



Impact of Cross-Cultural Training Programmes in Improving Employee Management in Malaysian Mncs

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Abstract:

Multinational companies (MNCs) are dedicated to enhancing their skills in managing expatriates on global assignments in order to succeed in global business. Keeping expatriates for overseas jobs is proving to be a challenge. Many people who are deployed on foreign assignments end up quitting their employment and going back home. One of the main reasons why expats don't adapt to their new surroundings is because they can't get into the local culture. MNCs' cross-cultural training (CCT) programs for overseas workers have therefore become crucial to the smooth running of their global operations. The impact of CCT on the several components of adjustment for expats in Malaysia and China is assessed in this research. The study polled 165 groups of foreign nationals now employed in Malaysia and China. Various culturally different trainings considerably effect on unique traits of foreigners' adjustment, according to the findings of this research. There is a discussion and identification of practical consequences. The efficacy and efficiency of foreign organizations is at the heart of the present cross-cultural dilemma in emerging nations. As a result, developing-world organizations are making great efforts to work together, learn, and absorb the culture of the host nation. An empirical examination of the impact of the three elements of cross-culture—managers' home country culture, managers' experience, and culture training—on organizational performance via adoption is the goal of this article, which is based on the underlying cross-cultural approach. The study's theoretical model and assumptions were put to the test with the use of survey data collected from foreign organizations operating in Malaysia. The data was then analysed using multiple linear regression and correlation coefficients.

1. Introduction

The term "cross-cultural" refers to the study of how people from diverse cultural backgrounds, such as managers and company executives, communicate and work together in a corporate setting. Furthermore, the prevalence of globalization in recent years has given rise to the notion of cross-

cultural leadership, which aims to comprehend the effects of globalization on leadership as well as the effects of a new culture on the efficiency and effectiveness of managers[1].

As a result of recent advancements in Malaysia's industrial sector, numerous Malaysian companies have gone global, opening international branches all over the world and bringing with them overseas

expertise from the global market. This trend is true even for companies from developing nations like Malaysia. Leaders with exceptional adaptability and the ability to collaborate effectively with people from many cultural backgrounds are essential in multinational firms that deal with cultures that are quite different from their own. Changing company cultures is still a major obstacle for many companies, and it's not safe to assume that a manager's success in one region will translate to another. Businesses throughout the globe have been more globalized in recent decades, with a focus on the East Asian market. A large number of Western corporations have been merging with or purchasing Asian enterprises at a fast pace in recent years. As a result of this acquisition, major emerging nations in Asia like Malaysia have experienced new cultural influences; as a result, a new organizational culture has evolved, posing several difficulties to the leaders and managers of Malaysia. In their discussions of the projected advantages of productive training, the majority of studies have ranked CCT as one of the most significant activities of human asset management on a global scale. The purpose of this study is to examine how diverse-cultural training affects several parts of an expat's adjustment to life in China and Malaysia. In order to assist expats in adjusting to the social, cultural, and environmental systems of China and Malaysia, this study's results may lend credence to the idea of creating proactive multicultural training. This exploratory research aims to concentrate on the Asia Pacific region and lower-tier expatriates deployed on overseas assignments, since most previous studies have focused on adjustment at upper management levels. Therefore, this study will also help increase general understanding of this important topic. It might also serve as a springboard for more studies on related subjects[2].

2. Background of the Study

In the linked world of today, multinational companies (MNCs) are more likely than ever to include culturally varied personnel. Multinational corporations (MNCs) are swarming to Malaysia to capitalize on the nation's geopolitical posture in Southeast Asia and cultural wealth. These companies' staff come from many different backgrounds. Good staff management in multicultural environments calls for an in-depth knowledge of cultural variations and how they affect leadership styles, motivation, collaboration, communication, and conflict resolution in addition to technical or administrative knowledge[3].

Through CCT, which is increasingly important in HR development strategies, employees from several cultural backgrounds may collaborate more successfully. CCT programs often have as their common goals increasing management and staff cultural sensitivity, improving participants' capacity for cross-cultural communication, and increasing participants' awareness of cultural variety. Cultural differences in MNCs, where workers from other countries coexist with locals and individuals from many backgrounds, may lead to conflict, low productivity, and high staff turnover. Cross-cultural training has been demonstrated in several studies to have a number of favourable results, including improved team performance, faster adjustment periods to overseas postings, and higher degrees of employee engagement and cultural intelligence (CQ). Factors like training design, delivery strategies, corporate financing, and participant passion for learning might define the success of these initiatives even while they are under way. Along with possible opportunities and difficulties for training programs, the unique cultural dynamics of Malaysian MNCs—including the impact of indigenous, Chinese, Malay, and Indian values—are also underlined. Though increasingly popular, studies on the effectiveness of cross-cultural training in enhancing managerial abilities for MNCs headquartered in Malaysia are scarce. In an attempt to close that knowledge gap, this paper examines the impact of cross-cultural training on management styles, employee happiness, and financial results for a Malaysian multinational company[4].

