



THE IMPACT OF PRE-DEPARTURE TRAINING ON THE EFFECTIVENESS OF EXPATRIATES

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify if pre departure training has significant effect on the effectiveness of expatriates working in the IT sector. There are various types of pre departure training and the importance of each type of training that the expatriates received and how it helped them adjust and cope in the new environment was studied. The aim was also to figure out the extent of importance that both the expatriates and their company give to pre departure training activities. The results are then analysed using SPSS (Correlation) and gave some very interesting and insightful conclusions.

Keywords: Pre-departure training, Expatriate, Expatriate success/failure, Cross culture training.

INTRODUCTION

In the global arena, the quality of administration is by all accounts considerably more critical than in local operation. The part of human relocation, international trade and expedient movements of capital amalgamation of monetary markets has made this world particularly globalized. All together to keep up and improve their worldwide intensity, the MNCs depend on finding the correct individuals who can adequately oversee and manage their abroad organizations. However, expatriate assignments are not always fruitful, and disappointment ranges from 16% to 40%. Working in a socially unique environment is always a challenge, so it is not surprising that the absence of cultural knowledge and language capacity, and in addition a trouble to conform to the nearby culture, are main considerations adding to expatriate failure. Thus, finding out about societies, getting to be distinctly mindful of social cultures, and having capability in cross cultural communications are an absolute necessity for expatriate management so they can conform to another social environment and do an effective overseas assignment. In this study we talk about the importance of pre departure training or cross cultural training for expatriates and its success.

Objectives of the study

The prime objective of the study is to find out the role of pre departure training in determining efficiency of expatriates particularly those working in IT companies based outside India. A vast majority of MNCs have recognised that the time when they could operate solely within one specific country or one geographic region has come to an end. Today extreme dynamics of business environment is forcing companies to send employees abroad. In order to remain competitive in the international arena, firms have found it crucial to employ expatriates in a number of international assignments, which are becoming indispensable to organisations due to a variety of functional and developmental reasons. However, how successful they are in this assumption that efficient pre departure training does really contribute to the success of an expatriate is not established quite as yet. In this research we attempt to find out how far this assumption is correct.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Brian J. Hurn (2007) in his conceptual paper entitled "Pre-departure training for international business managers" aims to examine the effective use of pre-departure training, the various types of such training available and the ensuing benefits to the company, the international managers themselves and their families. Findings suggest that there is still a relative lack of pre-departure training for international managers, although the benefits are now more widely accepted. Hence, the result and scope is that pre-departure training for international managers covering their destination country/region will assist them and their families to live and work more harmoniously and effectively in their new environment.

Leandra Celaya and Jonathan S. Swift (2006) in their paper entitled "Pre-departure cultural training: US managers in Mexico" aim to study the variety of differences encountered when interacting with people from other cultures can be daunting for foreign nationals operating in another country. This paper seeks to examine forms of cross-cultural training, and assess the relative effectiveness of each. The authors' findings showed that meetings with experienced international staff were the most common type of training. Behaviour modification methods and field experiences were the methods that were the greatest help to US managers in understanding Mexican culture. In conclusion, the paper shows how companies should look at cultural training not in terms of time-limited, task-specific, discrete chunks, but should seek to develop programmes that aim to educate the whole person.

Charles M. Vance and Yongsun Paik (2002) in their article entitled "One size fits all in expatriate pre-departure training?" This study found that workforces from Mexico, Indonesia and the USA differed significantly in their perceptions of both positive and negative behaviors affecting their work performance. Accordingly, the paper calls for a significant change in research and practice to incorporate the voice of the HCW to develop more valid and effective pre departure training for expatriate managers to enhance their performance in the host country to which they are assigned.

Chenyi Qin and Yehuda Baruch (2010) in their article entitled "The impact of cross-cultural training for expatriates in a Chinese firm" aim at exploring the significance of

cross-cultural training and career attitudes for expatriation career move in the context of China, whether cross-cultural training is perceived necessary, and the consequence of providing such cross-cultural training. Findings of the study states that expatriates adjusted well, and having a protean career attitude was a decisive factor. Research limitations include the limited sample size. Implications are presented for conducting cross-cultural training. Practical implications in real-world scenarios highlight the importance of developing cross-cultural training programs could add value to the firm and its people.

