

## **Cross-Cultural Training and Success Versus Failure of Expatriates**

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### **Abstract**

The past few decades has seen an explosion in research on expatriates and cross-cultural training. There has been controversy and an unending debate on the goals, effectiveness, implementation and processes of CCT. There are very few reviews that have condensed literature detailing the best practices of CCT. This review also details the success and failure of expatriates. The antecedents or moderators that play a role in the evaluation of success and failure have been outlined in this literature review. It also brings to light certain solutions that will make CCT more effective and provides directions for future research.

*Keywords:* Cross Cultural Training, Expatriates

## **Cross-Cultural Training and Success Versus Failure of Expatriates**

Globalization largely affects corporate culture and the employees therein. With the onset of economic globalization the onset of cross-cultural training (CCT) and expatriate training came about. During the 1960s and 70s, cross-cultural research examined multiple-cultural phenomena such as expatriate employment, differences in national cultures and relationship between culture and motivation, among others (Littrell & Salas, 2005). As research advanced in cross-cultural training, the 1980s and 90s saw an upsurge in the amount of research space accorded to cross-cultural research. And one major catalyst that brought about the change was the increasing globalization of the economy.

There are a number of studies that support the effectiveness of CCT (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Osman-Gani & Rockstuhl, 2009). There has been an upswing in terms of emphasis on cross-cultural research despite the fact that researchers have not been able to put research advances into practice. There has been controversy and an unending debate on the goals, effectiveness, implementation and processes of CCT (Baumgarten, 1995; Brewster, 1995; Selmer, 2001). There are very few reviews that have condensed literature detailing the best practices of CCT (Littrell & Salas, 2005; Littrell, Salas, Hess, Paley, & Riedel, 2006). This review attempts to condense the literature available to support both points of view and to find a probable gap in literature for further research. The researcher reviewed the period after the 1980s as the term 'globalization' became popular in that era with economists using it.

For the purpose of this article, the terms 'expatriates' and 'CCT' need to be defined specifically. Expatriates are defined as individuals who relocate from one country to the other for at least one year (Littrell et al., 2006). CCT is defined as 'the educative processes used to improve intercultural learning via the development of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies needed for successful interactions in diverse cultures' (Landis & Brislin, 1996; Morris & Robie, 2001; Littrell et al., 2006). In the past decade numerous studies evaluated the effectiveness of CCT. That led many researchers to study success versus failure of CCT. Studies have supported both points of view (Deshpande, 1992; Kealey & Protheroe, 1996). This review is significant because it does not just look at the larger picture, but it also explores the finer details of the various factors affecting the success and failure and definitions of the terms in context of the expatriate and the organization at large. This review is also important because it attempts to answer how success in CCT training is measured and to reveal the factors that play a role in the evaluation of success and failure. This review is imperative because few research studies have collated information about the same, or even researched about the same.

### **Research Questions**

Four major research questions will be answered in this review

1. How is success in CCT training for expatriates measured?
2. What is the definition of success and failure in the context of CCT?
3. Which moderators play a role in the evaluation of success and failure?
4. What are the models of evaluation?

### **Methodology**

This review focused on published research on cross-cultural expatriate training. The researcher reviewed all bodies of research that mentioned expatriation, cross cultural training, and multi-cultural training. Searches included research articles and dissertations in scholarly

journals using electronic databases, including ERIC, PsycInfo, PsycARTICLES, Digital Dissertations, ABI Inform, and Psychology and Behavior Sciences Collection. The reference lists for the articles as well as relevant articles were examined. Key search items used were 'cross-cultural training', 'expatriates', 'expatriate training', 'multicultural training', 'success of cross cultural training', 'failure of cross cultural training', 'diversity training'. The articles selected reported results dealing with expatriate and cross cultural training after 1980.

### **Cross-cultural training (CCT) and expatriates**

CCT has been defined in a myriad different ways, but the definition to understand it in its entirety is that 'it is the educative processes used to improve intercultural learning via the development of the cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies needed for successful interactions in diverse cultures' (Landis & Brislin, 1996; Morris & Robie, 2001, Littrell et al, 2006). CCT has evolved a great deal from what it was in the past. While it was only delivered face to face earlier, nowadays technology makes it possible to impart CCT either through the internet or through self-paced learning modules. CCT has been incorporated into multicultural training, while not being limited to training expatriates in just one culture. Whereas originally CCT was focused on preparing employees for overseas assignments, its incorporation into multicultural training means that organizations are now using it to improve the cultural awareness of domestic employees with the hope that it would empower them to interact with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. Moreover, CCT training is now extended to members of multicultural teams are being prepared using techniques of CCT.

