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**GOING GLOBAL: A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY
OF THE WILLINGNESS OF NEW HIRES TO
ACCEPT EXPATRIATE ASSIGNMENTS**

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*Working Paper 17/99
April 1999*

Abstract

Human resource managers struggle with attracting potential expatriates as well as enhancing the success rate of those who do accept expatriate assignments. The trend toward increased numbers of expatriates is expected to continue. More recently, companies are requiring more junior-level employees to accept international moves. This present study examines the experiential and psychological factors related to new hires' propensity to accept international assignments. Psychological variables included international orientation, career insight, attachment to family and friends, outcome expectancies, extraversion, and self-efficacy. The experiential variables included prior international experiences and prior number of domestic moves. The study employed samples from both an Australia ($n = 89$) and a United States ($n = 86$) university. The hypotheses were tested by hierarchical multiple regression to test if the situational variable of attachment to family and friends remained related to receptivity for international work after the individual variables were taken into account. The model explained 69% of the variance with international orientation being the most highly related variable. The country of origin was the next most important and then outcome expectancies and self-efficacy. International experience was also relevant but less so and willingness to relocate domestically was very weakly related. The results have implications for human resource policies related to selection, training and reward systems related to expatriate assignments. The limitations of the present study are examined and future research needs are discussed.

GOING GLOBAL: A CROSS-CULTURAL STUDY OF THE WILLINGNESS OF NEW HIRES TO ACCEPT EXPATRIATE ASSIGNMENTS

Companies are increasing the number of expatriate employees (Black, Gregersen, & Mendenhall, 1992) and expect this trend to persist in firms worldwide (Anonymous, 1996; Oddou, Derr, & Black, 1995). However, expatriates have high failure rates, and companies have difficulty attracting expatriate candidates (Borstorff et al., 1997; Collie, 1998; Swaak, 1995a, 1995b). Consequently, companies are changing their expatriation strategies (Swaak, 1995a). One recent trend is toward sending more junior employees and employees closer to entry level on international assignments (Solomon, 1998). However, not all younger managers are more willing to relocate for international work than older managers (Aryee, Chay, & Chew, 1996; Brett & Stroh, 1995). Companies are also more likely to relocate internationally high-performing and high-potential junior employees (Borstorff et al., 1997).

Identifying potential global talent early is important, and beginning the process at the college recruiting level is viewed as making good business sense (Swaak, 1995a). To select the best junior employees for international relocation, we need to understand what influences the propensity to accept an international assignment. Explicating these factors may enable companies to entice high potential, young employees to go global.

A recent review of the literature shows there is a paucity of research establishing the factors that influence receptivity to accept an international assignment (Borstorff et al., 1997). Empirical evidence is needed to identify individuals willing to embark on international jobs. Several scholars have studied managers' receptivity to expatriate assignments (Aryee et al., 1996; Brett & Stroh, 1995; Yurkiewicz & Rosen, 1995). However, these studies have been concerned with the impact of family factors on the willingness to relocate internationally. With younger employees, family may not be as important a factor.

The present study differs from previous research on international relocation in a number of ways. First, the sample population is university students preparing to enter the job market; that is, new college hires. Prior research has focused on current managers' or MBA students' willingness to move internationally. Second, the study is cross-cultural in that a U.S. sample and an Australian sample were obtained and compared. Third, the model developed in this study includes experiential and psychological variables building on the domestic relocation literature as well as the broader career choice research.

THE THEORETICAL FOUNDATION

For both the domestic relocation and international relocation research, there has been no integrative theory that encompasses all relevant issues. Hence, we used a number of theoretical approaches in order not to be premature in choosing a single approach (Landau, Shamir & Arthur, 1992). Uncertainty reduction theory (Black et al., 1992), social learning theory (Bandura, 1977), and expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964) appear relevant to explaining the willingness to accept international assignments.

Whereas uncertainty reduction is viewed as relevant both to domestic relocation and international relocation, the magnitude of uncertainty associated with international adjustments is much greater than that of domestic adjustments (Black, Mendenhall & Oddou, 1991). Uncertainty reduction as interpreted by Aryee et al. (1996: 268) suggests that receptivity to an expatriate assignment entails an individual's cognitive appraisal that an expatriate assignment will precipitate a disruption in established routines and the evaluation of the likelihood that those routines can be re-established. Thus, students with a strong international orientation, defined by Caliguri (1994) as positive attitudes toward different cultures, comfort with cultural differences, and participation in cultural events, should experience less uncertainty regarding an international assignment. Because of

positive attitudes, routines are less likely to be viewed as disrupted and adaptation should occur faster than for students with weak international orientation.

