Role of Family in Expatriate Assignments: A Qualitative Study

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Abstract—Adopting a qualitative in-depth interview approach, this study aimed to explore family-related factors impacting expatriate assignments. The data herein collected for this purpose suggest that spouse adjustment, spouse support, children education and adjustment, and care for parents are main family-related factors that have an impact on the decisions of expatriates to accept an international assignment and general adjustment. Contrary to previous research, these four main family-related factors are found to have no negative impact on expatriate performance. Based on the findings, this study suggests that multinational corporations should incorporate spouses into cross-cultural training, provide expatriates with a clear picture of the education system of the relocation country, and provide expatriates who have aged parents in the home country who need care, with some support. Moreover, the issue of children shouldn’t be neglected by multinational corporations and requires more empirical studies. Furthermore, future research should consider including the perspectives of spouse and children on expatriate studies.

Keywords—Children Education and Adjustment; Care for Parents; Expatriate Assignment; Spouse Adjustment; Spouse Support.

Abbreviations—English as a Second Language (ESL); Multinational Corporations (MNCs).

I. INTRODUCTION

The increase of economic globalization has driven a demand for multinational corporations (MNCs) to cultivate global leaders with the abilities to effectively perform their assignments overseas, and further to maintain global competitiveness. In order to compete in the global market, many MNCs use some methods to attract and source international managers and deploy some strategies, such as selection system and training programs, to equip their expatriate managers with cross-cultural competences. While there is an increasing consensus among MNCs that expatriate performance is central to MNCs global competitiveness [Caligiuri et al., 35; Dowling & Welch, 37], research indicates that the ratio of expatriate failure is still high with the figure of 15-50 percent [Scullion & Collings, 13]. Factors relevant to expatriate failure are varied. One of the important factors impacting the performance and adjustment of expatriates is family-related problems, including the inability of spouse to adjust [Briscoe & Schuler, 6; Scullion & Brewster, 12; Tung, 40], lack of spouse’s career opportunities [Kupka & Cathro, 4], children’s maladjustment and education [Dowling & Welch, 37; Caligiuri et al., 38], parental demand [Shaffer & Harrison, 26], and lack of support for expatriate and family while on international assignments [Briscoe & Schuler, 6].

These findings demonstrate that family-related situation plays a vital role in expatriate assignments. Research into expatriate adjustment confirms that family support [Lee & Kartika, 25; Takeuchi et al., 42], spouse support [Kraimer et al., 28], and family adaptation have a positive impact on expatriate adjustments. It is not surprising, despite MNCs “appear reluctant to include the spouse/partner in the selection process, treating it in a peripheral way” [Dowling & Welch, 37], some research argued that taking family into consideration in the selection and training practices is important for MNCs [Briscoe & Schuler, 6; Dowling & Welch, 37]. Given the important role that family system plays in affecting an individual’s actions, it is imperative to understand the specific factors of family situation that influence expatriates’ assignments.

The complexity of an international assignment is ever changing and challenging. Family-related factors to international assignments are dynamic and often culturally-bounded. Tung’s [41] pioneering study and Scullion & Brewster [12] have shown that there were significant national differences in the factors resulting in expatriate failure. Waxin [30] has highlighted that country of origin moderates cross-cultural adjustment and its antecedents. Moreover, studies addressing expatriate experiences from Asian countries are sparse [Dowling & Welch, 37]. Finally, although literature lists family, especially spouse adjustment,
as top factor resulting in expatriate failure, evidence supported from empirical studies is scant [Haslberger & Brewster, 1; van Erp et al., 23]. Thus, this study recruited Taiwanese expatriates in an attempt to answer the following questions: (1) what are the major family-related problems impacting international assignments?, and (2) what are the effects of family-related factors on international assignments?

II. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1. Expatriate Assignment and the Global Competitiveness of MNCs

The advantages of using expatriates in host countries are vary. Achieving important strategic objectives and enhancing global integration [Evans et al., 36] are two main categories. According to Evans et al., [36], MNCs employ expatriates as a way to maintain control over overseas business and to transfer know-how to overseas subsidiaries. They export technologies and organizational culture to the locals [Bennett et al., 43], thus enhancing global integration [Evans et al., 36]. Bonache & Fernández [17] contend that control and coordination of local operations and the transfer of knowledge benefit from the use of expatriates. These facts address the critical linkage between expatriate management and the global competitiveness of MNCs, suggesting the importance of expatriate management to the global expansion and success of MNCs.

