

The Role of Family Environment and Job Between People

Armin Mahmoudi¹·Abdolkalegh Golami²

¹Department of Studies in Education, Yasouj branch, Islamic Azad University, Yasouj, Iran. Email: agm1391@gmail.com

²Department of Management, Yasouj branch, Islamic Azad University, Yasouj, Iran.

Abstract: This Survey is about meta-analytic review of 42 experimental studies was made on the correlates of expatriates' adjustment to general living conditions, interactions with host nationals and work assignments. Respondents to these studies estimated to be 5,210 were expatriates of different nationalities and assigned to various countries. The majority of them were male managers in their forties. Correlates of expatriate adjustment were classified into work, environment and family-related factors. Family-related variables, specifically spousal adjustment, were the strongest correlate of adjustment to general living conditions. Frequency of interaction with host-nationals was the strongest correlate of adjustment to interactional adjustment, whereas job characteristics such as role conflict, ambiguity and discretion were also strongly correlated with work adjustment.

[Armin Mahmoudi, Abdolkalegh Golami. **The Role of Family Environment and Job Between People.** *Researcher* 2016;8(3):89-92]. ISSN 1553-9865 (print); ISSN 2163-8950 (online). <http://www.sciencepub.net/researcher>. 13. doi:[10.7537/marsrsj080316013](https://doi.org/10.7537/marsrsj080316013).

Keywords: Adjustment, Job, Family Environment, Students, experimental studies, conditions

1. Introduction

The increase in globalization has seen a rise in the deployment of employees to overseas assignments. Called "expatriates," these employees play vital roles in starting and troubleshooting for foreign subsidiaries and foreign ventures. On average, organizations spend over two and a half times more money to send an employee on an expatriate assignment than they would if they hired locally (McGoldrick 2001). In addition to being costly, however, utilizing expatriates can also be risky for organizations. Research on repatriated managers has found that more than 30 percent leave the company within a year of returning to their nation of origin, limiting any further return on the organization's investment. Worse, some firms lose their repatriates to competitors that know how to use their skills better (Cook 2004). Expatriate failure can also cause damage to a company's important constituents — local national employees, host government officials, local suppliers, customers and communities (Black, Gregersen, and Mendenhall 2005). Given such costs, it is not surprising that research on expatriates has focused on the characteristics of successful expatriates in order to help organizations find the "right" person for an assignment. Although ensuring person-job fit is certainly a sound practice, it is not sufficient because an expatriate assignment is different from a change of assignment or even a job relocation. Expatriate assignments typically require greater responsibility and autonomy and are often marred by policy and procedural conflicts between the parent company and its foreign operations (Black and Gregersen 2007). Aside from meeting the challenge of new job

responsibilities, expatriates also typically need to adjust to a different climate, a new culture and various other barriers. Finally, expatriate assignments often involve either uprooting families for the move to the new country or making the expatriates live away from their families — both of which put a strain on the expatriates and their families. There is a need to look beyond individual influences and to consider the job, environment, and family-related factors that would affect expatriate success. For the past two decades, research has examined a variety of correlates for the performance problems and dissatisfaction associated with foreign assignments. Much of the research has focused on expatriate adjustment and has generally dealt with three specific facets: general, interaction, and work adjustment. General adjustment refers to the degree of comfort made possible by the general living conditions, such as climate, food, housing, cost of living, transportation, health facilities.

Interaction adjustment refers to the degree of socializing and interacting with host nationals. Finally, work adjustment pertains to specific job responsibilities, performance standards and expectations, and supervisory responsibilities (Black 2006; Black and Stephens 1999). The present study aimed at meta-analysis of the individual, job, environment, and family-related predictors of these three facets of expatriate adjustment.

