

# MAJOR PROBLEMS OF INDIAN EXPATS: AIMING WORK HARM REDUCTION FOR THEIR SUSTAINABILITY

KALYANRAO K

Assistant Professor, Department of Master of Business Administration  
Guru Nanak Dev Engineering College Bidar, (Visvesvaraya Technological University, Belgaum, Karnataka, INDIA)

Dr. REKHA N PATIL

Asst. Professor, Department of MBA,  
VTU Regional Centre, Gulbarga, Visvesvaraya Technological university, Belgaum Karnataka (INDIA)

**ABSTRACT:** This study is conducted on the Indian expatriates working abroad. As the non supportive environment can cause major problems for them and also to their family who undergoes some challenges such as issues related to loneliness & adaptation & their Children may suffer some issues and not adapt well to their new school context.

In the developed countries like CANADA, UK & USA where Indian community are nothing more than Native American or hardly behave like Indians resulting they are not coping with the new expats. Individuals from different cultures may encounter difficulties in comprehending each other's values and behaviour towards another leading Cultural clash.

Everything has its cause and effect, one cannot exist without the other and this law exists through everything in nature. Work life harmony is also matters much than just work life balance. One should consider love, career and being happy for creating & maintaining harmony and balance in life. Our primary focus should be on our relationships with preferably the Nature, Society, Family & Friends then succeeding to the working environment. Understanding what we need in order to fulfil our requirements of happiness, financial security, relationship, friendship, passion, valuing & respecting, spending time with family, being honest with the friends, self caring.

**KEY WORDS:** Expatriates' Psychology, Problems faced, Sustainability of IHRM, Tolerance, and Adjustments.

## INTRODUCTION:

### FACTS:

- Saudi government stated 'Sack all foreigners by 2020,' & has instructed ministry officials to end the employment of foreign workers within the next three years, affecting 70,000 expatriates.
- "There will be no expatriate workers in the government after 2020," Abdullah al-Melfi, deputy minister for civil service, instructed ministry officials during a meeting. It means that ministries will be forced to sack 70,000 foreign workers over the next three years and make room for Saudi nationals.
- Saudi Arabia is also pursuing an aggressive diversification plan known as Vision 2030, which looks at massively expanding the private sector.
  - The declining occupations require some level of precautions from Indian Govt. for expatriates to settle bck at India.
  - The occupations are getting job declines in many countries like Saudi Arabia, USA, Australia etc.
  - The economic recession of the last decade decimated the U.S. labor market, with millions of Americans losing their jobs. To this day, many occupations remain below their pre-recession employment levels.
- The recession did not have the same effect on all occupations. Some types of businesses remained stable, or even flourished during those years. In some occupations in the hardest hit industries, however, total employment fell by more than half. Based on data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) on occupational employment changes from 2005 through 2014, 24/7 Wall St. reviewed the 10 fastest shrinking jobs in the country
  - While the recession may have catalyzed the declines in some of the disappearing occupations and a recovery would likely mean better years ahead for these positions other occupations are not on the verge of bouncing back. As technology improves and business and cultural practices change, some jobs word processors and switchboard operators, for example are simply on the way to becoming obsolete.
  - Many countries are banned foreigners (expats) activities and occupations in order to provide more jobs to its citizens, a move that is likely to affect a large number of workers from India and other South Asian countries.
  - Like the ambitious crown prince, Mohammed bin Salman, to revamp the Saudi economy and reduce its dependence on oil revenues.
    - The unemployment rate in Saudi Arabia crossed 12% last year following the impact of low oil prices.
    - Saudi barring expatriates from certain jobs from the next Hijri year under the Islamic calendar that begins on September 11, the state-run Saudi Press Agency reported.
    - Australia is scrapping its temporary worker visa, and Indians will lose out most.
    - For Indians, doors of opportunities outside India are slamming shut.

- The UK, Canada, and the US these three countries that account for the majority of India's software export revenue have upped the hurdles for Indians to gain work visas. The island nation of Singapore has reportedly started "shutting the tap" on Indian techies' visas too. The latest nation to tighten restrictions is Australia.

- "The India market is very dynamic and very competitive now. So if you want to be in India, you have to be aggressive

#### **OBJECTIVES:**

- To examine the problems & challenges faced by the expatriates and their adjustments made to the challenges in other countries
- To analyse Indian expatriate's cope with new working environment.
- To analysis expatriate's cope with the cross cultural differences.
- To discuss the obtained finding and to make recommendations.
- To aim work harm reduction for sustainable international Human Resource Management.