H1: Respondents with stronger international orientation will be more receptive to expatriate assignments.

In addition, prior international experience from travel abroad, prior international relocations (e.g., with parents), and skills in foreign languages should help lessen uncertainty because individuals have a better understanding of what to expect (Black & Gregersen, 1991). Less disruption of behavioral routines and faster re-establishment of new routines should occur for those with international experience.

H2: Respondents with more international experience and a higher number of prior international relocation moves will be more receptive to expatriate assignments.

Believing in one's ability to live and work in a foreign country should also reduce uncertainty through less anticipated disruption of behavioral routines. A social learning construct that may underlie the willingness to accept an expatriate assignment is self-efficacy (Bandura, 1977). Whereas self-efficacy has not been studied in relation to willingness to accept expatriate assignments, it has been shown to influence intercultural adjustment (Black et al., 1991; Harrison, Chadwick & Scales, 1996). Perceived self-efficacy refers to the strength of one's belief that he or she can successfully execute the behaviors required in a specific situation (Bandura, 1982). Wood and Bandura (1989:365) stated that "one's judgements of self-efficacy affect personal choice of activities and environments. People tend to avoid activities and situations they believe exceed their coping capabilities, but they readily undertake challenging activities and pick social environments they judge themselves capable of managing." Thus, individuals who have high efficacy expectations regarding the ability to function effectively in an international environment are apt to be more willing to consider expatriate assignments than those individuals with low efficacy expectations. We also thought it necessary to consider respondents' levels of extraversion, as extraversion has been linked to the receptivity to work internationally (Aryee et al., 1996). Individuals' needs for external stimulation, rather than their self-efficacy with respect to working and living in another country, may enhance receptivity to international assignments. Hence, extraversion needs to be taken into account.

H3: Respondents with high self-efficacy expectations in regard to living and working internationally will report stronger receptivity to expatriate assignments than those with low self-efficacy expectations.

Bandura (1977) and others (e.g., Frayne & Latham, 1987; Maddux, Norton & Stoltenberg, 1986) have distinguished efficacy expectations from outcome expectations. Outcome expectancies refer to the belief that a given behavior is likely to produce a certain outcome. Vroom (1964) proposed in expectancy-valence theory that individuals will be highly motivated when they believe that their actions will result in valued outcomes. Therefore, outcome expectancies are also likely to predict receptivity to international assignments.

H4: Respondents with high outcome expectancies that work internationally will result in valued outcomes will report stronger receptivity to expatriate assignments than those with low outcome expectancies.

Other variables are also relevant to the receptivity to accept expatriate assignments. For example, managers who are willing to relocate domestically are also more willing to relocate internationally (Brett & Stroh, 1995). For students, those who have previously moved domestically, perhaps for parents' work or other family reasons, may be more practiced at such moves and anticipate less disruption of routines than those who have not moved, and thus may be more willing to move internationally.

H5: Respondents who are more willing to relocate domestically for work and have previously relocated domestically will report stronger receptivity to expatriate assignments than those less willing or with fewer domestic moves.

Students who have high career insight, in terms of planning career goals and seeking out information on career development (Noe, Noe & Bachhuber, 1990) may be more likely to consider a wider range of options for first jobs than those with less insight. Career insight has previously been found related to managers' receptivity to work internationally (Aryee et al., 1996).

H6: Respondents with high career insight will report stronger receptivity to expatriate assignments than those with low career insight.

Prior studies conclude that the most important influence on the decision to relocate internationally for work stems from the family, especially the spouse (Borstorff et al., 1997; Brett & Stroh, 1995; Swaak, 1995a). We viewed family variables as playing a less important role for graduating students who are likely not to be married or have children. However, attachment to families, friends, and community may influence receptivity to move internationally. We expected that students who had stronger personal attachments may be less willing to relocate internationally.

H7: Respondents who have weaker attachments to family and friends will report stronger receptivity to expatriate assignments than those with stronger attachments.

