

Self-Initiated Expatriate Adjustment in Saudi Universities: The Role of Previous Experience and Marital Status

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to evaluate the role of previous experience and marital status on the adjustment of self-initiated expatriates in Saudi universities. The assumptions of Black et al. (1991) model of adjustment was addressed to help self-initiated expatriates to adjust. It was hypothesized that previous experience and marital status have no influence on self-initiated expatriates' culture, interaction and work adjustment. This study was quantitative in nature and employed a descriptive correlational research design. The sample of this study included 237 self-initiated expatriates from two public universities in Saudi Arabia. Findings indicated that previous experience has no relationship with self-initiated expatriates' culture, interaction and work adjustment. Further analysis also revealed that marital status has no influence in term of self-initiated expatriates' socio-cultural adjustment. The implications of these findings are discussed for practice.

Keywords: Self-Initiated Expatriate, Adjustment, Saudi Higher Education, Previous experience, Marital Status.

Introduction

The most important issue in labour force in general is employee shortage due to the aging population in developed economies, with more retiring than entering, and the large unskilled youth population in the developing and emerging economies (Briscoe, Schuler, & Claus, 2009). As a result of increased globalisation, Briscoe et al. (2009) argue that the global economy today makes educated and skilled labour available almost everywhere from all ethnic backgrounds and nationalities. However, staffing human resources in the international context is quite complicated as different human resource options are applicable and each option has different pros and cons (Punnett, 2004).

Global staffing is a critical issue in international management with regard to the employment of home, host and third country nationals to fill key positions (Scullion & Collings, 2006). Dowling, Festing and Engle (2008) argue that the key factor that differentiates between international and domestic Human Resource Management (HRM) is the complexity of operating in different countries and the employment of different national categories of workers. In addition, the awareness of cultural differences in international business plays an important variable (either diminish or accentuate) to moderate the differences between local and international HRM (Dowling, 1999). Dowling et al. (2008) address the importance role of the IHRM adaptation and sensitivity to the various host-country work requirements, local culture and traditions. Consequently, people working in international environment need to find a way to cope with constrains raised by cultural differences as host cultures can directly affect employees' performance and accordingly the organisational performance (Briscoe, et al., 2009; Onyemah, Rouziès, & Panagopoulos, 2010; Varner & Palmer, 2005).

However, unsuccessful international assignments will have a far greater impact than just on the balance sheet of the organisation. From an organisational perspective, the indirect costs of assignment failure could include strategic aims and goals not being accomplished, the impact of job productivity both in terms of the incumbent in the role as well as that employee's co-workers, and could even affect relations with host-country nationals (R Takeuchi, Yun, & Russell, 2002).

From the employee's perspective, the costs can be enormous: negative psychological impact not only on the employee but also potentially on the spouse and family, lowered self-esteem as well as negative consequences for the future career of the employee (J S Black, Gregersen, Mendenhall, & Stroh, 1999).

Therefore, the noticeably increase of business globalisation has led to a focus on expatriate adjustment over the past decade (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer, & Luk, 2005; Hechanova, Beehr, & Christiansen, 2003; Riki Takeuchi, 2010). Thus, the overwhelming majority of the studies have focused on the organisational expatriation which refers to employee assigned by their parent companies to a host country (J Selmer & Luring, 2010). However, there is a gap in the empirical literature on how self-initiated expatriates adjust themselves in the new host environment as well as human managerial issues facing organisations (Inkson, Arthur, Pringle, & Barry, 1997; Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari, 2008; Suutari & Brewster, 2000).

self-initiated expatriates refer to someone who chose to leave (their) homeland to live or work in another country, usually for a long period of time (Vance, 2005). According to Peltokorpi & Froese (2009), recent findings suggest that better adjustment to life in host countries is made by self-initiated expatriates than those assigned by their employers. Suutari and Brewster (2000) found in their research involving 400 Finnish Engineers on overseas assignments that the self-select expatriates were keenly interested in internationalism and wanted to escape from the poor employment situation in their home country. Their study suggested that the percentage count (33%) of expatriates deciding to work abroad was much larger than had previously been thought. This means that the increasing number of self-select expatriates was fostered by the global economy and that individual self-interest in personal career development is a primary reason why individuals accept a foreign assignment (Vance, 2005).

