

Factors contributing to Expatriates' Adjustment in International Assignments and their impact on Job Performance: An Empirical Study of Sri Lankan Expatriates' Adjustment

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Certification

I hereby recommended the dissertation prepared under my supervision by P. Jayasekara (GS/MC/1885/2001) entitled **“Factors contributing to Expatriates’ Adjustment in International Assignments and their impact on Job Performance: An Empirical Study of Sri Lankan Expatriates’ Adjustment”** be accepted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Management.



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ABSTRACT

The world has become more competitive than ever. Thus explosive growth in globalization has led to a growing number of individuals with international assignments. This study was conducted to investigate the contribution of age, working experience, length of time spent overseas, managerial competence, selection practices, pre-departure training, role expectations, role ambiguity and cultural sensitivity (independent variables), to determine Sri Lankan Expatriates' adjustment in international assignments. At the same time this research was intended to measure the degree to which international adjustment of the Sri Lankan Expatriates influenced on their job performance. To test the self-developed research model, fifteen organizations which are registered in the Ceylon Chamber of Commerce and the National Chamber of Commerce for the year 2005 have been used. Those were the organizations doing business internationally by establishing their own branches in India, Bangladesh, United Kingdom, Australia, Maldives, Russia, Canada, China and German. Altogether 94 expatriates have been included for the study irrespective of their job positions. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data over a period of one month. Questions comprised of both positive and negative statements and scores were assigned according to the five point Lickert Scale. For analyzing data, mean, standard deviation, correlation, simple regression and multiple regression under univariate, bivariate and multivariate analyses were used. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used for the analysis. Basically the study was conducted in two stages. First it was measured that how perceived factors link with Sri Lankan Expatriates international adjustment and at the second stage how those adjustment factors link with job performance of the Sri Lankan expatriates. Except role ambiguity, the rest of the factors positively link with international adjustment. Among them, lengths of time spent overseas, pre-departure training, and cultural-sensitivity insignificantly correlated. The degree of the influence of international adjustment towards determining job performance of the Sri Lankan expatriates is significantly positive. This research findings contribute to reduce the prevailing theoretical and empirical knowledge gap in the field of International Human Resource Management in the Sri Lankan context.

Table of Contents

Title page	i
Recommendation of the Supervisor	ii
Acknowledgement	iii
Abstract	iv
Table of Contents	v
List of Tables	xii
List of Figures	xiv

Chapter One- Introduction

1.1 Introduction	01
1.2 Background of the study	01
1.3 Problem statement of the study	04
1.4 The research questions of the study	05
1.5 Objectives of the study	06
1.6 Significance of the study	07
1.7 Methodology of the study	09
1.8 Hypotheses of the study	10
1.9 Limitations of the study	11
1.10 Organization of the chapters	12

Chapter Two- Literature Review

2.1 Introduction	13
2.2 Introduction to international human resource management	13
2.2.1 Characteristics of international human resource management	17
2.2.2 Who is an expatriate?	22
2.2.3 Reasons for using expatriates in international assignments	22
2.3 Expatriates adjustment factors in international assignment	24
2.4 Evaluation of expatriates' job performance	38

2.5 Summary	45
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Chapter Three- Conceptual Framework and Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction	46
3.2 Conceptual framework	46
3.3 Relationship between independent and dependent variables of the research study	47
3.3.1 Relationship between age and international adjustment of expatriates	47
3.3.2 Relationship between work experience and international adjustment of expatriates	48
3.3.3 Relationship between length of time spent overseas and international adjustment of expatriates	49
3.3.4 Relationship between managerial competence and international adjustment of expatriates	50
3.3.5 Relationship between selection practices and international adjustment of Expatriates	51
3.3.6 Relationship between pre-departure and international adjustment of expatriates	52
3.3.7 Relationship between role expectation and international adjustment of expatriates	53
3.3.8 Relationship between role ambiguity and international adjustment of expatriates	54
3.3.9 Relationship between cultural-sensitivity and international adjustment of expatriates	55
3.4 Ceptualization and Operationalization of the variables	57
3.4.1 Age	57
3.4.2 Work experience	57
3.4.3 Length of time spent overseas	58
3.4.4 Managerial competence	58
3.4.5 Selection practices	59
3.4.6 Pre-departure training	60
3.4.7 Role expectation	61

3.4.8 Role ambiguity	62
3.4.9 Cultural-sensitivity	65
3.4.10 Expatriate adjustment	67
3.4.11 Job performance	68
3.5 Hypotheses of the study	69
3.6 Summary	71