In sum, the aim of this study was to examine the factors that may affect new hires' willingness to work internationally. University graduates in business studies were considered a suitable population. By identifying the factors relevant for new hires' receptivity to international work, companies can design human resource policies that account for the outcomes junior employees expect from international relocation.

METHODS

Respondents

The study employed two samples: a United States sample and an Australian sample. The U.S. sample was 163 upper-level undergraduate students in a small, comprehensive university reporting either a major in a business field or a minor in a business field. We surveyed 67 women and 96 men. A letter from the U.S. researcher and a survey form were mailed to potential respondents with a self-addressed envelope. Approximately two weeks after the initial mailing, non-respondents received a second letter and another survey form. A total of 86 students participated in the study yielding a response rate of 52.44% for the U.S. sample. Response rates were 78% for the female students and 35% for the male students. A matched sample of 89 students was chosen from a large Australian sample. The Australian sample comprised 3134 students in their final undergraduate year who were doing a major or minor in business and economics at a large, public urban university. The return was 1300 students, a response rate of 41.48%. The same letter and survey was used for the Australian sample, and reminders were not sent. A sample was randomly drawn to match the U.S. sample on the frequencies for age, gender, marital status, children, undergraduate/postgraduate status, fulltime/part-time student, home country, major in degree, and specialty in business studies. Chi-square tests showed the matched samples drawn were not significantly different on these items.

Of the total sample of 175 students, most were from business and economics (92.5). Their specialties were chiefly marketing (23.6%), finance (21.8%), accounting (21.8%), and management (14.9%). Students ranged from 20 to 22 (92.6%), 62.6% were women, 95.4% were single, 98.9% did not have children, 98.3% were undergraduates, and 98.9% were fulltime students.

MEASURES

Receptivity to international assignments. Willingness to relocate internationally for work after graduation was the average of Adler's five, 7-point items, which were developed for MBAs and yielded an alpha of .85 (Adler, 1986). Sample items are "I want an international assignment at some time in my career", "I am seriously considering pursuing an international career". The alpha with the present sample was .94.

International orientation. Three of the four subscales of Caliguri's (1994) International Orientation scale were averaged to measure international orientation. Each scale comprised four, 5-point items. The scales measured international attitudes, comfort with differences, and participation in cultural events. The overall alpha for the scale was .81 (Caliguri, 1994). The overall alpha with the present sample (which omitted the 4-item foreign experience scale) was .75. The fourth subscale, the foreign experience subscale, was used in the present study to measure international experiences. Since the foreign experience sub-scale measured actual

behaviour, we separated it from the other three subscales that measured attitudes and more subjective assessments of behaviours.

Prior international experiences. Prior international experience was measured by the foreign experience scale from the International Orientation Scale, comprising four, 5-point items (Caliguri, 1994). The alpha with the present sample was .63. Respondents were also asked the number of different countries in which they lived and the total number of years they had lived in other countries. These items were measured as two single 10-point items, ranging from (1) none to (10) nine or more, adapted from Gerner, Perry, Moselle, and Archbold (1992). To measure the number of international relocations, students were asked the number of times they had moved internationally in their lives for any reason on a 9-point scale from (1) none to (9) eight or more times.

Prior number of domestic relocation moves. The number of prior domestic relocation moves was a single, nine-point item ranging from (1) none to (9) eight or more times.

Willingness to relocate domestically for a job. This measure was adapted from Brett and Reilly (1988) for use with students and was a single, five-point item ranging from (1) I will move domestically for a job to (5) I will not move domestically for a job for any reason.

Self-efficacy. The self-efficacy measure was developed for the present study based on Bandura's (1977) concept of self-efficacy as the belief in one's ability to perform specific behaviors. The scale comprised twelve, 10-point items. Respondents were asked to rate their confidence in their ability to perform particular behaviors in relation to working and living in a country different from their own. The scale ranged from 0% (high uncertainty) to 100% (high certainty). The alpha for the scale was .94. To assess the construct validity of the scale, the distinctness of its factor structure from general social self-efficacy, measured by the Sherer, Maddux, Mercandante, Prentice-Dunn, Jacobs, and Rogers' (1982) scale, was assessed. A principal axis factor analysis of the two self-efficacy scales and the scale for attachment to family and friends developed for this study revealed five factors, when rotating factors with eigenvalues greater than one. The first factor was the 12 items assessing self-efficacy for working and living internationally, explaining 41.9% of the variance, with all factor loadings greater than .55, and being distinct from the two factors representing the Sherer et al. (1982) measure.