2. Methods

A literature search was conducted using both published and unpublished studies. Three criteria were used in deciding which studies. First, only studies that utilized expatriates (defined as employees who were

sent by their companies on a cross-cultural assignment) were included. Second, in studies that utilized the same population (as determined by identical sample characteristics), effect sizes were cited only once. Third, only predictor-criterion relations cited in at least two studies were cited in the meta-analytic summary. The final sample consisted of 42 empirical studies, nine of which were unpublished dissertations or theses. Respondents to these studies were expatriates of different nationalities assigned to various countries. The majority of expatriates were male managers in their 40s. Counting only independent studies, the total number of respondents was estimated to be 5,210. Study characteristics, including sample size, type of predictor, reliability of scales used to measure predictors, type of criterion, reliability of scale used to measure criterion, and effect size of the predictor-criterion relationship (e.g. a correlation coefficient) were documented. Using formulae obtained from Hunter and Schmidt (2000), average correlation coefficients (r) weighted by sample size were computed for each predictor. The average correlation coefficient corrected for the reliabilities of the measures (rc) was likewise computed for each predictor-outcome relationship. Since not all studies reported the reliability of their scales, the average reliabilities across reported scales were used. Statistical significance was not reported because of the use of such effect size. Instead, credibility intervals for average corrected correlations (95 percent) were computed.

3.Results

The strongest predictor to adjustment to living conditions was spouse's general adjustment ($rc = .64$) and interaction adjustment ($rc = .42$). Frequency of interaction with host nationals was also moderately correlated with general adjustment ($rc = .24$). The longer the expatriate had been on the assignment, the more adjusted s/he was to general living conditions ($rc = .14$). Interestingly, work-related variables such as role conflict ($rc = -.20$) and role ambiguity ($rc = -.16$) were also related to general adjustment. An unexpected finding was that cross-cultural training was negatively, rather than positively, correlated to general adjustment ($rc = -.14$).

4.Interaction Adjustment

Frequency of interaction with host nationals was the strongest correlate of adjustment to interaction adjustment ($rc = .49$). Spouse's interaction ($rc = .36$) and general adjustment ($rc = .32$) were also moderately predictive of expatriate adjustment to interactions with host nationals. Expatriates who were in cultures vastly different from their own reported more difficulty in interacting with host nationals ($rc = -.23$). Work-

related factors such as role ambiguity ($rc = -.17$) and role discretion ($rc = .19$) were also moderately correlated with interactional adjustment.

5.Work Adjustment

Not surprisingly, job characteristics such as role ambiguity ($rc = -.41$), role discretion ($rc = .43$) and role conflict ($rc = -.46$) were the strongest correlates of expatriate work adjustment. Months on assignment ($rc = .15$) was slightly associated with work adjustment, as was outcome expectancy, i.e. individuals who believed their assignment would benefit their career ($rc = .14$). Although interaction with both host and co-nationals appeared beneficial to the expatriate, the correlation of work adjustment was higher when the interaction was with host nationals ($rc = .28$) than when the interaction was with co-nationals ($rc = .19$).

6.Discussion and Results

Among the three types of factors examined, family-related variables had the strongest correlation with expatriate adjustment, indicating that adjustment is not a unitary phenomenon (Black 2006).

Expatriate assignments, in fact, affect the family as a whole and geographic relocations cause tremendous disruption in the lives of all family members (Guzzo, Noonan, and Elron 2007). Spillover theory suggests that the relationship between affective responses in one's work and family life is reciprocal; hence, family difficulties can affect a worker's performance (Caligiuri, Hyland, Joshi, and Bross 2001). There are many reasons why spouses have an even more difficult time than expatriates do during an assignment: most spouses are not considered during selection of expatriates and as a consequence, do not receive any pre-departure training (Tung 2002). In addition, relocation for an expatriate assignment represents a career interruption for many spouses, leading to dissatisfaction, and can spill over and have a negative impact on the satisfaction of expatriates (Torbiorn, 2005). Finally, whereas expatriates have some form of social network at work, spouses are often isolated and have to cope with interactions with host nationals without any form of support or assistance (Harvey 2005). Aside from family-related factors, environmental factors also influenced expatriate general and interaction adjustment. Specifically, interactions with host nationals were positively correlated with all three facets of adjustment. Although work adjustment was also correlated to interactions with conational's, the results reveal better adjustment when expatriates interacted more with host nationals than when they interacted exclusively with their countrymen. Unfortunately, sojourners generally prefer to seek the company of

