INVESTIGACIÓN

Identifying Strategies for Selecting Expatriate Employees

Identificar Estrategias Para Selecccionar Empleadores Expatriados

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Abstract

This research was an investigation triggered by an alarming history of expatriate failure, that is, in that expatriate did no complete their assignments and returned home prematurely. The research showed that very few factors were taken into account when recruiting and selecting expatriate workers, factors that contributed to an early termination of the foreign assignment. These factors include Cultural Intelligence, preparedness, failure to adapt, language barriers, homesickness, and not being able to bring family. Implications for future expatriate success would be to take said factors into account in all the preliminary stages of recruitment and selection, before sending expatriate workers on foreign assignments.

Key words Expatriate, Recrudment- Selection, Failure rates, and MNC in Hermosillo Sonora

JEL: F23, D21, C1

Resumen

Esta investigación fue desencadenada por un historial alarmante de fracaso de expatriados, es decir, en el que los expatriados no completaron sus asignaciones y regresaron a casa prematuramente. La investigación mostró que se tuvieron en cuenta muy pocos factores al reclutar y seleccionar trabajadores expatriados, factores que contribuyeron a una terminación anticipada de la asignación en el extranjero. Estos factores incluyen inteligencia cultural, preparación, falta de adaptación, barreras del idioma, nostalgia y no poder traer consigo a la familia. Las implicaciones para un éxito futuro de los expatriados serían tener en cuenta dichos factores en todas las etapas preliminares de reclutamiento y selección, antes de enviar trabajadores expatriados en asignaciones en el extranjero.

Palabras clave: Expatriado, reclutamiento-selecciona, tasa de fracaso y MNC en hermosillos

Introduction

Multinational companies have experienced high failure rates because employees often return home prematurely for reasons related to incapability to adapt to a new culture (Wang & Varma, 2019). Hung-Wen (2007) concluded that many expatriates fail within the first year, resulting in costs between $1.2 million a year and their emotional costs (Sambasivan et al., 2017); as projects go unfinished, and a sense of failure on the part of the employees. The research I am proposing will consist of a multiple case study, interviewing various managers and HR employees responsible for recruiting and selecting employees to work on overseas assignments.

Managers of multinational companies sending employees to work in foreign branches experience high failure rates because employees return home prematurely for various reasons related to incapability to adapt to a new culture (Wang

& Varma, 2019). Researchers have shown a large number of expatriates fail within the first year, resulting in costs between $1.2 million a year (Hung-Wen, 2007) and in addition to the financial, there are emotional costs (Sambasivan, et al, 2017) per expatriate and company. The general business problem is managers assigning home country nationals to overseas assignments experience high failure rates. The specific business problem is that some managers lack strategies to select employees as expatriates qualified and willing to work in different countries.

The purpose of this qualitative multiple case study is to explore strategies managers use to select employees as expatriates qualified and willing to work in different countries. The population will be managers of expatriates in four Sonora, Mexico manufacturing companies who have shown significant improvement in terms of selecting employees as expatriates who are qualified and willing to work in different countries. Implications for positive social change are to increase the successful completion of overseas assignments, which can have a positive economic and social effect and increase productivity and quality of life of expatriates in the home country and host countries, as well as quality of life of stakeholders such as foreign employees, their families, suppliers, and clients.

The three methodologies available for research are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (Stacey, 2011). According to Turner (2010), a researcher using a qualitative method explores phenomena through a small number of research subjects. Using the qualitative method should enable me to explore the strategies and processes managers consider when selecting workers for overseas assignments. A researcher using the quantitative method employs closed-ended questions to test a hypothesis about variables relationships or groups' differences (Stacey, 2011). I am not postulating a theory about variables' characteristics or relationships but instead seeking to identify and explore strategies; therefore, the quantitative method does not align with the purpose of the proposed study. Using the mixed-methods approach requires combining both qualitative and quantitative methods (Stacey, 2011). It is not appropriate for this study as a quantitative approach's statistical analysis is not required for this study's purpose.