3. Purpose of the Study

Examining how CCT programs in Malaysian MNCs have improved management practices for staff is the main goal of this research. There is a growing need for organizations to devise strategies that promote harmonious and productive cross-cultural work relationships in today's multicultural workforce, particularly in Malaysia, which is known for its multicultural demographic, and in today's global business environment. Examining the effects of CCT training on managers' and workers' capacity to work together in multicultural teams is the overarching goal of this research. The goal is to find out whether there is a correlation between this training and real benefits in things like team cohesiveness, leadership effectiveness, conflict resolution, and intercultural communication. In addition, the research will look at how CCT influences organizational outcomes like staff retention, performance, and productivity in addition to employee attitudes like work satisfaction, motivation, and engagement.

4. Literature Review

What researchers mean when researchers talk about a people's culture is the intangible parts of their social lives, such as their common values, beliefs, languages, communications, and traditions. When a person travels to a new nation and experiences a completely different culture, they may suffer from culture shock. When individuals experience cross-cultural adjustment in new situations, cross-cultural adjustment may help alleviate psychological stress, conflict, and anxiety both at work and in one's personal life. Research shows that when people go from one culture to another, they adapt to the new way of life and way of thinking. As a result of their cross-cultural experience, they undergo noticeable changes in their perceptions as well as physical and mental alterations. People used the term "cross-cultural adjustment" to describe this process. Interactions between individuals from different cultural backgrounds constitute cross-cultural adjustment. Working and living in a foreign culture requires a certain level of flexibility, a process known as cross-cultural adjustment or expatriate adjustment. One of CCT's primary goals is to help people from different backgrounds learn to work together constructively and effectively. The ability to quickly and easily assume different duties is another skill that is taught[5].

Cognitive, emotional, and behavioural approaches are all part of CCT. An approach to cognition that deals with data dissemination via the use of external, non-participatory social interactions. In order for people to learn how to handle fundamental social situations, the most successful method is to encourage individual answers that mirror the lifestyle of the people they want to interact with[10]. People learn new things by observing, mimicking, and emulating the behaviours of others around them. This approach is crucial when talking about cross-cultural training for expats since it highlights the importance of social interactions and observing other cultures. Expatriates' performance in cross-cultural training is enhanced by the use of social learning theory using a variety of strategies, such as language training, cultural sensitivity training, feedback mechanisms, interactive training methods, role modelling, and observational learning. Nonetheless, this research looked at how companies may use social learning theory to help expats adapt better to a new culture. Language classes and cultural awareness workshops were its primary areas of emphasis[6].

5. Research Question

How have cross-cultural training programs impacted the management of employees in Malaysian multinational corporations?

6. Methodology

Quantitative research pertains to investigations that analyze numerical data of variables using one or more statistical models. The social environment may be more effectively comprehended via quantitative study. Academics often use quantitative methods to investigate issues affecting people. Graphically represented objective data is a derivative of quantitative research. Numerical data is essential for quantitative research and must be gathered and analyzed systematically. Their assistance enables the calculation of averages, formulation of forecasts, identification of correlations, and extrapolation of results to broader populations.

6.1 Research design:

SPSS version 25 was used to analyse quantitative data. The odds ratio and 95% confidence interval were used to assess the direction and magnitude of the statistical connection. The researchers proposed a statistically significant criterion of $p < 0.05$. A descriptive analysis highlighted the key aspects of the data. Quantitative techniques are often used for mathematical, numerical, or statistical analyses of data obtained from surveys, polls, and questionnaires, or by adjusting existing statistical data using computational tools.

6.2 Sampling:

Research participants completed questionnaires to provide information for the study. Utilizing the Rao-software, researchers ascertained a study population of 941 individuals, prompting the distribution of 1236 questionnaires. The researchers received 1092 responses and removed 37 for incompleteness, resulting in a final sample size of 1055.