The removal of national protectionist trade policies, de-regulation of international fiscal and monetary markets, and rapid advances in communications and distribution channels have contributed to the increasing numbers of organizations that have decided to expand their operations across international borders in the last two decades. The international movement of labor that has been concomitant to such expansion of international business has meant that issues associated with the management of human resources across international borders have become of increasing importance to international Human Resource Management (IHRM) managers and academics. Much has been written about the saliency for individuals and organizations to be cross-culturally sensitive, adaptive and responsive when managing internationally if non-adjustment and expatriate failure is to be avoided.

Expatriates are defined as individuals who relocate from one country to the other for at least one year (Littrell et al., 2006). Most expatriation trainings focus on long term expatriation as opposed to short term or extended business visits. The difference between expatriation and short term visits is intensity because during a short term visit, the individual is mentally aware that he or she is going back to the home country, and is aware that it does not require as much adjustment as long term expatriation.

Expatriates play central roles as controllers, coordinators and those who transfer knowledge within multinational and global firms. However, there is a lack of competent expatriates within companies (Suutari & Burch, 2001). Thus, training becomes an important way to promote the competence of expatriates.

### **Selection of expatriates by organizations**

Since the 1970s a surplus of literature in the field of IHRM has highlighted the vital importance of organizations providing comprehensive, strategic, country-specific programs of preparation for expatriates managing abroad if the costs of expatriate failure for organizations

and expatriates are to be minimized and cross-cultural capability achieved (Caligiuri, 2000; Forster, 2000; Osman-Gani, 2000; Sargent & Matthews, 1998). At the core of this argument was the belief that better selection techniques (Black, Gregersen & Mendenhall, 1992; Harvey, Speier & Novicevic, 2001; Richardson, 2000; Tung, 1982), cross-cultural training (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1991; Desphande & Viswesvaran, 1992; Selmer, 2001; Tung, 1988; Zakaria, 2000), and in-post support (De Cieri, Dowling & Taylor, 1991; Harris, 1989; Hippler, 2000; Kraimer, Wayne & Jaworski, 2001), can play a major role in contributing to expatriates' intercultural effectiveness. Despite a recent survey suggesting that expatriates want their employers to provide cross-cultural assistance to them and their families (Britt, 2002), research conducted over two decades has consistently shown that international organizations either neglect or handle expatriate cross-cultural preparation poorly (Osman-Gani, 2000).

Multinational companies (MNCs) can maximize the likelihood of expatriate success through appropriate selection programs. Since the dimensions comprising the performance construct for expatriate positions differ from performance in domestic positions, expatriate employees in a foreign environment need a somewhat different set of skills and abilities to accomplish the same job they performed successfully in a domestic environment (Liu & Lee, 2008; Tung, 1981)

Lee and Croker (2006) suggested four perspectives when selecting employees for CCT:

1. A competence perspective of expatriate training which looks at the personal characteristics of expatriates
2. A task perspective of expatriate training which examines the relationships between characteristics of expatriate assignments and the needs of expatriate training.
3. A culture perspective of expatriate training – Individuals tended to perceive culture factors differently, and expatriate perceiving higher cultural differences between the parent country and host country might need higher levels of expatriate training
4. Learning style and teaching modes as moderators of training performance – Learning style analysis has become a critical element in the expatriate training process (Lam, 1998). The analysis of the learning styles of the expatriates is useful in identifying what kinds of training modes should be offered before and after their departure. To enhance the effectiveness of training, trainers should deliver materials in particular teaching modes to fit the interests of the various learning style of the learners.

Besides selection techniques, cross – cultural adaptation is the biggest challenge that derails expatriate success (Jassawala, Truglia, & Garvey, 2004). Therefore, Jassawala et al., suggest ways to ensure success. Helping expatriates understand and manage conflict situations arising from cross-cultural differences, using emotional intelligence as a selection procedure, and enhancing training content and methods to prepare participants for the day-to-day reality of interacting with host nationals, thus creating lower stress familiarization pre-sojourn visits can all contribute to the success of expatriation. Tan, Hartel, Panipucci and Strybosch (2005) suggest that emotional management skills are pertinent to the study of expatriate experiences and important to achieving successful cross-cultural operations.