Three potential qualitative design options are phenomenological, ethnographic, and case study (Astalin, 2013). A researcher explores the personal meanings of subjective human experience when using a phenomenological design (Byrne, 2017). As such, a phenomenological model would limit me to exploring the different personal meanings of the skills by the workers selected for overseas assignments and their home country managers on a case-by-case basis, which does not align with the proposed study's purpose. Ethnographic researchers explore a cultural group's shared beliefs and behavior (Fetterman, 2010). Since I am not focusing this study on exploring a group's culture, an ethnographic design is not appropriate for this study. I will use a case study design. Qualitative case researchers use data from various sources, such as interviews, observations, reports, minutes of meetings, advertisements, and campaign materials, so case studies rely on multiple data types for analysis (Mills et al., 2010). The multiple case study design is the most appropriate for my research because I will gather data from numerous sources, such as interviews and archival and procedural documentation. Unlike a single case study, a multiple case study will allow the generalization of results to be turned into an analytical generalization (Yin, 1994).

The potential significance of this study is to identify the successful strategies managers use to provide an improved process for selecting employees for overseas assignments. As related to the potential for effecting social change, improving these selection processes could decrease the failure rate of home country employees sent on overseas assignments and improve the result for the home country company. Moreover, these selection strategies once identified, could benefit overseas facilities and the individuals selected (or rejected) to go on overseas assignments. Improved productivity would allow these companies to contribute more to corporate social responsibility initiatives in the communities in which they operate.

The focus of this study is not to solve the problem of expatriate failure rates, but rather identify potential strategies for more successful selection methods. Through this study, I seek to identify strategies and methods to help managers of multinational corporations improve the success of the process for identifying which candidates are likely to complete the overseas assignments they receive. The results

of this study might provide the tools for preparing and motivating employees while on assignments to increase organizations' overseas subsidiaries' performance.

Managers of multinational organizations have been considering employees' overseas assignments solely on an organizational level (Aycan, 2011), but Loes (2015) proposed that over the last 10 years, these managers have started to consider said assignments at an individual employee level. The improved results may prevent both unnecessary stresses on the part of both the expatriates in question and those who assign them, but also to the host country organizations. Managers harnessing this improved productivity could enable allow these companies to contribute more to addressing corporate social responsibilities through enhancing funding of local charitable initiatives.

Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of the proposed study is the international human resource (IHRM) framework (Kumar & Murthy, 2013). Kumar and Murthy built their international human resource framework on an earlier framework, the strategic international human resource management (SIHRM) (Schuler et al., 1993). Schuler et al. (1993) stipulated that SIHRM is sufficiently distinct from standard human resource management (HRM) to warrant its framework to review the concepts, which make up the expatriate recruitment and selection process. Schuler et al. (1993) took into account such intercultural issues as international law, ethics, and cultural intelligence. Schuler et al. (1993) also proposed anchoring SIHRM in the strategic components of multinational enterprises (MNEs), accurately aligning the links between the corporations' separate units and their internal operations. After an overview of the literature on the subject since 1980, Dabic et al. (2015) demonstrated the dominance of a separate theoretical or conceptual framework in this field. Some concepts related to the SIHRM framework of selection include job factors, compensation, and motivation (Schuler et al., 1993). Building on this theory, along with the research conducted into the selection of expatriate workers in the 20 years since, Kumar and Murthy (2013) proposed the IHRM framework for evaluating the possible performance of employees on overseas assignments. The authors listed five specific factors with many subfactors, including an employee's proficiency (job factors, motivation, and interpersonal skills), cultural training, the compensation structure, cultural intelligence, performance evaluation (task), and context and external factors (Kumar & Murthy, 2013). Identifying the aspects related to the selection of successful expatriate workers is, therefore, directly related to the concepts of IHRM, making the IHRM framework as being a likely appropriate framework for my understanding of the findings from my proposed study.

Operational Definitions

Cross-cultural training: The educative processes used to improve intercultural learning via the development of cognitive, affective, and behavioral competencies needed for successful interactions in diverse cultures (Joshua-Gojer, 2012).

Cultural intrinsic motivation: Individuals' inherent interest in other cultures, regardless of motivation by external factors (Firth et al., 2014).

Cultural self-efficacy: Individuals' belief in their capability to be effective in culturally diverse environments (Firth et al., 2014).

Expatriate adjustment: The person-environment relationship in the three dimensions of cognition, feelings, and behaviors (Haslberger et al., 2013).

Expatriate effectiveness: The extent to which the expatriate's job performance reflects behaviors that are relevant to the organization's goals, determined by a set of variables, including personality, adjustment, language skill, cultural distance, organizational support, job performance, intentions of an early return, and manager efficacy (Salgado & Bastida, 2017).

Expatriate failure: The measurable financial costs of the 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 (Joshua-Gojer, 2012).