Although advantages of using expatriates to supervise overseas subsidiaries are discussed in the literature, not all expatriate assignments are success stories. The ratio of expatriate failure was widely discussed in the literature, with the numbers varying, depending on the region of the world, from between 16% and 40% [Employee Benefit Plan Review, 9; Tung, 40] and financial costs from US$200,000 to US$1.2 million dollars [Harzing & Christensen, 3; Chiots-Leskowich, 16]. The high ratio of expatriate failure and its cost have caused serious concerns to the MNCs, leading many researchers in the field to focus their studies on exploring the factors influencing expatriate assignments. Many examined expatriate adjustment and performance from evaluating the effect of cross-cultural training [Osman-Gani & Rockstuhl, 2; Ko & Yang, 11; Puck et al., 18]. Some explored expatriate effectiveness via looking into expatriates’ cross-cultural competence [Caligiuri, 33; Caligiuri & Tarique, 34]. Others studied expatriate performance using the dimension of culture-related issue, such as cross-cultural uncertainty [Lee, 15; Stock & Genisysyrek, 39] and cultural disparities [Thomas & Inkson, 8; Zander et al., 45]. Most recently, van Erp et al., [23] and Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., [32] indicated that lack of spouse dissatisfaction and spouse adjustment are most frequently mentioned reasons for expatriate failure. As a result, there is an increasing consensus among academic and MNCs that family situation is very important to expatriate assignments and that needs more attentions and research [van der Zee et al., 22; Dowling & Welch, 37].

2.2. Family Situation and Expatriate Assignments

Family situation refers to “the ability of the expatriate’s family to adjust to living in a foreign environment” [Tung, 40]. The pioneering research examining expatriate failure conducted by Tung [41] listed “the inability of spouse to adjust” as top of reason leading to expatriate failure. From then, many research confirmed that family situation is critical to expatriate success or failure [Selmer & Lam, 21; Harvey, 27]. A number of studies revealed that spouse adjustment and lack of spouse career development were most frequently mentioned as factors relevant to expatriate failure in the literature [van Erp et al., 23]. In addition, spouse dissatisfaction was found to have an impact on expatriate performance [Lazarova et al., 29; Adler, 31; Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 32] and would affect expatriates’ morale [Harvey, 27]. It is important to note that the spouse issue seems to be most influential factor in expatriate assignments. Thus, Franke & Nicholson [19] suggested that spouse support is listed to be the most important criterion in selecting expatriates.

Haslberger & Brewster [1] stated that family situation is a complex and multi-faceted process which requires awareness of organization. Following Tung’s study [41], Harvey [27] incorporated the dimension of children into the discussion of expatriate selection and adjustment. Scullion [14] highlighted that the growing unwillingness to disrupt children education is one of the important factors impacting international mobility in many MNCs. Wan et al., [7], investigating factors affecting Singaporeans’ acceptance of international positions, found that the presence of schooling children is negatively related to willingness to accept an expatriate assignment. Lately, Schoepf & Forstenlechner [24] concluded that children education plays an important role to expatriates’ decisions to stay or to leave current international positions.

The care of ageing parents is another important issue that concerns expatriates. According to Scullion & Collings [13], concern for ageing parents was one of major barriers for expatriates to accept an international assignment in Asian firms. Research indicated that parent demand is a stressor of expatriates which may reduce their adjustment [Parasuraman & Simmers, 44]. In contrast, in their empirical study, Lee & Kartika [25] suggested that parental demand has significant positive influence on expatriate adjustment. They argued that this is because expatriates may consider parental demand a good challenge which motivates them to work harder. However, they contended that when the situation of parental demand is overwhelming and beyond expectation, then adjustment will deteriorate.

III. METHODS

A qualitative in-depth interview approach was utilized in this research to explore family-related factors influencing expatriates’ international assignments, including adjustment to living and working life in host country, willingness to
accept an international assignment, and performance. The method was chosen for two main reasons. First, it allows expatriates participated in this study to describe their experiences and stories of cross-cultural adjustment and cross-cultural interactions as much as possible. Second, it enables the researcher to conduct “a guided conversations with a goal of eliciting interviewee rich, detailed materials” [Rosman & Rallis, 10].

