

ABSTRACT

Multinational Companies (MNCs) implement an expatriation strategy to control and coordinate their business operations overseas and to ensure successful competitive outcomes. This study investigates cross-cultural adjustment of 387 British expatriates working in 5 cities in Thailand. From literature review of expatriates' adjustment and Shaffer, Harrison and Gilley's (1999) expatriate adjustment model of general adjustment, interaction adjustment and work adjustment were regressed on three key factors namely personal factors, work-related factors, and cultural factors. Both quantitative and qualitative methodologies were used in this study. Data were collected using questionnaire and conducting interviews. Multiple Regression Analysis was used to test the hypotheses. Results highlight the importance of spouse/family adjustment in expatriates' general adjustment. The findings also show that spouse/family adjustment and social support are the main predictors of British expatriates' interaction adjustment. In addition, social support, spouse/family adjustment, work role discretion, work role conflict and hierarchical power of expatriates are significant predictors of British expatriates' work adjustment. Three recommendations were given based on the findings of the study. Firstly, selection criteria for overseas assignment should focus on technical competence including language training programs in order to facilitate expatriates' work adjustment. Secondly, support from spouse and family as well as organization support should be provided as they are outstanding factors found to enhance all three facets of British expatriates' adjustment. Thirdly, social support programs should be initiated within the organization before the overseas assignment is given to facilitate the British expatriates' adjustment in the foreign country. This study also includes suggestions for further research.

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