### **Characteristics of Expatriate Training**

MNCs have realized that the way to thrive and not just survive in the global market is by developing global human resource management strategies. Even though the tasks carried out in

the same organization are similar across continents, differences exist. A popular way of trying to have similar processes in the same organization in different parts of the world is to send an upper level executive overseas to manage the operations of a foreign subsidiary. These expatriates, usually from the head office, are responsible for various processes in the organization such as transferring technologies, starting up an operation in a foreign location, managing mergers and acquisitions, transmitting organizational culture, to name a few.

CCT is an essential theme for the success of expatriates, and has been the theme of much research (Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991). It is ironic, however, that even though there is much research recognizing its importance and advocating CCT, many corporate leaders do not provide CCT for employees and doubt training's effectiveness for expatriates. Research indicates that most CCT is provided in North American MNCs and even amongst those only about 30 percent of US managers sent on overseas assignments receive minimal CCT prior to departure (Goldstein & Smith, 1999). The primary notion in the mind of corporate leaders is that a manager who is successful in the United States will be equally effective in another country (Black & Mendenhall, 1990).

The basic premise for CCT stems from the belief that it will help acclimatize the individual to the new culture and be effective in the new role. CCT can facilitate adjustment by involving the gradual development of familiarity, comfort, and proficiency regarding expected behavior and the values and assumptions inherent in the new culture (Torbiorn, 1982, cited in Black & Mendenhall, 1990). There have been efforts to develop a theoretical framework of CCT (Shim & Paprock, 2002).

Managing and developing the international careers of managers cannot be done by introducing isolated one time interventions in response to crises of succession, performance skill shortages or business operations (D'Annunzio-Green, 1997). Researchers have emphasized that CCT should be an integrated and coordinated approach, and if it is not, it would remain ad hoc and reactive. CCT will be effective if it takes into account the cultural transition for the expatriate as well as the short term and long term goals of the organization. Such preparation would be more effective if it included goal-setting, performance expectations, and awareness of socio-cultural limitations of operating from a business and social perspective (Hutchings, 2003).

### **Importance of CCT Research**

CCT research is important for a host of reasons. One of them is expatriate failure. When an expatriate leaves the country, he or she is faced with many difficulties such as food habits, culture, and a difference in managerial practices. These can lead the expatriate to return home early which has high costs (Black & Mendenhall, 1990). Lost opportunities, delayed productivity, or damaged relations are considered a loss (Bennet, Aston & Colquhoun., 2000; Selmer, Torbiorn & de Leon, 1998). It was estimated that 30 percent offer their employees CCT and most of these programs are one day briefings (Bhagat & Prien, 1996; Black, 1988; Deshpande & Viswesvaran, 1992). One day briefings do not enable expatriates to anticipate the change they will be experiencing overseas.

Also, there is a lack of empirical evidence regarding the implementation and effectiveness of CCT (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Deshpande & Viswesvaran, 1992; Selmer et al., 1998). Most of the studies on expatriation have been theoretical and few empirical studies have been conducted to study the relationship between CCT and expatriate performance (Littrell et al., 2006). There have been many theories propounding the relationship between CCT and expatriate success but due to lack of empirical testing, practitioners and fellow researchers are

left wondering which theory is most applicable to CCT research. CCT is also important because of inconsistencies in classifying effective performance. Even though efforts have been made in that direction (Harzing & Christensen, 2004), evidence needs to be more conclusive. With many operational but floating definitions regarding success and failure, it has been difficult for researchers to compare results across studies and meta-analyses. Lastly, constant changes in the workplace with an increasing diversity necessitate additional CCT research. Multicultural teams have become common phenomena and therefore, CCT is required not only to improve the performance of individual expatriates, but also to identify training strategies and interventions that would be beneficial for preparing multicultural teams to interact effectively in uncertain environments (Littrell et al., 2006).