Newcomer socialization: The process by which newcomers successfully navigate the uncertain aspects of a new job and effectively adjust to the demands of a new work environment (Ellis et al., 2015).

Self-initiated expatriates: Expatriates who self-initiate their international relocation, with the intentions of regular employment and temporary stay, and with skills/professional qualifications (Cerdin & Selmer, 2014).

Work adjustment: The extent to which expatriates feel comfortable handling their jobs during an international assignment (Firth et al., 2014).

Assumptions, Limitations, and Delimitations

Business scholars have acknowledged that core assumptions, limitations, and delimitations can identify how, why, and to what effect these affect the research in question (Martin & Parmar, 2012). Assumptions are aspects behind the research that have not been proven (Scotland, 2012). Limitations are potential weaknesses in your study and are out of your control (Simon, 2011). The delimitations are boundaries set by the researcher himself for his study (Ellis & Levy, 2009).

Assumptions

It is essential to acknowledge, in any research, the assumptions behind the research and recognize all assumptions have not been proven (Scotland, 2012). The effect of these assumptions implies that the most significant contributions to the field of research are those contexts and situations that challenge previous assumptions (Bansal & Corley, 2011). Researchers using a case study method explore, describe, or explain phenomena by exhaustive research within its natural setting (Ellis & Levy, 2009). Assumptions are notions or beliefs believed to be accurate by the researcher in question and guide the study. As researchers in previous studies have shown, multinational corporation (MNC) managers who send employees to work in foreign branches see an alarming failure rate in those employees who do not finish their assignments (Firth et al., 2014). The second assumption is between 33% and 80% of expatriates sent by an MNC to work in overseas branches, fail within the first year (Joshua-Gojer, 2012), suggesting expatriates do not complete their assignment as planned. For this study, I will focus specifically on managers of companies sending home-country workers to work in Mexican assembly plants (*maquiladoras*) and their processes for recruiting employees to work in their foreign facilities. The third assumption is that managers lack strategical knowledge about certain controllable existing factors or currently unexplored options in selecting successful expatriate candidates. Making conscious assumptions and identifying unconscious assumptions will avoid misconceptions related to the research question and measurements.

Limitations

Limitations are problems or weaknesses identified by the researcher before and during the study and duly reported. The first limitation in this research study is self-reported, pertaining to factors of internal and external validity and construct validity. The second limitation of this study is that it is strenuous to provide comprehensive, global research. The difficulty lies in investigating the movement of workers between the world's 193 countries and offer a cohesive consensus as expatriation is truly a global phenomenon in an ever-increasing global economy (Brutus et al., 2013). The third limitation is that focusing on the Mexican portion of the problem of expatriate failure would be to ignore dimensions of a culture completely, as expatriates of different nationalities will react differently to the foreign assignment and the stimuli to send them on foreign assignments. The selection of a limited sample was an acknowledgment of the impossibility of observing all nationalities of an expatriate working on foreign assignments. The many different factors contributing to their success or failure on international transfers are considered. The recognition of limitations ensures that the credibility of this proposed research study rests on the strategies and procedures used. The recognition of limitations also demonstrates self-awareness on the part of the researcher throughout the research process because it will show the level of objectivity applied during both the research and data data analysis (Houghton et al., 2013).

Delimitations

Delimitations are the factors that the researcher in question will not consider (McGregor, 2018) and those characteristics that limit the scope and define the boundaries of a study (Simon, 2011). The first delimitation is the sample subjects who are available for interviews in Hermosillo, Sonora. The second delimitation is the availability of participants for interviews. The third delimitation of this study is the reliability of participants to suggest acquaintances for interviewing. Penrod et al. (2003) concluded controlling a sample gives a researcher

the ability to select participants with experiences related to the specific business problem. Because I will not have the ability to select my participants, I will rely on colleagues and acquaintances of foreign nationals working for international conglomerates in Hermosillo who may be less enthusiastic about participating in the study for fear of incriminating themselves or jeopardizing their positions.

Methodology

For this study, I have decided on a qualitative approach. The qualitative method will allow me to acquire the amount of information needed to draw significant conclusions. The in-depth approach to collecting, categorizing, and analyzing different experiences and opinions provides the most viable approach (Denzin & Lincoln, 2011).