3.1. Participants

By applying purposeful sampling 13 Taiwanese male expatriates working for Taiwan-based MNCs were recruited. Their ages range from 35-66 with 2-30 years of expatriate experiences. Their assignments were in the United States, Germany, Australia, Netherlands, Thailand, Malaysia, South Korea, Singapore, and Japan (Table 1). Out of the 13 participants, eleven were married, eight were accompanied by their spouses, six have children, and three brought their children along.

Table 1: Participant Demographics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Case</th>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Education</th>
<th>Marital Status</th>
<th>Number of Children</th>
<th>Accompanied with Spouse</th>
<th>Accompanied with children</th>
<th>Years of Relocation</th>
<th>Countries of Relocation</th>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>NO</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>Germany USA</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>Bachelor</td>
<td>Married</td>
<td>1</td>
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<td>YES</td>
<td>5</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>33</td>
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<td>Single</td>
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<td>NO</td>
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<td>3</td>
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<tr>
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<tr>
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<td>27</td>
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<tr>
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<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
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<td>9</td>
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<td>NO</td>
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<tr>
<td>10</td>
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<td>YES</td>
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<tr>
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<td>YES</td>
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<td>6</td>
<td>USA</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Demographic information, including age, education, number of children, marital status, years of relocation, and countries of relocations, were collected before the interviews.

3.2. Data Collection

Data was collected via semi-structured interview. Each interview was completed in two hours, following a guideline of interview protocol designed to facilitate the interview process. To best understand and elicit the views or concepts of expatriates regarding the experience of how family-related factors influenced their international assignments, the interview questions centered on issues of cross-cultural adjustment, willingness to accept an international assignment, and performance. Marshall & Rossman [5] argue that “studies making more objectivist assumptions would triangulate interview data with data gathered through other methods”. Consequently, in order to enhance the credibility of this study, self-evaluation of performance and demographics form were distributed to each participant following and before each interview, respectively. Data interviewed were audio-taped with the permission of the participants, transcribed verbatim, and sent to all participants for corrections and verifications to facilitate the development of data analysis.

Self-evaluation of performance primarily evaluated expatriate’s job-related performance on two open-ended questions about overall performance and individual job performance. 13 of 13 participants reported that they successfully completed their international assignments both in overall performance and individual job performance. 3.3. Data Analysis

This study adopted open coding and constant comparative method in the procedure of analyzing data. Open coding was the act of identifying, naming, and categorizing data. Starting from breaking down and conceptualizing raw data by line-by-line analysis, concepts pertaining to the same phenomena were grouped into categories. Further, constant comparative method was applied to systematically and carefully compare and explore the similarities and differences within and among categories so as to develop the main constructs that can best understand and explain the research problems and achieve the objective of the study.

IV. Results

The analysis of the data yielded four main constructs found to be the major factors affecting expatriate assignments, namely: (1) spouse adjustment, (2) spouse support, (3) children’s education and adjustment, and (4) care for parents. These four critical family-related factors have an impact on expatriates’ adjustment or decisions to accept or reject an international assignment.
Most participants emphasized their concerns about family members when receiving notice of their relocation overseas. “What do I do with my family?” (Case 11) “What do I do with my girl friend?” (Case 5) “What do I do with my children?” (Case 11) These, plus the “fear of losing their familiar connections” (Case 4 and 5), were the most common reactions to their international assignments in terms of family situations. Thus, making best arrangements for their family became the most important issue before they departed for the countries of relocation or while they were on international assignments.

4.1. Spouse Adjustment

Loneliness, boredom, and helplessness are the terms participants used to describe the difficulties of cross-cultural adjustment of their accompanied spouses. Language barrier is another factor leading to spouse’s maladjustment in a different cultural setting. Spouse’s cross-cultural adjustment is an issue frustrating some expatriates, impacting the expatriate’s decisions to accept another overseas assignment. However, over time, almost all accompanying spouses gradually adjusted to the local environment and found ways to live well in the new place. With this change, the spouse, in turn, was transformed into a supporting power for expatriates.

Many participants, deciding not to bring their spouse along, were concerned that their spouses might become a burden if they came along. By contrast, Case 7 presented a very different viewpoint on this issue. He thought his spouse may become more of a “burden” if he left her alone with his parents in the home country since his spouse and his mother did not quite get along. He said, “It will become a burden psychologically if I leave my spouse alone in Taiwan. I live with my mother. Conflicts between my wife and my mother will often occur when there is no husband or son to smooth things out.”