Career insight. Career insight was the average of Noe, Noe, and Bachhuber's (1990) eight, 5-point items. The scale measured the extent individuals seek information from others concerning career goals and skill strengths and weaknesses. The alpha for the present sample was .79.

Attachment to family and friends. This measure was also developed for the present study. The scale comprised eight, 7-point items from (1) strongly disagree to (7) strongly agree and assessed behaviours and attitudes in relation to attachment to family, significant others, friends, and the community. In the factor analysis with the self-efficacy measures previously described, the scale emerged as two factors. A low alpha of .59 was produced. Removal of three items increased the alpha to .61.

Outcome expectancies. Outcome expectancies were measured using Vroom's (1964) formula. Respondents were asked the likelihood that particular benefits (16 items) and hindrances (9 items) may be received if they accept an international job. The 10-point scale ranged from zero, not at all likely to 100, extremely likely (i.e., instrumentality). Respondents were also asked the desirability of each outcome, ranging from zero, not at all desirable, to 100, extremely desirable in 10-point intervals (i.e., valence) with the nine hindrance items reverse scored. The outcomes represented personal development, social factors and relationships, job challenge, rewards and advancement, and personal security. The stated outcomes were based on prior responses to single survey items and open-ended items from other studies (Miller & Cheng, 1978; Yurkiewicz & Rosen, 1995) including those with students (Adler, 1984, 1986). The alpha for the instrumentality items was .80 and for the valence items was .88. Consistent with Vroom's (1964) formula, each outcome was weighted by its desirability to form the overall score, whose alpha was .89. In a separate measure, to test the relevance of the items for this sample, respondents were asked to consider which of the 25 outcomes were not relevant to them and those that were relevant (score of 1).

Extraversion. We used the items related to extraversion from a scale developed by Eysenck, Eysenck, & Barrett (1985) that comprised twelve items using yes/no responses. The alpha for this scale is .90 (males) and .85 (females). For the present sample, the alpha was .85.

Demographic variables. Items asked the respondents' age (open-ended), gender, marital status (from six options, collapsed into spouse/no spouse for the correlation), and children (no/yes). Respondents also indicated their degree (undergraduate, postgraduate), fulltime/part-time student status, home country (from 15 choices), major in their degree (from seven choices), and their specialty in business studies (from six choices).

Open-ended questions. Two open-ended questions about the main reasons students would or would not accept an international job were also asked.

RESULTS

TABLE 1
Means, Standard Deviations, Alpha Coefficients, and Correlations for All Variables

Variables	Mean	SD	Correlations																						
			1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21		
1. Willing move internationally	4.07	1.71																							
2. Australia/U.S.	1.51	0.50	-.48																						
3. Gender	1.67	0.47	-.08	-.11	-																				
4. International experience	3.29	0.84	.49	-.34	.20	.63																			
5. Number countries	0.32	0.93	.21	-.14	.01	.28	-																		
6. Years countries	0.95	2.43	.27	-.22	.13	.40	.51	-																	
7. International moves	0.39	1.07	.19	-.06	.11	.33	.23	.35	-																
8. Domestic moves	1.51	1.82	.11	-.10	.06	-.13	-.01	.05	.01	-															
9. Willing move domestically	1.91	1.01	-.05	-.21	.02	.22	.20	.22	.06	-.03	-														
10. International orientation	3.17	0.52	.73	-.37	.12	.48	.20	.33	.35	.25	.01	.76													
11. Self-efficacy	70.83	15.65	.60	-.20	-.01	.34	.14	.19	.21	.18	-.05	.60	.94												
12. Extraversion	1.25	0.25	-.14	-.01	.02	-.14	-.01	-.03	-.02	.07	-.02	-.16	-.31	.85											
13. Outcome expectancy	188.49	43.32	.62	-.22	.11	-.34	.09	.17	.09	.05	-.08	.55	.55	-.09	.88										
14. Career insight	3.59	0.64	.07	.18	-.06	.05	-.01	-.01	-.02	.01	-.10	.14	.30	-.36	.18	.79									
15. Family attachment	3.70	1.00	-.27	.15	.00	-.06	-.10	.02	.00	-.07	.21	-.23	-.11	-.07	-.31	.08	.63								
16. Age	21.18	2.67	.10	.00	-.04	-.07	.19	.16	.22	.29	-.01	.23	.15	.17	.01	.02	-.16	-							
17. Marital status	1.94	0.24	-.01	.05	-.08	-.05	-.14	-.05	-.15	-.11	-.09	.01	-.06	-.11	.03	.05	.00	-.42	-						
18. Number children	1.01	0.11	-.07	-.00	.08	-.13	.20	.16	.16	.03	.01	.03	-.01	.02	-.09	.01	-.06	.48	-.19	-					
19. UG/PG degree	1.02	0.13	.06	-.13	-.00	.15	.00	.06	-.01	-.01	-.08	.03	-.02	.06	-.06	-.00	-.04	.01	.03	-.01	-				
20. Fulltime student	1.02	0.15	-.08	-.13	.03	-.01	.07	-.05	-.02	.02	.05	-.11	-.13	.11	-.09	-.09	-.08	.03	-.43	-.02	-.02	-			
21. Business/other major	1.08	0.27	-.04	.15	.03	-.08	-.08	-.12	-.07	-.04	-.10	-.12	.02	-.14	.02	.08	-.01	-.03	-.01	-.03	-.04	.10	-		