Hai-Ming Chen, Che-Cheng Chang (2016) in their article titled "Contingent Expatriate Training Strategies with Examples of Taiwan MNEs" talks about how expatriates play the critical part and are required to show performances. In this way, providing adequate amount and quality trainings to expatriates is basic for MNEs. With subjective approach, this paper proposes four expatriates preparing methodologies which comprise of pre-flight training and supportive training for various internationalization circumstances. They chose 4 presentative global organizations from 2014 Outward Investment Directory of Taiwan as cases to clarify four expatriate preparing methodologies with various internationalization circumstances. This paper stresses continuity of expatriate training, recommending that organizations ought to give pre-departure training to expatriate before their departure and offer strong training while they are working and living abroad. Strong training can expand expatriates fitness in working abroad and defeating challenges.

Christian Hånberg ,GabrielÖsterdahl (2009) in their article titled "Cross-Cultural Training of Expatriates: A case study of Ericsson" the study looks at the preparation and training of expatriates at Ericsson in connection to these speculations. In depth meetings with two Area Managers at Ericsson have been completed keeping in mind the end goal to set up how the organization's preparation program is organized. The pre departure training is extremely culture general, while the post-landing training is more particular for the host culture. The post-landing training is, in any case, not offered in all host nations. A proposal is made to additionally formalize the post-entry training and make the general training more culture-particular.

Laura Kangas (2012) in their article titled "Expatriation and cross cultural training" The aim of this paper was to discover how expatriate and culturally diverse preparing are actualized by and by. This proposal concentrated the difficulties expatriates confront amid and after their assignments. This study clarifies the reasons, difficulties, assignments and roles of expatriates and in addition how expatriates are trained. It likewise manages distinctive approaches and the contrast between global human resource management also, domestic human resource management. This examination demonstrated that organizations have not understood yet the significance of cross culture training.

Khulan Ganbat (2012) in his study titled "Positive Relationship of Cross Cultural Training to Expatriate Adjustment" analysed six reviews which inspected positive relationship of cross culture training to expatriates modification in Asia, particularly

in China and one case in Morocco Purpose of this review paper is to demonstrate positive relationship of the CCT to expatriates success, especially emphasize importance of it to expatriates who are assigned to new emerging market like China. Researcher analyzed differences and similarities and summarized main points of the six studies. The research was done through quantitative survey research approach with collected data through internet questionnaire (email).

Pingle and Sood (2011) in their article titled "An Empirical Study of Expatriate Expectations in IT/ITES Sector from Human Resource Management Perspective" aim to explore the challenges and expectations of the expatriates in terms of policies, procedures and framework. The data used for the research was primary data in collected through questionnaires focusing on all the policies and procedures followed in IT/ITES sector related to IHRM. The statistical tools used include ANOVA. It was concluded that very few selection tests were taken to select expatriates. According to the respondents, employees find that job related knowledge; past performance and adaptability to the host country's culture are the most important factors to be considered during selection of the expatriate for any international assignment.

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RESEARCH DESIGN

Research Question

How powerful is the effect of pre departure training on expatriates in IT companies (PCNs, HCNs and/or TCNs)

Research Methodology

- Types of data: Primary data collection through questionnaires and Secondary data collection through journals and articles
- Population: Expatriates from IT companies, known to the authors of this research paper
- Sampling Method: Non-probability convenience sampling
- Sample size: 24 employees
- No of responses selected: 22

DATA ANALYSIS

Statistics

Trainin g helped	Length of trainin g	Trainin g	Years	Job positio n		
24	24	24	24	24	Valid	N
0	0	0	0	0	Missin g	
2.1667	.5000	.3750	1.8750	.708	Mean	
1.2740 4	1.1033 5	.49454	1.2619 0	.46431	Std. Deviation	

Cul training	Meeting repats	Longer training	Adjustment problems		
24	24	24	24	Valid	N
0	0	0	0	Missing	
2.5000	2.2917	1.7917	1.9583	Mean	
1.38313	1.26763	1.06237	1.19707	Std. Deviation	

The Statistics Table shows the various variables used throughout this procedure along with their respective means and standard deviations. The means and standard deviations were calculated to compare them from one variable to another.

