This study examined the role of 3 sources of support in facilitating expatriate adjustment and performance. A model was developed that examined the effects of perceived organizational support (POS), leader-member exchange (LMX), and spousal support on expatriates' adjustment to work, the country, and interacting with foreign nationals. In turn, it was expected that expatriate adjustment would influence expatriate task performance and contextual performance. The model was tested using a sample of 213 expatriate-supervisor dyads via structural equation modeling. The results indicated that POS had direct effects on expatriate adjustment, which in turn had direct effects on both dimensions of performance. Although LMX did not influence adjustment, it did have direct effects on expatriate task and contextual performance. Spousal support did not relate to adjustment or performance. Practical implications for facilitating expatriate adjustment and performance are discussed.

A recent study by the National Foreign Trade Council (NFTC) estimates that there are more than 250,000 Americans on overseas assignments (expatriates) and that this number is expected to continue to increase in the future (Dolainski, 1997). Furthermore, the NFTC study found that an average one-time cost to relocate an expatriate is $60,000. As a result, the issue of how expatriates adjust to foreign cultures and perform on their jobs has become increasingly important (Aycan & Kanungo, 1997; Forster, 1997). Forster (1997) specifically highlighted sev-
eral possible implications of poor expatriate cross-cultural adjustment including inadequate performance, psychological stress, the negative effects on the expatriates' families, and the long-term career repercussions upon repatriation of failed expatriate assignments. In order to advance the research on expatriate adjustment, we examine several antecedents of expatriate adjustment and the relationship between adjustment and performance.

Black and Stephens (1989) identified three relevant facets of expatriate adjustment: work, general, and interaction. Work adjustment refers to the expatriate's psychological comfort with respect to the job tasks of the foreign assignment. General adjustment is with respect to the general living conditions and culture of the foreign country. Interaction adjustment is with respect to interacting with the host-country nationals. Following Black and Stephen's development of a scale to measure the three components of adjustment, there was an increase in studies on the predictors of expatriate adjustment. Specifically, individual factors such as personality, international experience, and preparation have been related to expatriate adjustment (Black, 1990; Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Caligiuri, Joshi, & Lazarova, 1999; Dunbar, 1994; Parker & McEvoy, 1993; Shaffer, Harrison, & Gilley, 1999). Role factors such as role novelty, role discretion, and role ambiguity have been related to work adjustment (Aryee & Stone, 1996; Black & Gregersen, 1990, 1991; Florkowski & Fogel, 1999; Gregersen & Black, 1992; Shaffer et al., 1999). Contextual factors such as spousal adjustment and the differences between the U.S. national culture and the host country's national culture (degree of cultural novelty) have been related to general and interaction adjustment (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Black & Stephens, 1989; Caligiuri, Hyland, Joshi, & Bross, 1998; Gregersen & Stroh, 1997; Parker & McEvoy, 1993; Shaffer & Harrison, 1998; Shaffer et al., 1999). Finally, initial evidence exists that organizational support predicts expatriate adjustment (Caligiuri et al., 1999; Shaffer et al., 1999).

Although this research has provided insights on some of the predictors of expatriate adjustment, there is still a need for theoretically based empirical research (Aycan, 1997). One promising theory that has been extensively examined in domestic work situations is the role of support in facilitating work transitions, based on a stress management perspective (Feldman & Brett, 1983; Fisher, 1985; Pinder & Schroeder, 1987). Given that expatriate assignments create a great deal of uncertainty for the employee—new work role, new corporate facility, new city, and new country—theories of stress management seem particularly relevant to understanding expatriate adjustment (Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991; Fisher & Shaw, 1994; Harvey, Buckley, Novicevic, & Wiese, 1999). Stress management scholars have highlighted the role of social support
in helping individuals reduce uncertainty when in novel situations (e.g., Ashford & Taylor, 1990; Feldman & Brett, 1983; Fisher, 1985; Pinder & Schroder, 1987). The role of social support in the successful acculturation of immigrants and sojourners has also been recognized (Aycan, 1997; Berry, 1997).

The purpose of this study is to examine three sources of support (organization, supervisor, and spouse) as predictors of expatriate adjustment. A secondary purpose is to examine the relationship between expatriate adjustment and performance, which has received limited empirical attention (Aycan & Kanungo, 1997; Caliguiri, 1997; Guzzo, 1996; McEvoy & Parker, 1995). This is a critical oversight as it is commonly believed that a reason for expatriates' job ineffectiveness is their inability to adjust to the foreign country (Black, 1988; Forster, 1997). Examining the relative importance of the three types of adjustment on performance addresses this issue.

**Theoretical Framework**

The model, presented in Figure 1, suggests that perceived organizational support (POS), leader–member exchange (LMX), and spousal support will be related to expatriate adjustment. In turn, adjustment will be related to expatriate performance. Support for the relationships in the model is largely based on stress management theories of social support.

Social support can be broadly defined as “the availability of helping relationships and the quality of those relationships” (Leavy, 1983, p. 5). According to Kahn and Quinn (1976), social support may be of three types: aid, affect, or affirmation. In the expatriate context, aid entails providing relevant information and assistance to the expatriate in order to reduce his or her stress and help him or her make sense of the work environment. The second type of social support, affect, is based on interpersonal attraction between the source of social support and support seeker. Affect is similar to mutual liking and provides high-quality supportive relationships. The third type of social support is affirmation and refers to reaffirming the support seeker's abilities and beliefs in oneself to deal with the stressful situation. Relationships that are reaffirming will be more helpful than those that are not reaffirming.