The growing number of self-initiated expatriates is one of the opportunities that global organisations seeking to fill in international positions and to enlarge candidate application at a low expenses in comparing with traditional expatriation (J Selmer & Luring, 2010). However, there is a gap in the empirical literature on how self-initiated expatriates adjust themselves in the new host environment as well as human managerial issues facing organisations (Inkson, et al., 1997; Jokinen, et al., 2008; Suutari & Brewster, 2000). Therefore, Hu and Xia (2010) and Selmer and Luring (2010) address the need for studies within this to expand the current investigations as well as extend its scopes.

Literature Review

The most important issue in the labour force in general is employee shortage as aging population in developed economics, with more retiring than entering, and the large unskilled youth population in the developing and emerging economics (Briscoe, et al., 2009). As a result of an increased globalisation, Briscoe et al. (2009) argue that global economy today makes educated and skilled labour available almost everywhere from all ethnic backgrounds and nationalities. However, staffing human resources in the international context is quite complicated as different human resource options are applicable and each option has different pros and cons (Punnett, 2004).

The orientation of international staffing generally refers to the early work of Howard Perlmutter (1969) when he introduces a classification of multinationals. Originally, he identifies three approaches to the staffing of multinational companies namely: Ethnocentric where organisation is primarily home-country oriented, Polycentric where organisation is staffed by host country nationals and Geocentric where best person is the requirement for filling position regardless of nationalities. In a later work, regiocentric approach is classified as a fourth approach by Heenan and Perlmutter (1979) where organisation been conceptualised on a regional bases and the selection criteria is based on best in the region.

Global staffing is a critical issue in international management with regard to the employment of home, host and third country nationals to fill key positions (Scullion & Collings, 2006). For example, there is a considerable growth in human resource mobility as a result of rapid globalisation and international competition (J S Black, Marrison, & Gregersen, 2000). Major differences between domestic and international staffing are link first to predispositions by organisations in regard to holding key positions and second host governments constrains which can limit hiring opportunities for right people (Dowling, et al., 2008). Torbiörn (1997) consider staffing in the international environment is more complex with relation to nature of complexity of operation in different countries and different national workers.

In addition, the International context of human resource management is more complex, where management development, staffing, compensation activities, and performance evaluation are complicated by differences between legal systems, cultures, and economic systems within various labor markets (Chitakornkijasil, 2010). Thus, the awareness of cultural differences in international business plays an important variable (either diminish or accentuate) to moderate the differences between local and international HRM (Dowling, 1999). For better understanding of how global organisations might balance this complexity of global and local human resource activities, host-country culture becomes an important element in this regard (Dowling, et al., 2008). Dowling et al. (2008) address the importance role of the IHRM adaptation and sensitivity to the various host-country work requirements, local culture and traditions.

Nationals' variations in values, beliefs, behaviour are essential patterns for international business activities, performance management of multinational employee and human resource functions (Briscoe, et al., 2009). In order to be more effective in both business and social situations, people working in international environment need to find a way to cope with constrains raised by cultural differences (Briscoe, et al., 2009) as host culture can directly affect employees' performance (Onyemah, et al., 2010; Varner & Palmer, 2005). Similarly, host culture shape and design payment systems, the importance of distributive justice, the importance of centralisation and hierarchies structures, the role of manager-subordinate on effective management performance and job mobility (Edwards & Rees, 2006).