Frequency Table

Job position					
Cumulative Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Frequency		
29.2	29.2	29.2	7	.00	Valid
100.0	70.8	70.8	17	1.00	
	100.0	100.0	24	Total	

Interpretation: This table shows that the more respondents had Non-Manual positions as opposed to the respondents with managerial positions. From this, we can interpret that more expatriates are sent to host countries holding a non managerial position.

Years				
Cumulative Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Frequency	

25.0	25.0	25.0	6	.00	Valid
33.3	8.3	8.3	2	1.00	
54.2	20.8	20.8	5	2.00	
100.0	45.8	45.8	11	3.00	
	100.0	100.0	24	Total	

Interpretation: This table shows that over 45 percent of the respondents are in the ages of 50 or above. From this we can conclude that expatriates that are above the ages of 50 and above are usually sent as expatriates.

Training					
Cumulative Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Frequency		
62.5	62.5	62.5	15	.00	Valid
100.0	37.5	37.5	9	1.00	
	100.0	100.0	24	Total	

Interpretation: This table shows that over 62 percent of respondents do not prefer expatriate training to be mandatory.

Length of training					
Cumulative Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Frequency		
79.2	79.2	79.2	19	.00	Valid
83.3	4.2	4.2	1	1.00	
91.7	8.3	8.3	2	2.00	
95.8	4.2	4.2	1	3.00	
100.0	4.2	4.2	1	4.00	
	100.0	100.0	24	Total	

Interpretation: This table shows that over 79 percent of the respondents had less than 1 month of pre-departure training

Training helped					
Cumulative Percent	Valid Percent	Percent	Frequency		
8.3	8.3	8.3	2	.00	Valid
33.3	25.0	25.0	6	1.00	
62.5	29.2	29.2	7	2.00	
79.2	16.7	16.7	4	3.00	
100.0	20.8	20.8	5	4.00	
	100.0	100.0	24	Total	

Interpretation: This table shows that about 30 percent of the respondents are neutral to the statement about whether the training helped them.

<i>Adjustment problems</i>					
<i>Cumulative Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Frequency</i>		
8.3	8.3	8.3	2	.00	<i>Valid</i>
37.5	29.2	29.2	7	1.00	
75.0	37.5	37.5	9	2.00	
83.3	8.3	8.3	2	3.00	
100.0	16.7	16.7	4	4.00	
	100.0	100.0	24	<i>Total</i>	

Interpretation: This table shows that 37 percent of respondents are neutral about whether they had any problems adjusting to the cultural and corporate setting of the host country.

<i>Longer training</i>					
<i>Cumulative Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Frequency</i>		
12.5	12.5	12.5	3	.00	<i>Valid</i>
33.3	20.8	20.8	5	1.00	
83.3	50.0	50.0	12	2.00	
91.7	8.3	8.3	2	3.00	
100.0	8.3	8.3	2	4.00	
	100.0	100.0	24	<i>Total</i>	

Interpretation: This table shows that 50 percent are neutral about whether they need longer pre-departure training.

<i>Meeting Repatriates</i>					
<i>Cumulative Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Frequency</i>		
8.3	8.3	8.3	2	.00	<i>Valid</i>
25.0	16.7	16.7	4	1.00	
62.5	37.5	37.5	9	2.00	
75.0	12.5	12.5	3	3.00	
100.0	25.0	25.0	6	4.00	
	100.0	100.0	24	<i>Total</i>	

Interpretation: This table shows that about 37 percent of the respondents are neutral about whether meeting repatriates would help them in their performance.

<i>Cultural training</i>					
<i>Cumulative Percent</i>	<i>Valid Percent</i>	<i>Percent</i>	<i>Frequency</i>		
4.2	4.2	4.2	1	.00	<i>Valid</i>
29.2	25.0	25.0	6	1.00	

58.3	29.2	29.2	7	2.00	
100.0	41.7	41.7	10	4.00	
	100.0	100.0	24	<i>Total</i>	

Interpretation: This table shows that about 41 percent of the respondents strongly agree to whether cultural awareness training would benefit the expatriates in their training