Research on social support has acknowledged that individuals may obtain support from various sources such as organizations, coworkers, supervisors, friends, and families (Caplan, Cobb, French, Harrison, & Pinneau, 1975). Theoretically, we expect support provided by the organization, supervisor, and family to be particularly important to expatriates. Aycan's (1997) model of expatriate acculturation highlighted the
Figure 1: Hypothesized model
important role that organizations play in the acculturation of expatriates. Other scholars have also argued that organizational support may be an important determinant of employees' adjustment following a transfer (Payne, 1980). Yet, little research has examined the effects of organizational support on employee adjustment. A second source of support that can occur on the job is that from the supervisor. Domestically, research has examined supervisor support as an important source of support for dealing with stress at work (e.g., Fisher, 1985; Ganster, Fusilier, & Mayes, 1986). Research on leader–member exchange (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Liden, Wayne, & Stilwell, 1993) and socialization (Bauer & Green, 1998; Major, Kozlowski, Chao, & Gardner, 1995) has indicated the importance of the supervisor in influencing employee attitudes and job performance. Although two expatriate studies have found no relationship between supervisor support and expatriate adjustment (Aryee & Stone, 1996; Shaffer et al., 1999), it is too early to dismiss the potential role of the supervisor in facilitating expatriate adjustment. Finally, spousal support in particular has been identified as a critical source of support for expatriates (Guzzo, 1996; Tung, 1981) due to the spill-over effect that family support can have on work outcomes (Brett, 1980; Caplan, 1976).

Perceived Organizational Support and Adjustment

Perceived organizational support (POS) refers to employees' general beliefs about the extent to which their organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchinson, & Sowa, 1986). POS represent an employee's overall assessment concerning all organizational members who control that individual's resources and rewards (Eisenberger et al., 1986). Providing resources and rewards may be interpreted as a form of aid, the first type of social support identified by Kahn and Quinn (1976). Guzzo, Noonan, and Elron (1993, 1994) demonstrated that the number of resources and benefits that organizations provide to expatriates contribute to expatriates' perceptions of organizational support. The other two types of social support, affect and affirmation, are captured within the definition of POS: general beliefs about the extent to which the organization values and cares about their well-being. Thus, POS constitutes a potential source of support.

Research has found POS to be positively related to organizational commitment (Eisenberger, Fasolo, & Davis-LaMastro, 1990; Guzzo et al., 1994; Shore & Wayne, 1993; Wayne, Shore, & Liden, 1997), attendance rates (Eisenberger et al., 1986, 1990), job performance (Eisenberger et al., 1986, 1990), and prosocial behaviors (Eisenberger et al.,
Expatriate research provides initial exploratory evidence that there is also a positive relationship between expatriates' perceptions of company support and adjustment to their expatriate assignments (Caliguiri et al., 1999; Shaffer et al., 1999), however, further theoretical and empirical support is warranted. Given the dual employment relationship for expatriates, they can receive organizational support from two sources: the parent company and the foreign facility (Aycan, 1997). It is expected that employees will be able to distinguish between parent company and foreign facility support.

The parent company will be the initial source of support and provide benefits and services prior to arriving and once in the foreign country that will affect the expatriate's quality of life and work in the foreign country. For example, Florkowski and Fogel (1999) found that companies who provide expatriates with enough financial support to maintain one's standard of living were more adjusted to working in the foreign country. Other benefits from the parent company might entail cross-cultural training, assistance in housing relocation, membership in "American" social clubs in the foreign country, rest and relaxation vacation leave, assistance with schooling for children, and spousal employment (Guzzo et al., 1993, 1994). In addition, the parent company might maintain communication with expatriates in order to alleviate his or her repatriation anxieties (Aycan, 1997). In combination, these services and benefits will facilitate adjustment to work and the general culture.

**Hypothesis 1:** POS from the parent company will be positively related to the expatriate's work and general adjustment.

Although we expect POS from the parent company to influence the expatriate's adjustment at the foreign facility, support from the foreign facility may be even more critical (Aycan, 1997). Because the expatriate is working in the foreign facility on a day-to-day basis, support from management from this facility is critical to continued adjustment. The foreign facility's managers can be an important source of information, especially with logistical help in the foreign country (Black et al., 1991). They may provide many of the same benefits and services as the parent company, but also provide foreign language courses, socialization experiences, and other opportunities to interact with host country citizens (Aycan, 1997). Thus,

**Hypothesis 2:** POS from the foreign facility will be positively related to the expatriate's work, general, and interaction adjustment.
Leader-Member Exchange and Adjustment

Leader-member exchange (LMX) refers to the quality of the interpersonal exchange relationship between an employee and his or her supervisor (Graen, 1976). High LMX relationships are characterized by mutual loyalty, liking, professional respect, and contributory behaviors toward meeting mutual goals, whereas low LMX relationships do not entail mutual loyalty, liking, respect, and contributory behaviors (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Liden & Maslyn, 1998). In a review of the LMX literature, Liden, Sparrowe, and Wayne (1997) concluded that “LMX has been found to be related to an impressive set of important individual and organizational outcomes...and for the most part, LMX is positively associated with favorable attitudes such as job satisfaction and behaviors such as organizational citizenship” (p. 73). However, despite the number of studies on LMX, there is a gap in the literature on the relationship between LMX and employee adjustment following a job transfer.

All three of Kahn and Quinn's (1976) types of social support—aid, affect, or affirmation—are captured by LMX. The theoretical underpinning of LMX is that supervisors will provide certain employees with information that goes beyond the employment contract (Liden & Graen, 1980). Thus, expatriates in a high-quality LMX relationship should receive information and assistance that will serve as supportive aid. Empirical research has found that LMX is positively related to information and assistance (Fairhurst, 1993; Major et al., 1995). The second type of social support, affect, is captured within the dimensionality of LMX. Liden and colleagues discussed interpersonal attraction as an element and predictor of a high-quality exchange relationship (Dienesch & Liden, 1986; Liden et al., 1993; Liden et al., 1997; Wayne et al., 1997). The third type of social support, affirmation, is captured within the LMX dimension of professional respect. Because LMX captures a support relationship within the job context, it is expected that LMX will only influence work adjustment.

Hypothesis 3: LMX will be positively related to the expatriate's work adjustment.

