

**ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF WORK
ADJUSTMENT AMONG SELF SELECTING
EXPATRIATE ACADEMICS IN MALAYSIAN
PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**

NAJIHAH HANISAH BTE MARMAYA



**THESIS SUBMITTED IN FULFILLMENT FOR
THE DEGREE OF DOCTOR OF
PHILOSOPHY**

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH
2013**

UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

BORANG PENGESAHAN STATUS TESIS

JUDUL : ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF WORK ADJUSTMENT
AMONG SELF-SELECTING EXPATRIATE ACADEMICS IN MALAYSIAN
PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES
IJAZAH: DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

Saya **Najihah Hanisah Bte Marmaya** Sesi Pengajian **2005– 2013**, mengaku membenarkan tesis Sarjana disimpan di Perpustakaan Universiti Malaysia Sabah dengan syarat-syarat kegunaan seperti berikut:-

1. Tesis ini adalah hak milik Universiti Malaysia Sabah
2. Perpustakaan Universiti Malaysia Sabah dibenarkan membuat salinan untuk tujuan pengajian sahaja.
3. Perpustakaan dibenarkan membuat salinan tesis ini sebagai bahan pertukaran antara institusi pengajian tinggi.
4. Sila tandakan (/)



(Mengandungi maklumat yang berdarjah keselamatan atau kepentingan Malaysia seperti yang termaktub di dalam AKTA RASHIA RASMI 1972)

(Mengandungi maklumat TERHAD yang telah ditentukan oleh organisasi/badan di mana penyelidikan dijalankan)

TIDAK TERHAD

PERPUSTAKAAN
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

NURULAIN BINTI ISMAIL
Disahkan oleh,
PUBLIKASIAN
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

(Najihah Hanisah Bte Marmaya)

(Tandatangan Pustakawan)

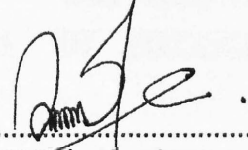
Tarikh: Ogos 2013

PROF. DR SYED AZIZI WAFA BIN
SYED KHALID WAFA
Head of Publication Unit
Universiti Malaysia Sabah
Jalan UMS
88400 Kota Kinabalu

DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the material in this thesis is my own except for quotations, excerpts, equations, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.

19 August 2013



.....
Najihah Hanisah Bte Marmaya
PS05-002-069



UMS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

CERTIFICATION

NAME : **NAJIHAH HANISAH BTE MARMAYA**
MATRIC NO. : **PS05-002-069**
TITLE : **ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF WORK
ADJUSTMENT AMONG SELF-SELECTING
EXPATRIATE ACADEMICS IN MALAYSIAN
PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES**
DEGREE : **DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**
VIVA DATE : **2 JULY 2013**

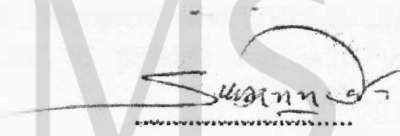
DECLARED BY;

1. SUPERVISOR

Prof. Dr. Syed Azizi Wafa




Signature


.....
**PROF. DR SYED AZIZI Wafa BIN
SYED KHALID Wafa**
Head of Publication Unit
Universiti Malaysia Sabah
Jalan UMS
88400 Kota Kinabalu

2. Co-SUPERVISOR

Associate Professor Dr. Arsiah Bahron

Signature


.....
ASSOC. PROF. DR. HJH. ARSIAH HJ. BAHRON
Dean
School of Business & Economics
Universiti Malaysia Sabah

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

Alhamdulillah.... Obtaining my Ph.D. degree is not an easy path. The completion of this dissertation was made possible through the invaluable supports and encouragement of a number of people.

First and foremost my sincere appreciation goes to my father, Marmaya Abd. Razak and mother, Salizah bt. Manggal for the unrelenting support and being there for me through thick and thin. Secondly, my gratitude and heartfelt thanks go to my supervisors, Professor Dr Syed Azizi Wafa Syed Khalid Wafa for generously providing guidance for my academic career, for continuously encouraging me and pushing me when I work on this dissertation, and for all the patience and support you gave me since the day one of my doctoral study. I am truly honored and lucky to complete my Ph.D. degree under your tutelage. I would also like to thank to my co supervisor Associate Professor Dr Arsiah Bahron for her guidance, encouragement and support throughout this journey. My profound gratitude also goes out to Professor T. Ramayah (USM) for the invaluable advice in regards to statistics and data analysis.

