Determinants of Work Adjustment in Cross-Cultural Work Environment: A Study of Indian IT Expatriates in the United States of America

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ABSTRACT   *The Present study explores the influence that individual competencies like emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence and supporting systems like perceived organizational supporting practices and family support on work adjustment of Indian IT expatriates who are on an international assignment in the United States of America*

KEYWORDS : Emotional Intelligence, Cultural Intelligence, Work Adjustment

Introduction:

Globalization has made the world shrink whereby employees have been moving across the globe as the organizations expand their business outreach to enhance their market share. To facilitate this human resources, play a vital role. Increasingly, MNCs have an extensively using expatriates to grow globally. Merely selecting an employee alone does not serve the purpose today. They need to be groomed. The way the organizations do business have transformed enormously. There is increased interaction between the people from different cultures and there is a high degree of global mobility. Post-1990 there is tremendous growth of the Indian MNCs which started providing software services to the clients across the globe. India due to its highly skilled human resources emerged as a major of exporter of software. India's total export of computer services and ITES/BPO services (excluding commercial presence) during 2013-14 was estimated at ` 4,322.8 billion (US$ 71.4 billion), exhibiting 14.1 per cent growth in the US $ terms over the previous year (RBI 2015). 'USA & Canada' continued to remain the top destination for software exports and accounted for 62.7 percent of the total export of software services during 2013-14 (RBI 2015). European countries had 24.4 per cent share, of which the UK accounted for 12.6 per cent. Due to this tremendous growth, the Indian MNCs started sending the employees to the client sites to cater to the global business needs. The Present study explores the influence that individual competencies like emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence and supporting systems like perceived organizational supporting practices and family support on work adjustment of Indian IT expatriates who are on an international assignment in the United States of America.

Literature Review:
Emotional Intelligence:

In the recent literature on the expatriate's cross-cultural adjustment and performance, much prominence is given to the role emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence can be defined as "The abilities to understand and manage the emotional reactions of yourself and those of others and to effectively adapt in culturally diverse settings, have been increasingly recognized ed as critical elements that influence adjustment" as cited in (Lin, Chen, & Song, 2012:542). "The ability to monitor one's emotional changes and accurately read the emotional reactions of others is called emotional intelligence." (Lin, Chen, & Song, 2012: 542). There is enough evidence that emotional intelligence plays an important role in the various facets of employee's work. The emotional intelligence assumes a significant role in the international assignments because of the nature of the international assignments. When an employee is selected and assigned to an international assignment, he or she face a new culture and new work practices which might cause significant problems to the international assignee to get adjusted to the new environment and it also will have a significant effect on the performance level of the employee. Under such instances "EI with its Dimensions are critical factors that facilitate adjustment when facing a different cultural environment." (Lin, Chen, & Song, 2012: 545). Also (Lin, Chen, & Song, 2012: 544) argues that "EI and its dimensions as a predictor of cross-cultural adjustment." The

present study is an attempt to examine the effects of emotional intelligence on cross-cultural adjustment, psychological wellbeing, Intention to finish the assignment and expatriate job performance.

Cultural Intelligence:

One of the important ability to be successful in the globalized world is the ability to interact with people from different cultures. The importance of the cultural intelligence has grown enormously because of the diversity in the workforce and because of the increase in international mobility due to globalization. An expatriate may face a number of problems when working in a culturally diverse country and workplace. In order to cope up with such problems and adjust successfully, the expatriate needs certain abilities. "CQ refers to the ability to collect and process messages, to make decisions, and the relative approaches needed in order to adjust to a new environment." (Lin, Chen, & Song, 2012:542). "Cultural intelligence refers to individual capacities which enable one to interact effectively with others from different cultural backgrounds and in different cultural contexts" (acNab & Worthley, 2012:63). "Earley and colleagues developed a three-part model of cultural intelligence with cognitive/metacognitive, motivation, and behavior components" as cited in (acNab & Worthley, 2012). "Cultural intelligence [cultural quotient (CQ)] is the ability of individuals to acquire, store, and use cultural knowledge" as cited in (Wua & Ang, 2011: 2684). (Lin, Chen, & Song, 2012: 542) acknowledged the need to increase an individual's CQ and EI to increase their adjustment to work, their interactions with host nationals, and their ability to deal with general living conditions in a cross-cultural context. "Cultural Intelligence is one of the key determinates of expatriate success" (Lin, Chen, & Song, 2012: 542) & (Wua & Ang, 2011: 2684). Expatriates who have to work in the culturally diversified workforce and country have to develop this special skill to be better adjusted and more productive. The present study is an attempt to examine the effects of cultural intelligence on cross-cultural adjustment, psychological wellbeing, Intention to finish the assignment and expatriate job performance.