Some participants stressed that they had more trouble with cultural adjustment at the initial stage of international assignments when they brought their spouses along because they had to take care of their spouse’s difficulties of loneliness, helplessness, boredom, and language barrier. One participant (Case 10) noted that “basically, the life of an expatriate’s spouse is very hard. In fact, she did not have any friends there.”

Other participants pointed out that spouse maladjustment has an impact on whether or not to accept a new offered assignment overseas. Case 6 stated: “My first relocation was in Japan. Because of language barrier, she suffered a lot. Her situation complicated my decision-making on the acceptance of another overseas assignment.” Another participant (Case 12), relocated to New York and Tokyo, emphasized that his wife had “a very poor adjustment” during his first relocation to New York because of no friends, and being totally dependent on others. These made her reluctant to stay any longer.

My wife is a person who is not very independent. Life for her was very hard. I think the major problem was that she had no friends, since she had just arrived at a culturally-different environment. Besides, I was too busy with my work. Usually, I went out to work at 7:30am and returned home at almost 8:00pm. Therefore, she stayed home alone the whole day. She did not have any friends at first; she felt very lonely. No wonder, then, that she had problems adjusting. Her pressure index was much higher than mine. She, of course, suggested we do not stay much longer. (Case 12)

Another participant described how his spouse had suffered because of the language barrier. Her adjustment problems triggered conflicts between him and his wife during a certain stage of his first relocation to the United States:

For my wife, life in the U. S. was very difficult. She was not proficient in English. I could not deal with a lot of her problems because I had to work. Therefore, she had to deal with them by herself, taking care of children, even paying utility bills and making phone calls. These were all big challenges for her. No wonder, then that she felt so depressed for some time. We often quarreled. The pressure was just too much at that time. It is really too much. (Case 10)

Similarly, Case 1, who relocated to Thailand, described that loneliness and boredom were terms can best illustrate his spouse life in Thailand. He also admitted that his spouse adjustment had an impact on his assignment for he always worried about her loneliness. As he put it,

My wife’s English ability is very poor, not to mention Thailand. Because of language barrier, she did not dare to go out by herself. As a result, she almost stayed at home, watched Korean drama all day, and hoped me go home as early as possible, waiting me for dinner at home… My company and my job were very busy. I had to work until 8 or 9 pm. But because I worried about her loneliness, I always brought tasks home and worked at home after work….. Although her accompany comforted me a lot, for her joy and happiness, sometime, I preferred she stay at Taiwan.

4.2. Spouse Support

Almost all expatriates with accompanying spouses credit and appreciate their spouses’ devotion and support on taking care of their life and facilitating their adjustments. Case 7 stated that spouse support is an important source that gives him “more accurate objectives” in life and offers him more joyful hours in leisure life.

Similarly, all expatriates with accompanying children were grateful to their spouses for all that they had done for children and family. Case 10 stressed that “I will not be able to concentrate on my work if there is no support and help from my wife.” Case 3 also added that “although I worried about my kid’s education and adjustment, but I believed that my wife will take very care of them so that I can concentrate on my work.” Both Case 10 and Case 6 attributed the whole family’s well adjustment to their spouses’ virtue of bearing hardship and hard work, a traditional value of Taiwanese culture.
4.3. Children’s Education and Adjustment

The impact of different educational system on the development and well-being of children was another major concern of the participants. This concern moderated the expatriate’s decision on whether or not to accept an international assignment. Language barrier and cultural difference were challenges faced by expatriate’s children when moving to a culturally different country with their parents. Once the accompanying children adjusted to the local culture and education system, the initial concern about children’s future and development turns into appreciations.

The consistency of children’s education was the main concern, and this may make expatriates reluctant to accept the offered assignment. In particularly, expatriates who had children under 16 worried about this issue most. Case 11 added,

I was nervous but exciting when receiving the notice of my first overseas assignment. You are going abroad for work not for fun. It is a big pressure…. What is my direction? Beside, how do I do with my family? I was only thirty-seven or thirty-eight…. My children were only elementary school students. How can I do? Can I accept this offered assignment if I go along…. It took me very long to think about these.