I want to express my gratitude to the Examiners who undoubtedly spent hours reading over this document in order to provide me with valuable recommendations for its improvement.

Finally, my deepest appreciation to my beloved husband Zainul Amiruddin bin Zakaria and my gorgeous daughter, A'isyah Malaeka Zuyyin who constantly reminds me of what matters most in life.

Najihah Hanisah Bte Marmaya
19 August 2013

ABSTRACT

ANTECEDENTS AND CONSEQUENCES OF WORK ADJUSTMENT AMONG SELF SELECTING EXPATRIATE ACADEMICS IN MALAYSIAN PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES

This study explores the work adjustment among self-selecting expatriate (SSE) in Malaysia. Specifically, this study examines the antecedents of expatriate academics' work adjustment and its influence on organizational commitment among expatriate academics in public universities in Malaysia within the context of Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) by Dawis and Lofquist (1986), Dawis (2005). This empirical study attempts to enrich the understanding of the work adjustment, organizational commitment, individual adjustment, family adjustment, task and emotional satisfaction. The study concluded the analysis by testing the structural model that incorporated all of the hypothesized relationships in this research. A quantitative method was adopted in this study and responses from 251 expatriate academics in Malaysia were analyzed using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The result showed that most of the hypotheses were supported. This result show that expatriate academics are satisfied with their work environments when the needs that they possess related to work correspond with the reinforcements offered by their work environments. Emotional satisfaction was also found to link with work adjustment and work adjustment influence organizational commitment. However there was no correlation for abilities and ability requirement correspondence towards task satisfaction. Task satisfaction also does not relate to work adjustment. The most interesting finding is individual adjustment and Family adjustment support the moderating effect in this study. On the basis of the results of the thesis, it was concluded that expatriate academics with high satisfaction were able to adjust their work adjustment and increase their organizational commitment while working abroad. The result indicate that top management and Human Resource (HR) should focus on maintaining expatriates' satisfaction while on an international assignment as higher levels of work adjustment can positively influence organizational commitment. This result showed that the moderating effect in the model is revealed and can be applied among self-selecting expatriate in Malaysia.

Keywords: Expatriate academics, Work adjustment, organizational Commitment.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk melihat tahap penyesuaian kerja di kalangan pensyarah asing (expatriate academics) di Malaysia yang datang Malaysia secara sukarela (self-selecting expatriate). Khususnya, kajian ini mengkaji faktor-faktor keatas tahap penyesuaian kerja dan seterusnya hubungan keatas komitmen organisasi dikalangan expatriates di dalam konteks Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) oleh Dawis and Lofquist (1986), Dawis (2005). Kajian secara empirikal ini bertujuan untuk memahami penyesuaian kerja, komitmen organisasi, penyesuaian kerja individu yang lain, penyesuaian keluarga, kepuasan kerja dan kepuasan emosi. Kajian ini menyimpulkan semua analisis melalui Model Persamaan Struktur untuk menguji semua hipotesis. Rekabentuk kajian secara kuantitatif telah digunakan dan maklumbalas daripada 251 pensyarah asing (expatriate academics) yang bekerja di universiti awam tempatan dianalisa menggunakan Model Persamaan Struktur. Hasil kajian menyokong kuat hampir semua hipotesis. Keputusan menunjukkan bahawa kepuasan pekerja tercapai apabila keperluan yang diperlukan ditempat kerja korespon dengan keperluan yang ditawarkan ditempat kerja. Kepuasan emosi juga mempunyai hubungan keatas penyesuaian kerja dan penyesuaian kerja mampu mempengaruhi komitmen organisasi. Walau bagaimanapun, tiada hubungan antara koresponden kebolehan dan kepuasan kerja, begitu juga hubungan antara kepuasan kerja terhadap penyesuaian kerja. Penyesuaian keluarga menyederhana hubungan antara penyesuaian kerja dan komitmen organisasi. Hasil kajian yang menarik ialah penyesuaian individu dan keluarga mempunyai kesan penyederhana dalam kajian ini. Hasil kajian menunjukkan bahawa pensyarah asing yang mempunyai kepuasan yang tinggi mampu menyesuaikan kerja dan meningkatkan komitmen organisasi. Keputusan kajian menunjukkan bahawa pihak pengurusan atasan dan Sumber Manusia harus fokus untuk sentiasa memastikan kepuasan expatriates di tempat kerja memandangkan penyesuaian kerja yang tinggi secara positif boleh mempengaruhi komitmen organisasi. Keputusan kajian juga mendapati bahawa kesan penyederhanaan di dalam model boleh dibuktikan di kalangan self-selecting expatriate.

