**ABSTRACT**

**Objective:** This study explores the settlement decisions of Serbian self-initiated expatriates (SIEs) in the United States.

**Methodology:** Using qualitative phenomenological inquiry, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 10 Serbian SIEs, and the data were analyzed through the framework analysis method. This explorative study focused on individual preferences and processes, social interactions, and socio-economic environment through the concepts of decision theory, acculturation orientation, and transnational attachment.

**Findings:** Serbian SIEs were motivated to migrate to the United States for career opportunities, self-worth validation, departure from social norms placed by the Serbian society, and normal, happy lives. Their decisions to stay were deeply influenced by their family members, possible repatriation or further journey dependent on favorable opportunities at home, potential boredom with a current lifestyle, and intention to start a family. Serbian SIEs navigated the macro system based on knowledge gained through exploration and transnational networks. They chose the path of individualism and integration in terms of their acculturation orientation, which put them in balanced position for their own well-being. Serbian SIEs deliberately chose metropolitan areas, in which transnational attachments were fostered, and more opportunities arose.

**Value Added:** Living in a culturally plural society has become a reality, leading to acculturation among migrants. If policy makers, hiring organizations, social service agencies, immigration officials, and law enforcement agencies understand why people choose to permanently relocate, they can also provide appropriate and relevant help in their adjustment challenges.

**Recommendations:** The research on migration and SIEs’ decisions shows strong evidence that it relates to economic and professional gain as well as social networks and family ties; however, economic and social factors are not the only ones influencing migration decisions. Studies that call for both person- and institutional level are needed for deeper understanding of migration and settlement decisions as parameters exploring the consequences of immigration, crucial for the development of the intercultural management field. This way, both micro- and macro-level aspects would be equally highlighted, while meso-level information would serve for providing the connection between the two.