Spousal Support and Adjustment

Scholars in stress management have consistently highlighted the importance of examining family and/or spousal support as a coping mechanism for individuals undergoing stressful situations related to work (Brett, 1980; Caplan, 1976; Lu & Cooper, 1995). It is believed that the
family, especially the spouse, can provide (a) an individual with information and assistance to help the individual through a stressful period, (b) a continual source of affect, and (c) affirmation to the individual concerning his or her ability to succeed (Brett, 1980). Thus, the spouse will be vital in fulfilling all three types of social support: aid, affect, and affirmation. Despite the prevalence of theory suggesting that spousal support should be critical to successful job transfers, a review of the literature did not reveal any research studies on this issue.

It is expected that spousal support will be positively related to expatriate work and general adjustment (Caliguiri et al., 1998, 1999; Harvey, 1998). With respect to work adjustment, the spouse can provide support to the expatriate by assisting him or her with logistical issues associated with the relocation; thus, freeing up the expatriate's time to focus on work. In addition, the spouse can serve as a "cheerleader" to the expatriate and reaffirm his or her beliefs concerning work-related abilities and successful completion of assignments. With respect to the general environment, spouses can search for information about the foreign countries to share with their spouses. Finally, spouses can provide love and admiration, which is consistently shown to be related to general life satisfaction and adjustment (Payne, 1980).

Hypothesis 4: Spousal support will be positively related to the expatriate's work and general adjustment.

Expatriate Adjustment and Expatriate Performance

Previous research has supported the multidimensional view of expatriate adjustment (Shaffer et al., 1999). However, little research has examined the interrelationship between these three dimensions. We expect expatriate interaction adjustment to be positively related to general adjustment based on contact theory (Homans, 1950). The contact hypothesis suggests that increasing the frequency and number of interpersonal relationships across ethnic groups will reduce intergroup conflict. Two of the explanations for the contact hypothesis suggest that interaction adjustment will positively relate to general adjustment. First, Homans (1950) suggested that interaction between group members leads to the development of positive feelings toward the other group. A second explanation is that intergroup contacts serve as conduits for information that help to contradict biases and intergroup conflict (Ashmore, 1970). Both of these explanations highlight the possibility that as expatriates interact more frequently with host country nationals (which over time will increase their interaction adjustment), they will
gain information that will help facilitate their adjustment to the foreign country. In addition, frequent interaction with host country nationals should help expatriates develop positive feelings toward the people of that country, which should translate to greater general adjustment.

*Hypothesis 5:* Expatriate’s interaction adjustment will be positively related to general adjustment.

Consistent with Aycan (1997), we also hypothesize that general adjustment positively relates to work adjustment. Spillover theory suggests that problems in nonwork domains will create stress for an individual and that stress will impact his or her adjustment in the work environment (Bhagat, 1983). Thus, expatriates who are experiencing stress due to difficulties in adjusting to living in the foreign country, in terms of basic day-to-day life activities, may bring that stress with them to work resulting in lower work adjustment.

*Hypothesis 6:* Expatriate’s general adjustment will be positively related to work adjustment.

Despite the anecdotal evidence that poor performance on expatriate assignments may be due to poor cultural adjustment, no studies have adequately tested this hypothesis (Aycan & Kanungo, 1997). Parker and McEvoy (1993) were the first to empirically examine the relationship between adjustment and job performance. They found a positive relationship between work adjustment and self-reported work performance, but a negative relationship between general adjustment and self-reported work performance. In another study, Caligiuri (1997) found a positive relationship between general adjustment and self-ratings of job performance, but no relationship between general adjustment and leader ratings of performance. She did not include work or interaction adjustment in her study. Thus, further work is warranted on the relationship between expatriate adjustment and performance.

The appropriate definition of expatriate job performance has recently been the subject of theoretical development (Caligiuri, 1997; Gregersen, Hite, & Black, 1996). These researchers argue that expatriate assignments require effective performance on dimensions beyond task performance. Drawing on the research of Borman and Motowidlo (1993), Caligiuri (1997) developed a theoretical taxonomy of expatriate success highlighting the need to examine both technical performance and managerial and expatriate-specific contextual performance. The two types of contextual performance include such aspects as maintaining good working relationships with employees and establishing good
relationships with host nationals. In this study, aspects of expatriate-specific and managerial contextual performance are combined and will be referred to as expatriate contextual performance. We define expatriate contextual performance as the expatriate's level of effectiveness in performing international aspects of the job that go beyond task specific duties (Borman & Motowidlo, 1993). Consistent with Caliguiri's (1997) taxonomy, we examined both task and expatriate contextual performance as outcomes of expatriate adjustment.

We expect adjustment to be related to performance based on stress management theories of psychological stress. Research on expatriates has found mental well-being to be positively correlated with all three dimensions of expatriate adjustment (Nicholson & Imaiizumi, 1993; Selmer, 1998) suggesting that individuals who are poorly adjusted may be experiencing psychological stress. Within the stress research, it has been suggested that when employees are learning new organizational roles or facing stressful life events, psychological stress may lead to decreased work performance (Bhagat, 1983; Latack, 1984; Motowidlo, Packard, & Manning, 1986). Cohen (1980) proposed that stress may create cognitive fatigue and rob individuals of energy needed for job performance. In support of the negative relationship between psychological stress and performance, Motowidlo et al. (1986) found occupational stress to be negatively related to job performance. Vicino and Bass (1978) also found that stress negatively correlated with managerial success. Thus, based on stress management theories, it is expected that individuals who feel well adjusted to the work and general environment will be able to perform at higher levels.