Kata kunci: pensyarah asing (expatriate academics), penyesuaian kerja (work adjustment), komitmen organisasi (organizational commitment).

TABLE OF CONTENTS

	Pages
DECLARATION	ii
CERTIFICATION	iii
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	iv
ABSTRACT	v
ABSTRAK	vi
TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
LIST OF FIGURES	xii
LIST OF TABLES	xiv
LIST OF APENDICES	xvi
CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION	
1.1 Introduction	1
1.2 Overview	1
1.3 Background of Study	2
1.4 Theoretical Introduction	3
1.5 Research Problem	5
1.6 Research Questions	9
1.7 Research Objectives	10
1.8 Significance of Study	11
1.8.1 Malaysian Public Universities and Ministry of Higher Education	11
1.8.2 Self-Selecting Expatriates (SSEs)	12
1.8.3 Knowledge Contribution	12
1.8.4 Methodological Improvement	13
1.9 Scope of the Study	14
1.10 Definitions of Key Terms in This Study	15
1.10.1 Abilities and Ability Requirement - Needs and Reinforcements Correspondence	15
1.10.2 Task Satisfaction	15
1.10.3 Emotional Satisfaction	16
1.10.4 Work Adjustment	17
1.10.5 Organizational Commitment	17
1.10.6 Individual/family Adjustment (General, Interaction and Psychological)	17
1.11 Structure of the Thesis	18
1.12 Summary	19

CHAPTER 2 : PUBLIC UNIVERSITIES IN MALAYSIA AND EXPATRIATE ACADEMICS

2.1	Introduction	20
2.2	Public Universities in Malaysia	20
2.3	Self-Selecting Expatriates (SSEs)	23
2.4	Summary	26

CHAPTER 3: LITERATURE REVIEW

3.1	Introduction	27
3.2	Cross-Cultural Adjustment	27
3.3	Expatriate Work Adjustment	31
3.4	Studies on Person-Environment Fit	32
3.5	The Minnesota Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA)	37
3.5.1	Theoretical Foundations of Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA)	39
3.5.2	Predictive Model of Theory of Work Adjustment	43
3.5.3	Theory of Work Adjustment Variables and Their Measurement	44
3.5.4	Process Model of Theory of Work Adjustment	46
3.5.5	Theory of Work Adjustment Variables and Their Measurement	48
3.6	Proposed Theoretical Framework	55
3.6.1	Perception of Correspondence and Satisfaction in the Model	56
3.6.2	Correspondence Leading to Task Satisfaction and Emotional Satisfaction	63
3.6.3	Commitment	68
3.6.4	Adapting Black's Model in TWA	76
3.6.5	Moderator Variable in TWA	78
3.7	Summary	86

CHAPTER 4: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

4.1	Introduction	88
4.2	Research Philosophy	88
4.3	Nature of Study	89
4.4	Theoretical Framework	89
4.4.1	Hypotheses Development	91
4.5	Questionnaire Design	99
4.5.1	Questionnaire Structure	100
4.5.2	Question Sequence in Questionnaire	100
4.5.3	Categories of Questions and Scale Measurement Method	101

