

Repatriates' Work Engagement: Proactive Behavior, Perceived Support, and Adjustment

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Abstract

This article examined the influence of academic repatriates' proactive behavior, perceived organizational support, and coworker support on repatriation adjustment and work engagement. The study was conducted with a group of 102 (71 males, 31 females) Sri Lankan academic repatriates. Survey data were analyzed using structural equation modeling (SEM). Results indicated that repatriates' proactive behaviors, perceived organizational, and coworker support had an important role to play in the prediction of repatriation adjustment. Further, results indicated the essential role of individuals, groups, and the organization on repatriation adjustment and work engagement of academic repatriates. By empirically investigating antecedents and consequences of repatriation adjustment of academic repatriates, this study broadens the context of repatriation research. Also, this study introduced adjustment as a predictor of work engagement and found it had more influence on engagement than the perceived support practices among academic repatriates.

Keywords

academics, repatriation, adjustment, engagement, career, proactive behavior, coworker support, organization support

The internationalization of education has increased the importance of retaining highly engaged academics with global expertise. To ensure their existence and development, governments and universities in developing countries encourage academics (teaching and research faculty) to gain overseas experience. In addition to the opportunities provided by their universities, academics take steps to acquire international experience in teaching and research with the belief that such experience will improve their career prospects in their institution as well as in the global academic market (Jepsen et al., 2014; Richardson & McKenna, 2002).

To encourage the repatriation of academics (return to the home organization after completion of the task overseas), home university grants financial assistance while academics go overseas to engage in

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academic activities (expatriation period). Also, academics are required to sign an agreement with their university confirming that they will return to their home organization and serve for a particular period back at home university. What is more, repatriates expect that their international experiences are highly valued and such experiences can be considered favorable for their career advancement. Consequently, considerable number of academics return to their home university (repatriates).

Upon repatriation, repatriates see the home context as unfamiliar, and they need to readjust and settle into that context (repatriation adjustment), and this process continues until repatriates adjust adequately with different aspects of their home context (James, 2018; Sussman, 2000). Although adjustment has been conceptualized as three facets, adjustment to work/organization, adjustment to interaction with others, and adjustment to the general environment (Black, Gregersen, & Mendenhall, 1992), this study focuses adjustment to work/organization only. Better adjusted repatriates feel acceptance, well-being, and a psychological comfort and better fitted to the home context (Adler, 1981; Black et al., 1992). Better adjustment positively influences repatriates' retention, performance, commitment (Black et al., 1992), and knowledge sharing (Oddou, Osland, & Blakeney, 2008). Repatriates who are unable to better adjust their repatriation experience feelings of uncertainty, alienation, loss of control, and stress. This unfavorable conditions badly affect repatriates' engagement at work (Hakanen, Bakker, & Schaufeli, 2006; Xanthopoulou, Bakker, Demerouti, & Schaufeli, 2007).

Work engagement is a positive, fulfilling, work-related state of mind (Schaufeli, Martínez, Pinto, Salanova, & Bakker, 2002). Engaged employees show high levels of energy and are motivated toward their work, and they are often fully occupied in their work (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2002; Schaufeli et al., 2002). Also, work engagement is positively related to positive outcomes such as employees' retention and work performance. Given these favorable consequences of the adjustment and engagement of repatriates for both organization and employees, it is crucial for organizations and repatriates to identify how to enhance their adjustment and work engagement.

Socialization resource theory (SRT) (Gruman & Saks, 2013; Saks & Gruman, 2012) highlights the resources that facilitate employees' successful adjustment to their work, work group, and organization. The fundamental premise of this theory is that job/role transition is fundamentally challenging and stressful and that offering employees the resources to cope with these challenges is the best way to facilitate their adjustment and successful socialization. The theory proposes individual-, group-, and organizational-level resources are necessary for better adjustment and positive socialization outcomes such as engagement, retention, and performance.