It is expected that only work adjustment will be related to task performance. Those who are adjusted well to the work environment should also perform their task duties more effectively. However, scholars have suggested that it will be necessary for expatriates to adequately adjust to their work, the general environment, and interacting with host-country nationals in order to perform well on international and managerial aspects of the job (McEvoy & Parker, 1995). Being comfortable with the country's cultural norms and with interacting with host-country citizens seem vital aspects of being able to develop exceptional expatriate-specific skills. Thus,

\textit{Hypothesis 7: Work adjustment will be positively related to task performance.}
\textit{Hypothesis 8: Work, general, and interaction adjustment will be positively related to expatriate contextual performance.}
Control Variables

In order to avoid model misspecification and to rigorously examine the influence of social support on expatriate adjustment, we included several control variables in the model. Based on prior research, we controlled for ability to speak the foreign language on interaction adjustment (Black & Gregersen, 1991; Naumann, 1993; Shaffer et al., 1999), role novelty on work adjustment (Nicholson & Imaizumi, 1993; Shaffer et al., 1999), perceived national culture novelty on general and interaction adjustment (Parker & McEvoy, 1993; Shaffer et al., 1999), and positive affectivity on all three dimensions of expatriate adjustment (Black, 1990; Caligiuri, 2000; Ones & Viswesvaran, 1997; Parker & McEvoy, 1993; Shaffer et al., 1999). Finally, it is expected that all three dimensions of expatriate adjustment will be correlated with time in the country (country tenure).

Method

Sample and Data Collection

Surveys were mailed to 583 expatriates and their supervisors from three U.S.-based Fortune 500 companies. The companies represent an insurance provider, a manufacturer of large vehicles, and a chemical processor and manufacturer of military equipment. All expatriates’ survey packets were distributed to the expatriate at work through each company’s internal mail system. Each packet included a survey and return envelope for the employee as well as a survey and return envelope for his or her supervisor. Employees were asked to distribute the appropriate survey and return envelope to their supervisors. Confidentiality was ensured by providing respondents with international business reply envelopes that allowed them to return their surveys directly to the researchers. Surveys were coded in order to match the employee’s and appropriate supervisor’s responses. Three weeks after the initial mailing, “reminder postcards” were mailed to all respondents encouraging their participation. Seven weeks after the initial mailing, complete packets were again mailed to all expatriates who had not yet replied to the first request.

Across all three companies, 339 surveys (a 58% response rate) were received from the expatriates. In addition, 278 supervisor surveys (a 48% response rate) were received. Complete data were received from 213 expatriate–supervisor dyads (a 37% effective response rate) representing 30 different country assignments, including Eastern and Western
European, Asian, Oceanic, North American, Latin American, and Middle Eastern countries.

The average age of the expatriates was 43.7 years. Most of the respondents were male (98%) and Caucasian (92%). All of the respondents were married and 57% had children with them in the foreign country. In terms of education level, 2% had a high school diploma, 7% had an Associate's degree, 55% possessed a bachelor's degree, 35% had a master's degree, and 1% had a PhD. On average, the expatriates had been working for their companies for 19 years. The average length of time on the current expatriate assignment was 1 year and 11 months. The functional position of the respondents included: Sales and marketing (33%), general management (22%), engineering (15%), finance (10%), operations (6%), and other functional areas (14%). In terms of the purpose of the expatriate assignment, 53% of the expatriates were considered to be in managerial positions (n = 113) and the remainder had a technical purpose for the assignment (n = 100).

Of the supervisors who responded to the survey, 74% were located at the same foreign facility as the expatriate. Of these co-located supervisors, 84% were also expatriate employees, and 16% were host country citizens of the foreign country. The remaining 26% of the supervisors were located either in the U.S. or in a foreign facility that was different from the foreign facility of the expatriates they supervised. The average organizational tenure of the supervisors was 22 years. Their average job tenure was 2 years and 10 months.

**Measures**

All measures, except the two dimensions of performance, were obtained from the expatriates. Expatriates' immediate supervisors assessed their task and expatriate contextual performance.

**Perceived organizational support.** POS was measured using the shortened-version of Eisenberger et al.'s (1986) POS scale. Expatriates completed the 9-item scale twice: once with respect to the foreign facility and once with respect to the parent-company. Responses were made on a 7-point scale (1 = strongly disagree to 7 = strongly agree). An exploratory factor analysis using varimax rotation revealed two distinct factors with eigenvalues greater than one. Component 1 had an eigenvalue of 8.6 that explained 48% of the variance and all nine items intended to measure foreign facility POS had high loadings on this factor. Component 2 had an eigenvalue of 2.8 that explained 15% of the variance and all nine items intended to measure parent company POS had high loadings on this factor. All scale items had factor loadings above .63 on their intended construct and had no cross-loadings greater than .29 indicating
that the expatriates made a clear distinction between support from the parent company and support from the foreign facility. Cronbach’s alpha was .92 for both POS measures.

**Leader–member exchange.** LMX was measured with Liden and Maslyn’s (1998) MDM–LMX 12-item scale. Responses were made on a 7-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree*). The items were combined to yield a single scale score (α = .93).

**Spousal support.** Perceived spousal support was assessed with the spousal support subscale of Caplan et al.’s (1975) measure of social support. Responses were made on a 5-point scale (1 = *not at all* to 5 = *a great deal*). The items were combined to yield a single score (α = .86).

**Expatriate adjustment.** Expatriates completed Black and Stephen’s (1989) 14-item scale to assess adjustment to work, general environment, and interactions with host-country citizens. Expatriates indicated how well adjusted they were on a scale from 1 = *very unadjusted* to 7 = *very adjusted*. A confirmatory factor analysis found the 3-factor model to have acceptable fit (GFI = .94; AGFI = .91; CFI = .97) and was superior to a 1-factor model and all possible 2-factor models. Thus, within each dimension, item responses were averaged to form a scale score (α = .74, .73, .93 for work, general, & interaction adjustment, respectively).