#### **METHODOLOGY:**

This study applied a qualitative study. It attempts to explore the fact & experiences in terms of challenges and adjustments of expatriates in the context of cross-cultural setting. The study is made only on 50 Indian respondents working abroad (Expats).

Most of the data is gathered from secondary data and little from primary data. Primary data collected from some IT professionals from various MNCs abroad and some from expats working in Non IT MNCs in foreign country.

The questionnaire are mailed to the expatriates working in different countries highlighting the psychological, socio-cultural and work challenges & Adjustments and also the mental strengths of individual & their families.

#### **SCOPE/CONTRIBUTION OF THE STUDY:**

The results of this analysis can be used to find how:

- Challenges faced by the Indian expatriates during their stay abroad with regard to the culture differences.
- The cross cultural difference affected Indian expatriates adjustment in that country.
- The cultural differences they found most challenging.
- Which personal strengths, most helpful during their overseas assignment.
- What types of training & support was helpful in their good performance.
- From this study it is hoped to create awareness on issues of adjustments of Indian expatriates in order to build a more productive workforce in years. It also analyse the Cross culture challenges and adjustment issue of Indian expatriate in the industry.
- We can aim for work harm reduction for sustainable international Human Resource Management.

#### **LITERATURE REVIEW:**

1. The expatriates have to cope with such conflicts and deal with them appropriately. In their interviews with expatriate managers, Black et al. (1999) found that the most common source of conflict for those expatriates who had high allegiance to both the parent company and subsidiary was conflicting expectations, demands or objectives between the parent and the foreign operation. In this connection Black et al. (1999, pp. 132-47) identify four types of expatriates, depending on the stand they take with respect to their loyalty.

2. Aycan (1997) emphasized that there are three aspects of adjustments, namely psychological, socio-cultural and work adjustments. An alternative to which these expatriates can prepare themselves with these adjustments is through cross-culture training (CCT).

3. According to Thus, it will require the researcher to interpret the experiences that the informants encounter. However, personal biases or beliefs should be put aside while doing this type of research, so that it will not interfere with the seeing the structure of the phenomenon.

4. Berg (1998) further supports that qualitative study enables a researcher to share in the understandings and perceptions of other individuals and to explore how they structure and give meaning to their daily lives. It requires the researcher to interpret the experiences, which the informants encounter.

5. As stated by Finuras (2007), the development of business processes and management practices can be hindered or can benefit small differences in culture and behaviour. For example, language can immediately start to create systems of misunderstandings. The author states that expatriates should know codes of conduct, policies and taxation issues.

6. Zwielewski (2009) emphasises that the way an expatriate observes cultural differences such as, time zone, punctuality differences and adaptation to work are factors that influence the expatriate's reaction to their new environment and the effectiveness of their integration.

7. Pereira et al. (2005) reiterate that no cultural adjustment by expatriates to the target countries results in high costs in terms of management performance, customer relations, productivity and operational efficiency.

8. It was for these reasons that theories of cultural adjustment of expatriate have been developed. Man and Tolfo (2008), citing Black et al. (1991), identify an adjustment model for expatriates based on two essential steps: the anticipated adjustment and the actual adjustment to the foreign country

#### **QUESTIONNAIRE:**

The following questionnaire was sent by email to the expatriate employee in order to interpret their perspectives.



- missing others
- annoyance
- fear

**Interpretation:**

During the culture shock, the expats psychologically reacted & experienced the depression, anxiety, fear, frustration, disappointment & insecurity, Where as few expats experienced the feeling of missed their relatives, family & friends. None of them were aggressiveness not curiosity towards culture shock.

Q8. What among the followings irritated you most?

- Working time in the company
- Position held before and during the expatriation
- Family monitoring during expatriation
- Cultural differences/adjustment
- Lack of Motivation
- Types of training received by the employee and his family
- Performance evaluation and mechanisms for the evaluation
- Communication problems
- Cultural differences
- Discrimination
- Lack of good food
- Weather
- Adhering country's social norms and etiquettes
- Racial / Ethnic issues
- Understanding the transportation system
- Monotonous Life
- Cost of Living
- Healthcare
- Relationships
- Money Matter

**Interpretation:**

The most irritating thing for the expats are Position held before and during the expatriation, Cultural differences/adjustment, Racial / Ethnic issues, Cultural differences. Few are irritated with Lack of good food, Adhering country's social norms and etiquettes & Relationships. None of them have any complaint with Working time in the company or Lack of Motivation.