According to SRT, providing necessary resources makes repatriates less likely to experience stress, more capable of solving problems, better at using their existing resources, and able to cultivate more resources (Bakker, van Veldhoven, & Xanthopoulou, 2010; Gruman & Saks, 2013; Hobfoll, 2002, Saks & Gruman, 2012). During the adjustment period, support from the organization and coworkers and individual's engagement in proactive behavior (self-initiated and change-oriented behavior) can be sources of valuable resources (Gruman & Saks, 2013; Saks & Gruman, 2012). These resources help repatriates to better repatriation adjustment.

Repatriates who experience better repatriation adjustment are better fitted to the home context (Adler, 1981; Black et al., 1992), and employees' perception of fit with a social system facilitates them to engage at work (Kahn, 1990). Also, Saks, Gruman, and Cooper-Thomas (2011) found that employees who find a better fit with their organization show a high level of engagement at their work. Further, Job Demands-Resources (JD-R) model highlights that support practices as a resource enhance individual's engagement in their work (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001). Hence, when employees are provided with sufficient organizational support and coworker support, they will engage in their work through their fit (adjustment) with their organization. Therefore, in addition to the support practices, the role of repatriation adjustment on engagement needs to be identified among repatriates.

This study aims to investigate the role of academic repatriates' proactive behavior, perceived coworker and organizational support in predicting their repatriation adjustment. It also analyses the role of

perceived coworker support and organizational support along with adjustment in predicting work engagement. Further, this study aims to identify the indirect and total effect of perceived organizational and coworker support and repatriates' engagement in proactive behavior on engagement. Universities expect to make use of the repatriate's global expertise in the process of internationalizing the institution and to ensure continued existence and competitive position (Gilliot et al., 2002; Jepsen et al., 2014; Lorange, 2006). Repatriates expect to take advantage of their global expertise to achieve their personal and career aspirations. However, the repatriation of academics has not yet been sufficiently discussed in the literature (Garson, 2005; James, 2018). Particularly, adjustment and work engagement among academic repatriates have not yet been studied. The increasing numbers of academics who work abroad temporarily return to home organization and experience repatriation. A better understanding of the relationship between the given variable can enable universities and academic repatriates to meet their expectations. This study contributes to the current discussion on the repatriation and engagement and will advance this discussion to a new group of repatriates—that is, academic repatriates.

Perceived Organizational Support and Adjustment

Repatriates' experiences are painful in terms of readjusting to general and organizational life (Black et al., 1992; Gregersen & Stroh, 1997), and organizational assistance in this process is very important (Black et al., 1992; Howe-Walsh & Torka, 2017; Stroh, 1995). Organizational support reduces uncertainty and associated with adjustment (Black, Mendenhall, & Oddou, 1991) and thus it can facilitate repatriation adjustment through uncertainty reduction. A longitudinal study on expatriation adjustment found that perceived organizational support was positively associated with adjustment (Takeuchi et al., 2009). It is possible that organizational support and adjustment are positively related to repatriates as well since both the expatriation and repatriation transitions are challenging and stressful. Another study with 58 repatriates found that organizational support practices increase repatriates' general perception about their organization and help successful repatriation (Lazarova & Caligiuri, 2002).

Nevertheless, it is apparent that academics with international experience are able to market their talent in a global academic market. But, they return to their organization with the expectations that they can obtain the expected return on their investment. When a university's human resource policies and practices related to management of repatriates are supportive to repatriates, they can make use of their global expertise and satisfy their repatriation expectations which can energize them to overcome repatriation challenges and stress. According to SRT, organizational support facilitates individuals in overcoming repatriation challenges and stress. Given that, one can presume that academic repatriates who perceive more organizational support will better adjust to their repatriation.