6.3 Data and Measurement:

A questionnaire served as the primary data gathering tool for the study. The survey had two sections: (A) General demographic information and (B) Responses on online and offline channel characteristics measured on a 5-point Likert scale. Secondary data was acquired from many sources, mostly online databases.

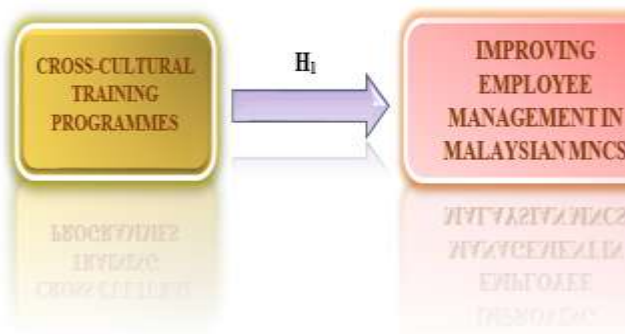
6.4 Statistical software:

The statistical analysis was conducted using SPSS 25 and MS-Excel.

6.5 Statistical Tools:

To grasp the fundamental character of the data, descriptive analysis was used. The researcher is required to analyse the data using ANOVA.

7 Conceptual Framework



8 Result

Factor analysis

A common use of Factor Analysis (FA) is to ascertain the presence of latent variables within observable data. In the absence of readily discernible visual or diagnostic indicators, it is customary to use regression coefficients to provide ratings. In FA, models are crucial for success. The objectives of modelling are to identify errors, intrusions, and evident correlations. A method to evaluate datasets generated by numerous regression investigations is the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) Test. They confirm that the model and sample variables are representative. The data exhibits duplication, as shown by the figures. When the proportions are reduced, the data becomes more comprehensible. The output for KMO is a value ranging from zero to one. If the KMO value ranges from 0.8 to 1, the sample size is deemed sufficient. These are the allowable limits, as per Kaiser: The subsequent approval requirements established by Kaiser are as follows:

A bleak 0.050 to 0.059, inadequate 0.60 to 0.69

Middle grades often range from 0.70 to 0.79.

Demonstrating a quality point score ranging from 0.80 to 0.89.

They are amazed by the spectrum of 0.90 to 1.00.

Table 1: KMO and Bartlett's Test for Sampling Adequacy Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin statistic: 0.869

The results of Bartlett's test of sphericity are as follows: Chi-square degrees of freedom are around 190, with a significance level of 0.000.

This verifies the authenticity of assertions made just for sampling purposes. Researchers used Bartlett's Test of Sphericity to determine the significance of the correlation matrices. A Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin rating of 0.869 indicates that the sample is adequate. The p-value is 0.00 as determined by Bartlett's sphericity test. A favourable result from Bartlett's sphericity test indicates that the correlation matrix is not an identity matrix.

Table: KMO and Bartlett's

KMO and Bartlett's Test		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.869
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	3252.968
	df	190
	Sig.	.000

The significance of the correlation matrices was further confirmed using Bartlett's Test of Sphericity. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy is 0.869. Employing Bartlett's sphericity test, researchers acquired a p-value of 0.00. A significant outcome from Bartlett's sphericity test revealed that the correlation matrix is invalid.

Independent Variable

Cross-Cultural Training Programmes

Structured efforts like cross-cultural training programs prepare professionals to work with people from other cultural backgrounds or in cultures that are different from their own. In order to better prepare employees for an organization's international business operations, cross-cultural training is essential. Increased business operations are a direct result of cross-cultural training's positive effects on intercultural communication, awareness, and understanding. Staff members receiving cross-cultural training will be better equipped to carry out business operations in settings where there is no universally accepted code of conduct; this will allow them to be more adaptable and responsive to changing circumstances. Helping professionals and committed volunteers overcome cultural barriers is the mission of the Cross Culture Programme (CCP). Nearly 55 Fellows from host organizations in Germany and more than 40 partner countries gain

knowledge of cross-cultural networks every year. Intercultural business training is another example of a kind of cross-cultural training. Employees will be better able to communicate and work together in a global corporate setting after completing this program. Companies are increasingly hiring people all across the globe in today's global economy[7].

Dependent Variable

Improving Employee Management in Malaysian MNCS

Strategic improvements to leadership styles, processes, and practices that successfully supervise, assist, and develop people within culturally varied organizational contexts are what Malaysian MNCs mean when they talk about improving employee management. Employee management in Malaysia extends beyond administrative tasks because of the country's diverse workforce, which includes both native-born and foreign workers. Culturally competent and inclusive practices include encouraging open and honest dialogue, fair treatment, teamwork, inspiration, dispute resolution, and assessment of performance. In Malaysia, where cultural diversity is both an asset and a liability, improving MNC staff management is of the utmost importance. Managers in this country must be adaptable and culturally aware in order to keep morale, productivity, and organizational cohesiveness at a high level[8].