Perceived Expatriate Supporting Practices:

"POS represents the degree to which the organization is willing to compensate employees for their efforts, provide them with interesting work assignments, and provide adequate working conditions" as cited in (Erturk & Vurgun, 2015:37). "Employees who receive higher levels of support from the organization are more inclined to repay the organization. One essential way to reciprocate the organization's favorable treatment is through continued participation" as cited in (Erturk & Vurgun, 2015:37). The importance of the organizational support is essential for the employee well-being and the employees if they perceive that organization supports them in all facets of their work and family they will to be more productive and more committed to the organization. The support of the organization becomes more relevant in the instance of the expatriates because the expatriates are working away from the parent organization in culturally diverse settings. "Expatriate supporting practices typically include a series of human resource supporting practices in international assignments,

we recognize those supporting practices as a bundle, as suggested by prior research in the human resource management literature" as cited in (Wua & Ang, 2011: 2684). Therefore, this study also focuses on the expatriate supporting practices as perceived by the employees. The present study is an attempt to examine the effects of Perceived organizational supporting practices on cross-cultural adjustment, psychological wellbeing, Intention to finish the assignment and expatriate job performance.

Family Support:

"Expatriate assignments often involve either uprooting families to a new country or causing the expatriates to live away from their families either of which puts a strain on both expatriates and their families" (Hechnova, Beehr, & Christiansen, 2003). "Expatriate adjustment has been strongly related to non-work factors such as psychological orientations, attitudes towards international living and family-related problems" (Osman-Gani & Rockstuhl, 2009:279). The expatriate cross-cultural adjustment largely depends on the family support and the social support in the host country. The present study is an attempt to examine the effects of Perceived family support on cross-cultural adjustment. Based on the literature review the following model is developed and the objective framed

Objectives of the Study

To investigate the determinants of the work adjustment of the Indian IT expatriates in the United States of America.

Hypothesis:

Based on the Objective the following hypothesis was developed.

	Hypothesis
H_0 1 a:	There is no significant relationship between emotional intelligence and expatriate cross-cultural work adjustment.
H_0 1 b:	There is no significant relationship between cultural intelligence and expatriate cross-cultural work adjustment.
H_0 1 c:	There is no significant relationship between perceived organizational support and expatriate cross-cultural work adjustment.
H_0 1 d:	There is no significant relationship between perceived family support and Intention to cross-cultural work adjustment.

Methodology:

This study adopts positivist deductive approach it, starts with clear variables which are derived from theory and based on these variables, the testable hypothesis was framed and tested. In the present study, Indian IT expatriates assigned to the International assignments to the United States of America from the sample unit. This research involves the use of primary data and secondary data. The data pertaining to the study was collected from the Indian IT expatriates who are assigned to USA working in the four major IT cluster of USA i.e. California, Washington, New York, & Chicago. These four states were selected as they were considered the largest IT clusters by the U.S. Cluster Mapping Project. A total 1200 questionnaires were distributed among the four IT clusters. A total 634 questionnaires were received indicating a response rate of 52 % which is considered a good response rate due to the nature of the study. Out of the 634 questionnaires, received 111 questionnaires were discarded due to missing data. 523 questionnaires were used for the final study.