fellow nationals. Although this reality makes it important to facilitate interaction among students of the same culture, too much reliance on fellow nationals for interaction and support may work against expatriates' best interests. Culture novelty, or the extent to which an expatriate's home and host environment are vastly different from his/her own, was moderately correlated with interaction adjustment. Culture novelty is important because it determines the degree of comfort an individual feels in interacting in the new environment. If the differences are perceived to be large, expatriates are more likely to be uncertain about how to behave and interact in the host environment (Aycan 2008). Not surprisingly, work-related factors had the strongest relationship to work adjustment. Expatriate assignments typically require a lot more responsibility and autonomy and are often marred by policy and procedural conflicts that occur between the parent company and its foreign operations (Black and Gregersen 2007). Indeed, it makes sense that the amount of ambiguity, discretion and conflict will influence the ability of an expatriate to adjust to his/her new work assignment. An unexpected finding was that cross-cultural training was unrelated, even negatively correlated, to adjustment. This runs contrary to previous research that cross-cultural training is positively correlated to adjustment and performance (Black and Mendenhall 2000). A meta-analysis of 21 studies revealed that cross-cultural training accounts for 21 percent of the variance in adjustment and 34 percent of the variance in performance of expatriate managers (Deshpande and Wiswesvaran 1999). It is possible, however, that the lack of any significant effect of training may be due to great variation in how cross-cultural training is implemented in organizations. Research has revealed that most cross-cultural training for expatriates is generally superficial, incomplete or nonexistent (Naumann 2006).

References

1. Adler, P. S. (1975) "The transitional experience: An alternative view of culture shock," *Journal of Humanistic Psychology*, 15(4), 13-23.
2. Armes, K. and C. Ward (2006) "Cross-cultural transitions and sojourner adjustment in Singapore," *Journal of Social Psychology*, 129(2), 273-275.
3. Aycan, Z. (2008) "Acculturation of expatriate managers: A process model of adjustment and performance," in Z. Aycan (ed.) *New Approaches to Employee Management*, Vol 4: 1-40. Greenwich, CT: Jai Press, Inc.
4. Black, J.S. (2000) "The relationship of personal characteristics with the adjustment of Japanese expatriate managers," *Management International Review*, 30: 119-134.
5. Black, J.S. (2006) "Work role transitions: A study of American expatriates in Japan," *Journal Of International Business Studies*, (27) 9: 277-293.
6. Black, J.S. and H.B. Gregersen (2000) "Expectations, satisfaction and intention to leave of American expatriate managers in Japan," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 14 (4): 485-506.
7. Black, J.S. and H.B. Gregersen (1991) "The other half of the picture: Antecedents of spouse cross-cultural adjustment," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 22 (3): 461-477.
8. Black, J.S., H.B. Gregersen and M. Mendenhall (1999) "Toward a theoretical framework of repatriation adjustment," *Journal of International Business Studies*, 23 (4): 737-760.
9. Black, J.S. and G.K. Stephens (1999) "The influence of the spouse on American expatriate adjustment and intent to stay in Pacific Rim overseas assignments," *Journal of Management*, 15 (4): 529-544.
10. Caligiuri, P. (2000) "The big five personality characteristics as predictors of expatriate's desire to terminate the assignment and supervisor-rated performance," *Personnel Psychology*, 53 (1): 67-88.
11. Caligiuri, P. (2008) "Assessing expatriate success: Beyond just being there," in Z. Aycan (ed.) *New Approaches to Employee Management*, 4: 117-14, Greenwich, CT: Jai Press, Inc.
12. Caligiuri, P. (1995) *Individual characteristics related to effective performance in cross-cultural work settings*. Unpublished dissertation, Pennsylvania State University.
13. Caligiuri, P.M., M.A. Hyland, A. Joshi and A. Bross (2001) "Testing a theoretical model for examining the relationship of family adjustment and expatriate's work adjustment," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83 (4):598-614.
14. Cathcart, S.J. (1996) *Adjustment variables, factors and outcomes in the lives of US managers of Maquiladoras: An exploratory study*. Unpublished thesis, Texas A & M University, TX.
15. Cook, J. (2008) "Special Treatment," *Human Resource Executive*, November: 43-46.
16. Deller, J. (2008) "Expatriate selection: Possibilities and limitations of using personality scales," in Z. Aycan (ed.), *New Approaches to Employee Management*, 4: 93-116. Greenwich, CT: Jai Press, Inc.