Proactive Behavior and Adjustment

An individual uses a range of proactive behaviors such as job change negotiation, positive framing, and networking to reduce uncertainty and to take control over the environment they are in through increasing their personal resources. Job change negotiation enables employees to influence the job structure and its process (Ashford & Black, 1996), which allows them to reduce uncertainty and increases their sense of control over the work environment (Black et al., 1992). Repatriates' feelings of certainty and control increases their self-efficacy and self-confidence (Black et al., 1992), which are the individual resources that provide the energy to get rid of adjustment stress and overcome repatriation challenges (Saks & Gruman, 2012). Engagement in positive framing increases personal resources (Saks & Gruman, 2012), and such personal resources facilitate the adjustment as well as help to assimilate more resources to reduce the adjustment stress and overcome adjustment challenges (Hobfoll, 2002; Saks & Gruman, 2012). Further, proactive engagement in developing networks with others provides

chances for more interaction with others; a broad range of interaction helps in learning necessary skills and appropriate workplace behavior, and it provides resource requirements that facilitate adjustment (Saks & Gruman, 2012).

Feldman and Tompson (1993) investigated the relevance of proactive behavior such as information seeking and positive framing during the career transition of three transition groups: expatriates, repatriates, and domestic geographical relocations and found most of the proactive behaviors positively correlate to the indices of the adjustment such as general satisfaction and intention to remain at the organization. The theoretical work of O'Sullivan (2002) focuses on the role of repatriates and their proactive behavior in the process of repatriation adjustment. This study proposes that repatriates who engage in proactive repatriation behavior feel more satisfied in their repatriation transition than those who do not engage in proactive behavior. Along with this line of argument, Adler (1981) found proactive repatriates feel satisfied and quickly adjust to their repatriation. Considering theoretical explanations and empirical evidences found in the literature on adjustment of expatriates, repatriates, and newcomers, it is clear that repatriates' feelings of stress, discomfort, uncertainty, and loss of control can be reduced by accumulating resources through engagement in proactive behaviors.

Perceived Coworker Support and Adjustment

Coworkers are the source of valuable information; they provide information about the work, work group, social- and cultural-related aspects (Allen, McManus, & Russell, 1999) and thus reduce the employees' tensions growing out of uncertainty and unpredictability. On the other hand, the negative attitudes and behaviors of existing employees (Chiaburu & Harrison, 2008) may also make the adjustment process very painful and challenging. Coworkers may be afraid of the repatriates as they feel that these repatriates have bettered themselves, and the presence of repatriates may hinder their progress or threaten their existing status. Thus, they may not be ready to accept repatriates as a member of their group immediately (Adler & Gundersen, 2008). This behavioral issue is common in the organizational setting generally, but repatriates perceive it as a severe problem as they are experiencing repatriation shock and stress upon their repatriation (Howard, 1974) and, in turn, this situation can hinder the process of adjustment.

In universities, academics are working together with least hierarchy and the greatest trust, and working in a team on projects (Enders & Kaulisch, 2006; van den Brink, Fruytier, & Thunnissen, 2013). Teamwork within and across subunits has been increased, and working in teams has become essential for career success of academics. A senior academic is more likely to lead projects and junior academics work as a team and play different roles on a project (Baruch & Hall, 2004). Thus, the support of coworkers has been crucial for academic repatriates to understand the work, work environment, and get rid of repatriation stress and challenges. On the other hand, the unsupportive behavior of coworker may increase repatriation challenges and stress.

Adjustment and Work Engagement

Employees' perception of fit with a social system facilitates them to engage in the work (Kahn, 1990). Saks et al. (2011) found empirical evidence for the claim those employees who better fit with their organization engage highly in their work. As the repatriation adjustment is a process that lasts until repatriates fit in to the home organization context, better repatriation adjustment can result in repatriates' increased work engagement. Moreover, when repatriates better adjust to their repatriation, they experience feelings of certainty, a sense of control, psychological comfort, and being accepted as a member of the group (Black et al., 1992), conditions that lead to employees' work engagement (Koyuncu, Burke, & Fiksenbaum, 2006; Mauno, Kinnunen, & Ruokolainen, 2007; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007). On the other hand, when repatriates experience unsatisfactory adjustment, they feel

uncertainty, loss of control (Black et al., 1992), and high stress (Black et al., 1992; Sussman, 2002), which are the conditions that adversely affect one's engagement at work (Koyuncu et al., 2006; Mauno et al., 2007; Xanthopoulou et al., 2007).