Chapter Four- Methodology

4.1 Introduction	72
4.2 Research design	72
4.2.1 Type of the study	72
4.2.2 Nature of the study	73
4.2.3 Study setting	73
4.2.4 Time horizon of the study	74
4.2.5 Unit of analysis	74
4.3 Research method	74
4.3.1 Methodological choice	74
4.3.2 Population and sample	75
4.3.3 Data collection method	76
4.3.4 Validity and reliability of the questionnaire	79
4.4 Level of Measurement of the variables	80
4.4.1 Measuring age of the expatriates	81
4.4.2 Measuring work experience	82
4.4.3 Measuring length of time spent overseas	82
4.4.4 Measuring managerial competence	82
4.4.5 Measuring expatriate selection practices	83
4.4.6 Measuring pre-departure training	85
4.4.7 Measuring role expectations	87
4.4.8 Measuring role ambiguity	88
4.4.9 Measuring cultural-sensitivity	89
4.4.10 Measuring expatriate adjustment	90
4.4.11 Measuring job performance	91

4.5 Procedure for data analysis	92
4.5.1 Univariate analysis	93
4.5.2 Bivariate analysis	94
4.5.2.1 Correlation analysis	95
4.5.2.2 Simple regression analysis	96
4.5.2.3 Multiple regression analysis	97
4.6 Hypothetical testing	99
4.6.1 Hypothetical testing using correlation analysis	99
4.6.2 Hypothetical testing using regression analysis	102
4.7 Summary	104

Chapter Five- Data Presentation and Analysis

5.1 Introduction	105
5.2 Analysis of reliability and validity of the questionnaire	107
5.3 University analysis	107
5.3.1 Frequency distribution analysis of respondents by their personal characteristics	107
5.3.1.1 Job position of the respondents	107
5.3.1.2 Age of the respondents	108
5.3.1.3 Gender distribution of the respondents	109
5.3.1.4 Level of education	110
5.3.1.5 Duration of the assignment	111
5.3.2 Frequency distribution analysis of independent and dependent variables	112
5.3.2.1 Frequency distribution for age of the Sri Lankan expatriates	112
5.3.2.2 Frequency distribution for work experience of the Sri Lankan expatriates	113
5.3.2.3 Frequency distribution for length of time spent overseas by the Sri Lankan expatriates	114
5.3.2.4 Frequency distribution of managerial competence of the Sri Lankan expatriates	114
5.3.2.5 Frequency distribution of selection practices	116
5.3.2.6 Frequency distribution of pre-departure training	118
5.3.2.7 Frequency distribution of role expectation	119

5.3.2.8 Frequency distribution of role ambiguity	121
5.3.2.9 Frequency distribution of cultural- sensitivity	122
5.3.2.10 Frequency distribution of expatriate adjustment	124
5.3.2.11 Frequency distribution of job performance	126
5.4 Bivariate analysis	127
5.4.1 Correlation analysis	127
5.4.1.1 Relationship between age and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	128
5.4.1.2 Relationship between working experience and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	129
5.4.1.3 Relationship between length of time spent overseas and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	131
5.4.1.4 Relationship between managerial competence and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	132
5.4.1.5 Relationship between selection practices and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	134
5.4.1.6 Relationship between pre-departure training and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	135
5.4.1.7 Relationship between role expectations and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	136
5.4.1.8 Relationship between role ambiguity and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	138
5.4.1.9 Relationship between cultural-sensitivity and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	139
5.4.1.10 Relationship between expatriate adjustment and job performance of the Sri Lankan expatriates	140
5.4.1.11 Summary of correlation analysis	144
5.4.2 Multicollinearity of the variables	145
5.4.3 Multivariate analysis	147
5.4.3.1 Combined effect of all the independent variables on international adjustment of the Sri Lanka expatriates	147
5.4.3.2 Combined effect of international adjustment factors on job performance of the Sri Lanka expatriates	150

5.5 Summary	152
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Chapter Six- Discussion, Conclusion and Recommendation

6.1 Introduction	153
6.2 Discussion of the findings	153
6.2.1 Background information of the respondents	153
6.2.2 Frequency distribution of the independent variables	154
6.2.3 Findings on hypotheses testing	155
6.2.3.1 Relationship between age and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	155
6.2.3.2 Relationship between working experience and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	156
6.2.3.3 Relationship between length of time spent overseas and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	157
6.2.3.4 Relationship between managerial competence and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	157
6.2.3.5 Relationship between selection practices and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	158
6.2.3.6 Relationship between pre-departure training and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	159
6.2.3.7 Relationship between role expectations and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	160
6.2.3.8 Relationship between role ambiguity and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	161
6.2.3.9 Relationship between cultural-sensitivity and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	161
6.2.3.10 Relationship between international adjustment and job performance of the Sri Lankan expatriates	162
6.2.3.11 Combine effect of all the independent variables on international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	162
6.2.3.12 Combine effect of all the adjustment factors (independent variables)	

on job performance (dependent variable) of the Sri Lankan expatriates	163
6.2.3.13 Summary of the testing hypotheses	165
6.3 Implications of the study	167
6.4 Recommendations for future studies	169
6.5 Conclusion	169