**Performance.** Job performance was rated by the expatriates’ supervisors using a 6-item scale designed specifically for this study. The items were developed based on the results of 17 interviews conducted with former expatriates prior to beginning this study as well as research by Caliguiri (1997), Feldman and Thomas (1992), and Gregersen et al. (1996). The six items developed were intended to measure task performance and expatriate contextual performance. Supervisors were asked to rate the expatriate’s performance on each item, using a 7-point scale from 1 = *very poor* to 7 = *outstanding*. The items were subjected to a principal components analysis using varimax rotation with results indicating two distinct factors with eigenvalues greater than one. Component one had an eigenvalue of 3.44 that explained 57% of the variance and included high factor loadings for the items “meeting job objectives,” “technical competence,” and “overall job performance.” This component measures task performance. Component two had an eigenvalue of 1.13 that explained 19% of the variance and included high factor loadings for the items “adapting to the foreign facility’s business customs and norms,” “establishing relationships with key host-country business contacts,” and “interacting with coworkers.” This component measures performance criteria related to expatriate contextual performance. All items had factor loadings greater than .73 on their intended factors and
had no cross-loadings greater than .40. These two factors were replicated when examining the factor structure within the managerial and technical expatriate subsamples. In addition, a MANOVA analysis indicated that neither the location of the supervisor, nor their citizenship status, had a significant effect on their performance ratings of the expatriate employee \( (F = 1.426, p = .20) \). Within each performance dimension, item responses were averaged to form a scale score \( (\alpha = .81 \text{ for both performance measures}) \).

**Control variables.** Torbiorn's (1982) 8-item cultural novelty scale was used to measure perceived national culture novelty \( (\alpha = .81) \). Shaffer et al.’s (1999) 4-item adaptation of Nicholson’s and West’s (1988) scale was used to measure role novelty \( (\alpha = .70) \). For both scales, responses were made on a 5-point scale with a high score reflecting more novelty. Language ability was assessed by asking expatriates to indicate on a 5-point scale, from 1 = *not at all* to 5 = *fluently*, how well they speak the host-country language. Positive affectivity was measured using the 10 positive affect items of the PANAS scale (Watson, Clark, & Tellegen, 1988; \( \alpha = .87 \)). Tenure on their current expatriate assignments was measured in terms of months. A MANOVA, using the adjustment dimensions and performance dimensions as the dependent variables and company as the independent variable, was not statistically significant \( (F = .934, p = .50) \). Thus, a control variable for company was not deemed necessary. Finally, a MANOVA, using the performance dimensions as the dependent variables and the technical versus managerial goal of the assignment as the independent variable, revealed no differences in performance ratings between managerial or technical expatriates \( (F = 1.73, p = .18) \).

**Analyses**

All hypotheses were tested using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) via LISREL 8.3 (maximum likelihood estimation). As the measurement model was not of substantive interest in this study, we wanted to prevent measurement misspecification from being misinterpreted as misspecification of the structural model (Burt, 1976; Williams & Hazer, 1986). Thus, we used scale values as the indicator for each latent construct. The covariance matrix of scale scores was used as input to LISREL 8.3 (Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1999). The path from the latent variable to the indicator (lambda X and lambda Y) was set equal to one in order to scale the latent variables (Bollen, 1989). To adjust for measurement error in the scale values, the error variance \( (\text{theta delta and theta epsilon}) \) was set equal to the variance of the scale value multiplied by 1.0 minus the reliability (Hayduk, 1987; Williams & Hazer, 1986). Nete-
meyer, Johnston, and Burton (1990) showed that the use of single-scale score indicators, adjusting for measurement error, conformed better to distributional assumptions and produced virtually identical latent parameter estimates as the multiple indicator approach. The correlations among the exogenous latent constructs (phi matrix) were allowed to be estimated, as is recommended practice (Hayduk, 1987). In addition, we estimated the correlation between the two performance dimensions (psi matrix) in order to statistically control for their intercorrelation (Hayduk, 1987; Medsker, Williams, & Holahan, 1994). The adequacy of the structural model was assessed by comparing the goodness of fit of the hypothesized model with four additional nested models.

Results

Correlations and descriptive statistics for all study variables are reported in Table 1.

To test the adequacy of the hypothesized model, five nested model comparisons were conducted. The first model estimated was the hypothesized model. This model was compared to a “control variables” model, two partially mediated models and a nonmediated model as is recommended practice when assessing model fit for a mediated model (Kelloway, 1998). The control variables model estimated the paths from the five control variables to the adjustment dimensions and the hypothesized paths from the adjustment dimensions to the performance dimensions, but fixed the hypothesized paths from the support variables to the adjustment dimensions. This model, referred to as the “control variables” model, allowed a direct comparison of the additional contribution of the support variables in predicting expatriate adjustment. The first partially mediated model included direct effects for POS, LMX, and spousal support on both performance dimensions, as well as the hypothesized indirect effects on performance through adjustment. In comparison to the hypothesized model, direct effects for POS, LMX, and spousal support on both dimensions of performance were added. This model will be referred to as the “full partially mediated model.” The second partially mediated model included the direct and indirect effects from LMX to the performance dimensions. Thus, in comparison to the hypothesized model, direct effects for LMX on both performance dimensions were added. This “LMX partially mediated model” is based on prior research findings that has consistently shown a positive direct relationship between LMX and supervisor ratings of subordinate performance (Gerstner & Day, 1997; Liden et al., 1997). The “nonmediated model” assumed direct paths from POS, LMX, and spousal support to both dimensions of job performance, and direct paths from expatriate adjust-
### TABLE 1