Perceived Organizational Support, Coworker Support, and Engagement

According to JD-R model, job resources compared to the job demand are a significant predictor of work engagement. Job resources are the physical, social, or organizational aspects of the job that may function in achieving work goal and reduce job demands and the associated physiological and psychological costs. Supportive relationships are resources that assist employees to deal with stressful events and minimize the adverse psychological effects of ongoing life strain (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Saks & Gruman, 2012)

In the work environment, employees may receive support from their organization and coworker that increases their resources. Also, by engaging in proactive behavior, an individual can increase their personal resources. Therefore, when employees are provided with sufficient resources to perform their task and they engage in proactive behavior to accumulate resources, they highly engage in their work. Also, when repatriates can receive resources through their coworkers and organization, their psychological capital (PsyCap) increases. PsyCap is an individual's positive psychological state of development (Gruman & Saks, 2013). PsyCap facilitates individuals to fit the organization and motivates them to engage at their work (Gruman & Saks, 2013). Further, Kim, Kim, and Lee (2018) highlight that people with greater support tend to actively engage in their occupation. In the repatriation context, repatriates experience adjustment to overcome their feeling of uncertainty, loss of control, and stress, which influence their work engagement. Therefore, among repatriates, perceived organization support, coworker support, and their engagement in proactive behaviors may influence their work engagement through repatriation adjustment.

Based on previous research, SRT, and JD-R models, the current study proposes the following six hypotheses for empirical investigation to achieve its' aims:

Hypothesis 1: Perceived organizational support positively relates to repatriation adjustment.

Hypothesis 2: Proactive behavior positively relates to repatriation adjustment.

Hypothesis 3: Perceived coworker support positively relates to repatriation adjustment.

Hypothesis 4: Adjustment positively relates to work engagement.

Hypothesis 5: Perceived organizational support positively relates to work engagement.

Hypothesis 6: Perceived coworker support positively relates to work engagement.

Method

Participants

Participants of this study were Sri Lankan academic repatriates who had been attached to a foreign university or academic institution for 1 or more years, had been involved in academic activities (teaching/research/higher studies), and, at the survey date, had returned to their home university within the past 24 months. The period of less than 24 months after repatriation was selected to ensure that the respondents are in the stage of adjustment or recently passed the stage (Adler, 1981; Harris & Moran, 2000; Sussman, 2002) to mitigate recall bias.

All 15 universities located in various parts of Sri Lanka were invited for this study but 12 universities only participated in this study. The researcher visited the 12 universities and got permission from the employer (the vice chancellor or registrar) to collect data from their academic repatriates. Having obtained employer consent researcher asked the organization to send the questionnaire to those they identified as fitting the criteria. In eight universities, the vice chancellor's office took the responsibility

of distributing the questionnaire packet, but in four universities, researcher was asked to meet deans or heads of department to make arrangements to issue questionnaire packs to suitable respondents. In such cases, researcher visited the dean/head of the department and sent the questionnaire pack through them to potential participants. The researcher included the participant information sheet for respondents with the questionnaire packet and enclosed a self-addressed envelope. Researcher kept respondents' anonymity by not directly contacting the respondents and not collecting personal data that might identify the particular respondent. Respondents were requested to send the survey directly to the researcher without mentioning their name or address. In total, 148 questionnaires were distributed, and the ultimate response rate was 74% (109 respondents). Seven questionnaires were rejected for two reasons: (a) missing data on a questionnaire were more than 15% (two cases) and (b) respondents had less than 1-year overseas experience (five cases). Hence, this study was carried out with the response of 102.