List of Tables

2.1 A comparison of IHRM with DHRM	19
2.2 Predicting expatriate adjustment factors	28
2.3 Categories of attribution of expatriates success	30
4.1 Summary of the questionnaire	78
4.2 Levels of measurement of the variables	81
4.3 Measurement of managerial competence	82
4.4 Measurement of selection practices	84
4.5 Measurement of pre-departure training	86
4.6 Measurement of role expectations	87
4.7 Measurement of role ambiguity	89
Measurement of expatriate adjustment	91
4.9 Measurement of expatriate job performance	92
5.1 Job position of the respondents	107
5.2 Age distribution of the respondents	108
5.3 Gender distribution of the respondents	109
5.4 Education level of the respondents	110
5.5 Duration of the assignment	111
5.6 Transformation of the level of work experience of the Sri Lankan expatriates	113
5.7 Transformation of the length of time spent overseas of The Sri Lankan expatriates	114
5.8 Relationship between age and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	128
5.9 Relationship between working experience and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	129
5.10 Relationship between length of time spent overseas and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	131
5.11 Relationship between managerial competence and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	132
5.12 Relationship between selection practices and international	

adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	134
5.13 Relationship between pre-departure training and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	135
5.14 Relationship between role expectation and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	136
5.15 Relationship between role ambiguity and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	138
5.16 Relationship between cultural-sensitivity and international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	139
5.17 Relationship between international adjustment and job performance of the Sri Lankan expatriates	140
5.18 Relationship between job performance and the dimensions of the Sri Lankan expatriates' adjustment	142
5.19 Summary of the hypotheses testing	144
5.20 Summary of multiple regression analysis of perceived adjustment factors with international adjustment	147
5.21 Summary of the multivariate analysis along the dimensions of expatriate's adjustment	149
5.22 Summary of multiple regression analysis of calculated international factors with job performance of the Sri Lankan expatriates	150
6.1 Summary of the frequency distribution of the variables	154
6.2 Summary of the relationship between perceived factors, adjustment and job performance	164
6.3 Summary of testing hypotheses	165

List of Figures

2.1 Impotent concepts in international human resource management	16
2.2 Expatriate adjustment-(model -a)	26
2.3 Expatriate adjustment-(model -b)	29
2.4 A theoretical model fro explaining international adjustment of expatriates	35
5.1 Job position of the respondents	108
5.2 Age distribution of the respondents	109
5.3 Education level of the respondents	111
5.4 Duration of the assignment	112
5.5 Continuum showing the degree of managerial competence of the Sri Lankan expatriates	115
5.6 Continuum showing the degree of selection practices of the Sri Lankan expatriates	116
5.7 Continuum showing the degree of pre-departure training of the Sri Lankan expatriates	118
5.8 Continuum showing the degree of role expectations of the Sri Lankan expatriates	120
5.9 Continuum showing the degree of role ambiguity of the Sri Lankan expatriates	121
5.10 Continuum showing the degree of cultural-sensitivity of the Sri Lankan expatriates	123
5.11 Continuum showing the degree of international adjustment of the Sri Lankan expatriates	124
5.12 Continuum showing the degree of job performance of the Sri Lankan expatriates	126

Chapter One

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This chapter is devoted to present the background of the study, the problem statement, the research questions, objectives of the study, significance of the study, methodology of the study, hypotheses of the study and the organization of the study.

1.2 Background of the Study

The world has become more competitive than ever. Therefore global competition has been the most influential trend in economics during the last decades (Adler, 2002). Thus explosive growth in globalization has led to a growing number of individuals with international assignments, international joint ventures, and strategic alliances and this has resulted in an increasing number of people working part of their working career abroad (Gregersen, Morrison, & Black, 1998). To compete successfully in a global market, more firms are focusing on the role of human resource as a critical path of their core competence and a source of competitive advantages (Dowling & Shuler, 2000). As a consequence, the concept of International Human Resource Management has become increasingly important in Business Management (Andrea, 2004).

Meanwhile coordination or/and integration between business units is important in the international business scenario. In the international business activities, each unit/branch/subsidiary needs to carry out its own task, own functional objectives, and to confront its own environmental pressures (Dowling & Shuler, 1990; Andrea, 2004;