*Descriptive Statistics and Correlations*

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<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
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<td>1. Work adjustment</td>
<td>5.96</td>
<td>0.78</td>
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<td>2. General adjustment</td>
<td>5.34</td>
<td>0.76</td>
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<td>3. Interaction adjustment</td>
<td>4.92</td>
<td>1.43</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.45**</td>
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<td>4. Task performance</td>
<td>5.31</td>
<td>0.81</td>
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<td>5. Expatriate contextual</td>
<td>5.15</td>
<td>0.91</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.53**</td>
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<td>performance</td>
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<tr>
<td>6. Country tenure</td>
<td>23.52</td>
<td>20.96</td>
<td>.22**</td>
<td>.18**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.05</td>
<td>.04</td>
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<td>7. Role novelty</td>
<td>3.56</td>
<td>0.87</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td>-.19**</td>
<td>-.06</td>
<td>-.25**</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.15*</td>
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<td>8. National culture novelty</td>
<td>3.57</td>
<td>0.71</td>
<td>.01</td>
<td>-.40**</td>
<td>-.26**</td>
<td>-.20**</td>
<td>-.14*</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>.22**</td>
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<td>9. Language ability</td>
<td>3.28</td>
<td>1.54</td>
<td>.14*</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>.42**</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>-.22**</td>
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<tr>
<td>10. Positive affectivity</td>
<td>3.83</td>
<td>.50</td>
<td>.43**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.15*</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.12</td>
<td>.02</td>
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<td>11. Parent company POS</td>
<td>5.13</td>
<td>0.98</td>
<td>.29**</td>
<td>.34**</td>
<td>.17*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.12</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>-.18*</td>
<td>-.13</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.39**</td>
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<td>12. Foreign facility POS</td>
<td>4.79</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.33**</td>
<td>.25**</td>
<td>.10</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>-.04</td>
<td>-.21**</td>
<td>-.16*</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.36**</td>
<td>.52**</td>
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<tr>
<td>13. LMX</td>
<td>5.47</td>
<td>0.94</td>
<td>.24**</td>
<td>.21**</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.26**</td>
<td>.19**</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>-.07</td>
<td>-.00</td>
<td>-.09</td>
<td>.38**</td>
<td>.23**</td>
<td>.24**</td>
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<tr>
<td>14. Spousal support</td>
<td>4.21</td>
<td>0.77</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.13</td>
<td>-.02</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.02</td>
<td>.00</td>
<td>-.08</td>
<td>.16*</td>
<td>.11</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.11</td>
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</table>

*The value of n is 213.

*p < .05  **p < .01
TABLE 2

Results of Model Comparison Testsa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>$\chi^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta \chi^2$</th>
<th>$\Delta df$</th>
<th>RMSR</th>
<th>RMSEA</th>
<th>CFI</th>
<th>GFI</th>
<th>AGFI</th>
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<tr>
<td>Hypothesized (mediated)</td>
<td>69.61**</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.86</td>
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<td>Control variables only</td>
<td>86.53**</td>
<td>16.92*</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.06</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.91</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Full partially mediatedb</td>
<td>58.55**</td>
<td>11.06</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.08</td>
<td>.93</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LMX partially mediatedc</td>
<td>60.28**</td>
<td>9.33*</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.04</td>
<td>.07</td>
<td>.94</td>
<td>.96</td>
<td>.87</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nonmediatedd</td>
<td>81.51**</td>
<td>21.23**</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>.05</td>
<td>.09</td>
<td>.90</td>
<td>.95</td>
<td>.83</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

aControl variables only, full and LMX partially mediated models were compared to the hypothesized model. Nonmediated model was compared to the LMX partially mediated model. Best-fitting model is in bold.

bFull partially mediated: In comparison to the hypothesized model, direct effects for POS, LMX, and spousal support on both performance dimensions were added.

cLMX partially mediated: In comparison to the hypothesized model, direct effects for LMX on both performance dimensions were added.

dNonmediated: In comparison to the hypothesized model, direct effects for POS, LMX, and spousal support on both performance dimensions were added. Paths from POS, LMX, and spousal support to expatriate adjustment were constrained to zero (deleted).

*p < .05 **p < .01

The results of the model comparisons are reported in Table 2. Specifically, the results indicated that the hypothesized model fit the data well ($\chi^2 = 69.61, df = 30, p < .01; RMSR = .05, RMSEA = .07; CFI = .93, GFI = .96, AGFI = .86$). The hypothesized model was then compared to the control variables model and the results indicated that the hypothesized model was superior to the control variables model ($\Delta \chi^2 = 16.92, \Delta df = 8, p < .05$). The hypothesized model was then compared to the full partially mediated model. This comparison indicated that the full partially mediated model was not superior to the hypothesized model ($\Delta \chi^2 = 11.06, \Delta df = 8, p > .10$). The hypothesized model was next compared to the LMX partially mediated model in which only the direct paths from LMX to the job performance dimensions were estimated. The LMX partially mediated model was superior to the hypothesized model ($\Delta \chi^2 = 9.33, \Delta df = 2, p < .01$). Thus, the LMX partially mediated model was retained as the best fitting model and was compared to the nonmediated model. This comparison indicated that the nonmediated model was significantly worse than the LMX partially mediated model.
mediated model ($\Delta \chi^2 = 21.23, \Delta df = 2, p < .01$). Thus, the LMX partially mediated model in which POS and social support are hypothesized to have indirect effects on performance through expatriate adjustment, but LMX has both direct and indirect effects on performance, was retained as the best fitting model. The structural path estimates from the completely standardized solution of the LMX partially mediated model (best-fitting model) are reported in Figure 2. Hypotheses were examined using one-tailed tests.

Hypotheses 1 and 2 examined the relationship of parent company POS and foreign facility POS with expatriate adjustment. The parameter estimate relating POS from the parent company to general adjustment was significant and positive ($t = 1.80, p < .05$). The simple correlation ($r = .34, p < .01$) indicated that those who perceived more organizational support from the parent company were more adjusted to the foreign country in general. In addition, statistically significant parameter estimates were found for paths from foreign facility POS to work adjustment ($t = 2.77, p < .01$) and interaction adjustment ($t = 1.88, p < .05$). Those who perceived more support from the foreign facility were significantly more adjusted to work ($r = .38, p < .01$) and to interacting with foreign nationals ($r = .25, p < .01$). Thus, partial support was found for Hypotheses 1 and 2.

Hypothesis 3 predicted that LMX would be positively related to work adjustment. This path estimate was not significant indicating a lack of support for Hypothesis 3. Hypothesis 4 predicted that spousal support would be positively related to work and general adjustment. Neither of these path estimates were significant, thus, Hypothesis 4 was not supported.