### **A Definition of Success and Failure of Expatriates**

A crucial issue in the consideration of CCT is the definition of success and failure. Expatriate failure, presently estimated to cost organizations in the range of US\$250000-US\$1000000 (Varner & Palmer, 2002), was initially defined by organizations and IHRM literature as being the measurable financial costs of early return of expatriates and disruption to international operations or as expatriates who are not retained by their organization following completion of an international assignment (Garonzik, Brockner & Siegel, 2000). The definition was later expanded to include the less measurable financial costs of expatriates who may complete international assignments but who contribute to loss of business confidence and damaged relations to the host country market through committal of cultural faux pas (Harzing, 2002; Selmer, 2002).

Most studies regard premature return as the one and only measure of failure either with or without listing reasons. Others use *expatriate failure* as a term encompassing a broad range of themes such as premature return, low performance, and adjustment problems. Many other terms, such as expatriate turnover and transfer (Naumann, 1992) and recall rates (Tung, 1981), are also used interchangeably. Even articles dealing with other areas of expatriate management routinely refer to (high levels of) expatriate failure to frame their arguments. Some authors do question the validity of the understanding, but they do not offer alternatives (Harzing, 1995; Forster, 2000).

In conclusion, the established understanding of the term *expatriate failure* consists of a core of the categories of 'premature end to an international assignment' and 'premature end caused by a reason'. An understanding of expatriate failure as 'underperformance, or similar, during the assignment' is also unfolding, and some contributions include repatriate turnover (expatriate leaving the company shortly after repatriation) and repatriation problems. However, the literature has been missing a critical, systematic and integrated approach to summarize these various definitions.

Success and failure would be measured as the contribution of the expatriate to the mission of the firm and the long term operations/bottom line of the firm (Palmer & Varner, 2000; Caliguri, 1997). More recently, several articles have attempted to discard the "myth of high expatriate failure rates" (Daniels & Insch, 1998; Forster, 1997; Harzing, 1995; Harzing, 2002; Insch & Daniels, 2002). Even though some contemporary authors still continue to support this myth (Harvey et al., 2001), there is a growing acceptance that failure rates might never have been as high as originally claimed.

### **Models of Success and Failure in the Context of CCT**

Harzing and Christensen (2004) have presented two models with two possible scenarios for an international assignment in order to clarify the understanding of the terms success and failure in the context of CCT. The first model is the 'ideal' type scenario where the expatriate 'life-cycle' is depicted as an unbroken circle, starting with recruitment and selection, hiring, the actual assignment and ending with the repatriation phase. After repatriation the expatriate might continue with his or her old job in the home organization or the cycle may start over again with the employee starting on a new international assignment. The second model illustrates all potential outcomes or scenarios for international assignments that have been identified from the literature and working professionals. By mapping out the potential scenarios from international assignments, a range of outcomes or scenarios emerges that is much broader than the currently predominant understanding of expatriate failure.

In the context of model one, premature return would be seen as an undesirable outcome. However, many cases do not resemble the ideal international assignment cycle at all. Expatriates may quit their assignment and leave for better job offers outside the organization, they might get transferred to other positions within the organization, and some might get fired because they do not perform according to expectations. Hence, the ideal-type international assignment cycle is disrupted. However, the premature return can in fact be a desirable outcome by the employee. Possible outcomes from international assignments besides an inability to adjust (or the organizations inability to prepare the expatriate for the assignment) could be premature return because of an internal transfer as organizational flexibility i.e. success, and hence distinguish failure from success by the causes of the outcome.

After a lengthy explanation on the definition of failure, Harzing and Christensen (2004) argued for a more appropriate definition of expatriate failure: "the inability of the expatriate or repatriate to perform according to the expectations of the organization" (pg. 622). This definition encompasses both under-performance during the assignment (which could lead to a premature end of the assignment, but this is not a necessary condition for failure) and dysfunctional turnover after repatriation. As different organizations have different expectations and as expectations might change of time, this means that expatriate failure has to be contextually defined. They mention that the definition does not give a verdict on whether it is the expatriate or the organization that is to blame for the failure. An expatriate might for instance fail to perform because of a lack of cross-cultural skills or support. The two main components of expatriate failure in this definition are performance, and the associated concept of performance management, and turnover.

Both concepts are well established in the general human resource literature. The researchers therefore argue that it might be better to abandon the term expatriate failure altogether and focus on how the general knowledge on performance management and turnover can be applied to the domain of expatriate management instead.