<i>Correlation Test</i>							
<i>I would recommend meeting and cultural awareness training to expatriates.</i>	<i>Meetings with repatriates as a part of training would help us to better understand the host country</i>	<i>I feel like the training I received should have been longer for improvement of performance</i>	<i>I would have had trouble adjusting to the new environment if not for the training I received from the host country</i>	<i>The training helped me adapt faster to the new environment the cultural training was very practical setting of the host country</i>	<i>Types of Pre-departure Training</i>	<i>Person</i>	<i>Types of Pre-departure</i>
.152	.373	.117	.056	.046	1	<i>Correlation</i>	<i>ure</i>

.498	.087	.603	.803	.840		Sig. (2-tailed)	Training
22	22	22	22	22	22	N	
.438*	.364	.372	.854*	1	.046	Pearson Correlation	The training helped me adapt faster to the cultural and practical settings of the host country
.042	.096	.089	.000		.840	Sig. (2-tailed)	
22	22	22	22	22	22	N	
.543*	.517*	.428*	1	.854**	.056	Pearson Correlation	I would have had trouble adjusting to
.009	.014	.047		.000	.803	Sig. (2-tailed)	

22	22	22	22	22	22	N	the new environment if not for the training I received from the company
.653*	.390	1	.428*	.372	.117	Pearson Correlation	I feel like the training I received should have been longer for improved performance
.001	.072		.047	.089	.603	Sig. (2-tailed)	
22	22	22	22	22	22	N	
.816*	1	.390	.517*	.364	.373	Pearson Correlation	Meetings with repatriates

.000		.072	.014	.096	.087	Sig. (2-tailed)	as a part of training would help us to better understand the conditions of the host country
22	22	22	22	22	22	N	
1	.816**	.653*	.543*	.438*	.152	Pearson Correlation	I would recommend companies to offer cultural awareness training to expatriates.
	.000	.001	.009	.042	.498	Sig. (2-tailed)	
22	22	22	22	22	22	N	
**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).							
*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).							

STATISTICAL INFERENCE

Based on the SPSS analysis conducted for this research, it can be concluded that the impact of pre departure training and the effectiveness of expatriate performance are not significantly correlated. The variables between the types and length of

training and the different statements the respondents had to answer are not correlated. For example, the types of pre departure training does not correlate with the statement stating that the training helped expatriates adapt to the cultural and social changes. Therefore we can conclude that pre departure training does not really help expatriates adapt to the different cultural changes. While many variables did not significantly correlate with each other, some variables have. The variable with the statement stating that the training helped the respondents adapt faster to the cultural and practical settings of the host country and the statement stating that the respondents would have had trouble adjusting to the new environment if not for the training I received from the company are significantly correlated. Based on this, we can infer that if not for the training that some of the respondents received, they would have trouble adapting to the new environment of the host country. This can be mainly due to the fact that most of the respondents did not receive any form of pre departure training. However most of the respondents were satisfied with their expatriation program.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

There are two main reasons why there was not a significant correlation between the impact of pre departure training and the effectiveness or efficiency of the expatriates: First is that majority of the expatriates did not receive any training at all prior to their departure at all nor was it mandatory. The second reason was that the expatriates did not really feel the need to get prior training since their foreign assignments were very short lasting up to less than a month or 1 month at maximum. If this is not the case, on a longer basis, expatriates will inevitably face a variety of unpredictable problems for which pre departure training would definitely come to be of great help. The companies may not give much attention to pre departure training with a short term business perspective in mind but the motives for sending their employees overseas must go beyond the business motives. Besides this, a large majority of expatriates agree that companies should come up with mandatory pre departure training programs to make the process of expatriation more easier and effective.

Existing Skills + Proper Training = Successful Expatriates

CONCLUSION

Some of the most successful MNCs of the world have only been able to grow through sustained international growth which inevitably leads to the process and concept of expatriation. While expatriation was seen to cover a wide array of benefits ,how successful they were in the process of expatriation remained crucial .This is because expatriate failure can have significantly large and lasting impact both on the operations of the company and also on the relations between the different subsidiaries and the head quarters. To avoid this predicament companies should take almost care in training and honing the employees for every obstacle they might face in other countries .Pre departure training plays a crucial role in preparing the employees in this process. Though many companies currently feel that just providing practical assistance to expatriates during their course of stay in foreign country is sufficient for successful expatriation ,they overlook the potential benefits that pre departure training can bring to the expatriates .It is high time that the companies create more detailed extensive and

mandatory pre departure training programs

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