

ABSTRACT

In the era of globalization where of multinationals and transnational companies have their international operations spread all over the world, the area of international human resource management (IHRM) has becoming more and more important. Human factor is now considered as an important aspect in determining the success of international operations. Scholars, like Adler and Bartholomew (1992) agreed that in order to ensure the success implementation of global strategies, it would largely depend on getting the people with right skills, at the right time, which typically requires the movement of people across border.

This study will focus on one of the most important parts of IHRM, the expatriation. Numerous studies have been conducted in this area, which include the selection procedures, adjustment process, training and repatriation. However, most of the studies were conducted in the western environments and only few have been done in the Asian context.

The study will focus on Malaysian expatriates and look at what they perceived the right qualities and competencies needed for successful overseas posting. In addition to that, other factors that can influence their performance and failure also being observed. The reason for conducting this study is to see whether previous literatures and studies can be applied to Malaysian scenario, given the notion suggested by Tung (1982), different people from different part of the world would act differently.

The report on this study will be presented in five chapters, where it includes the introduction, the literature review, research methodology, research results and recommendations and implications.

The outcome of the study shows some similarities with previous findings, especially in identifying the most important skills that an expatriate should have. In accordance to previous studies, Malaysian respondents have chosen work related competencies to be the most important skills that they should have in order to be successful in their assignments.

Nevertheless, there were also some distinctive differences that can be observed from the findings. One of the most prominent distinctions with previous studies was the finding that Malaysian perceived extroversion is less important compared to other traits. This differs from previous studies, where most of the time, extroversion was rank high as the most important trait that expatriate should have to be successful.

However, in the end, it has been found that, due to some limitations of the study, further studies should be conducted before validations and generalizations can be adopted.