Note. Correlations of .15 are significant at $p < .05$, at .20 are significant at $p < .01$, and at .25 are significant at $p < .001$. Alpha coefficients are given in the diagonal. Dashes indicate where alphas could not be calculated. UG=undergraduate; PG=postgraduate.

Table 1 presents the means, standard deviations, correlations and alpha coefficients for all the variables. The magnitude of the correlations revealed there were no problems with multicollinearity. Two variables, international experience and attachment to family and friends, had alpha coefficients below .70, and were used because of their importance to the study. From the correlation matrix, we note that the demographic variables were either not related, or related with a very low magnitude, to respondents' receptivity to international assignments. Because of the substantial number of women in the sample, we include gender to control for its effects. The remaining demographic variables were excluded from further analysis.

The hypotheses were tested by hierarchical multiple regression to assess if the situational variable of attachment to family and friends remained related to receptivity for international work after the individual variables were taken into account. The variables were entered in eight blocks. In Step 1, country (Australian, U.S.) and gender were entered to remove their effects before the experiential, psychological, and family variables were entered. In Step 2, one experiential variable was entered: international experience. In Step 3, number of countries and number of years related to prior international relocations and number of international relocations was entered. Remaining variables were entered as follows: In Step 4 willingness and having moved domestically; Step 5 international orientation; Step 6 self-efficacy and extraversion; Step 7 outcome expectancies; Step 8 career insight; and Step 9 attachment to family and friends. The results of the regression analysis are presented in Table 2. Overall, a substantial 69% of the variance was explained.

TABLE 2

Hierarchical Regressions Regressing Willingness to Relocate Internationally on Experiential, Psychological and Situational Variables

Step	B	DR ²
Step 1		
Australia/U.S.	-.23 ***	
Gender	-.04	.23 ***
Step 2		
International experience	.14 *	.12 ***
Step 3		
Number countries	.05	
Years countries	-.10	
International moves	-.05	.01
Step 4		
Domestic moves	-.03	
Willing move domestically	-.12 *	.07 ***
Step 5		
International orientation	.38 ***	.20 ***
Step 6		
Self-efficacy	.18 **	
Extraversion	-.00	.04 ***
Step 7		
Outcome expectancy	.21 ***	.03 ***
Step 8		
Career insight	-.06	.00
Step 9		
Family	-.02	.00
	<u>R²</u>	.69 ***
	<u>df</u>	14,158

*p<.05. **p<.01. ***p<.001.