4.6	Basic Means of Obtaining Primary Data	105
4.7	Population	105
4.7.1	Population Frame	107
4.8	Sampling Technique	107
4.8.1	Data Collection	107
4.8.2	Pilot Test	109
4.9	Data Processing and Analysis	110
4.9.1	Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)	110
4.9.2	Meeting SEM Requirements and Assumptions	111
4.9.3	Model Fit Criteria and Recommended Fit Indexes	113
4.9.4	Measurement Model and Structural model	114
4.9.5	Model Misspecification and Modification	117
4.9.6	The Moderator	120
4.9.7	Model Misspecification and Modification	122
4.9.8	The Moderator	123
4.10	Summary	125

CHAPTER 5: ASSESSMENT OF RELIABILITY AND VALIDITY

5.1	Introduction	126
5.2	Sampling Result	126
5.2.1	The Respondents	126
5.3	Examination of Non-Response Bias	127
5.4	Screening the Data	131
5.4.1	Detection of Missing Data	131
5.4.2	Detection of Normality	132
5.5	Confirmatory Factor Analysis (CFA)	132
5.5.1	Measurement Model for All Variables	132
5.6	Inter-Correlation among All Constructs	139
5.7	Summary	140

CHAPTER 6: MODEL TESTING USING STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELING (SEM)

6.1	Introduction	143
6.2	Hypotheses Testing Using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM)	143
6.2.1	Model Specification	144
6.2.2	Model Assessment	144
6.3	Structural Model	148
6.3.1	Hypothesis 1 – Testing The Direct Effect of Abilities and Ability Requirement Correspondence on Task Satisfaction	148
6.3.2	Hypothesis 2 – Testing The Direct Effect of Needs and Ability Reinforcements Correspondence on Emotional	150

	Satisfaction	
6.3.3	Hypothesis 3 – Testing The Direct Effect of Task Satisfaction on Work Adjustment	153
6.3.4	Hypothesis 4- Testing The Direct Effect of Emotional Satisfaction on Work Adjustment	153
6.3.5	Hypotheses 5a, 5b and 5c- Testing The Direct Effect of Work Adjustment on Organizational Commitment (Affective, Continuance and Normative)	154
6.4	Testing the Moderating Effect of Individual Adjustment and Family Adjustment	155
6.4.1	Hypothesis 6a, 6b and 6c- Testing The Moderating Effect of Individual Adjustment (General, Interaction and Psychological adjustment) on The Relationship Between Task Satisfaction and Work Adjustment	156
6.4.2	Hypothesis 7a, 7b and 7c- Testing The Moderating Effect of Individual Adjustment on The Relationship Between Emotional Satisfaction and Work Adjustment	156
6.4.3	Hypothesis 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 8e and 8f- Testing The Moderating Effect of Family Adjustment on The Relationship Between Work Adjustment and Organizational Commitment (Affective, Continuance and Normative)	166
6.5	Summary	174
CHAPTER 7 : DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION		
7.1	Introduction	175
7.2	Discussion of the Findings	175
7.2.1	Do Abilities and Ability Requirement Correspondence lead to Task Satisfaction Among Expatriate Academics in Malaysia?	176
7.2.2	Do Needs and Reinforcement Correspondence Lead to Emotional Satisfaction Among Expatriate Academics in Malaysia?	177
7.2.3	Do Task Satisfaction and Emotional Satisfaction Influence The Work Adjustment Among Expatriate Academics in Malaysia?	179
7.2.4	Does Expatriate Work Adjustment Lead to Organizational Commitment Among Expatriate Academics in Malaysia?	180
7.2.5	Does Individual Adjustment (General, Interaction and Psychological Adjustment) Moderate The Relationship Between Task Satisfaction and Emotional Satisfaction Towards Work Adjustment Among Expatriate Academics	182

	in Malaysia?	
7.2.6	Does Family Adjustment (Interaction and General Adjustment) of Expatriate Moderate The Link Between Work Adjustment and Organizational Commitment Among Expatriate Academics in Malaysia?	183
7.3	Theoretical, Methodological and Practical Contributions	184
7.3.1	Theoretical Contributions	184
7.3.2	Methodological Contributions	186
7.3.3	Practical Contributions	187
7.4	Limitations of the Study	190
7.5	Directions for Future Research	191
7.6	Conclusion	192
Reference		194
Appendixes		228