Katrinli and Penbek (2010) address the importance of host-country culture sensitivity on expatriate performance. They conduct a study on 62 academic expatriates from Turkey and USA to find out whether perceived creativity is positively affected by the level of intercultural sensitivity. The results present that academic expatriates with high intercultural sensitivity perceived themselves more creative than the ones with low intercultural sensitivity. Many researchers address that the expatriation failure rate is quite high, that impact organizations enormous direct and indirect costs (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, Harrison, Shaffer, & Luk, 2004; J. S Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991; Harvey & Wiese, 1998) despite the importance of international experiences both for the organizations and individuals. The high failure, which are defined by terminating the international assignment prematurely, is account to poor job performance and/or personal problems (Forster, 1997). The failure to adjust to foreign environment has been cited as one of the most important reasons for unsuccessful expatriation (M A Shaffer & Harrison, 1998). Hechanova et al. (2003) address that unsuccessful international assignments affect in direct way the ability of the organisation to attract and retain qualified candidates. On the side of the individuals, the cost of the failure can impact enormously not only on negative expatriate psychology perspective but also on spouse and family, poor self-esteem as well as the negative attitude toward future experience (J S Black, et al., 1999). The literature have indicated that if expatriates do not adjust well to the host culture, they might depart prematurely (J. Black & Stephens, 1989; J. S Black, et al., 1991; R Takeuchi, et al., 2002). The term expatriate adjustment is synonymous with acculturation, cross-cultural adjustment and international adjustment which refers to expatriate psychological comfort and familiarity with different foreign environmental aspects (J S Black, 1988). Takeuchi et al. (2005) expand the description as the degree of ease or difficulty that expatriate have with life or work issues in a hostile country. As a time-related process, expatriate adjustment related to the process of uncertainty reduction and change through the feeling of harmonisation and comfortable with the new culture (J S Black & Mendenhall, 1991; I Torbiörn, 1982).

Expatriate who are open to the hostile culture can be culturally adjusted and able to add new behaviours, norms and rules to the foundation provided by home cultures (Church, 1982). On other hand, maladjusted expatriates tend to have anxiety toward the host culture and may even believe that host people are plotting and making life worse to them (Richards, 1996). Expatriates who have a limited adjustment to the host culture are able to gain negative work-related consequences as the case of lower job satisfaction and job performance (Naumann, 1993).

Early models by different researchers has explored the procedures of expatriate adjustment and been developed over to clarify the steps of acculturation. One of the popular models is the U-Curve of cross-cultural adjustment model which is based on the work of Lysgaard's (1955). The U-Curve model consists of four phases to describe the process of the cross-cultural adjustment process of expatriate employees or sojourners within a host culture (J S Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Lysgaard, 1955). The first phase is called honeymoon once the individual has arrived in a foreign culture (Gullahorn & Gullahorn, 1962) which happens during the first weeks up to two months when attraction of all the new and interesting aspects of the culture is characterised (Adler, 1986).

The second phase is culture shock when an individual is characterized by frustration and lack of sufficient understanding towards the host nation and its people, which are common indicators of culture shock (Adler, 1986; Church, 1982). The third stage been described as adjustment period when an individual can gradually perform norms and values of the host culture (Harris & Moran, 1989). Finally, the individual begin to behave properly which refers to the ability to act effectively in the new culture (Oberg, 1960).

Gullahorn and Gullahorn (1962) extended the U-Curve and formulated the W-Curve hypothesis. They discovered that there is another shock experienced after returning home. They believed that since sojourners had to learn new socialization skills to cope with the foreign environment, they would often find themselves out of phase with their home culture. Thus, culture shock that is experienced while adjusting to a foreign culture is mirrored by re-entry shock experienced by the returning sojourner. Early models of expatriate adjustment, such as Lysgaard's (1955) U-Curve adjustment model Oberg's (1960) model of culture shock, and Guthrie's (1975) learning model, tend to treat the concept on a various groups as immigration, refugees and sojourns. These models lack consensus across studies as the appropriate theoretical framework for adjustment and lack the agreement of key constructional definitions.

Black and Stephens (1989) add a new theoretical ground by stating that sociocultural adjustment should be viewed as a multidimensional concept. Black (1988) and Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) categorise the adjustment of socioculture into three facets: General, Work and Interaction. General adjustment refers to the psychological comfort the expatriate experiences with regard to issues of living in the host cultural environment, to include weather, food and living conditions. Work adjustment refers to the degree of the adjustment is related to different work values, expectations, and standards. Interaction adjustment is related to the degree of comfort to different communication styles and interpersonal communication expatriates feel when interacting with the host country nationals. According to Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al. (2005) the adjustment model proposed by Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou (1991) has instigated and galvanized a large body of evidence. It is the most influential and often-cited theoretical treatment of expatriate experiences, and it can be considered a context-specific reflection of the stressor-stress-strain sequence (Hechanova, et al., 2003; Mendenhall, Kuhlmann, Stahl, & Osland, 2002).