As presented in Table 2, the significant beta coefficients provided support for the relationship between willingness to relocate internationally and prior international experience, international orientation, self-efficacy for living and working overseas, and expectancy of valued benefits, thus supporting Hypotheses 1 to 4. Willingness to move domestically but not the number of domestic moves was related to willingness to relocate internationally for work, thus partially supporting Hypothesis 5. Career insight and attachment to family and friends were not found to be significant, thus not supporting Hypotheses 6 or 7. In addition, extraversion was not related to the willingness to work internationally. The most highly related variable was international orientation. The country of origin was the next most important, with Australians more willing to relocate internationally after graduation than the U.S. sample. The next most important variables were the expectancy of valued benefits and self-efficacy. International experience was also relevant but less so, and willingness to relocate domestically was very weakly related.

Students were also asked to indicate the relevance/lack of relevance of the 25 outcomes used in the expectancy measure. Of the 25 provided, those indicated as most relevant (more than two-thirds of the sample) were in relation to cross-cultural experiences, money, and the nature of the job. The items were opportunities to travel to new places (86%), personal growth from experiencing a difficult culture (78%, significantly more relevant for Australians than Americans 87% vs 68%), greater types of jobs qualified for in the future (73%), knowledge of other cultures (70%, more relevant for Australians than Americans 82% vs 58%), earning more money (70%), challenging work (68%, more relevant for Australians than Americans 81% vs 54%), and job responsibility (67%). Outcomes that were indicated as not relevant by more than two-thirds of the sample (accounted for in the outcome expectancies score as each outcome is then multiplied by a valence of zero) were of two types. The first category related to family and friends. Items included being viewed more positively by my friends (74%) and feeling socially isolated from people (67%). The second category related to problems with living overseas. Items included dealing with greater inconveniences on a daily basis (73%), not enjoying the same health advantages (74%), greater personal danger (74%), and difficulty adjusting to a different lifestyle (66%).

Coding of responses to the open-ended questions revealed 16 positive reasons for accepting an international job and 17 negative reasons for not accepting one. Calculation of percentages showed that eight of the 16 positive reasons were most frequently mentioned. Students considered accepting international jobs for the following reasons: new experiences/cultural aspects (60%), travel opportunity (33%), pay (31%), promotion/career advancement (27%), meeting new and different people (21%), personal growth (20%), job opportunities (18%), and excitement/challenge (15%). The seven most frequently provided reasons for not accepting an international job were family and friends (70%), with the remainder mentioned less frequently: security and political unrest concerns (28%), cultural differences/culture shock/strangeness (20%), language issues (18%), relationship issues (17%), loneliness/being alone (16%), and financial issues (15%). Few cross-country differences existed.

Differences between the Australian and U.S. samples are presented in Table 3. Except for willingness to relocate internationally (which was analyzed separately), the differences for the variables were examined by MANOVA to account for their intercorrelation (results are available from the authors upon request). Australians reported a greater willingness to relocate internationally, more international experience, a higher international orientation, higher self-efficacy for living and working in another country, and higher outcome expectancies than U.S. students.

TABLE 3
Means for Total, Australian and United States Samples

Variables	Total		Australian		United States	
	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
Willingness to relocate internationally	4.03	1.73	4.83	1.48	3.23	1.58
International experience	3.27	0.87	3.55	0.89	2.98	1.81
Number of domestic moves	1.52	1.83	1.70	1.84	1.35	1.81
Willingness to move domestically	1.94	1.01	2.22	0.92	1.67	1.02
International orientation	3.16	0.53	3.35	0.50	2.97	0.49
Self-efficacy	70.83	15.59	73.98	14.41	67.49	16.09
Extraversion	1.25	0.25	1.25	0.26	1.25	0.25
Outcome expectancies	46.92	10.77	49.23	11.45	44.56	9.61
Career insight	3.62	0.65	3.53	0.73	3.71	0.55
Attachment to family & friends	3.75	1.00	3.65	0.99	3.85	1.00

Note. Australian students were significantly higher than U.S. students on willingness to relocate internationally, international experience, international orientation, self-efficacy, and outcome expectancies, but not on extraversion, career insight, or attachment to family and friends.

Table 3 presents the means and the standard deviations for the total sample. Students had a moderate willingness to relocate internationally for work (mean of 4.03 on a 1 to 7 scale), but there was a large spread of scores within one standard deviation (2.3 to 5.8). Overall, they had moderate international experience in languages and time abroad (3.27 on a 1 to 5 scale). They were willing to move for a domestic job (1.94 on a 1 to 5 scale) and had moved once domestically (1.52) but with a substantial standard deviation of 1.83. They had reasonably high self-efficacy for living and working abroad (70.83) but there was a substantial spread (54% to 86% within one standard deviation). They had moderate international orientation (3.16 on a 1 to 5 scale) with limited range. Students tended to assess themselves as extroverted more than introverted. They had slightly less than average attachment to family and friends (3.75 on a 1 to 7 scale), ranging from 2.75 to 4.75 within one standard deviation. They had slightly less than moderate outcome expectancies (46.92 from 0 to 100%) with a range within one standard deviation of 35% to 58%.