UMS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

LIST OF FIGURES

	Pages
Figure 1.1	Abilities and Ability Requirement Correspondence 16
Figure 1.2	Needs and Reinforcements Correspondence 16
Figure 3.1	Framework of International Adjustment 30
Figure 3.2	The Basic TWA Predictive Model... 44
Figure 3.3	The Expanded TWA Predictive Model... 46
Figure 3.4	The TWA Process Model... 49
Figure 3.5	Theoretical Framework 56
Figure 3.6	Model of Intercultural Adjustment 65
Figure 3.7	Various Outcome Concerning an Individual's Tenure 70
Figure 4.1	Theoretical Framework 90
Figure 4.2	Six-Stage Process for Structural Equation Modeling... 112
Figure 4.3	Moderator Model 124
Figure 5.1	Higher-order Structure for Organizational Commitment 142
Figure 6.1	Theoretical Framework... 144
Figure 6.2	Structural Model 149
Figure 6.3	Moderator Model for Hypotheses 6a, 6b and 6c 156
Figure 6.4	Moderator Model for Hypotheses 7a, 7b and 7c 159
Figure 6.5	Moderating effect of general adjustment on task satisfaction - work adjustment relationship (H6a) 163
Figure 6.6:	Moderating Effect of Interaction Adjustment on task satisfaction-work adjustment relationship (H6b) 163
Figure 6.7:	Moderating Effect of Psychological adjustment on task satisfaction-work adjustment relationship (H6c) 164
Figure 6.8:	The moderating effect of general adjustment on emotional satisfaction-work adjustment relationship (H7a) 164
Figure 6.9:	The moderating effect of interaction adjustment on emotional satisfaction-work adjustment relationship (H7b) 165
Figure 6.10	The moderating effect of psychological adjustment on emotional satisfaction-work adjustment relationship (H7c) 165
Figure 6.11	Moderator Model for Hypothesis 8a, 8b, 8c, 8d, 8e and 8f 166
Figure 6.12	The moderation effect of family general adjustment on work adjustment- affective commitment (H8a) 171
Figure 6.13	The moderation effect of family general adjustment on work adjustment-continuance commitment (H8a) 172
Figure 6.14	The moderation effect of family general adjustment 172

	on work adjustment- normative commitment (H8c)	
Figure 6.15	The moderation effect of family interaction adjustment on work adjustment- affective commitment (H8d)	173
Figure 6.16	he moderation effect of family interaction adjustment on work adjustment- continuance commitment (H8e)	173
Figure 6.17:	The moderation effect of family interaction adjustment on work adjustment- normative commitment (H8f)	174



UMS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

LIST OF TABLES

	Pages
Table 4.1:	106
Table 4.2:	120
Table 5.1	127
Table 5.2	128
Table 5.3	130
Table 5.4	133
Table 5.5	138
Table 5.6	139
Table 5.7	141
Table 6.1	145
Table 6.2:	151
Table 6.3	157
Table 6.4	158
Table 6.5	158
Table 6.6	160
Table 6.7:	161
Table 6.8:	162
Table 6.9:	167
Table 6.10:	167
Table 6.11	168
Table 6.12:	169
Table 6.13	169



UMS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

LIST OF APENDICES

	Pages
APPENDIX A: QUESTIONNAIRE	228
APPENDIX B: NORMALITY DISTRIBUTION	238
APPENDIX C: TEST FOR NON RESPONSE BIAS DATA – CHI SQUARE	251
APPENDIX D: TEST FOR NON-RESPONSE BIAS DATA – T TEST	254
APPENDIX E: RELIABILITY ANALYSIS	255
APPENDIX F: FULL COMFIRMATORY FACTOR ANALYSIS	265
APPENDIX G: MEAN,STANDARD DEVIATION, SKEWNESS AND KURTOSIS	266



UMS
UNIVERSITI MALAYSIA SABAH

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In this first chapter a series of topics are considered which deal with, background, research problems, and research purposes, significance of the study and finally the scope of this thesis.