Harzing and Christensen (2004) conclude with the following results of their study:

1. Expatriate management should be seen less as a one-size-fits-all function and that practices with regard to selection, training and appraisal and compensation need to be tailored to these different reasons for international transfer.
2. It is also of crucial importance that the multinational clearly communicates its expectations to the expatriate and clarifies how individual performance goals (step 2) fit into the wider organizational strategy.

3. Regular feedback is essential in managing performance (step 3), but might be more difficult to provide when headquarters and subsidiaries are separated by time and distance.
4. Regular feedback would allow the organization to signal problems in the expatriate's performance at an early stage and provide opportunities to improve this performance (step 4), hence preventing a potential expatriate failure
5. Expatriates are unlikely to function effectively if they do not perceive a clear link between performance and rewards

Since expatriate failure is costly, there has been an increasing attempt to isolate criteria that can contribute to success and select employees for expatriation that meet these criteria (Varner & Palmer, 2005). It is important to understand the characteristics of expatriates and the tasks assigned to them that influence the different kinds of training they receive.

### **Theories guiding CCT**

As mentioned earlier, researchers have propounded various theories to explain how CCT improves the success rate of expatriate assignments. This section will discuss the more prominent theories that best guide CCT.

#### **Social Learning Theory**

Bandura's social learning theory (1969) asserts that learning is a process influenced by observation and experience. Applying this to CCT, expatriates observe behavior and develop skills to interact appropriately in the host country. Therefore, they are better equipped to learn to recognize model behavior in the host country and to reproduce that behavior when required.

#### **U Curve of Adjustment**

Church (1982) explained that expatriate adjustment can be described as a function of time. In the beginning there is excitement, followed by a dip in the level of adjustment and some frustration and confusion whilst adjusting, finally followed by near complete adjustment. Applying this to CCT, the time taken to adjust to the new culture will be shorter if the expatriate is aware of what to expect in the host culture.

#### **Culture Shock Theory**

Culture shock is defined as a normal process of transition, adaptation and adjustment in which an individual who enters a foreign environment for an extended time period experiences cultural stress involving some degree of anxiety, confusion, disruption, helplessness, and irritability (Befus, 1998; Church, 1982, as cited in Littrell et al., 2006). In the context of CCT, Befus (1998) proposes that the design of CCT programs can be enhanced if the training approaches address the problems associated with culture shock.

A related theory that explains performance of expatriates is the theory of met expectations. The theory proposes that an individual holds expectations about a situation or job before he or she enters it. If initial expectations are consistent with the reality, then the individual is more adjusted, satisfied and committed (Caligiuri et al., 2001; Wanous et al., 1992 as cited in Littrell et al., 2006).



## **Sequential Model of Adjustment**

It is a model proposed by Selmer et al. (1998) and is the latest in the lineup of models. It is based on the view that training is a process and not a one-time event, meaning to say that the impact of training differs at various stages of the expatriates' posting. Selmer et al. (1998) propounded four phases of adjustment: the ethnocentric phase, culture shock phase, conformist phase and the adjusted phase.

All of the above theories have not been empirically tested, leading researchers to exercise caution when designing and evaluating CCT.

## **Influencers of CCT**

Researchers have promulgated various moderators/influencers of CCT. They can be segregated into three types (Waxin, 2004):

### **Organizational antecedents –**

- a. Corporate culture – the corporate culture, to a large extent will determine the kind of CCT that the organization provides. The CCT provided by a company that follows a global model (focus on centralization, control by headquarters) will send employees for different reasons as compared to an organization that follows a multinational model (focus on decentralization and local responsiveness). The transnational model, a newer model is seen as a cusp between the global and multinational model with a focus on connecting global and local cultural values and on co-learning (Prud'homme van Reine & Trompenaars, 2000).
- b. Organizational social support – It encompasses supervisory, co-workers and home country organization social support. Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991) suggested that it provides expatriates with a heuristic to measure what is acceptable and unacceptable in the new work context. Specific managerial behaviors that expatriates should engage in or avoid to optimize expatriate assignment performance may differ from country to country. Therefore, pre-departure training needs to include proper behaviors to be engaged in or avoided to gain the confidence of host-country workers (Vance & Paik, 2002).
- c. Intercultural training – Research has pointed towards a possibility that intercultural training enhances expatriates' intercultural adjustment. Cultural distances exist and country-specific cultural training incorporating technical competencies, expatriate networks, ethnic group social networks and resources are required to bridge such distances (Pires, Stanton & Ostefeld, 2006).
- d. Organizational dissimilarity – Perceived dissimilarity between home-country and host-country organizations is a source of uncertainty and stress and correlates negatively with adjustment.
- e. Action learning approach to training – The trainer who provides training also matters in the whole scheme especially if he or she employs a practical action learning approach to it as opposed to a theoretical one.