Hypothesis 5 examined the relationship between interaction and general adjustments. This path estimate was significant ($t = 4.16, p < .01$) indicating that expatriates who reported higher levels of interaction adjustment also reported higher levels of adjustment to the country in general ($r = .45, p < .01$). Hypothesis 6 examined the relationship between general and work adjustments. This path estimate was not significant indicating a lack of support for Hypothesis 6.

Hypotheses 7 and 8 examined the relationship between expatriate adjustment and job performance. In support of Hypothesis 7, a significant path estimate was found between work adjustment and task performance ($t = 1.89, p < .05$). The simple correlation ($r = .19, p < .01$) indicated that expatriates who reported being well adjusted to work were rated as higher performers on task dimensions by their supervisors. In partial support of Hypothesis 8, a significant path estimate was found between interaction adjustment and expatriate contextual performance ($t = 2.80, p < .01$). The simple correlation ($r = .24,$
Figure 2: Path Estimates of the LMX Partially Mediated Model

a For clarity’s sake, the control variables and corresponding path estimates are not depicted in the figure. All path estimates are from the completely standardized solution. Broken lines indicate hypothesized paths that were not statistically significant.

*p < .05  **p < .01
90

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\[ p < .01 \] indicated that expatriates who reported being more comfortable interacting with host-country citizens were rated as higher performers on international dimensions. The relationship between general adjustment and expatriate contextual performance was not statistically significant nor was the relationship between work adjustment and expatriate contextual performance. Thus, Hypothesis 7 received full support and Hypothesis 8 received partial support.

Although not originally hypothesized, the LMX partially mediated model estimated paths from LMX to task performance and to contextual performance. Both of these paths were statistically significant \( (t = 3.02, p < .01, \) and \( t = 2.15, p < .05, \) respectively). In addition, the simple correlation indicated a significant positive relationship between LMX and task performance \( (r = .26, p < .01) \) and between LMX and expatriate contextual performance \( (r = .19, p < .01) \).

As for the control variables, a significant path estimate \( (p < .05) \) was found between: country tenure and work, general, and interaction adjustment \( (\beta = .22, .20, \) and \( .13, \) respectively); role novelty and work adjustment \( (\beta = -.20) \); national culture novelty and general adjustment \( (\beta = -.39); \) national culture novelty and interaction adjustment \( (\beta = -.18); \) language fluency and interaction adjustment \( (\beta = .37); \) and positive affectivity and all three adjustment dimensions \( (\beta = .34, .16, \) and \( .18, \) respectively for work, general, & interaction).

In order to ensure that the path estimates obtained from the LMX partially mediated model were not biased by allowing the error term between the performance dimensions to correlate (in the psi matrix), we re-ran the model after fixing the error term between the two performance dimensions to zero. In comparing the standardized parameter estimates between the two models (correlated error term vs. uncorrelated error term), it was found that the estimate between work adjustment and task performance increased from .17 to .19 and the estimate between interaction adjustment and expatriate contextual performance increased from .23 to .25. All other parameter estimates were exactly the same between the two models. Thus, allowing the performance dimensions to have correlated error terms did not bias the results.

The explained variance in all five endogenous variables was greater in the LMX partially mediated model than in the control variables model providing support for the value-added contribution of this study. Specifically, the LMX partially mediated model accounted for 45% of the variance in work adjustment, 58% in general adjustment, 32% in interaction adjustment, 11% in task performance, and 12% in expatriate contextual performance. In comparison, the control variables model explained 41%, 49%, 31%, 6%, and 9%, respectively.
Discussion

The results of this study, using a sample of 213 expatriate-supervisor dyads, found support for the LMX partially mediated model. Specifically, it was found that POS positively related to expatriate adjustment. Further, it was found that LMX, expatriate work adjustment, and expatriate interaction adjustment had positive relationships with the supervisor's ratings of two dimensions of performance. It should be noted that subsequent subgroup invariant analyses found the LMX partially mediated model to hold up for both managerial and technical expatriates. That is, goal of the assignment did not moderate any of the significant path estimates. The findings contribute to and extend the expatriate research in several ways.

Support and Adjustment

Of the organizational support factors examined, parent company POS positively related to general adjustment, and foreign facility POS positively related to work and interaction adjustment. These results provided an important contribution to the research on POS. First, our findings bolster Caliguiri et al.'s (1999) and Shaffer et al.'s (1999) findings that organizational support (as assessed through content analysis of respondent's written/interview responses to open-ended questions) related to cross-cultural adjustment. Second, our findings show that expatriates were able to clearly distinguish between organizational support from the foreign facility and organizational support from the parent company in concurrence with Guzzo and colleagues' (1994) suggestion that the expatriate assignment creates a complex employment relationship. Although Guzzo et al. (1994) had shown that POS from the parent company positively related to the expatriates' organizational commitment, this was the first study to examine the relationship between POS and expatriate adjustment. In support of discriminant validity of the two foci of POS, parent company POS only related to general adjustment, where as foreign facility POS related to work and interaction adjustment. This distinction supports the notion that the parent company provides more global support in terms of financial and general logistical support that helps the expatriate adjust to the foreign country. On the other hand, the foreign facility provides the day-to-day support that facilitates adjustment to the actual work setting and interacting with foreign nationals (Aycan, 1997).

LMX was not positively related to work adjustment, but instead had direct positive effects on both task and expatriate contextual performance. The lack of a relationship between LMX and work adjustment is consistent with previous research that has found no relationship between
supervisor support and work adjustment (Aryee & Stone, 1996; Shaffer et al., 1999). It seems that supervisors have more of an impact on expatriate performance, than on work adjustment. It should be noted that, in a separate analysis, the positive relationship between LMX and performance was significant when controlling for whether the expatriate's superior was located at the same foreign facility or at another geographical location. That LMX was positively related to both dimensions of performance extends the research on LMX to the international context. Future research is needed to examine the process by which LMX affects performance, as the results of this study indicate that LMX does not affect performance through adjustment.

