

CULTURAL INTELLIGENCE AND EXPATRIATE INTENTION AMONG STUDENTS IN CHENNAI

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ABSTRACT

Due to high global mobility, study on migration and expatriation is gaining paramount importance in understanding the factors involved in becoming an expatriate. Cultural intelligence theory and expatriation intention factors help us to gain a better knowledge to appreciate individuals' behaviour. This research focused on college students who wanted to move abroad. The study aims to understand the cultural intelligence among the students along with the problems faced by them to realize their dream of becoming an expat. To test this assertion, data were collected in a sample of university students (N= 143) in Chennai. The data showed cultural intelligence and expatriate intention has shown no relationship and the study further paved way by suggesting the college institutions and organisations remedial steps.

Keywords: Cultural Intelligence, Expatriate Intention, Overseas Career, Brain drain

Introduction

People nowadays cross geographical and cultural boundaries to pursue employment and career opportunities. (Baruch, Budhwar & Khatri, 2007; Iredale, 2001) Both business managers and researchers are continually interested in and focused on the significance of the expatriate in the global economy (Bolino, 2007; Lee and Sukoco, 2010). International experience is a requirement for senior management (McMullen et al., 2011), and expatriates are key for the success of multinational organisations across a variety of nations. They also contribute to crucial asset management functions including knowledge transfer (Makela, 2007). For the purposes of this study, expatriation is defined as overseas relocation for work (Tharenou, 2003).

The recent trend of internationalisation includes self-initiated expatriation, where the individuals relocate to another country voluntarily. Many factors contribute to this, including the lack of career opportunities in their own country (Doherty, Dickmann & Mills, 2011), the desire to pursue an unrestricted career (Arthur, Khapova & Wilderom, 2005), the desire to travel and be adventurous (Inkson, Arthur, Pringle & Barry, 1997), and a lack of commitment to the company (Andresen, Biemann & Pattie, 2012).

Review of Literature

People with high levels of competence, qualifications, and abilities "brain drain," or emigrate, from their home nations. One significant instance of brain drain is when students from developing nations who are learning in developed nations choose not to return when their studies are finished. Yehuda Baruch (2006) did research with a sample of 949 management students who travelled to study in the UK and the US. The study showed that the students' desire to remain in the host country was influenced by their perceptions of racial differences and labour markets, their adjustment to the host country, and their ties to their families there and back home. These were the motivating elements that persuaded international pupils to remain in their home countries.

This study is based on the career construction theory and intelligence theory, where self-initiated expatriation is seen as being influenced by a person's ability to self-regulate in an adaptive vocational behaviour to thrive in another country and work to build their career. The study further aims to prove that the individuals who prefer to work abroad rely on the adaptive resource to develop their career. These assertions were tested by Presbitero and Quita (2016) with a sample of 514 Philippines University students, a country which is considered to have a high rate of migration. The findings support the notion that the interaction between an individual's intercultural competence and self-regulatory traits affects the early stages of an expatriate job.

Brain drain

Millions of young talented Indians from various disciplines have left our country over the years in search of better opportunities. For a long time, moving to a different country was regarded as a badge of honour, a feather

in one's cap. The most zealously pursued fantasy, and this was primarily due to India's inability to provide those opportunities to its citizens. (India Times)

Sunita defined brain drain as the movement of medical professionals in pursuit of better pay, a better quality of life, access to cutting-edge technology, and more stable political environments. In their research they tried to seek a solution for the key issue of why talented people leave the country. The study went on to say that people need the following in order to remain put even when better opportunities present themselves. They need the proper equipment to do their tasks, training opportunities, a network of encouraging co-workers, and recognition for the challenging work. According to the study, foreign professionals could be employed to create cutting-edge graduate education chances in their own countries and to transfer technology to fields of domestic research and development.

Foreign University in India

The University Grants Commission published draft legislation for public comment, with the goal of facilitating the entry and operation of foreign institutions in the country. Leading international universities like Yale, Oxford, and Stanford will now be able to set up campuses and grant degrees in India. The current practice of having partnership with the Indian institution to obtain their degree by partially staying back in the home country can now be better aided by starting a new campus and allowing the students to pursue their higher education at the comfort of their home.

Expatriation Intention

An intention to relocate abroad may arise as a result of self-motivation, the intervention of friends and family, or a company-sponsored programme (Peltokropi and Froese 2009). It should also be noted that self-motivated expatriation has a higher success rate than other external motivations (Hechanova, Beehr and Christiansen, 2003). Because of the higher average failure rate of expatriate managers compared to domestic managers, as well as the high rates of manager dissent to relocate overseas, multinational corporations have identified a need for global human resource managers to develop a method to identify, inspire, and retain qualified managerial talent (Harvey, 2011)

A study conducted by Ajzen gave a framework for expatriate intention. The author proposed a three factor model to analyse the motivating factor for an individual to migrate to a new country. The three facets are as follows:

- Attitude towards expatriation - A person's attitude has a significant influence on his behaviour. It can be described as an evaluation of his behaviour, which can have a positive or negative impact on expatriation. (Ajzen 1975).
- Perceived Expatriation- The belief about how easy or difficult it is to engage in a certain behaviour, as well as the overall ability and control that a person believes they have to carry out this behaviour, are all examples of perceived behavioural control. (Ajzen, 1991)
- Subjective Expatriation- Subjective norms are the social influence on a person's behaviour and the perceived social pressure, i.e., whether important people want the person to engage in or refrain from performing the actual behaviour (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1975).