Major indicators of the consequences of expatriate adjustment, along with performance are job satisfaction and premature return intention (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, et al., 2005). Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al. (2005) indicate that expatriate with poor adjustment manifest in planning to search for other employment, general thoughts or consideration of quitting, and intention to return earlier.

Data and Methodology

Research Design

This research study, in part, replicated earlier empirical work testing the Black et al. (1991) model of expatriate adjustment. For that reason, a quantitative based research follow the same design, with the key difference being the use of a previously untested subpopulation of self-initiated academic expatriates currently teaching at universities in Saudi Arabia.

Population

The target population of this study was expatriate academics of the northern area of Saudi Arabia. The reason behind selection of this area among others was due to unfamiliarity with the existence of expatriates in general and academic expatriates in particular. The area was not well-known by expatriate academics till 2005 when the University of Ha'il was established. As Saudi Arabia was divided into 13 provinces, the northern area was compromised of four provinces namely; Ha'il, Al jouf, Tabouk and Northern Borders. The area was subdivided into two groupings likely the Near North which consisted of Ha'il and Northern Borders provinces and the Far North which consisted of Al jouf and Tabouk provinces. Universities were established in each province to meet the government policy in which to provide higher education in the area. This challenge led the new borne universities to recruit expatriate academics which shape 85 percent of the total academics population in the area.

Sampling

Sampling is the process of selecting suitable respondents or participants for inclusion as a representative of the entire population (Schneider, 2003). The process of choosing who will be participated is considered to be a very essential part of the research, because inappropriate way of sampling and selection endanger the integrity, results and outcome of the research. Researchers rarely survey the entire population because the cost of a census is too high. The three main advantages of sampling are that the cost is lower, data collection is faster, and since the data set is smaller it is possible to ensure homogeneity and to improve the accuracy and quality of the data.

McMillan and Schumacher address that proportional stratified cluster sampling is considered appropriate in case of large populations which can be classified as units or groups. The proportional stratified cluster sampling associates with a process of dividing the population into homogeneous subgroups in order to yield a simple random sample in each subgroup (McMillan and Schumacher, 2010).

In this study, the selection of expatriate academics was based on proportional stratified cluster sampling. The four universities were located in two areas (far north and near north) which was considered as units and each unit included two universities. The number of participants that would be obtained in each selected division was determined based on the identified minimum sample size ($n= 159$). The required sample size of each stratum was selected based on the proportional size of the population of each location. To predict the required number of participants in each stratum or unit, In addition, the percentage of each studied location was multiplied by the sample size (159). Table 3.3 displays the required sample for each location based on their proportional size.

Table (1): Summary of Required Sample for Each Location Based on Their Proportional Sizes

Location	No. of Faculty Members	% of sample	Min. Sample
Far North	900	45%	72
Near North	1100	55%	87
Total	2000	100 %	159

The 159 foreign faculty members who comprise the sample in this study were randomly selected. The researcher obtained the expatriate academics contact details list from Al-Jouf University and University of Ha'il research department and deanship of faculty affairs. The faculty members were selected randomly from the provided lists. The provided lists included the name, university Id. Number, and name of university for all expatriate faculty members. The procedure for selecting each sample members was manually performed by choosing the 5th number of each list (e.g. 5, 10, 15, and so on), to ensure that the sample number of each region have been met.

Research questionnaire

This research was a partial replicating of previous empirical tests of the Black et al. (1991) model of expatriate adjustment study. A constructed measurement scale of Black (1988), Black and Stephens (1989) was used in this study. Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al. (2005) address this scale as the most often used measurement of expatriate adjustment and that employment has provided substantial amounts of evidence regarding expatriate adjustment (Hechanova, et al., 2003; Mendenhall, et al., 2002).