### **Individual antecedents –**

- a. Adjustability – Researchers have identified various dimensions of an expatriate's adjustability that would have a significant influence on CCT and its outcome. The dimensions are confidence in their own technical competencies, social orientation, willingness to communicate, substitution capacity, cultural openness and stress resistance (Waxin, 2004).

- b. Influence of individual attitude – The personal attitudes of the expatriates play a role in the end result of the CCT. Those expatriates who see themselves as dual citizens try to merge the global and local operations and find solutions that benefit both. They would also be the ones who are successful (Prud'homme van Reine & Trompenaars, 2000).
- c. Prior international experience – Frequent business travel and international experience is a relevant characteristic for the adjustment process (Church, 1982; Black, 1988). Both theoretically and intuitively, it makes sense to assume that international experience allows a quicker and more complete interaction adjustment (Waxin, 2004).
- d. Training rigor – Another probable moderator of the relationship between CCT and performance is training rigor or the degree of mental involvement and effort that must be expended for the trainee to learn the training material (Black, et al., 1992). It is also associated with the amount of time spent on training.

#### **Contextual antecedents -**

- a. Partner social support/ Family support – Partner support reduces stress and is a factor that enables the expatriate to adjust in the new environment.
- b. Length of time spent in the host country – Adjustment is a time related process and it is assumed that the more amount of time one spends in the host country, the easier it will be to get adjusted and be productive.
- c. Culture of origin – The more different the culture of the host country is from that of the home country, the more difficult it is to adjust which would also have a bearing on the effectiveness of the CCT (Waxin & Panaccio, 2005). This phenomenon is known as the effect of cultural distance (Church, 1982) or cultural toughness (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985).
- d. Local perspective – CCT is also affected by the relationship that the local host-country workers have with the expatriate. The cross-cultural issues that emerge can point to the effectiveness of CCT. A match between culture of trainer and trainee may be necessary when introducing diversity training to cultures where the practice is less familiar or value incongruent. In such cases, potential barriers or resistance should be addressed before launching training led by trainers from different cultures (Holladay & Quinones, 2005).
- e. Timing – One of the main moderating effects believed to exist involves the timing of the CCT (Littrell et al., 2006). There are debates as to whether pre-departure or post-arrival methods are better. There have been many more studies done on pre-departure rather than post-arrival.

#### **Effectiveness of CCT**

Many studies advocate the use of cross-cultural training as reflected in Black and Mendenhall's (1990) review of literature. However evidence of its effectiveness remains inconclusive (Selmer, 2005). Kealy and Protheroe (1996) claimed that most of the studies that support the effectiveness of training applied flawed methodologies or were based on anecdotal or limited information restricting their generalizability. Also, most investigations study short term business travelers as opposed to business expatriates making the findings doubtful in a corporate context (Caligiuri, Phillips, Lazarova, Tarique, & Burgi, 2001). Despite the breadth, and often depth, of research into the need for better expatriate preparation, the focus has overwhelmingly been on North American, European and Japanese cases (Black et al., 1991; Forster, 2000; Tung,

1981, 1982). The research examining expatriates in China and Hong Kong (Björkman & Schaap, 1994; Selmer, 1999; Selmer, 2001, 2002) has rarely included any other nationalities.

Studies have found that between 16 and 40 percent of all expatriate managers end their foreign assignments early because of their poor performance or their inability to adjust to the foreign environment (Black, 1988). Furthermore, as many as 50 percent who do not return early function at a low level of effectiveness (Kaye & Taylor, 1997). The critical factors in ensuring that cross-cultural training meets its intended objectives are effective trainers, effective design based on adult learning principles, appropriate models or theories of culture, and suitable resources. Evaluating CCT has presented challenges for providers, their clients and other stakeholders due to the complexity of the subject and the wide range of approaches, models and styles of training. Training program design and delivery varies, as does levels of trainer qualifications and expertise, evaluation methodology and program administration. No general guidelines exist for working with trainers and designing programs (Bean, 2006).

