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Latha R
Research Scholar,
Department of Commerce,
Rayalaseema University,
Kurnool. Andhra Pradesh,
India

Dr. H Prakash
Professor and HOD,
Department of Commerce and
Management, Maharani
Women's Arts, Commerce and
Management College,
Bangalore, Karnataka, India

Expatriate cross cultural training: A conceptual study

Latha R and Dr. H Prakash

Abstract
This paper contributes to the existing literature through the assessment of remedies and proposals for research future. By doing so, this research also aims to boost the knowledge and the seriousness of these issues. Given the broad range of the research focus, this research is limited in its comprehensiveness. The range covered in the study of organizations comes from so many disciplines that it is virtually impossible to think simultaneously about the large number of problems and research strategies. The findings of this research imply that despite several decades of development, meaningful cross cultural training research continues to remain an extremely difficult task. Theoretically, the field has yet to be capable of objectively explaining cultural inferences on organizational behaviour. Methodologically, although in some aspects of the problems may be solvable.

Keywords: Expatriate, cross-culture training

Introduction
In today's world everything is based on knowledge: Knowledge Economy, Knowledge Product, and Knowledge Workers. The processes of globalization in today's world have brought about a rapid increase in contact among representatives of different cultures. The wide variety of mind sets, values and attitudes we encounter in a global world, the diversity of approaches to solving management tasks, various leadership styles and different ways of social interaction excite, amaze and enrich everyone who "plays on the international field".
This very diversity, which we cannot always see, much less understand and interpret, places increased demands on the individuals expatriate on his/her ability to survive under the new diversity conditions.
It is no great surprise that in many cases expatriate want to simplify the increasingly complex world around them. This is where stereotypes come to our aid: "Germans are pedantic and boring", "Americans are superficial" and "the British are arrogant". Cross-Cultural differences may spur certain positive outcomes in the course of co-operation. Over two millennia ago the differences in cross cultures of people residing in warm climates, who he described as intelligent but not very heroic, as opposed to inhabitants of cold climates, who he in spin called brave but not so intelligent. Since then much more detailed analysis by various researchers has led to the formation of many different theories and models regarding the differences in cross-culture.

Objectives
- To help the organisations to tap the niche market and create develop and retain diverse work force so that to feel connected to their company
- To enhance creativity, innovation and to produce advantage to the expatriate
- To help the expatriate for entering the international arena with flexibility and rapid response to change

Methodology
The source of information collected for the research paper "Expatriate – Cross culture Training" are sourced from the data such as HR Manual, Annual Reports, Internet Information, Published Theses, Dissertations, Internationally Acclaimed HR Journals, Magazines, News Bulletins, Newspapers.

Correspondence
Latha R
Research Scholar,
Department of Commerce,
Rayalaseema University,
Kurnool. Andhra Pradesh,
India

Synergistic organizations assume

The expatriate's within society differs across different cultures and that every culture is distinct. The similarities and differences are of equal importance. That there are many culturally distinct ways to live, work, and achieve personal and organisational goals. The best way depends on the cultures of the expatriate involved. For recognizing cultural differences and using them to create advantages for the organizations can make use of cross-cultural training and valuing culture diversity.

Cross-cultural training

Cross-cultural training stresses on training employees about other cultures and sensitizing them to the discrimination and biases diverse employees feel. Cross-cultural training aims at helping employees live and work comfortably in another culture. Organizations can use two approaches of training that can play a big role in managing diversity. First approach offers training to diverse groups of expatriates. People from diverse groups can be trained for at the entry-level skill. The other approach is to provide training to managers and remaining employees who work with diverse cultural expatriates. Many organizations impart practical, real-life training to teach expatriates how to handle situations those arise due to cross-cultural differences. The companies may use the following cross-cultural training methods:

Environmental

To endow with information about history, geography, climate, schools, government, economy, etc. Orientation of culture, that has to be familiarize to the expatriates with value systems and culture of the host country. Cultural assimilator is a programmed learning technique that is designed to expose expatriates of one culture to some of the attitudes, customs, etc. of another culture. Language training have to give to conversational language skills. Sensitivity training has to be developed, attitudinal flexibility. Field experience is important and to be given first hand exposure to another culture.

Utilizing and Valuing Diversity

The companies can be successful at diversity if the initiative to create and manage the diverse workforce has the full support from the top management. With this, the following have to follow by the organisations.

Organizational Audit

The organizational audit should include and it has to be a continuous monitoring of all human resource management decisions around hiring, placement, training and development, evaluation, promotion, performance management system, compensation, reward systems and IR.

To know the pulse of the Organisation: If diverse workforce in the organization feels good about their stay and experience and enjoy at work, then the well-being, motivation, satisfaction, and commitment of expatriates will help in performance of any organization will help in reaching organisational goal.

Communicate and Establish Clear Performance Standards: Performance standards must be based on critical competencies necessary for each job. These must be clearly and objectively established, effectively communicated, and used on objective criteria.

Giving Continuous Feedback: Expatriates should be trained about how to give and receive feedback continuously on clearly identified undesirable behaviors the organisation want to change and desirable behaviours the company want to encourage. Identification of desirable and undesirable behaviours must be based upon performance feedback discussions involving diverse workforce.