The questionnaire consisted of three parts. The first part deals with socio-demographic data gathered through close-ended questions. In the second part, there were 14 items which measured expatriates cultural, interactional and work adjustment. Seven items were focused on culture adjustment which in original study scored .82 regard reliability. Four items measured interaction adjustment with a produce of .89 reliability score. The last three items of the second part measured work adjustment with a score of .91 in the original study. The last part of the questionnaire was the culture distance scale which consisted of 8 items. In the original study, the scale reported an acceptable reliability level for this scale with .64.

Research Questions

The study has the following questions to address the problem:

1. What is the influence of previous work experience on self-initiated expatriates' cultural, interactional and work adjustment in higher institutions in Saudi Arabia?

2. Do marital status has significant difference with overall self-initiated expatriates' socio-cultural adjustment in higher institutions in Saudi Arabia?

Data Collection

The research design provided for the researcher to invite participants who met the research criteria at the participated universities. A total of 277 expatriate academics were invited to participate and complete the study questionnaire to insure the reliability of the data. To avoid problems such as survey questionnaires not reaching their destined addressees or prospective participants being uncooperative and not willing to complete their questionnaires, the researcher decided to use oversampling technique. Bartlett et al. (2001) suggested that when utilizing oversampling technique, a researcher should consider the anticipated return rate based on prior research experience. Therefore, the estimated return rate was applied to adjust the minimum sample size and to calculate how many responses that should be added. However, it was considered that 74% was the anticipated return rate based on. This estimation of the responses percentage rate was based on a related study conducted by Bhuian et al. (2001) who employed a survey questionnaire to study the relationships of work-related attitudes job characteristics and demographics concerning self-initiated expatriates in Saudi Arabia. Based on that, the researcher adjusted the sample size to 277 expatriate academics. The calculation of the sample size was obtained by $(0.74 \times 159 = 118)$ and adding the result to the minimum sample size of the study ($n=159$). Consequently, number of the distributed questionnaires was 277 to expatriate academics.

The invitation was made by sending a letter to the selected expatriate academics internal mailbox. The letter included a plain language statement and a bilingual version of the questionnaire (Arabia and English). The plain language statement provided information to respondents as the purpose of the study, time needed to complete the survey and how to contact the researcher. The participants were asked return the completed questionnaires to a temporary designated researcher mailbox. Respondents were informed also about assurance of their confidentiality and securing all collected data. Participants were given a two-week time to return the completed survey. Initially, the participants show a low response rate with nearly thirty percent. So, researcher considered the midterm exam period and run a follow-up reminder letter two weeks later to encourage who had not responded yet.

Data Analysis

For the purpose of the study, the statistical package for the social sciences (SPSS) computer program for Windows was used. In all tests of the hypotheses, the 0.05 confidence level was be used for determining statistical significance. Descriptive and Inferential statistics was used in the study. Frequency distributions tables was constructed to portray the findings in tabular forms. This can be use to collect, tabulate, analyse and present the data in a more systematic and for an ease in visualization analysis. Percentages were also computed and can be seen in the frequency distribution to get the percentage allocation of each item. Weighted Mean was also used to get the level of the answers of the participants on each item. To test the significant relationship when data were ordinal, the Spearman Rho and Pearson correlation tests were used.

Empirical Analysis

A total of 248 returned questionnaires were collected by the researcher. The questionnaires were examined by the researcher before analysis data were conducted. As a result, 11 returned questionnaires were removed as 8 respondents did not complete the survey questionnaire and 3 were identified as Saudi national. Therefore, 237 was the total valid number of return questionnaires, for an adjusted response rate of 85.5%. The response rate was adequate and satisfying the requirement of testing the hypothesis at 95% confidence level.

Demographics

There were eighty six participants aged between 25-35 years old (36.3%). Over 50% of the respondents were of the ages 36-50 ($N=120$). Participants who aged between 51-60 years old had 12.2% of the total sample ($N=29$). Lastly, there were 2 participants who aged more than 60 years old. In the concern of gender profile, the number of female participants accounted for only 38 respondents (16 %). However, male participants outnumbered female expatriate academics while the number of male participants was 199 which aggregate 84 % of the total sample. Participants self-reported 16 different nationalities. Jordan was the most frequent country reported by participants with a percent of 31.5 % ($N=63$).