The three methodologies available for research are qualitative, quantitative, and mixed (Stacey, 2011). According to Turner (2010), a researcher using a qualitative method explores phenomena through a small number of research subjects. A researcher using the quantitative method employs closed-ended questions to test a hypothesis about variables concerning relationships or groups' differences (Stacey, 2011). Using the qualitative method should enable me to explore the strategies and processes managers consider when selecting employees for overseas assignments.

I am not postulating a hypothesis about variables' characteristics or relationships, but rather seeking to identify and explore strategies; therefore, the quantitative method does not align with the proposed study's purpose.

The established method has been qualitative research (Hlady-Rispal & Jouison-Laffitte, 2014).

Using the mixed-methods approach requires combining both qualitative and quantitative methods (Stacey, 2011). It is not appropriate for this study as a quantitative approach's statistical analysis is not required for this study's purpose.

When considering international research stages, where many different cultures, and therefore, mores, values, and principles are in play, a qualitative study offers the most viable option. This viability is because it does not limit the number of possible results (Wagner et al., 2014). Previous studies, such

as the expatriates' geographical location and their foreign assignments as a factor of expatriate success rate (Andresen et al., 2014), were only possible using a qualitative approach. The study's sample size was validated by another peer-reviewed paper, outlining the factors that I would need to consider for ensuring the correct sample size for an academically valid study result that holds up to closer scrutiny and criticism (Marshall et al., 2013). The selected research method had a strong influence on the conceptual framework.

Three potential qualitative design options are phenomenological, ethnographic, and case study (Astalin, 2013). A researcher explores subjective human experience's personal meanings when using a phenomenological design (Byrne, 2017). A phenomenological design would be limited to exploring the different personal meanings of the experiences by the workers selected for overseas assignments and their home country managers on a case-by-case basis, which is not aligned with the proposed study's purpose. Ethnographic researchers explore a cultural group's shared beliefs and behavior (Fetterman, 2010). A definition put forward is that ethnography is defined as a qualitative design in which the researcher describes and interprets the shared and learned patterns of values, behaviors, beliefs, and language of a culture-sharing group (Parker-Jenkins, M., 2017). As I will specifically not be studying a group with a shared culture, but the opposite, this method is deemed not appropriate.

I will use a case study design. Qualitative case researchers use data from various sources, such as interviews, observations, reports, minutes of meetings, advertisements, and campaign materials, so case studies rely on multiple data types for analysis (Mills et al., 2010).

The multiple case study design is the most appropriate for my research because I will gather data from numerous sources, such as interviews and archival and procedural documentation. Unlike a single case study, a multiple case study will allow the generalization of results to be turned into an analytical generalization (Yin, 1994).

Qualitative case researchers use data from various sources, such as interviews, observations, reports, minutes of meetings, advertisements, and campaign materials, so case studies rely on multiple data types for analysis (Mills et al., 2010). A case study approach will allow me to adjust the study

design's dynamic as the situation presents itself or communication problems, contact, or willingness arose. A case study approach allows for multiple collection methods (reviewing documents, artifacts, archives, observation, and interviews) and allowing me to focus on individuals, small groups, and the organization they belong to as a whole (Yin, 2014).

Case study methods allow for a study where no fundamental theory or hypothesis has been stipulated (Lewis, 2015). A case study avoids following strictly laid assumptions and procedures. Case study research can help prevent constricting the narrative of social life within theoretical descriptions (Tavory & Timmermans, 2009, & Yin, 2013).

As the purpose of the study is to provide insight into expatriate workers' success factors, we must allow for a research design that would enable participants to identify factors freely. Case study research can identify previously unidentified categories, which will reveal themselves as the study continues.

The multiple case study design is the most appropriate for my study because I will gather data from various sources, such as interviews and archival and procedural documentation. Unlike a single case study, a multiple case study will allow the generalization of results to be turned into an analytical generalization (Yin, 1994).

Role of the Researcher

As the researcher in this study, I am responsible for processing data collected through interviews in an objective and nonarbitrary manner. Walsh (2014) noted that the researcher is removed from the study subject and therefore is not a part of the subject's natural environment. In case studies, the researcher's inherent subjectivity must be considered (Mabry, 2008). Qualitative research emerges as the preferred method when looking at current international business research trends (Sinkovics, Penz, & Ghauri, 2008). My relation to the research participants must be objective, and I must ethically protect the subjects of the study against any possible reprisal by their superiors. I will have no prior relationship with the subjects of my research to guarantee objectivity.

