

THE ANALYSIS OF SUCCESS FACTORS IN TERMS OF ADAPTATION OF EXPATRIATES TO WORK IN INTERNATIONAL ORGANIZATIONS

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Abstract: Increasing international competition means that companies are seeking to take advantage of the market's drive to internationalize their business in search of market advantages. The result is an increase in the share of expatriates, who often undergo problems with adaptation, cultural shock all having a negative impact on work efficiency and, decreasing job satisfaction. On the other hand, those who adapt quickly can increase the potential of corporations. The paper presents a part of research results related to the analysis of factors determining the success of adaptation to work in international organizations.

Key words: expatriates, management, human resources, international organizations

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Introduction

Companies use various techniques of human management for conducting expatriates. These techniques include selection of expatriates, training for international task, managing their performance during work and managing the process of repatriation after assigning for international task. Selection and successful management of repatriates is inevitable for realization of social strategy as well as it contributes to success of individuals abroad (Dowling et al., 2008; Kovacs and Kot, 2016; Lorenz et al., 2018). However, techniques of global companies differ in extend, how they are used and designed. Every company has its own proprietary strategy. Policies of expatriates selection and training, criteria of performance assessment, or impact of international experience on the career of an expatriate should be modified according to the environment in which a multinational company is active and its strategic goal (Dragolea et al., 2017). The main problem for global companies is not to set the best international policies, but to find the most appropriate connection between external environment of the company, its global strategy and human resources policy (Scullion and Collings, 2006; Gherghina and Vintilă, 2016; Blaskova et al., 2017). Since it is done in a foreign country with different culture from that known to the expatriate, basic

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criterion for its successful implementation is understanding and modification to other cultures and the ability to develop global thinking (Ferencová, 2013; Hrazdilová et al., 2014; Lajčiak, 2017; Oláh et al., 2017a; Androniceanu, 2017a). As soon as an employee has been selected for international task, next important step in the effort to ensure efficiency and success of an expatriate is intercultural education. Many previous studies have shown that educational program is useful by preparation of employees for international task. Expatriates can face various problems in a foreign cultural environment. Main goal of the education is to improve overall efficiency of the employee and ability to quickly adapt and get oriented in a foreign country. Before leaving abroad, effective education consists of several features, such as cultural awareness, pre-stay in destination country and learning the language, which cannot be separated from the preparation, especially in such case when English is not official language of the host country. Qualified management and educational programs increase the awareness about cultural values develop social and interpersonal skills, skills for effective communication, negotiation manners and make overcoming of cultural shock easier (Dowling et al., 2008; Pacana and Ulewicz, 2017; Grabara 2017; Woźny et al., 2017; Androniceanu, 2017b). Research workers in the field of expatriate education agree that successful educational expatriates program increases competitive advantage and success of company on foreign market. It is generally accepted that education about cultures before sending and expatriate to foreign country, helps them to adapt to the life and work in new environment. Although education before leaving is important, other authors (Bednářová et al., 2012; Dubravská, 2013; Stahl and Björkman, 2006; Vance and Paik, 2006) emphasis the need of education also during the stay abroad. Intercultural education is an inevitable instrument by socialization of an expatriate and by successful execution of his activities. Managers and employees, who have the ability to adapt quickly and have intercultural competences, dispose with competitive advantage. Attention should be paid to the extremely high levels of migration and the debate about coexistence in the host country (Oláh et al., 2017b).

Materials and Methods

As a part of expatriate`s success, strategic questions represent wide range of items, depending on individual needs, personal characteristics of individuals and subjective perception. Based on the above mentioned strategic questions of successful expatriation, the study has stated presumption that support program of expatriates during fulfilling international task eliminated the risk of unsuccessful expatriation.

Focuses of this investigation were expatriates active in Europe, America and Asia. Purposely the authors selected multinational corporations with the focus on the expatriates – employees working for these international companies. The goal was to their perception, experiences and needs during expatriation. Altogether, the study addressed 36 companies, such as Nortel, Sapient, Hisense, Wipro, Gazprom,

and 17 personal agencies, e.g. Grafton Recruitment, USG People, Iw, Compass and Oakleaf. 12 companies (23%) responded negatively to the questionnaire request due to various reasons. The authors received 112 completely filled questionnaires. Data analysis was carried out on 2 levels:

Level 1. Data acquired via questionnaire were organized by table processing software Microsoft Excel. Answers to the questions ordered to rows and columns with numeric values for data analysis. Clearly organized data were processed by the means of descriptive statistics to required values, charts, tables, and the results were interpreted.

Level 2. In the next step we tested statistical hypothesis via statistical software SPSS (Statistical Package for Social Science).