Similarly, Egypt was the next most frequent country with a percent of 31% (N=62). The next most three frequent countries were Sudan (11%), India (5%) and England (4%). The majority number of participants were reported as Arabic speaker with over 81% (N=192). English Language were the next native language among participants with nearly 10 percent of the total sample (N= 23). Participants who spoke other native languages were 21 which aggregated almost 9 %. The most degree that participants earned was Doctorate with a percent of 59.1 (N=140). The next frequent degree among participants was Master degree which aggregated 27 % (N=64). Expatriate academics who hold Bachelor degree were 32 participants (13.5 percent).

Descriptive Analysis of Socio-Cultural Adjustment

The socio-cultural adjustment which expatriate academics involved constitute a dependent variable. This adjustment of expatriate academics measured by a scale consisted of 14 items and divided into three subscales which were cultural (7 items), interactional (4 items) and work (3 items) adjustment. The mean for each subscale was determined by adding the scores for the items divided by the number of these items for each subscale. The minimum score was 1.0. and the maximum score that a respondent could obtain was 7.0. Scores were considered adjusted at low level when mean ranging from 1 to 3 , a moderated level of adjustment was considered when mean ranging from 3.01 to 5.01 and the last level which was high level of adjustment when the mean scores ranging between 5.02 and 7.

The descriptive analysis of socio-culture adjustment scale provides valuable information in the favour of expatriate academics cultural, interactional and work adjustment. The overall socio-adjustment of expatriate academics showed mean scores of 4.45 which considered as a moderated level of adjustment. This meant that expatriate academics were more tend to be adjusted as two third came from Jordan and Egypt which are neighbour countries. Table (2) indicates that work adjustment subscale mean was 5.52 which was considered as a high level of adjustment. However, the cultural adjustment and interactional adjustment subscales means were 4.40 and 3.80 respectively which were considered as moderated levels of adjustment.

Table (2): Means and Standard Deviations of the Socio-Culture Adjustment Sub-Scale

Adjustment Scale	Mean	SD
Cultural Adjustment	4.40	1.20
Interactional Adjustment	3.80	1.60
Work Adjustment	5.52	1.15
Overall Adjustment	4.45	1.03

Further descriptive was presented in Table (3) about means and standard deviations of the respondents self-reporting from the participating universities regarding socio-cultural subscale items. It included 7 items for the cultural adjustment subscale, 4 items for the interactional adjustment subscale and 3 items for the work adjustment subscale.

Most of the cultural adjustment subscale items were scored means at a moderate level of adjustment. The computed mean for the 'food' item had the highest computed mean given by the participants with a mean score of 5.10 while the items of 'living condition in general', 'housing condition' and 'shopping' had had shared the next most moderated means scores by 4.79. However, the item of 'entertainment/recreation facilities & opportunities' had a low level of adjustment with a mean of 2.83. Items of the interactional adjustment subscale had a moderated level of adjustment when 'interacting with Saudi nationals on a day-to-day basis' had the highest mean by 4.15 among others. Noticeably, all means of the work adjustment subscale items were above 5.02 which in sequence represented a high level of adjustment. The item 'my specific job responsibilities' had the highest scored mean by 5.91.

Table (3): Cultural, Interactional and Work Adjustment Means and Standard Deviations

Adjustment Scale	Mean	SD
<i>Cultural Adjustment</i>		
Living conditions in general	4.79	1.509
Housing conditions	4.79	1.504
Food	5.1	1.514
Shopping	4.79	1.692
Cost of Living	4.6	1.666
Entertainment/recreation facilities & opportunities	2.83	1.749
Health care facilities	3.68	1.766
<i>Interactional Adjustment</i>		
Socializing with Saudi nationals	3.56	1.844
Interacting with Saudi nationals on a day-to-day basis	4.15	1.724
Interacting with Saudi nationals outside work	3.49	1.792
Speaking with Saudi nationals	3.98	1.779
<i>Work Adjustment</i>		
My specific job responsibilities	5.91	1.264
Performance standards and expectations of my job	5.38	1.549
My supervisory responsibilities	5.27	1.468