Male participants accounted for 72% ($n = 71$) of the respondents. Majority of the participants (78%) were married. Regarding country of overseas assignments, 31% ($n = 32$) respondents had overseas experience in Asian countries, but the majority of the respondents ($n = 70$) had such experience in other developed countries (Australia, Canada, New Zealand, UK, and United States). Concerning age and working experience of respondents, their average age and working experience were 41.8 years ($SD = 6.5$) and 11.4 years ($SD = 4.9$), respectively. Respondents' expatriation and repatriation experiences were 41.4 months ($SD = 11.8$) and 12.6 months ($SD = 7.8$), respectively.

Measures

Perceived organizational support (POS). The 9 items of the POS Scale that loaded highest in Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, and Sowa's (1986) factor analysis was used with slight modifications (e.g., "the organization" was reworded as "my university") in the current study. The modifications were made to suit the scale to the repatriation context. This scale measures repatriates' perception of the extent to which the organization values their contribution and cares about their well-being. Previous studies (Eisenberger et al., 1990; Wayne et al., 1997) have reported very high reliability coefficient (Cronbach's α [CrA] was $< .92$). In these studies, the POS Scale has been shown to possess external construct validity via its positive relationships with affective attachment and employee performance. Example item includes "My University strongly considers my goals and values." Participants responded items on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*). The average score of all items in the scale was computed. Higher scores indicate greater levels of repatriates' perceived organizational support. The estimated internal consistency reliability of the current study was found to be $CrA = .93$.

Proactive behavior. It was measured with 8 items that closely related to repatriation context adapted from Ashford and Black (1996). This scale measures repatriates' engagement in proactive behavior such as information seeking, networking, and positive framing. Previous studies reported generally acceptable psychometric properties of the scale (Ashford & Black, 1996; Kim et al., 2005; Saks, Gruman, & Cooper-Thomas, 2011). Moreover, in these studies, the scale has been shown to possess external construct validity via its meaningful relationships with adjustment indicators such as job satisfaction and social integration. Measures were modified to suit the repatriation context and to keep consistency with other measures. For example, the original item "To what extent have you tried to see your situation as opportunity rather than a threat?" was modified as "I tried to see my situation as an opportunity rather than a threat." In the original questionnaire, Ashford and Black's (1996) Scales were based on 5-point Likert-type scale from 1 (*to no extent*) to 5 (*to a great extent*). In order to maintain consistency among scales, a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*) was used. Example item includes "I tried to look on the bright side of things at work." The average score of all items in the

scale was computed. Higher scores indicating greater levels of repatriates' engagement in proactive behaviors. For the current study, internal consistency was satisfactory ($CrA = .78$) and consistent with past reported estimates.

Coworker support. Eight social support (coworker support) items developed by Ducharme and Martin (2000) were included in the survey. These items focus on employees' perceptions of coworkers' support at the stressful situation. Previous study reported acceptable reliability coefficient, and the scale has been shown to possess construct validity via its expected correlation with stress (Ducharme & Martin, 2000). The wording of the original items was modified without changing the meaning of the statements to make the respondents identify personally with the question. For example, the original item "You feel close to your coworkers" was changed to "I feel close to my coworkers." The participants in the current study responded items such as "I feel appreciated by my coworkers" on 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*). The average score of all items in the scale was computed. Higher scores indicate greater levels of repatriates' perceived coworker support. In the current study, the CrA of the scale was .90.

Adjustment. Repatriates' adjustment was measured by measuring the degree of repatriates' perceived person-organization fit (PO fit). To measure PO fit, 5 items were used: two from Cable and Judge's (1996) study and three from Cable and DeRue's (2002) study. The internal consistency of Cable and DeRue's Scale was high .92. Cable and DeRue's Scale has only 3 items, and researcher perceived that these items are not adequate to measure the whole construct (PO fit). For example, values match between the repatriates and current employees in organization is one of the features of PO-fit, but there was no item to measure such feature in Cable and DeRue's Scale. Thus, in the current study, to give an accurate measure of the whole concept, 2 items were adopted from Cable and Judge's (1996) Scale which seemed to be complementary. The 5-item Scale used in the current study measures repatriates' degree of perceived fit with their home organization.