In researching strategies for selecting expatriate workers, expatriates' geographical location and foreign assignments have shown to be a factor in terms of expatriate success rates (Andresen et al., 2014). Zhuang, et al (2013) posited that local mentors' psychosocial support, role modeling, and career development functions were related to expatriate employees' general adjustment to a foreign environment and work dynamics, office interaction adjustment, and work adjustment. The expatriate employee's geographic location contributes either positively (an expatriate worker completes their foreign assignment) or negatively (an expatriate worker does complete their foreign assignment). Long-term or short-term assignments (meaning the amount of time an expatriate worker is to spend in an overseas environment to complete set tasks) are also crucial to completing the assignment. Long-term goals signify that the expatriate worker spends more time away from their homes, family, co-workers, and friends(Holtbrügge & Ambrosius, 2015).

In qualitative research, validity and objectivity are addressed by following the Belmont Report guidelines, which will allow me to engage with research subjects. Abiding by standards set out in *The Belmont Report* will also allow me to comply with the ethical guidelines of Walden University's Internal Review Board (IRB).

I will employ a procedural document called an interview protocol, which will allow me to conduct interviews consistently and impartially. This protocol will be a standardized script that will include predetermined questions and information on the background and reasons for the study and a section for informed consent of interview subjects. The interview protocol will ensure consistency and validity during the process of data collection analysis.

The responsibility of the researcher is to determine the appropriate sample size of interviewees. In a qualitative study, small sample size is used to extract significant answers (Burns & Bush, 2006), in that the conclusion is not derived from statistical analysis. To consider the correct sample size for an academically valid study result, the sample will be determined using an interval method, which is a method to determine the maximum and the minimum number of results necessary for a valid analysis (Burns & Bush, 2006).

Participants

The focus of this study is companies sending employees to work in foreign branches and high

failure rates because these employees return home prematurely. Participants in this study will be members of a specific population stratus. Participants will be foreign expatriate workers sent to Hermosillo to work in a foreign company's local operations. Participants will include expatriates residing in Hermosillo, and these participants will consist of managers or HR expatriates residing in Hermosillo. Managers in these corporations have experiences and perspectives regarding sending their employees to staff their operations in other countries.

Firth et al. (2014) put limitations on participants, such as age, gender, educational level, and years having worked with the company that sent them. Firth et al. (2014) did not try to look for success rates related to a specific demographic. Therefore, I will identify selection by managers of multinational corporations of employees for overseas assignments within a specific demographic, relating successful completion of overseas assignments to factors such as age, gender, geographic location, presence of family, and financial stimuli. The family factor has proven to be very decisive in terms of whether employees accept foreign assignments (Shaffer & Harrison, 1998).

I will identify factors that contribute to the successful and unsuccessful completion of expatriates' foreign assignments. Successful selection of expatriate employees by managers relies on the perceived trustworthiness of the organizations in which they are employed, as both recruiters' and expatriate workers' attitudes regarding benevolence, integrity, and ability influence successful selection outcomes.

Two sampling methods selected for this research were convenience and snowball sampling to reach an adequate number of participants. A qualitative sample does not need to be large to be accurate (Burns & Bush, 2006). This study is a case study design, so the sample size need not be significant, as using overly large samples leads to redundancy and saturation of information. Marshall et al. (2013) recommended a maximum of five interviews for a case study.

Expatriates often form closed communities and a microcosm within the foreign offices (Arman & Aycan, 2013). As a researcher, it is helpful to have contacts within the expatriate community to identify research subjects who can arrange the first and consecutive interviews. From previous experience investigating foreign employees in Hermosillo, executives and managers of foreign companies are reluctant to agree to sit down for in-depth interviews.

To establish confidentiality, the working relationship must be based on professionalism and trust (Morse 1998). However, it must never become a relationship based on friendship, which would affect the study's perceived validity and subjectivity (Brewis, 2014).

Research Question

What strategies do managers use when they select employees as expatriates qualified and willing to work in different countries?

Population

I have the responsibility of processing the data collected through the interviews in an objective, nonarbitrary manner. When it comes to qualitative research, the necessity for validity and objectivity is often heightened. Qualitative research has allowed for a much deeper insight into the investigated questions (Sarma, 2015). The use of a qualitative researcher in this study is not only valid; it is required to elicit the necessary responses. The measurement of the significance that the researcher himself had as part of the subject is essential to establish his objectivity (Mowbray, 2003).