The purpose of the study was determine if there was a significant association that exists between the previous work experience and the self-initiated expatriates' socio-cultural adjustment among the participants in terms of the cultural adjustment, interactional adjustment and work adjustment. A Spearman Rho statistic test was used to answer the problem. Spearman's rho is a measure of a linear relationship between two variables. It differs from Pearson's correlation only in that the computations are done after the numbers are converted to ranks.

From table (4), the relationship between the previous job held and the over-all self-initiated socio-cultural adjustment was examined, the Spearman's Rho was calculated, $r_s(234) = -0.026$, $p = 0.688$, which means that there is no significant relationship between previous job held and the overall adjustment. Similarly, the correlation coefficient that is found between the previous job held, and the cultural adjustment is, $r_s(234) = -0.071$, $p = 0.281$, for the interactional adjustment $r_s(234) = 0.060$, $p = 0.359$, for work adjustment $r_s(234) = 0.019$, $p = 0.774$. The p-value computed for the said adjustment scales is greater than the threshold value of 0.05. This indicated that there is no significant relationship that exists between the previous job held and the cultural adjustment, interactional adjustment and work adjustment.

Table (4): Spearman-Rho Test of Relationship between previous work experience and the self-initiated expatriates' socio-cultural adjustment in terms of the cultural, interactional and work adjustment

Variable	r	p-value	Description
Cultural Adjustment	-0.071	0.281	No Significant
Interactional Adjustment	0.060	0.359	No Significant
Work Adjustment	0.019	0.774	No Significant
Overall Adjustment	-0.026	0.688	No Significant

For the marital status of the participants, as shown in table (5) the computed mean score in the overall self-initiated expatriates' socio-cultural adjustment was 4.4918 for "married with family", for the "married without family" was 4.2633 and for the "single" was 4.5421 which resulting to a computed f-ratio statistic of 1.118 with a computed degree of freedom of 2 and 234. The computed p-value for the marital status was 0.329 would mean that there was no significant difference that exists in the means for the different groups of marital status regarding the score in the overall self-initiated expatriates' socio-cultural adjustment based on marital status.

Table (5): Test of Difference in the overall self-initiated expatriates' socio-cultural Adjustment based on the Demographic Characteristics.

Marital Status	Mean	test Statistic	df	P-value	Description
Married with a family	4.4918				
Married without family (family at home-country)	4.2633	F=1.118	2,234	0.329	Not Significant
Single	4.5421				

Conclusions

Failure in international expatriation adjustment increases personal and organizational expenses. In specific, deficient information prior to international assignment may preclude setting employee and employer expectations. The increased numbers of self-initiated expatriates maintain the need on how this sub-category of expatriates are adjusted. Therefore, this study sought more information about adjustment levels of expatriates and the role of previous experience to address such problems. In addition, married expatriates with and without accompanying spouses were compared to single expatriates during expatriation.

Interestingly, the findings of this study contradicts numerous previous studies (Bhaskar-Shrinivas, et al., 2004; J S Black, et al., 1999; J.S. Black & Porter, 1991; Lee, 2005; J. Selmer, 2000, 2002; M.A. Shaffer, Harrison, & Gilley, 1999; R Takeuchi, et al., 2005) where strong correlation between previous experience and adjustment was found. The results indicate that no relationship was found on how many previous experience hold and any facet of socio-culture adjustment. In other words, self-initiated expatriates with or without previous international experience did not reflect statistically significant results. The nature of cross-culture adjustment complexity may explain this findings.

The investigation of the marital status role indicates no significant difference between the three types of expatriates and socio-culture adjustment. Van Oudenhoven et al. (2003) stress that it is believed that people who are married have a high level of well-being. On the contrary, single expatriates are found better adjusted to work in compare to married people (Morley & Flynn, 2003). This findings may reflect that marriage is unique and could be differ from person to other.

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