DISCUSSION

The aim of this study was to investigate the experiential and psychological variables related to graduating university students' receptivity to international assignments. The results clearly show that those students who are receptive to international work have a positive orientation to international events, have high self-efficacy in their judgements for living and working in another country, and expect that working in another country will provide rewards they value. To a lesser extent, they are also more willing to move domestically and have had prior international experience in terms of languages and travel. However, those interested in international assignments do not have greater career insight or less attachment to family and friends, have not had more domestic moves, nor are they more extroverted than introverted. Prior domestic relocation was not important, consistent with Yurkiewicz and Rosen's (1995) results, but the willingness to relocate domestically was related to the willingness to relocate internationally, as previously found (Brett & Stroh, 1995).

Worth noting is that the sample of Australian students was more receptive to international work than the U.S. sample. However, this difference may well be a function of factors other than national origin. The Australian sample was from a large urban university with a high proportion of international students and campuses located in Asia.

The U.S. sample was from a small rural university with a low proportion of international students and no international campuses. The differences between the Australians and the Americans, although consistent with other research (Adler, 1986), may be due to factors other than national origin. We controlled for this difference in the analyses by entering the country variable first to remove its effects. Moreover, differences in the predictor variables by country were also controlled for in this way and by the multivariate analysis taking into account the overlap between the variables.

This study also has a greater number of women in the sample than other studies of students (Adler, 1984, 1986). We controlled for the gender proportions in the sample. However, we found no differences related to gender on receptivity to an international move, consistent with other studies of graduating students (Adler, 1984, 1986) and managers (Aryee et al., 1996; Brett Stroh, 1995). Only one study found female managers less willing to relocate internationally than male managers (Yurkiewicz & Rosen, 1995).

The results overall support uncertainty reduction theory, social learning theory, and expectancy theory. Students with a positive international orientation including appreciation of other languages and countries, comfort with differences, and participation in cultural events should anticipate fewer disruptions to behavioural routines and faster re-establishment of those routines. Interestingly, the major variable is not international experience in language and travel, but international orientation. Since more students are apt to have an international orientation rather than actual experience, the potential pool of prospective expatriates is expanded.

The importance of international orientation has implications for the selection of suitable candidates for expatriate assignments. While U.S. firms continue to select expatriates based primarily on technical competence (Haslberger & Stroh, 1992; Mendenhall, Dunbar & Oddou, 1987), other factors such as those reflected in this study need to be taken into account. For example, candidates with a positive international orientation are more likely to adapt easily than those less positive. Selection need not be based on experiences in terms of prior international experience or even domestic relocation, but on respondents' positive attitudes toward different cultural experiences reflected by their current involvement in various cultural events.

Similarly, those students who have confidence in their abilities to live and work in another country should anticipate less disruption to behavioural routines and quicker re-establishment of those routines. Those with high self-efficacy are more likely to engage frequently in task-related activities and persist longer in coping efforts (Gist, 1987). Thus, we can expect that international assignees with moderate to high self-efficacy will engage in a variety of activities related to being effective in expatriate roles and also persist longer in overcoming difficulties frequently associated with these assignments. For example, self-efficacy has been shown to be related to the desire to stay in host countries (Singer, 1993).

The importance of self-efficacy rather than extraversion is useful for the development of potential global managers. Efficacy expectations for specific behaviours can be enhanced through enactive mastery (personal attainment), vicarious experience (modelling), verbal persuasion, and physiological arousal (e.g., reduction of anxiety) (Bandura, 1982). Learning and development activities can be designed based on these tenets of self-efficacy to enhance confidence in performing effectively in international assignments and then consequently, increasing the desire to become an expatriate.