The relationship of expatriates with the local host country workers is also important. One of the factors measuring success and failure is a smooth working relationship between the expatriate and the local worker. In most Asian and Hispanic cultures, it is necessary to solidify a trust-based relationship between both parties (Petison & Johri, 2008; Sanders-Smith, 2007). Therefore, it is necessary to provide the expatriate with appropriate training prior to their assignment.

Many have considered cultural awareness as being central to the success of an international manager. In that case, it might be assumed that developing cultural awareness should be an essential constituent of CCT (D'Annunzio-Green, 1997). Culture might be considered to be either fundamental in the development of an international manager or an issue that is over-rated in its relevance to the success of the international manager and the overseas operation in general (Kanter & Corn, 1994). Although it is acknowledged that cultural differences exist, on paying close attention it seems that success is also intertwined with organization structure. Stereotyping and extreme ethnocentrism are a few reasons people feel their cultures are incompatible. In one study, no organization focused on culture awareness as an essential competence in selection process although they did train employees with regards to culture for specific assignments. They emphasized the business aspect as opposed to personal preparation and believed that technical orientation can override national orientation (D'Annunzio-Green, 1997).

Mixed results exist in terms of the effectiveness of different types of training (Black & Mendenhall, 1990; Celaya & Swift, 2006). Some studies revealed that the basic level and brevity of the training also limited its effectiveness in increasing participants' confidence in dealing with cultural diversity and in applying knowledge to the workplace or transferring it to coworkers (Bean, 2007).

### **Implications for HRD**

This review holds much value for the practical implications in HRD. It defines or rather redefines the focus of attention of CCT. It brings to light certain solutions that will make CCT more effective. It also highlights certain factors that CCT trainers need to pay minute attention to. The workforce is the backbone of any organization, and MNCs should pay careful attention to trends as well as published research to reduce failures that will ultimately affect its financial state as well as the organization as a whole.

### **Conclusions and directions for future research**

The purpose of this review was to compile journal articles on success and failure of expatriates with regards to CCT. The paper reviewed the definition of success and failure in the context of CCT and also viewed measures of success in CCT training. Further it outlined the antecedents or moderators playing a role in the evaluation of success and failure. The review also lists a few models that have been propounded by researchers but have not been empirically tested.

A second goal of this review, besides answering the research questions, was to identify directions for future research. Firstly, much of the research found focused on pre-departure training, expatriate adjustment, expatriate performance, expatriate training and evaluation, and cross-cultural training. Fewer articles specifically dealt with expatriate success and failure and the theoretical frameworks seemed too few and far in between. Lack of empirical evidence for these theories points researchers to empirically test them and search for some kind of direction.

Secondly, although the training of expatriates has been regarded as one of the key elements for the success of business globalization (Suutari & Burch, 2001), few studies have focused on the interrelationships among expatriate competence, training mode, learning style, and expatriate training on the effectiveness of expatriate training.

Thirdly, a majority of the studies focus on North American organizations and Japanese or Chinese firms. Very few articles dealt with expatriation in European organizations or places like Africa.

Fourthly, the workplace is getting more diverse not just in terms of culture, but also in terms of demographics, the search for articles on women expatriates yielded very few. With the number of women being employed in the workforce all over the world increasing, the number of women expatriates is increasing. However, most articles focus on the male expatriate and how the family has to compromise when it comes to expatriation. It would be interesting to see the interplay of various factors in the case of women expatriates and how that affects whether they are successful during their expatriation stint.

A vast quantity of research has been dedicated to the phenomena of CCT and expatriation. However, due to a lack of empirical evidence, much of that research is inconclusive regarding design, effectiveness, and implementation (Littrell et al., 2006). However, there is much scope for improvement in terms of synthesis of literature and new directions.

This review examined the concept of CCT, expatriation, importance of CCT research, theories guiding the same and the effectiveness of CCT in increasing expatriate performance. However, despite the 25-30 years spent in researching on CCT and various factors surrounding it, as the workplace evolves and as the world gets smaller, there is still much to be explored in this field.

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