By analysing whether the acquired answers (values) from the respondents differ from those expected by us, the researchers used non-parametric test Chi-square test of goodness of fit (χ^2). For data analysis the authors created contingency tables and obtained overview of relation of two statistical parameters. To determine the tabulated values of the test characteristics, they calculated individual degree of freedom (df), as the number of table rows minus one times the number of table columns minus one, $df = (r - 1) \times (p - 1)$ and chose a level of significance of 5% alpha.

The calculated test characteristics together with tabulated values were compared and the results interpreted. If the calculated value was larger than the tabulated value, it would confirm the significant statistical difference. Otherwise, if the calculated value was smaller than the tabulated value, the opposite inequality would be true and statistically significant difference would not be confirmed. In the selection of the sample, the researchers focused on the main actors in the foreign environment in interaction with new cultures and people in order to accomplish work tasks. The revised sample represented the expatriates working and operating outside their home country for a certain period of time. Questionnaire survey was attended by 112 respondents. Summary of analysed socio-demographic data of the sample evaluated by descriptive statistics is reported in Table 1, where it displays the composition of the sample in terms of gender, the transition from the home country to the host country and the duration of the expatriation.

Results

The effectiveness of programs aimed at expatriates' support during the performance of the international role the study has examined the following hypothesis: the study assumes that the program to support expatriates during the performance of the international role eliminates the risk of a failed expatriation. The hypothesis is based on generally accepted assumption that intercultural education before sending and expatriates to foreign country, which helps them to adapt to the life and work in new environment. Although education before expatriation is important, other authors (Baron and Armstrong, 2007; Brewster et al., 2005; Ferencová, 2013; Guest et al., 2012) emphasis the need of education

also during the stay abroad. Intercultural education is an inevitable instrument of socialization and successful performance of expatriate's tasks and activities. Managers and employees, who have the ability to adapt quickly and have intercultural competences, have a competitive advantage.

Table 1. Sample of Expatriates Analysed According to Gender, Transition from the Home Country to the Host Country and the Duration of the Expatriation

Gender, Home, Country Duration of expatriation	Host country						Summary	
	Europe		America		Asia			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Male	25	53	33	69	11	65	69	61.60
Europe	9	19	17	35	11	65	37	33.03
More than 5 years	2	4	6	12			8	7.94
1 - 5 years	3	6	7	15	6	35	16	14.28
6 months - 1 year	4	9	2	4	5	30	11	9.82
Less than 6 months			2	4			2	1.78
America	1	2	11	23			12	10.71
More than 5 years			2	4			2	1.78
1 - 5 years	1	2	1	2			2	1.78
6 months - 1 year			6	13			6	5.35
Less than 6 months			2	4			2	1.78
Asia	15	32	5	10			20	17.85
More than 5 years	1	2					1	0.89
1 - 5 years	3	7					3	2.67
6 months - 1 year	9	19	5	10			14	12.5
Less than 6 months	2	4					2	1.78
Female	22	47	15	31	6	35	43	38.39
Europe	20	42	13	27	6	35	39	34.82
More than 5 years			3	6.25			3	2.67
1 - 5 years	3	6	3	6.25			6	5.35
6 months - 1 year	8	17	3	6.25	1	5	12	10.71
Less than 6 months	9	19	4	8.25	5	30	18	16.07
America	2	4	2	4			4	3.57
1 - 5 years			2	4			2	1.78
6 months - 1 year	2	4					2	1.78
Summary	47		48		17		112	100

99 respondents (88%) from 112 (100%) have reported that the company they work for has developed such a program. The aim of the evaluation of the hypothesis is to investigate if the program to support expatriates actually eliminates the risk of failure for the whole duration of expatriation. Respondents expressed their responses via 4 points scale, which indicates whether support program does not eliminate all risk or eliminate it completely. The authors have verified the hypothesis on the basis of a questionnaire: *Have your organization developed*

the program to promote expatriates during the performance of the international role?. The organization programme to support the expatriates during the performance of the international role eliminates the risk of failure of expatriation, where respondents had the option to mark one of 4 stages of risk elimination. Item (Have your organization developed the program to promote expatriates during the performance of the international role?) the study has used to screen those respondents whose company has a program for supporting expatriates. Table 2 shows data for the calculation of the statistical analysis.

Table 2. Efficiency of the Support Program for Expatriates

	The degree of risk elimination								Total sum	
	1		2		3		4			
	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
Risk elimination	0	0	62	63	14	14	23	23	99	100
Total sum	0	0	62	63	14	14	23	23	99	100

Based on the statistical analysis, the study has realized regarding the hypothesis, the authors calculate the test characteristics (χ^2), which is equal to 58.989. On the basis of the degree of freedom $df = 3$, and significance level of $\alpha = 0.05$, the authors have found the table value of tested characteristics ($\chi^2_{tab. 0.05cal.}$), which is equal to 7.815 (see Table 3). Thus, on the basis of the relation: $\chi^2_{cal.} = 58.989 > \chi^2_{tab. 0.05} = 7.815$ the authors confirm the relationship between the support program for expatriates and the level of risk of failed expatriation.