The study conducted by C.A.K. Weerasinghe and S. Kumar on graduates' intention to pursue overseas jobs throws light that the students from Sri Lanka are willing to migrate to developed nations to secure employment overseas. The paper aims to find the relationship with the factors of expatriate intention i.e, attitude control, subjective norm and perceived behaviour along with self-efficacy. The researcher collected data from 400 graduates using a structured questionnaire and found all the factors of expatriate intention are well correlated with the variable self- efficacy.

Cultural Intelligence

Ang (2007) the process by which people learn about and comprehend different cultures is known as cultural intelligence. This allows individuals to perform successfully in a variety of settings with individuals from other cultures. Cultural intelligence refers to behaviours that are deemed intelligent based on the perspectives of people in specific cultures (Brislin 2006). Because globalisation has made the corporate environment more complicated, dynamic, and competitive, the ability to operate effectively in many cultural contexts, or "cultural intelligence," has never been more important for firms.

Ang and Dyne (2008) conceptualised the framework of Cultural Intelligence into four major determinants such as:

- a) Meta cognitive CQ is a strategy that involves understanding one's own thought process in order to understand and become acquainted with various cultural contexts and solve problems in a given situation.
- b) Cognitive CQ is based on how well an individual understands the concept of culture and how it shapes one's thought process.
- c) Motivational CQ refers to an individual's level of interest, drive, and adaptability in a cross-cultural situation.
- d) Behavioural CQ is the ability to understand and adapt to verbal and nonverbal actions; it is also known as the action dimension.

Need for the study

The aim of the paper is to bring out the mind-set of young citizens of India (students), migrating to other countries for career advancement and to know how cultural intelligence (CQ) has an impact on their expatriate intention. In addition, the study also helps the educational institutions and employers to understand the challenges faced by these millennials when introduced to a culturally diverse background.

Research Objectives

- 1) To study the relationship between the factors of cultural intelligence and variables of expatriate intention.
- 2) To suggest educational institutions and employers to understand the challenges faced by these millennials when introduced to a culturally diverse background.

Hypothesis

H1: CQ positively related to expatriate intention

H2: Preference to move abroad is related to the gender of the respondent

H3: Expatriation intention is related to the family income of the respondent

Research Methodology

The structured questionnaire consisted of 30 questions segregated according to the objective of the study. The primary data was collected through online questionnaire (Google form) by adopting a purposive sampling method from 143 college students who attended online classes in Chennai city. Further the collected data was analysed using tools like descriptive analysis, correlation matrix and parametric and non-parametric ANOVA using Jamovi Version 1.6.14 for attaining statistical results. Secondary data for the study was collected from published sources like academic journals and websites.

Data Analysis

Demographic variable

Gender	Male 38 (26.6%)		Female 105 (73.4%)
Educational Qualification	UG 132 (92.3%)		PG 11 (7.7%)
Family Income	Less than 3 lakhs 63 (44.1%)	3 lakhs – 5 lakhs 38 (26.6%)	5 lakhs – 10 lakhs 42 (29.4%)

Table 1 Personal Profile

Source: Computed data

Interpretation:

The above table 1 shows that 26.1% of the respondents are Male and 73.4% of the respondents are Female. As regards education, it is found that 92.3% of the respondents are Undergraduates and 7.7% are Postgraduates.

Preference to migrate	Yes 121 (84.8)	No 22 (15.2)
Preference to work or study	Work 98 (81%)	Study abroad 23 (19%)
Self-Initiated or Family friends influenced	Self-Initiated 105 (86.4%)	Family or Friends 16 (13.6%)
Willing to study in foreign university situated in India	Yes 96 (67.4%)	No 47 (32.6)

Table 2 Opinion on migrating abroad

Source: Computed data

Interpretation

Table 2 reveals out of 143 students 121 (84.8) prefers to migrate to a new country and the other 22 (15.2) prefer to stay back in India. Out of the 121 who wish to move abroad 98 (81%) students prefer to work while 23 (19%) students prefer to study. The table also reveals 105 (86.4%) students were self-influenced to go abroad and 16

(13.6%) are influenced by family and friends. Willingness to study in foreign university situated in India 96 (67.4%) are willing to study and 47 (32.6) says no.