1.2 Overview

Globalization has drastically changed the world. As reported in the Sunday Star (2007), in 2007 there were 34,887 expatriates working in Malaysia. Most of the management literature and models presented by previous researchers (eg: Black, J.S and Gregerson, H.B, 1991) focus on expatriate assignment of corporate executives who are sent by their company to work in the host country. However, the literature on individuals who are self-initiated or willingly work overseas is still limited. Self-selected expatriation is also considered a career-enhancing experience, as it can contribute to the development of work-related and personal skills (Al Ariss and Ozbilgin, 2010). Although precise numbers are not yet known, it is posited that self-selecting expatriates (SSEs) are a widespread phenomenon (Suutari and Brewster, 2000). Expatriate academics are one of the groups of self-selecting expatriates (SSEs) who are currently spread around the world to work outside of their home country.

Why do universities hire expatriates? Today's global economy is very competitive and borderless. University education also receives its bit from the globalization breeze. Thus, today a majority of the universities turn out to be international service organizations as a result of strategic partnerships where both students and academicians are circulating between universities of various countries (Richardson and McKenna, 2002). Universities at the same time need to ensure the number of quality expertise in their universities to meet the needs and quality standards of the university. Thus, today, not only the multinationals should

advance their skills of managing diverse groups, but also universities should generate universal codes of management for their future success (Katrinli and penbek, 2010).

In Malaysia, all public universities need to be competent in order to fulfill the global requirement of the level of education in the world. This is why, foreign expertise is needed in certain faculties in universities. However, to hire expatriate employees, global human resource systems and globally competent people are required. This is the greatest challenge in human resource management to manage human resources on a global scale because finding the right people working in a foreign country is a difficult task.

Current study is an attempt to examine the antecedents and consequences of work adjustment among self-selecting expatriate academics from the perspective of work adjustment theory (TWA). A significant contribution of the study is the extended the TWA by incorporating individual adjustment and family adjustment as the moderator in the model. Current study also has added organizational commitment as an outcome of work adjustment in the theory. Explanations were discussed further in the next section and chapter.

1.3 Background of Study

Today, not only employees of multinationals are rotating around different branches of home organization, but also, volunteer individuals are favouring positions in companies located outside their home country. The increasing rate of unemployment, individual development, limited opportunities among home country institutions and even the motive of venture may be the examples for rising popularity of "self-directed international assignment". Universities, consequently the academicians, are among the most valuable assets of countries and they are also the ones who are frequently defined as "volunteer expatriates".

Malaysian public universities have opened its market towards globalization. Scholars agree that expatriates must (a) reach a cognitive and emotional comfort level with the values, attitudes and behavioral practices considered the norm in the

host culture (Caligiuri, 2000; Tung, 1987); and (b) integrate the cultural assumptions of the host-country and adapt to the differences that exist in the physical, psychological, and communication environments. What is the level of satisfaction of expatriate academics at an institution of higher learning with their ability to meet teaching and administrative workloads? What is the person-job fit perceptions of the expatriate academics and to what extent do such perceptions influence their work adjustment? It must be very interesting to uncover the answer.

Furthermore, little research has been undertaken to assess the relationship between expatriate academics and their respective jobs abroad (Richardson and McKenna, 2002). Kealey and Ruben (1983) have defined a successful expatriate as a person who has the ability to live and work effectively in an overseas environment. Breiden (2005) claimed that, previous investigations on expatriate management practices, emphasis on assessing individual factors perceived to enhance the success or failure of an international assignment but, little research has been undertaken to examine the antecedents and consequences of work adjustment among expatriates in foreign country. The connections and developed network among universities generate overseas opportunities for both students and academicians all around the world in different universities. In Malaysia the study on self-selecting expatriate also needs to be developed since the number of this group is increasing. The present study is focusing on expatriate academics in public universities in Malaysia in terms of their antecedent and consequences of work adjustment.