Table 3. Statistics - Support Program for Expatriates / Elimination of the Risk of Failure

Pearson's Chi-square	support program (1) x elimination of risk (4)			
	χ^2_{vvp}	df	$\chi^2_{tab. 0.05}$	p
	58.989	3	7.815	0.000

Discussions

Most dynamic and competitive business environment of globalization emphasizes new focus on how to be human resources should be organized and managed. This led to the emergence and increasing use of the concept of strategic human resource management, where the convergence between human resources and strategy is visible. A strategic approach to human resources management refers to the practice of human resources and strategic objectives of the company (Sparrow et al., 2004). This view is becoming even more important in today's knowledge economy, which depends on the skills and knowledge of employees.

Although the approaches to the international management of human resources in the organizations vary (depending on the degree of internationalization), it is necessary to comprehend the importance of preparing expatriates and their subsequent support during expatriation. Up to 63% of respondents experience

shows that the risk is eliminated due expatriation program to encourage expatriates. 14% of respondents indicate that the elimination is sufficient and even 23% refers to the complete elimination of risk.

Based on the above, it can conclude the validity of the hypothesis that program to support expatriates during the performance of the international role of eliminating the risk of a failed expatriation. Appropriate tool of support for expatriation is a Job Shadowing (Sopatová, 2014), which provides an opportunity for the development of knowledge, skills and understanding of a work task directly through participation and observation.

Such participation enables employees to gain realistic view and consider their skills according to what is expected from them and ultimately their self-assessment of whether they are prepared. Consequently, it helps to identify the weaknesses which also motivate employees to self-development. Job Shadowing can contribute to obtaining the international experience, which respondents indicate as the one of the main reasons of the failure of expatriation.

Conclusion

The aim of the paper is to highlight the importance and the need for a strategic approach to human resources management, which is important especially in internationally operating organizations. Results of analysed strategic issues concerning the expatriates and their activities abroad have demonstrated various negative experiences and challenges. The causes or reasons for problems arising may vary depending on personality of employee; from the company point of view it may be incorrect setting the human resources management policies and various external factors that negatively affect the employees. Taking into account these factors is especially important if the most valuable asset of the company is the people themselves. The most important factors affecting the success of expatriates during the implementation of the international role include screening of employees, which facilitates the selection of a suitable employee for the international role, intercultural education (cultural awareness, language skills, etc.), support during expatriation (adjustment), remuneration and subsequent repatriation. The results of the survey have showed several weaknesses of IHRM strategy, especially in terms of training and support for expatriates. Based on the results of the survey can be concluded that the preparation of expatriates before expatriation e.g. in the form of training but particularly their subsequent support during expatriation plays a key role in the successful coping of international role.

A further study is expected to be carried out to continue investigating expatriates needs and correlate those needs to socio-demographic features in host's countries. This kind of approach may lead to better adjusting implementation expatriates in cultural awareness for specific groups.

As an appropriate tool to support the expatriation seems to be job shadowing, often use as a training technique for new employees. Another option is to use already repatriated employees who have personal experience and can precisely define

critical areas of expatriation. It is important to understand that only properly thought out and well-designed programs to support the successful performance of the international role of expatriate can reduce the risk of failure and increase the confidence of expatriate. Ultimately, this leads to the achievement of the business objectives of the company, which is the primary goal of any business unit.

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ANALIZA CZYNNIKÓW SUKCESU DOSTOSOWANIA EKSPATRIANTÓW DO RELACJI ZADAŃ W ORGANIZACJACH MIĘDZYNARODOWYCH

Streszczenie: Nasilająca się konkurencja międzynarodowa sprawia, że przedsiębiorstwa w poszukiwaniu przewag rynkowych podejmują wysiłki zmierzające do internacjonalizacji działalności. Konsekwencją jest wzrost udziału expatriantów, co powoduje często problemy z adaptacją, szokiem kulturowym, negatywnym wpływem na efektywność i obniżoną satysfakcją z wykonywania pracy. Z drugiej strony osoby szybko adaptujące się mogą zwiększyć potencjał korporacji. W pracy przedstawiono część wyników badań związanych z analizą czynników decydujących o sukcesie adaptacji do pracy w organizacjach międzynarodowych.

Słowa kluczowe: expatrianci, zarządzanie, zasoby ludzkie, organizacje międzynarodowe

国际组织工作人员离职适应条件成功因素分析

摘要: 日益增加的国际竞争意味着企业正在寻求利用市场的动力将其业务国际化以寻求市场优势。结果是外派人员的比例有所增加，这些人经常遇到适应问题，文化冲击对工作效率造成负面影响，并降低了工作满意度。另一方面，那些快速适应的人可以增加公司的潜力。本文介绍了与决定国际组织适应工作成功因素分析有关的一部分研究成果。

关键词: 外籍人士，管理人力资源，国际组织。