STATEMENTS	MEAN	S.D	RANK
Quality can be compromised	3.96	0.838	I
Missing on global job opportunities	3.94	0.807	II
Might not gain the exposure of travelling abroad	3.88	0.800	III
Might not be worth for the money paid	3.87	0.821	IV

Table 3 Mean and SD on opinion of foreign university setting up in India

Source: Computed data

Interpretation

The above table 3, opinion of foreign universities setting up in India, consists of four statements. Amongst the four statements, the “Quality can be compromised” statement has scored the highest mean of 3.96 and a SD of 0.838. “Missing on global job opportunities” statement ranked second with a mean of 3.94 and a SD of 0.807. “Might not gain the exposure of travelling abroad” statement ranked third with a mean of 3.88 and a SD of 0.800. Finally, “Might not be worth the money paid” statement ranked last with a mean of 3.87 and a SD of 0.821. Therefore it can be concluded that though 67.4% students showed willingness to study in foreign universities established in India still there were few demotivating factors for students to pursue their higher education in these universities.

Inferential Analysis

Analysing Cultural Intelligence (CQ) and Expatriate Intention of students

Null Hypothesis - There is no significant difference between Cultural Intelligence and expatriate intention among students.

		METACOGNITIVE	Cognitive CQ	"Motivational CQ"	"Behavioural CQ"	EXPATRIATE INTENTION
METACOGNITIVE	Pearson's r	—				
	p-value	—				
Cognitive CQ	Pearson's r	0.419	—			
	p-value	0.004	—			
"Motivational CQ"	Pearson's r	0.493	0.672	—		
	p-value	< .001	< .001	—		
"Behavioural CQ"	Pearson's r	0.485	0.475	0.605	—	
	p-value	< .001	< .001	< .001	—	
EXPATRIATE INTENTION	Pearson's r	1.000	0.412	0.496	0.487	—
	p-value	< .001	0.005	< .001	< .001	—

Table 4 Pearson's test in Correlation Matrix

Source: Computed data

It is inferred that P-value is more than 0.05 and so the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. It can be observed that there is no significant difference between the four factors of cultural intelligence with expatriate intention. Therefore, H1 CQ showed no impact on expatriate intention.

Null Hypothesis - There is no significant relationship between preference to move abroad and the gender of the respondent.

	F	df1	df2	p
"I prefer to go abroad."	1.81	1	44	0.185
-				
	Gender	Mean	SD	SE
"I prefer to go abroad."	Male	1.21	0.412	0.0766
	Female	1.06	0.243	0.0588

Table 5 One-Way ANOVA (Fisher's)

Source: Computed data

From table 5 it is inferred that P-value is more than 0.05 and so the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Therefore, H2 is accepted there is no significant relationship between preference to move abroad and the gender of the respondent.

Null Hypothesis There is no significant relationship between expatriate intention and the family income of the respondent

Income Group	N	Mean	SD	SE	F	P
Less than 3 lakhs	63	2.03	0.657	0.200	5.60	0.012
3 lakhs – 5 lakhs	38	2.33	0.516	0.211		
5 lakhs – 10 lakhs	42	1.90	0.539	0.118		

Table 6 Group Descriptive- One Way ANOVA Welch's

Source: Computed data

From table 6 it is inferred that P-value is less than 0.05 and so the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance. Therefore, H3 is rejected. There is a significant relationship between preference to move abroad and the income group of the respondent.

Findings

Demographic variable

- It is found that 73.4 of the respondents are female and 26.6% are male.
- Out of the total sample of 143 respondents 92.3% are undergraduates and minimum 7.7% are postgraduate degree holders.

Opinion on Migrating Abroad

- The study shows that there is a huge willingness to move abroad. It is also noted that, of those who wish to move abroad are willing to join work force (81%)
- Majority of the students have exhibited self-initiation to migrate to a new country (86.4%). In pursuit of higher salaries, better access to cutting-edge technology, a better quality of life, and more stable political conditions.
- For the new law to be approved in the nation, whose objective was to make it easier for foreign institutions to operate there. Of which, 67.4% students showed interest to study in these Universities.
- The drawback of these foreign universities setting in India was also noted and students shared that there is a chance for the quality of the education to be diluted.

Inferential Analysis

- The result of Pearson's test in Correlation Matrix shows that P-value is more than 0.05 and so the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. It can be observed that there is no significant difference between the four factors of cultural intelligence with expatriate intention.
- One-Way ANOVA (Fisher's) shows that P-value is more than 0.05 and so the null hypothesis is accepted at 5% level of significance. Therefore, H2 is accepted there is no significant relationship between preference to move abroad and the gender of the respondent.
- Group Descriptive- One Way ANOVA Welch's inferred that P-value is less than 0.05 and so the null hypothesis is rejected at 5% level of significance. Therefore, H3 is rejected. There is a significant relationship between preference to move abroad and the income group of the respondent.

Limitations

1. Due to scheduling restrictions, the study's sample size is small.
2. Information was gathered from college pupils in Chennai. The results were not generally.

Conclusion

Though many students prefer to migrate, only few make it up. It is necessary that college management and the faculty members throw light on the pros and cons of migrating abroad and give them guidance on career planning and other viable options within India. The recent unspoken issue is brain drain as there are many states getting affected by the migration of the youth population in pursuit of higher salaries, better access to cutting-edge technology, a better quality of life, and more stable political conditions. It is also understood that out of 10 at least 8 are willing to move abroad which is becoming a rising demand to inculcate the cultural intelligence among the students by conducting workshops and seminars to work in a diverse group.

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