Measures:

Emotional intelligence was measured with 16 item scale developed by Wong, C. S., & Law, K. S. (2002). In the current sample, the Cronbach alpha for the instrument was 0.969. Cultural intelligence was measured by 20 item Cultural Intelligence Scale developed by Ang et al. (2007). In the current sample, the Cronbach alpha for the instrument was 0. 977.Perceived organizational support was measured with 12 items scale developed by (Kraimer & Wayne, 2004). In the current sample, the Cronbach alpha for the instrument was 0. 968.The spousal social support was measured with 8 items scale developed by (Vinokur and van Ryn, 1993). In the current sample, the Cronbach alpha for the instrument was 0. 933.Cross-cultural work adjustment was measured by 10 item work adjustment scale developed by Yu-Ping Chen which was modified and adopted by Black and Stephens, 1989 and Thomas & Lazarova, 2006. In the current sample, the Cronbach alpha for the instrument was 0.934 for work adjustment and 0.919 for

general adjustment

Results:

Multiple regression models for work adjustment of the Indian IT expatriates was developed with various factors like emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, perceived organizational support, perceived family support as predictors of work adjustment.

Model Summary:

Model Summary				
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.630[a]	.396	.392	.4314
a. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Family Support, Perceived Organisational Support, Cultural Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence				

Interpretations:

R is the correlation, its value is 0.630 and R-square is the degree of determination, its value is 0.396. The degree of determination shows the extent to which emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, perceived organizational support, perceived family support influence work adjustment. Here the work adjustment is determined to an extent of 39% by emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, perceived organizational support, and perceived family support

Anova Table:

ANOVA[a]						
Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	63.286	4	15.821	85.005	.000[b]
	Residual	96.411	518	.186		
	Total	159.697	522			
a. Dependent Variable: Work Adjustment						
b. Predictors: (Constant), Perceived Family Support, Perceived Organisational Support, Cultural Intelligence, Emotional Intelligence						

ANOVA table shows that the significant value is less than 0.01, which means the dependent variable that is work adjustment is significantly predicted by the independent variables namely emotional intelligence, cultural intelligence, perceived organizational support, perceived family support at 99% confidence level

Coefficients						
Model B		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		Std. Error	Beta			
1	(Constant)	1.811	.124		14.570	.000
	Emotional Intelligence	.189	.027	.276	6.920	.000
	Cultural Intelligence	.158	.025	.244	6.270	.000
	Perceived Organisational Support	.178	.026	.284	6.882	.000
	Perceived Family Support	-.013	.021	-.023	-.650	.516
a. Dependent Variable: Work Adjustment						

Work Adjustment =
1.811 + 0.189 (Emotional Intelligence)
+ 0.158 (Cultural Intelligence)
+ 0.178(Perceived organisational support) -.013(Perceived family support)

Among the above four factors perceived organizational support have the highest impact on the work adjustment of the Indian IT expatriates in the United States of America. Emotional intelligence is also having significant impacting the work adjustment of the IT expatriates in the United States of America followed by cultural intelligence.

According to the model, perceived family support is not having a significant impact on the work adjustment of the Indian IT expatriates in the United States of America. According to the model hypothesis [$H_0 1$ a] is rejected and it shows that there is a significant relationship between emotional intelligence, and expatriate cross-cultural work adjustment. Hypothesis [$H_0 1$ b] is rejected and which shows that there is a significant relationship between cultural intelligence and expatriate cross-cultural work adjustment. Hypothesis [$H_0 1$ c] is also rejected and shows that there is a significant relationship between perceived organizational support and expatriate cross-cultural work adjustment. This model accepts hypothesis [$H_0 1$ d] and shows that there is no significant relationship between perceived family support and cross-cultural work adjustment.

Conclusion:

From the result, we can conclude that for work adjustment in cross-cultural settings, cultural intelligence is of primary importance for establishing cross-cultural work adjustment. Emotional intelligence is of similar importance. Perceived organizational support has importance. Family support, on the other hand, has little relevance because it is of low importance. Consequently, managerial activities to improve work adjustment should focus on cultural intelligence and emotional intelligence and the organizations should focus on providing adequate support to the expatriate.

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