Spousal support did not relate to any of the expatriate adjustment dimensions. This result was quite surprising because the literature is replete with suggestions that spousal support is critical to expatriate adjustment (Caligiuri et al., 1998; Guzzo, 1996). It is important to note that although the literature emphasizes spousal support, most empirical studies have examined spousal adjustment (e.g., Black, 1988; Black & Gregersen, 1991; Black & Stephens, 1989; Caligiuri et al., 1998). This is the first study to examine perceived spousal support with respect to expatriate adjustment. Based on the findings here, it appears that future research needs to include both spousal adjustment and perceived spousal support in the same study to determine the relative importance of each to enhancing expatriate adjustment. Or, perhaps spousal support is only important when the spouse is well adjusted him or herself (Aycan, 1997). Future research should examine the possible interactive effects between spouse support and spouse adjustment with respect to expatriate adjustment.

This study's findings are consistent with past research in terms of the significant effects for role novelty, perceived national culture novelty, language fluency, and positive affectivity. In addition, this study added a new class of variables—perceived organizational support—as a significant predictor of expatriate adjustment. This contributes to both expatriate research and work transitions research, in general. Although expatriate transitions are distinct from other types of domestic work transitions, they do share some similarities. In expatriate and domestic work transitions, employee adjustment depends on both characteristics of the employee and organizational support as suggested by Aycan (1997). The positive findings for POS suggest that more research is needed that integrates the organizational support and work transitions research.
Adjustment and Performance

One of the important contributions of this study was finding a positive relationship between adjustment and performance as it is commonly cited that expatriate “failure” is often a result of poor adjustment (Aycan & Kanungo, 1997; Parker & McEvoy, 1993; Tung, 1981). The results of this study provide initial evidence that expatriates who are well adjusted at work and who are comfortable interacting with host-country citizens are perceived to be higher performers by their managers on task and expatriate contextual performance, respectively. Longitudinal research is needed in order to provide further evidence that adjustment precedes job performance as suggested by stress management theories. Finding that task performance and expatriate contextual performance were relevant performance dimensions for both managerial and technical expatriates also provides initial support for Caliguiri’s (1997) taxonomy of expatriate success and highlights the need for future expatriate research to further examine her taxonomy.

Finally, this study also contributed to research on the expatriate adjustment construct. Although previous research has found support for the multidimensionality of expatriate adjustment (Shaffer et al., 1999), this is the first study to examine the interrelationships between the adjustment dimensions. The results suggest that these dimensions are interrelated such that, based on contact theory, expatriates who are comfortable interacting with foreign nationals are also more adjusted to the country, in general. This finding highlights the importance for organizations to provide language training and social opportunities for the expatriates to interact with foreign nationals. Purposely separating the expatriates from the host country nationals at the workplace, as one foreign facility did in this study, may have detrimental effects on the expatriate’s general adjustment to the foreign country.

Practical Implications

The results of this study have several implications for the management of expatriates on foreign assignments. That POS from the parent company was positively related to an expatriate’s general adjustment suggests that it is important for an organization to realize that its support of an expatriate will extend past the boundaries of the work environment. In addition to providing predeparture cross-cultural training and financial support to expatriates, the parent company should consider offering other types of support services, such as: on-going career counseling, psychological counseling for expatriates experiencing stress and anxiety
(i.e., Employee Assistance Programs), and in-country contractual services to help with the transition period.

This study's results also found support for a positive relationship between perceived organizational support from the foreign facility with work and interaction adjustments. Support can range from having one person available to assist expatriates to having an entire human resource staff at the expatriates' disposal to answer questions as they arise. For example, the foreign facility may provide support by providing post-arrival cross-cultural training to the expatriates. Another suggestion would be to implement a formal mentor system within the foreign facility for the expatriates (Feldman & Bolino, 1999). In most cases, host-country nationals provide these types of support systems, thereby allowing expatriates to interact and bolster their confidence in language skills. The expatriates are subsequently gaining confidence in their abilities at work through these interactions as well. Finding that expatriate adjustment relates to performance on the job suggests that it is worth the company's time and expense to help expatriates adjust to the foreign facility and develop the language skills needed to interact with host country citizens.

Expatriates who had high-quality relationships with their supervisors were more effective in completing their job responsibilities. This emphasizes the importance for supervisors to take the initiative in terms of developing a positive relationship with their expatriate workers. Organizations can facilitate high-quality relationships between expatriates and their supervisors by providing the supervisors with training on the challenges of cross-cultural adjustment. This would make the supervisor more aware of the issues facing their expatriates and encourage supervisors to provide expatriates with information and assistance in learning their job tasks and building the expatriate's international skills. The effort extended by the supervisors translates into better expatriate performance at work.

Study Limitations

When considering the results of the study, a few limitations should be acknowledged. First, the cross-sectional nature of the study limits the ability to draw strict causal conclusions. Future expatriate research would benefit from a longitudinal study design in order to develop causal predictors of expatriate adjustment and performance. Another limitation is that few women were included in the sample. Future research is needed to determine the role of support in predicting adjustment and performance for female expatriates (e.g., Caliguiri et al., 1999). Third, this study focused on only organizational, supervisory, and spousal support. Future research should consider examining additional sources of
support such as that provided by coworkers, subordinates, and friends outside the workplace. A fourth limitation is that the reliance on a single respondent for the independent variables and the three adjustment variables may have contributed to common method variance explaining a portion of our significant relationships.

In conclusion, this study found that organizational support from the parent company and the foreign facility related to expatriate adjustment. In turn, expatriate work and interaction adjustment, as well as LMX, positively related to two dimensions of performance. These results indicate that the stress management, POS, and LMX research hold promise for enhancing our understanding of expatriate adjustment and performance.

REFERENCES