Copying to be avoided: Very often, organisations rely on existing benchmarking, replicating or copying of latest strategies adopted by the other organisations to take advantages. This strategy may backfire. To be successful, the strategy that a diversity or otherwise must be based on the will of the human resources, strength, and culture of the organization. Adopting a diversity strategy for a company whose culture and history are different and not suitable for diversity strategy reduces the viability and utility of the strategy. Managers must understand their firm's culture first and then implement diversity strategies according to that culture.

Definition and Contents
Cross-Cultural competence

The range of definitions of cross-cultural competence could be synthesized as: The ability to function or work effectively in culturally diverse situations in general and in particular encounters with people from different cultures. Because of the hidden or invisible nature of one's own culture and the historically tribal, territorial and parochial nature of nations and societies, cross-cultural competence is not an innate characteristic of human nature. Rather, it is learned — as is culture — through experience, education and training. Individuals and organizations do not choose their native culture, but they can choose to acquire and place value on cross-cultural competence.

The level or degree of cultural competence required for effective functioning is determined

Largely by context. It is also largely dictated and measured by the perceptions of the individuals in cross-cultural encounters; one person's idea of the cultural competence required in the situation may be different from another's (Bean, 2006). Australian papers and reports (Miralles & Migliorino, 2005; Eisenbruch, 2004) have proposed a model comprising the following four dimensions of cultural competence (Bean, 2006):

a) Systemic cultural competence — requires effective policies and procedures, monitoring mechanisms and sufficient resources to foster culturally competent behavior and practice at all levels.

b) Organizational cultural competence — requires skills and resources to meet client diversity, an organizational culture which values, supports and evaluates cultural competency as integral to core business.

c) Professional cultural competence — depends on education and professional development and requires cultural competence standards to guide the working lives of individuals.

d) Individual cultural competence — requires the maximization of knowledge, attitudes and behaviors within an organization that supports individuals to work with diverse colleagues and customers.

Cross-cultural Training (CCT)

CCT is defined as that which increases the competence of individuals to function in cross cultural situations domestically and abroad. In broad terms, CCT programs focus on the following broad categories (Bean, 2006):

a) Managing and working with culturally-diverse employees and colleagues;
b) Working and living internationally;
c) Designing and delivering products and services to culturally-diverse customers. CCT is generally delivered in three models (Bean, 2006);

d) General awareness and communication training — focuses on developing generic cross cultural skills and sensitivity to assist with interactions in any culture the participant may encounter.
e) Ethno- or country-specific training — focuses on a single ethnic group or country to increase participants' knowledge, understanding and ability to function effectively in that environment or with that group.
f) Training in working with interpreters and translators — focuses on developing the technical skills involved and also includes those elements of cross-cultural communication that influence the process.

Table 1: Overview of the Cross-Cultural Training Methods, their Focus, Timing of Implementation and General Activities used to convey the Training

Training	Focus	Timing	Activity
Didactic	Factual information, culture general and/ or culture specific	Pre-departure and/or post-arrival	Lectures, informal briefings
Experiential	Practical learning, culture general and/ or culture specific	Pre-departure and/or post-arrival	Look-see trips, workshops, simulations
Attribution	Learning to think and act as a host national, culture specific	Pre-departure	Cultural assimilator
Language	Facilitating specific intercultural communication	Pre-departure and/or post-arrival	Traditional teaching
Cultural Awareness	Understanding culture as a concept, culture general	Pre-departure	Role-plays, self-assessment exercises
Interaction	Learning from previous expatriates, culture specific	Pre-departure	Counselling
Sequential	Synergies from combined training, culture general and culture specific	Pre-departure, post-arrival, repatriation	Combining different training methods

Source: Christian Hånberg and Gabriel Österdahl (2009) Cross-Cultural Training of Expatriates A case study of Ericsson

Present Context in India

The Indian workforce is young comparatively. 61% of the overall workforce in India is under age group of 35. Being young Indian employees can be trained easily for the purpose. The cross cultural dimensions have identified certain quality about the Indian workforce. Indian employees tend to show high power distance position. Titles, status and formality command high importance. Subordinates follow orders as a matter of course. Indians demonstrate a greater willingness to take risks, low levels of stress and low levels of anxiety, as they tend to be on the low uncertainty avoidance dimension.

Indian employees are individualists with high level of autonomy and achievement orientation. Further they show the qualities of masculinity where assertiveness, acquisition of money and things are features. While managing Indian workforce, Indian managers and other countries managers have to take care of these specific characteristics along with others. The multinationals may not face cultural problems in some respects in India. As this country has so many languages for a long time, people in general can understand and speak English language that is an international language. There is no problem relating to business communication while dealing at least with other Western countries. But at the same time it may not be so as dealing with other countries.

Conclusion

The spotlight of the expatriate diversity topic has changed from equal employment opportunity to effectively managing workforce diversity as an organizational imperative. As the globalization is increasing, workforce diversity is here going to stay. Those recognize the globalization of labor as a positive trend and facilitate the flow of expatriate will be benefit most. Keeping this in mind our strategy should be aimed at creating change in organizations. To be successful in such type of new environment, HR managers must learn to value and respect different cultural styles and ways of behaving those differ from our styles. HR Managers must be able to tie the issues of managing cross-cultural differences to the needs of the business and be well versed in business issues, goals and results. Managing expatriate workforce diversity should be considered by managers as an opportunity to serve the needs of customers better and to penetrate new market.

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