Students who expected valued positive outcomes from an international post were also more willing to consider relocating. Students rated the outcomes of gaining cross-cultural experiences, job prospects and meaningfulness, and money to be the most relevant categories outcomes. Reasons reported by students in our sample are consistent with those found by Adler (1986) to be MBA students' primary reasons for being interested in international work. Surprisingly, the reasons were also similar to Feldman and Thomas' (1991) expatriate sample of men whose average age was early 40s.

The importance of outcome expectancies yields practical implications in terms of companies' human resource policies. Positive outcomes particularly relevant to new hires such as job opportunities and pay can be incorporated into human resource policies developing relocation packages for junior employees. Moreover, companies can capitalize on younger employees' desire for personal growth opportunities and cross-cultural experiences to progress their development in ways needed by global managers.

Interestingly, attachment to family and friends was not related to the receptivity to work globally, consistent with the lack of relevance given for some of the outcomes. On a cautionary note, the scale measuring attachment to family and friends had low reliability, and thus higher than desirable error. Family and friends were mentioned by 70% of the students as the major reason they would not take an international job, suggesting pressure to stay. Attachment to family and friends was negatively related to the receptivity to work in another country when the bivariate correlation was calculated (Table 1). The lack of importance for attachment to family and friends in the hierarchical regression analysis suggests that other variables explain its effects. For example, when respondents' self-efficacy for living and working internationally is taken into account, attachment to family and friends abates in importance. Positive international orientation and outcome expectancies may also reduce the link attachment to family and friends has to receptivity to expatriation. Overall, it appears the importance placed by mid-career employees on family for relocating internationally (Borstorff et al., 1997; Swaak, 1995a) is not shared by this sample of students, as indicated by its lack of prediction in the multiple regression and the lack of relevance given for the outcomes.

This study has several limitations. More reliable measures need to be developed for attachment to family and friends with clear factor structures, as well as for international experiences, to be more confident about the interpretation of the results of these variables. Generalizability of the results is also limited. The sample was not representative of new hires from the U.S. and Australia. Even though the differences between the samples could be controlled, future research requires samples from which greater generalizations can be made, and in which the universities are matched on size, composition and location. Moreover, the sample had more female than male students. A re-examination of the results from the larger Australian sample choosing a sample with more males than females showed that gender was not an important variable. This lack of effect for gender is consistent with most prior studies (Adler, 1984, 1986; Aryee et al., 1996; Brett & Stroh, 1995).

The present study examined primarily the impact of individual factors, with only two situational factors included: the country of origin and attachment to family and friends. Studies of expatriates have revealed the importance of both individual and situational factors for adjustment (Black & Gregersen, 1991). Future research should account for situational factors likely to impinge on the receptivity to international work. For example, the cultural similarity or dissimilarity of the country to which relocation might occur was not assessed. In a study of Singaporean managers, cultural similarity of the international relocation was shown to be related to willingness to relocate internationally (Aryee et al., 1996).

Another limitation of this study is that it is a cross-sectional, correlation based study in which all data were gathered by survey. Hence, common method variance may explain the results, although response scales were generally different and the method of analysis took into account overlap amongst the predictors that

may have been shared method variance. In addition, responses to open-ended data were coded to more fully interpret the results and assess consistency with the quantitative results. Most importantly, the study was based on three well-established theoretical frameworks to develop the measures, and the results were interpreted in regard to these theories, strengthening their interpretation.

Future research requires longitudinal designs. A longitudinal design in which antecedents precede consequences reduces common method variance and allows for inferences about cause and effect. The samples also need to be tracked to ascertain if receptivity to international work predicts actual acceptance of international jobs, and if international orientation, self-efficacy for living and working in another country, and expectancy of valued outcomes actually predict taking an international job. In addition, it appears relevant to assess if the factors linked to the intent to accept expatriate jobs, which in this study chiefly relate to adaptability (international orientation, self-efficacy) also predict expatriate success.

Getting employees to go global requires an integrated international human resource management approach. This framework begins at the college recruiting level with attracting internationally oriented candidates and continues through the training and development of new hires for global positions. Based on career pathing models, succession planning which values international experiences and management development initiatives which further instill global perspectives will help prospective global managers understand how to develop their careers internationally and the promotional payoffs for doing so. Furthermore, total reward systems that reinforce employees' valued outcomes such as personal growth, pay, career development, and challenging work environments will help to retain the global talent developed.

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