1.4 Theoretical Introduction

A thorough review of expatriate and international assignment literature concluded that the studies are focused on fundamental issues such as; management, selection and training of expatriates, (Gregersen and Black, 1996; Selmer and Luk 1995; Peterson, Napier and Shim, 1996; Castillo, 2006; Stone, 1991; Naumann,1993; Ones and Viswervaran, 1999; Bennet and Colquhaun, 2000; Hutchings and Ratnasari, 2006; Selmer, 2004; Graf and Harland, 2005; Tye and Chen, 2005; Inkson, K. Arthur, M.B., Pringle, J., Barry, S. 1997), cultural adaptation during an overseas experience (Vance and Paderson, 1993; Aycan, Kanungo, Mendonca, Yuk,

Deller, Stahl and Khursid, 2000; Aycan, Al-Hamd, Davis and Budhwar, 2007; Stahl, 2000; Jun, Gentry and Hyun, 2001; Hutchings 2002; Ang, Van Dyne, Koh, Ng, Templer and Chandrasekar, 2007), the impact of family and spouse for the continuity and success of an international experience (Caligiuri, 2000; Johnson, Kristof-Brown Vanvienen, Depater and Klein, 2003; Huang et al, 2005; Swagler and Jome, 2005), personality of an expatriate (Shaffer and Joplin, 2001) and various integrated models regarding the antecedent and consequences of an international assignment (Black et al., 1991; Aycan, 1997; Tung,1998). Whatever the core subject of an expatriate research - such as selection, training, performance, job satisfaction, degree of adaptation- "culture" is traced as a sub theme in most of the papers (Black et al., 1991; Gregersen and Black, 1996; Aycan, 1997; Peterson et al., 1996; Tung,1998; Aycan et al., 2000, 2007; Stahl, 2000; Stahl Chua CH, Caligiuri P, Cerdin J, Taniguchi M , 2008; Jun et al., 2001; Hutchings 2006; Oudenhoven, Mol, Vander, 2003; Ang et al., 2007). One of the major problems of an international assignment is adjustment to a new culture where isolation can trigger decreased efficiency, job satisfaction, motivation and performance (Aycan et al., 2000, 2007). Work adjustment is very important because with good work adjustment expatriate employees can increase efficiency, job satisfaction, commitment and performance in the organizational.

Theory of Work Adjustment (TWA) by Dawis and Lofquist (1986) is used to study the antecedents and consequences of work adjustment among self-selecting expatriates in Malaysia. This model is preferred because of its unique, dynamic and ongoing processes through which the individual and the environment interchange each other. This was discuss further in the literature review. The interaction between person and environment factors is conceptualized in this study in terms of person-environment fit. In the TWA, this fit is called correspondence and is described along two dimensions: skills and needs. According to the TWA, the greater the correspondence between the skills that employees possess and those required by the work environment, the more satisfying the workplace is for their employees. The TWA researchers also hypothesized that employees are satisfied with their work environments when the needs that they possess related to work correspond with the reinforcements offered by their work environments.

Researchers have begun to draw attention to the possible importance of other variables in the TWA model (Dawis, 1994; Dawis and Lofquist, 1993; Fitzgerald and Rounds, 1993; Rounds and Hesketh, 1994; Tinsley, 1993). For example, researchers offered suggestions for the hypothesized role or other cultural variables of race in the TWA. These suggestions generally have taken three directions: consideration of a mediated model of the TWA (Dawis, 1994; Dawis and Lofquist, 1994; Martin and Swartz-Kulstad, 2000), and other variables as moderators (Fitzgerald and Rounds, 1993; Rounds and Hesketh, 1994; Tinsley, 1993). The present study also investigates the role of other variables (e.g family adjustment) which related to self-selecting expatriates in an attempt to advance knowledge regarding the relevance of the model for expatriates.

1.5 Research Problem

Malaysia has received three waves or phases of expatriation for the past fifteen years or so where the expatriates were normally sent by MNCs like Shell, Dunlop, Guthrie and British Petroleum and are mostly Britons (Mohd Tahir and Ismail 2007). In a 2008 World Bank Doing Business Report, Malaysia is ranked number 20 out of the 181 economies surveyed. The report looked at ten business regulation categories concerning investors such as starting a business and dealing with construction permits (World Bank Doing Business Report 2008). Malaysia continues to be a major recipient of foreign direct investment (FDI) with an equivalent of USD 12.9 billion in incoming FDI in 2008 as opposed to USD 8.4 billion in 2007 in various sectors (UNCTAD Report 2006). In a recent HSBC Bank International Expat Explorer Survey 2009, with response from more than 3,100 expatriates, Malaysia is newly ranked as number 10 in the overall league table even beating China in terms of quality of life which was determined by four factors; annual income, disposable income, ability to save and possession of luxury items (HSBC Bank 2009). All of the above factors contributed to the many reasons why Malaysia is a good destination for FDI and the sending of expatriates. The above statistics testify that international trade has been an essential element in Malaysia's economy.