The subjects of this study will be supervisors, mentors, and other superiors who influence the expatriate employee's work experience (Zhuang et al., 2013). I will be interviewing supervisors and managers of different MNCs in Hermosillo who recruit foreign workers to come to Hermosillo. The researcher's location in the host country of the expatriate workers in this research must be considered. Additionally, their organizations' role and their influence on their employees must be minimized for the sample to be representative and acknowledged when it is not (Kyvik, 2013). The effect of the research on the community of which the organizations are part must be considered (Nelson et al., 2015).

Sampling

It is also the responsibility of the researcher to determine the appropriate sample size of the interviewees. The sample size was based on previous papers outlining the factors that would need to be considered to ensure the correct sample

size for an academically valid study result, which holds up to closer scrutiny and criticism. As set forth by Marshall et al. (2013), the preferred sample size is 5, so I will be interviewing supervisors and managers of 5 different MNCs in Hermosillo who recruit foreign workers to come to Hermosillo. The sampling method used will be a snowball method (Burns & Bush, 2006) as it will be essential to have referrals, considering the expatriate community is closely knit. Additionally, their organizations' role and their influence on their employees must be minimized for the sample to be representative and acknowledged when it is not (Kyvik, 2013). The effect of the research on the community of which the organizations are part must be considered (Nelson et al., 2015).

Ethical Research

Any research in the Human Resources field is extremely sensitive, as it contains personal information of participating companies' employees' personal decisions and their personal lives. Asking employees of multinational corporations about their experience of being sent abroad by their companies, and by which factors they were selected are always both professional and personal experiences that are often difficult or uncomfortable to share with a third party, not involved in the said process. Therefore, when conducting this research, I must be completely removed from said experience whatsoever, to be subjective (Brewis, 2014). That is to say; the researcher cannot have an immediate work relationship with the participants of the study, to avoid any influence on the data provided by the research subject. (Guest, Namey & Mitchell, 2013).

Therefore, to ensure the security and comfort of the subjects involved, it is necessary to employ the snowball, or referral method of sampling (Burns & Bush, 2006). In this manner, the participants in the study will feel validated, and assured that the information they divulge would be handled in a correct and sensitive manner, as they were referred to by acquaintances. This referral will either establish a bond of trust between the researcher, and research participant, or establish from the start that such a bond will not be possible, thus allowing to identify for the sample participant as unsuitable, and be discarded (Shaw, 2008). As all participants in this study have participated as having been referred to by acquaintances, there is an understanding that the information shared will be confidential, and

handled sensibly. Nevertheless, for purposes of establishing a firmer bond of trust and legal nature (Thorne, 2013), consent forms will be issued and signed by all participants in the study.

Data Collection Instruments

I will be the primary data collection instrument of this study. As the design of the study is case study, the main form of data collection will be through structured interviews (Yazan, 2015), with additional data being collected through a review of archival documents on earlier selections and selection methods, field notes (Hancock & Algozzine, 2016), and finally, through observation of expatriate workers while they work (Baškarada, 2014), with the express permission of Human Resources, which would also be very helpful, considering their experience in interpreting nonverbal cues.

Considering the five main qualitative research methods, most of these approaches (i.e. ethnographic, narrative and phenomenological) would not render sufficiently diverse results, and the research data would be too uniform (Atkinson & Delamont, 2010). This incompatibility stems from the fact that grounded theory creates new theories of interrelated concepts rather than testing existing theories, and DBA research is more aligned to testing current theories and applications in the pursuit of improving on their respective applications. Therefore, I decided on a case study approach. This is based on the fact that a case study approach allows for multiple means of collecting data, the recommended ones being: reviewing documents, archival data, reviewing artifacts and conducting interviews (Yin, 2014).

This possible adjustment, as mentioned previously, is due to the evolution of qualitative research itself, finding new approaches to ensuring its validity (Amsteus, 2014). Even though much research is based on empirical data, qualitative research in general, and case study research specifically has seen much substantive and methodological development (Johnson, 2015).

Likewise, the use of case study methods allows the researcher for a study where no initial theory or hypothesis has been stipulated, and not one specific data collection method has been selected, but rather use different means of collecting data (Creswell, 2013). Therefore, it is important to consider that case study allows for, even encourages the worldview of

the researcher (Annells, 1996, & Higginbottom & Lauridsen, 2014), and avoids following strictly laid assumptions and procedures.