Relationship between Cross-Cultural Training Programmes and Improving Employee Management in Malaysian MNCS

MNCs that have a presence in Malaysia testify to the fact that CCT programs are very advantageous to the management of workers. Misconceptions and difficulties in communication may be obstacles to effective management in a country as culturally diverse as Malaysia, where businesses often hire employees from a wide range of countries and races. It would be beneficial for both managers and workers to participate in cross-cultural training programs that educate them how to comprehend and function well within a variety of cultural atmospheres. Certain programs that stress cultural awareness, sensitivity, and flexibility may provide managers with a number of advantages, including a reduction in the amount of conflict that occurs, an increase in the amount of cooperation that takes place, greater levels of employee engagement, and improved cultural understanding and leadership abilities. Therefore, CCT plays a role in assisting Malaysian multinational corporations in enhancing

their organizational performance by fostering a more harmonious working environment via the use of people management methods that are more inclusive and efficient[9].

Based on the above discussion, the researcher formulated the following hypothesis, which was to analyze the relationship between Cross-Cultural Training Programmes and Improving Employee Management in Malaysian MNCS.

H₀₁: "There is no significant relationship Cross-Cultural Training Programmes and Improving Employee Management in Malaysian MNCS"

H₁: "There is a significant relationship Cross-Cultural Training Programmes and Improving Employee Management in Malaysian MNCS"

Table 2: H₁ ANOVA Test

ANOVA					
Sum					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	39588.620	514	5663.817	765.794	.000
Within Groups	492.770	540	7.396		
Total	40081.390	1054			

This investigation yields remarkable results. The F value is 765.794, achieving significance with a p-value of .000, which is below the alpha threshold. The hypothesis "H₁: There is a significant relationship between Cross-Cultural Training Programmes and Improving Employee Management in Malaysian MNCS" is accepted, while the null hypothesis is rejected.

9 Discussion

Initiating this study was a desire to learn more about how prior global experience relates to the effects of distinct cultural trainings on different parts of adjustment. The main finding showed that different kinds of CCT might predict how expats will adapt. Expats' adjustment is positively and significantly affected by different forms of CCT, according to the results. These results agree with those of similar research done in other emerging nations. Some experimental forms of CCT are seen to work better than more traditional ones when it comes to changing expats' views towards a foreign culture. There is also continuity between this study and ongoing studies. Among the several forms of training that were studied, the findings indicated that foreigners would gain the most from culturally targeted experimental training. This study's findings stress the importance of CCT in all kinds of international adaptations. The researcher found that CCT programs can help expatriates adjust more

quickly if they are regularly revised and implemented with the expatriates' marital status, education level, age, job title, and home and host countries taken into account. This research suggests that prior knowledge and experience abroad has a significant effect on the link between CCT and expatriates' adjustment. This may be because members' past exposure or experience of a distant country is a crucial component in the conformance process in China and Malaysia among expats. One additional thing is that it's possible to reduce adjustment-related stress, challenges, and issues with early exposure to other countries. Therefore, it is clear that past overseas experience is very significant for a successful adjustment of expatriates.

10 Conclusion

In this study, researchers in China and Malaysia looked at how different cultural training affected different parts of foreign adjustment. It also looked into how different parts of an expat's transition to a new country were affected by researchers or researchers prior international experience. According to this study, experimental forms of training are the most effective pre-departure CCTs for facilitating adaption to overseas assignments. In addition, the CCT's connection with expatriate adjustment is clearly affected by the expatriates' prior overseas experience. The results of this study are consistent with and build upon previous ones. Additionally, they back up the researcher's long-held belief—held for the previous two decades—that pre-move CCTs positively impact adaptation to overseas assignments. The findings of this research provide credence to the idea that culturally varied training programs' potential to influence international conformance may depend on contextual factors, such as the prevalence of remote work. Positive benefits and impacts of CCT on lower and middle management expatriates, especially in China and Malaysia, and on expatriates generally, may be added to the literature by this research.

Author Statements:

- **Ethical approval:** The conducted research is not related to either human or animal use.
- **Conflict of interest:** The authors declare that they have no known competing financial interests or personal relationships that could have appeared to influence the work reported in this paper

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