Q9. After expatriation, you have found your changes most in

- |                      |                         |
|----------------------|-------------------------|
| a. Life style        | b. Food changing habits |
| c. Change in culture | d. attitude & behaviour |

**Interpretation:**

The expatriation has changed their Life style first most, then Change in attitude & behaviour followed by Change in culture & finally change in food habits.

Q10. How much time it took for you to feel comfortable living in a new cultural setting

- |                      |                         |                     |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| a. One to six month  | b. six to twelve months | c. One to two years |
| d. Two to Five Years | e. Above Five years     |                     |

**Interpretation:**

For most of expats it took One to two years to feel comfortable living in a new cultural setting. For some expats above five years & for few One to six month to adjust the new culture.

Q11. How many months it took for your family to feel comfortable living in a new cultural setting

- |                      |                         |                     |
|----------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| a. One to six month  | b. six to twelve months | c. One to two years |
| d. Two to Five Years | e. Above Five years     |                     |

**Interpretation:**

For most of expats family members it took six to twelve months to feel comfortable living in a new cultural setting. For some expat's family members it took One to two years & for few two to five years to adjust the new culture.

Q12. Your opinion towards coming back to India & work?

- |                          |                       |
|--------------------------|-----------------------|
| a. Stay here permanently | b. Stay for few years |
| C. Not yet decided       | d. Return to India    |

**Interpretation:**

Most of them would like to work for few years. Some want to settle permanently few want to return back to India where as very less expats not yet decided about returning to India.

**FINDINGS:****From the Interpretation of questionnaire, we can state the following findings:**

- Most of the Indian expat's motive to work abroad is preferably Money, then comes Assignment Completion & finally Exposure.
- Most of them agreed that there is risk working in other country.
- Most of them experienced the Language problem & many found an issue with social adjustment abroad.
- Most expats are satisfied with the Career Progression & Compensation & Benefits provided.
- Most of them mentioned that the language & conflict management skills are much necessary followed by flexibility to adjust to critical situations & decision-making skills.
- Most of them are perfect with the qualities like emotional Intelligent followed by Self confidence, Openness to experience & then Intuition. Very few are Tolerance with ambiguity and uncertainty.
- During the culture shock, the expats psychologically reacted & experienced the depression, anxiety, fear, frustration, disappointment & insecurity, Where as few expats experienced the feeling of missed their relatives, family & friends. None of them were aggressiveness not curiosity towards culture shock.
- The most irritating thing for the expats is Position held before and during the expatriation, Cultural differences/adjustment, Racial / Ethnic issues and Cultural differences. Few are irritated with Lack of good food, Adhering country's social norms and etiquettes & Relationships. None of them have any complaint with working time in the company or Lack of Motivation.
- The expatriation has changed their Life style first most, then Change in attitude & behaviour followed by Change in culture & finally change in food habits.
- For most of expats it took One to two years to feel comfortable living in a new cultural setting. For some expats above five years & for few One to six month to adjust the new culture.
- For most of expats family members it took six to twelve months to feel comfortable living in a new cultural setting. For some expat's family members it took One to two years & for few two to five years to adjust the new culture.
- Most of them would like to work for few years. Some want to settle permanently few want to return back to India where as very less expats not yet decided about returning to India.

**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- The expats & their family willing to stay abroad should get language & cultural training.
- The expats should try to become closer to local employees to improve the integration of the expat and the harmony within the team.
- They should help their spouse or other family member to adjust abroad.
- Offer performance feedback and praise good efforts and results to reduce employee turnover.

**CONCLUSION:**

The main motive for working abroad & becoming ready for the international challenge was financial reasons. They have to compromise a lot, like staying away at long distance from their loved ones, food, Language, Culture & so on. The company & the local employees should show the respect towards expats & their family, listen to them deeply; use their ideas; never ridicule or shame them. One should Stop fault finding, Commanding & Expecting. Avoid Anger, Ego and fight. Overcome differences & disagreements. The harmony in life is integrating these various elements like maintain Physical, Mental & Financial well being, be good, be kind, Lead a simple life, Forget & Forgive, being Transparent. Life & Death, Destruction & Creation is all about the balancing.

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- Doctor in Communication (University de Vigo, UVIGO – Espanha). Professor at the Instituto Superior de Entre Douro e Vouga – ISVOUGA, Santa Maria da Feira, Portugal, e-mail: jorge.remondes@gmail.com.
- M.S. in Business Administration (Universidade Lusfada de Vila Nova de Famalicão, Vila Nova de Famalicão, Portugal), e-mail: joao.faria.vinhas@gmail.com.