In this same manner, the one of the most prominent, though not exclusive, instrument for collecting the data for this proposed research, as has been shown in previous investigations, is through a series of in-depth interviews (Guest, Namey, & Mitchell, 2013). For this study I will conduct these interviews with foreign expatriate workers in Hermosillo, Sonora. These subjects are to be selected from expatriate workers in maquiladoras in Hermosillo, and Mexican maquiladora workers who had worked on foreign assignments. Most of the selection will be made through referral, as most foreign expatriate workers occupy management positions, and are initially reluctant to participate, without a co-worker or acquaintance putting me in contact with them. This referral would ensure the confidentiality of their participation and the information gained through this, as the research participants enjoy the confidence of their co-workers enough to be referred to me by them.

Additionally, I will be using observation and review of archives and documents. Observation, as is the case with case study is often argued to not being able to provide a general theory. However, proponents of case study, and observation along with it argue that it can. One proponent offers the example of Galileo rejecting Aristotle's law of gravity was not based on observation on a wide range, but that this made the theory and proof he produced not any less true (Flyvbjerg, 2004). Finally, I will be reviewing documents and archival data related to the selection processes of expatriates, with the distinct consideration that these may be subject to internal bias on part of the organization, as it is noted that case studies relying heavily on archival data need to be sensitive to these possible biases and to take steps to counteract them (Yin, 2013).

Interview Questions

1. What strategies do you use during the separate stages of the selection process, such as recruitment, investigation, and/or interviews to identify employees for overseas assignments?

2. During the selection process, what requirements for an expatriate assignment's selection do you explain to the candidate?

3. What key requirements do you make the candidates aware of that determined their selection?

4. What are the key requirements that are considered during the recruitment process that would determine if the candidate is to be selected for an overseas assignment?

5. What was the reasoning behind this consideration?

6. How do you determine that a candidate complies sufficiently with the key issues to be selected for an overseas assignment?

7. How does your organization assess the effectiveness of its strategies for candidates complying with several, but not all key requirements, and to what extent will they be eligible, while not be 100% compliant?

8. What else can you share with me about your organization's strategies for the selection process of expatriate employees for overseas assignments that we have not discussed?

Data Analysis

As mentioned before, in qualitative research, data analysis can be a much more complex process than in quantitative studies, due to the large amount of data that is collected during the study (de Casterle, Gastmans, Bryon, & Denier, 2012). After gathering data from the interviews, I will code the said data according to the most common themes. It is important, though, not to completely discard information gathered that may not be duplicated much in separate interviews, or at all, as this still needs to be analyzed. It will be important to note in the final publication that this aforementioned data does not represent the majority of expatriate experiences. I will analyze the data twice to make sure no themes are overlooked and that all data is transcribed correctly. I will then enter said data into NVivo to help develop and organize the major themes (Anderson, 2010, and Smith & Firth, 2011). I will analyze the major themes in the data collection process according to the conceptual framework mentioned previously. After a thorough analysis of the key themes gathered from NVivo, and remembering to include the aberrations for a complete picture, I will also relate these themes to themes found in the literature review, and thereby identifying the new information and conclusions generated by this study.

Conclusion

Through interviews with foreign managers representing Multinational Corporations here in Hermosillo, who were in charge of recruiting and selecting expatriate workers to come and work in the plants in this city, a pattern emerged. Almost all acqcuiescend that they had seen large number of turnover of foreign workers coming to work in Hermosillo. The reasons varied, but several factors remained most prominent, and these were related exactly to the selection and recruitment process of said expatriate workers.Failure to adapt to the culture, both in general, and in the business environment, was a leading factor. This means that expatriate workers were not sufficiently questioned whether or not they were willing or able to move to a foreign country, and adapt to its culture.

Language was also mentioned often, as workers selected did not speak the language and as a result felt even more estranged in both the work environment and the culture in general.

Time was also of the essence, as many workers signed up for assignments for a duration of time they were not comfortable with, as it would signify a considerable amount of time away from family, friends and coworkers.

Finally, family was a key point to expatriate success. As mentioned above, not being able with family was a key factor in expatriate failure rates. Those who were able to bring their families with them, had a much higher success rate in completing their assignments than those who were not able to.

Managers of foreign companies hiring expatriate workers to come and work abroad, nit just in Hermosillo, but anywhere in the world can use these factors to first identify which candidates are most likely to succees on their overseas assignments.

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