Another participant who did not bring his children along attested:

Personally, I did not bring my children with me because I believe it is better for them to grow up in the environment they belong to. They will suffer if you relocate them along with you, and it will be very painful for them. I have had my own personal problems adjusting. The children’s difficulties with adjustment will be much more serious. Some people think that living aboard will enhance children’s views and knowledge. I agree, but we cannot predict our next relocation. And their education will become a big issue when they come back from our overseas assignment. (Case 8)

Case 10, by contrast, believed that it is important for teenagers to stay with their parents. Taking this into consideration, he decided to have his spouse and children over during the third year of his first relocation in the United States because he had been given notice that he would stay in the U. S. for another three years. He noted that his children “suffered tremendous pressure” right after moving to the U. S. due to language problems and cultural differences and “enjoyed their education and life” after gradually adjusting to a new education system and being fluent in the local language. He stated:

They were teenagers when they came over. They suffered tremendous pressure because of language ability and cultural difference. I was very worried about their learning effectiveness and their adjustment at school. I was really concerned a lot when my children told me that it is not easy for them to get along with their American classmates because they do not know how to interact with them….Over time, once they gradually adjusted to the local culture and education system as well as can speak English well, they enjoyed their education and life in the United States…. I really appreciated my company to give me the opportunity to work overseas.

Similarly, Case 6, with 27-year expatriate experiences, added that although his children suffered language barrier and cultural shock when he relocated to the United State, but they have been well-educated after gradually adapting to new education system and local life via taking ESL programs and making friends at school. Thus, he believes that the expatriate experience is of great worth for it benefits him and his children. Case 3 considered children education and adaptability to be the most difficult situation faced by him while on international assignments. Case 3 stated,

When I relocated to the United State, my kid was ninth grade. He suffered language barrier at the beginning. Then, he had difficulties in get along with his classmates. This was probably a problem of cultural differences. He was very frustrated when he came back from school and even did not want to go to school. … The most difficult situation during my assignment was my kid’s education and adaptability. He cried a lot when faced with challenges from school’s homework or cultural shock….for example, he even did not know whom he can ask for if he had learning difficulties at school.

4.4. Care for Parents

The care of aged parents, especially parents’ health conditions, was another family issue many participants mentioned as an inevitable concern. Many participants were concerned that their parents are getting old. Case 11 clearly expressed his concern: “I worried about my mother’s age. She is getting old, she is over 70. Fortunately, her health is in good condition.” Some worried about parents’ health situation. Case 10 spoke of his grim “dilemma”:

The most difficult situation for us [expatriates] is to deal with our family members. It is not an easy matter to handle. I was facing a dilemma by going abroad. My wife, my children, and I all lived together with my parents. My father was 85 and my mother was 75 at the time. I was the only male adult who could take care of them and of the family’s children. So went I left, my parents felt very helpless. I used to always drive my father to the hospital when he had a heart attack. This became my wife’s task while I was on international assignment. It put an enormous pressure on her. Sometimes she had to call a taxi at 2:00 am to drive my father to the hospital because he had a heart attack. (Case 10)
V. PROPOSITIONS

Integration of research results generated four main propositions which explain the specific family-related factors influencing expatriate assignments.

5.1. Spouse adjustment, children education and adjustment, and care for parents and their health conditions are critical family-related factors found to have an impact on expatriate assignments.

5.2. Spouse adjustment concerns expatriates, but it does not impede their mission and completion of their assignments.

5.2.1. The extent to which an expatriate goes in order to facilitate the spouse’s adjustment to the local living environment, will weigh on his/her decision to accept another overseas assignment.

5.2.2. The more easily the accompanying spouse adjusts, the more willing the expatriate is to accept a similar assignment in the future.

5.2. Spouse support is critical to the success of expatriates on overseas assignments.

5.3. The care of parents and their health conditions are major concerns for expatriate candidates that may lead them to refuse an overseas assignment.

5.4. Children education is an important concern of expatriates and may impact expatriate’s decision to accept an offered overseas assignment.