17. Deshpande, S.P. and C. Viswesvaran (1999) "Is cross-cultural training of expatriate managers effective: A metaanalysis," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 16: 295-310.
18. Downes, M. (2008) *An organizational learning approach to expatriate cross-cultural adjustment, organizational commitment and satisfaction*. Unpublished dissertation. Florida International University, FL.
19. Dunbar, E. (1999) "Adjustment and satisfaction of expatriate U.S. personnel," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 16 (1): 1-16.
20. Feldman, D.C. and D.C. Thomas (1999) "Career management issues facing expatriates," *Journal of International Business Studies*, 23(2), 271-294.
21. Feldman, D.C. and H.B. Tompson (2006) "Expatriation, repatriation, and domestic geographical relocation: An empirical investigation of adjustment to new job assignments," *Journal of International Business Studies*, 24 (3): 507-529.
22. Fisher, C.D. and J.B. Shaw (2007) "Relocation attitudes and adjustment. A longitudinal study," *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 15 (3): 209-224.
23. Gail, R.C. (1996) *Repatriation adjustment training and its effect on turnover of repatriate executives: An empirical study*. Unpublished thesis. Nova Southeastern University.
24. Garonzik, R., J. Brockner, and P. Siegel (2000) "Identifying international assignees at risk for premature departure: The interactive effect of outcome favorability and procedural fairness," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 85 (1): 13-20.
25. Gregersen, H.B. and J.S. Black (1996) "Multiple commitments upon repatriation: The Japanese experience," *Journal of Management*, 22 (2): 209-229.
26. Gregersen, H.B. and J.S. Black (1999) "Antecedents to commitment to a parent company and a foreign operations," *Academy of Management Journal*, 35 (6): 65-90.
27. Gregersen, H.B. and J.S. Black (2000) "A multi-faceted approach to expatriate retention in international assignments," *Group and Organization Studies*, 15 (4): 461-485.
28. Guzzo, R.A., K.A. Noonan, and E. Elron (2007) "Expatriate managers and the psychological contract," *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 79 (4): 617-626.
29. Harris, M. and J. Schaubroeck (2006) "A meta-analysis of self-supervisor, self-peer and peer-supervisor ratings," *Personnel Psychology*, 41 (1): 43-62.
30. Harrison, J.K., M. Chadwick and M. Scales (1996) "The relationship between cross-cultural adjustment and the personality variables of self-efficacy and self-monitoring," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 20 (2): 167-188.
31. Harvey, M.G. (2005) "The executive family: An overlooked variable in international assignments," *Columbia Journal of World Business*, 20: 84-92.
32. Hawes, F. and D.J. Kealey (2002) "An empirical study of Canadian technical assistance. Adaptation and effectiveness in overseas assignment," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 5: 239-255.
33. Hunter, J.E. and F.L. Schmidt (2000) *Methods of meta-analysis. Correcting error and bias in research findings*. Beverly Hills, CA: Sage Publications.
34. Kealey, D.J. (1999) "A study of cross-cultural effectiveness," *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 13 (3): 387-428.
35. Li, L. (1995) *Antecedents and consequences of expatriate satisfaction. An empirical investigation of hotel managers in Pacific Asian countries*. Unpublished dissertation, Virginia Polytechnic Institute and State University, VA.

3/25/2016