The brain circulation of expatriates (professionals and high skilled workers) accounts for a small portion of total labor flows. Base on the accessible statistics,

the portion of these expatriates is 2% in Malaysia (Manning, 2002). In year 2002, these expatriates' growth rate increases to 5-10 % in Malaysia (Bharatnagar and Manning, 2005). Expatriates who are high skilled workers and largely professionals, accounts 3 % of the foreign manpower in the country as forecast in Third Industrial Master Plan (IMP3). Most of them are employed in the construction, petroleum, manufacturing and service sectors (education, health and ICT industries).

The Ministry of Higher Education reported that 1,261 expatriate academics are working in public universities in Malaysia in 2009. The National Mission as announced in the Ninth Malaysia Plan (9th MP), emphasized the third phase of the government's effort to achieve Vision 2020. The Ministry of Higher Education has the main role of initiating the mission to raise the capacity for knowledge and innovation, as well as encouraging a first class mind set to the nation. Malaysia needs to produce human capital with a first class mind set in order to face developmental challenges in a knowledge and innovation based economy. Generally, different policies are imposed for public universities and private universities. Public universities in Malaysia are categorized into three groups: Research Universities, Focused Universities (technical, education, management and defence) and Comprehensive Universities but not for private universities. Therefore, this study only focuses on expatriate academics in public universities for rigor and generalizability purposes.

The tremendous growth of expatriate academics in Malaysia contributes to business and economic activity and job creation. However universities are still not problem-free from various unpleasant issues related to relationship conflicts, imbalance rewards system, performance deficiency as well as inconsistencies in policies and technology conducts. Most academics especially expatriates are usually affected by these conflicts due to several reasons such as the lack of satisfaction, lack of work and family adjustment, lack of socio-cultural adjustment and ineffective development or preparation programs. Perhaps the general perception that most expatriate academics are usually familiar and prepared to perform all the academia job aspects such as teaching, research, supervision, publishing, consultancy as well as community works led to the negligence of continuous

improvement of developmental programs for them. Consequently, many of them ended up alone in the process of juggling between new job demands, new norms and culture of the organizations in foreign country.

In Malaysia, within its 25 million populations, 50.4 percent are Malay, Chinese (23.7 percent), Indigenous (11 percent), Indian (7.1 percent) and others (7.8 percent) (MSD, 2010). Intercultural difficulties affect some psychological distraction of confusion, resistance or disappointment in interpersonal interaction and relationship. Foreigners' may experience more challenges to build mutual cultural relationship with interethnic society of Malaysia (Asma, 1992, 1993; Ezhar, 2009; Lailawati, 2008; Richardson and Foong, 2004; Salfarina, Mohd. Zaini and Azeem Fazwan, 2009). It is essential for sojourners' to understand specific psychological traits of Malaysian that contributed to their business performance (Sidek and Zainol, 2011).

To some extent, it also requires a lot of effort for the expatriate academics to adapt to the culture, organizational system, job design, formal and non-formal communication networks persisting in their new work environment. Several researchers have even proven that new academics who are experts of their own field could not necessarily demonstrate effective, efficient and excellent performance (Lucas and Murray, 2002). The same situation applies to expatriate academics of Malaysian public universities. Being part of the tertiary educational system, talented expatriate academics face the challenges to achieve several goals such as generating first class human capital, to promote the banner of lifelong learning and to create new knowledge as well as innovations (National Higher Education Plan 2007-2010, 2008).

A lot of studies have been done regarding the issues of expatriation, little progress has been made to show how expatriates perceive their work adjustment based on their level of correspondence among self-selecting expatriate (SSEs) in the Malaysian context. Relatively little research has been conducted on SSE employees. Hence not enough is known about this type of expatriate (Selmer and Lauring, 2010). Breiden (2005) claimed that there is a lack of comprehensive