VI. DISCUSSION

This study identified four dimensions of family-related factors impacting expatriate assignments: spouse adjustment, spouse support, children education and adjustment, and the care of ageing parents. Spouse adjustment, children education and adjustment, and the care of ageing parents appeared to influence expatriates’ decisions to accept or reject an overseas assignment as well as the overall adjustment in a new environment. These results are in line with previous studies, which assert family factors in expatriation play a critical role for expatriate adjustment [Lee & Kartika, 25; Takeuchi et al., 42]. In addition, the result showed that spouse support is critical to the success of expatriate assignments. This result is in conformity with those of previous research which addresses spouse support accelerate the influence of expatriate adjustment and operational capability on performance [Lee, 15]. Moreover, the results of this study suggest that family-related factors have no direct negative influence on job performance. This can be explained from the following reasons. First, perhaps this was because the participants of this study underwent culture shock only in the initial stage of their assignment. Second, the spouses of expatriate played an important role in getting all family well adjusted to local culture and environment so that expatriate will be able to concentrate on their job. Apart from family-related factors, expatriates’ personality characteristics and cross-cultural competencies may be other important factors that can address this result.

The finding indicated most accompanying spouses suffered more serious culture shock than the expatriate before being able to adjust. The major factors were the language barrier and loneliness. This suggested that there is a need to incorporate spouses into the cross-cultural training program when this is available.

Another important finding is that traditional Taiwanese culture has an impact on expatriate assignments. First, it influences expatriates’ decision on the acceptance of an offered international assignment. This can be best illustrated from the stories of participants with ageing parents regarding their concern about the care and health conditions of their parents. Actually, no matter where they are, on international assignments or not, the care of parents is always on their minds. This is typically a case of the influence of a traditional Taiwanese cultural value, namely, filial piety. In addition, expatriates with accompanying spouses applauded their spouses’ determination to get the whole family become adjusted to the new environment despite their spouses suffered cross-cultural adjustment. They credited their willingness and devotion to the virtue of “bearing hardship and hard work”, a traditional value of Taiwanese culture.

Although most accompanying spouses and children suffered serious problems of adjustment in the initial stage of the overseas assignment, and this situation caused concern for the participants, these problems did not hinder their determination to complete their assignments and pursue their career development. This finding suggests that personality characteristic is very important to the success of expatriate assignments.

Children education and the adjustment problems were the major concerns of expatriates with accompanying children in the initial stages of the overseas assignment. Over time, once the children had adapted well to the local living conditions and the educational environment, these concerns turned into appreciation. The expatriates were appreciative to the companies for giving them the opportunity to work overseas and also have their children get the opportunity to study abroad, have a solid education and enhance their own future careers. They also sounded very grateful for the devotion of their accompanying spouses. From this perspective, the researcher would argue that the children’s education and adjustment problems became priorities for the accompanying spouses, and their own difficulties were seen as secondary or even trivial. The good of the children always comes first. This finding suggests that children issue shouldn’t be neglected by MNCs and requires more empirical research.

VII. RECOMMENDATIONS

7.1. MNCs

The findings of the study indicate that the accompanying spouse makes contributions to the success of expatriate assignments. However, it is very true that all accompanying spouses in the study suffered very severe cultural shock.
Children’s education and care for parents are the main concern of the expatriates. Integrated with these issues related to family situations, MNCs should incorporate spouses into cross-cultural training programs, particularly language training. MNCs should also provide expatriates who have children accompanying them with a clear picture of the education system of the country or city where they will be relocated. Furthermore, MNCs should provide expatriates who have aged parents in the home country who need care, some support for this purpose.

7.2. Future Research

Future research should incorporate the perspectives of the spouses of expatriates. Literature indicates that there is little knowledge about the experiences of expatriate spouses [Black et al., 20]. Having data collected from the spouses of expatriate managers will enrich information about the context or conditions influencing the success of expatriate assignments. In addition, considering the findings of this study regarding children education and adjustment as an essential factor influencing the decision on expatriates’ willingness to accept an international assignment, future research should consider including children as a research sample, which has little been done in research on expatriate studies.

REFERENCES


Hsiu-ching Ko earned her Ph.D. from University of the Incarnate Word, San Antonio, TX. Currently, she is an assistant professor in the Department of Mass Communication, Chang Jung Christian University, Taiwan. Her research interests focus on international human resource management, intercultural communication, and political communication. Her research on exploring “The Effects of Cross-cultural Training on Expatriate Assignments” was the only paper published in International Communication Studies in 2011. In recent five years, she attended at least 10 conferences, including domestic and international. Paper presented in conferences primarily focus on issues of cross-cultural competence, cross-cultural leadership, cross-cultural training, political communication, media management and media technology.