

## ABSTRACT

The ever increasing rate of globalization has propelled multinational corporations (MNCs) into setting up subsidiaries to establish their presence in the international arena as well as to sustain a competitive advantage. Global human resource management plays an important role in determining the success of MNCs in international business markets via strategies, particularly in facilitating the process of expatriation. Cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates is the major driving force for successful international expansion and expatriation.

Each year, an increasing number of expatriates come to Thailand to take up international assignments of which the largest number is Japanese expatriates. The increases in the standard of living and production costs in Japan have influenced Japanese companies to search for nearby locations, such as Thailand, for their investments. Therefore, it is important to examine the cultural adjustment of Japanese expatriates working in Thailand.

As the consequences, this study examines crucial antecedents of cross-cultural adjustment of the Japanese expatriates in Thailand. The independent variables include learning characteristics, congruency of organizational cultures, effectiveness of cross-cultural training, mentor programming and demographic profile. There is also an important moderator which is spouses' degree of adjustment in the novel environment of the host country. The conceptualization of this model is aimed at understanding the mechanisms required to overcome impacts of cultural distance between the two countries; Thailand and Japan.

This quantitative study is conducted using questionnaire surveys. A total of 412 Japanese expatriates working in subsidiaries in Thailand were surveyed. The statistical treatments employed were structural equation modeling (SEM) and Analysis of Variance (ANOVA).

The findings demonstrate that individual learning characteristics, effectiveness of cross-cultural training, and spouse adjustment are the major predictors of the Japanese expatriates' cross-cultural adjustment in Thailand. In addition, mentor programs and age groups can also create significant difference on the overall degree of cross-cultural adjustment as well. Hence, this study utilizes the results and findings to provide recommendations on the effective practical mechanisms for Japanese MNCs in Thailand to facilitate their expatriates' degree of cross-cultural adjustment. This study recommends the expatriates and spouses to be provided with proper processes of selection, preparation, and support from the effective human resource management practices of their Japanese multinational corporations. This study also concludes by providing suggestions for further research.