In the present study, to confirm the factor structure of the 5-item Scale, an exploratory factor analysis was performed, and the results supported the one-factor model. The participants in the current study answered items such as, "The things that I value in my life are very similar to the things that my organization values" on a 7-point Likert-type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* and 7 = *strongly agree*). The average score of all items in the scale was computed. Higher scores indicate greater levels of adjustment. In the present study, the reliability coefficient was .94.

Work engagement. The Utrecht Work Engagement Scale-9 (UWES-9; Schaufeli et al., 2006) was adopted to measure the levels of work engagement of repatriates. The scale measures respondents' levels of energy, willingness to invest effort, enthusiasm, inspiration concentration, and their involvement in their work. The three dimensions of the UWES-9 (vigor, dedication, and absorption) are highly correlated (Seppälä et al., 2009), and recent studies summed these three dimensions and considered them as one factor with acceptable reliability coefficient (Rayton & Yalabic, 2014; Reilly, Awad, Kelly, & Rochlen, 2019). The UWES-9 has been shown to possess external construct validity via its meaningful relationships with job resources (Bakker et al., 2013). In the present study, to confirm the factor structure of the UWES-9, an exploratory factor analysis was performed, and the results supported the one-factor model of UWES-9. The original items scored on a 7-point scale, ranging from 0 (*never*) to 6 (*every day*). In order to maintain consistency among scales, a 7-point Likert-type scale that ranged from 1 = *strongly disagree* to 7 = *strongly agree* was used. A sample item includes "I feel happy when I am working intensely." The average score of all items in the scale was computed. Higher scores indicate greater levels of repatriates' work engagement. For the current study, internal consistency was satisfactory ($CrA = .93$) and consistent with past reported estimates.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics, Reliability, Validity, and Correlations Among Variables.

Constructs	M	SD	CrA	CR	AVE	AJD	CSS	ENG	OSS	PaB
Adjustment (AJD)	3.76	1.49	.94	.96	.81	.90				
Coworkers support (CSS)	5.08	1.09	.90	.92	.58	.46	.76			
Engagement (ENG)	4.87	1.14	.93	.94	.64	.58	.31	.80		
Organization support (OSS)	4.28	1.29	.93	.94	.68	.49	.44	.51	.82	
Proactive behavior (PaB)	4.54	1.08	.78	.85	.50	.61	.36	.40	.41	.70

Note. Bold diagonal figures are the square root of AVE, shaded areas shows correlation between constructs. CrA = Cronbach's α ; CR = composite reliability; AVE = average variance extracted.

The data were preliminarily screened for errors and outliers. Preliminary analysis showed that only two cases had more than 15% missing data, rest of the missing data were less than 5% per indicators. The two cases that had more than 15% missing data were removed from the data file, and other missing data were replaced with mean value as there were very few missing values (maximum 3) per an indicator (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2017, p. 57). Although the current study tests hypotheses, it is prediction-oriented, where variance-based structural equation modeling (Partial Least Square-Structural Equation Modeling [PLS-SEM]) is preferred to covariance-based (CB) SEM (Hair, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2011, 2013). Further, the available response of 102 is not sufficient to analyze the proposed model using CB-SEM; however, PLS-SEM is a powerful tool for model analysis with comparatively a small sample size (Hair et al., 2017). According to Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt (2017) and Hair, Ringle, and Sarstedt (2011, 2013), the minimum sample size for PLS-SEM will be the 10 times of the larger of the following two possibilities: (a) the largest number of formative indicators used to measure one construct (measurement equation) or (b) the largest number of independent latent variables that influence dependent latent variables (the largest structural paths). In the proposed model, formative indicators were not used to measure any construct and the maximum structural path was six. Therefore, to analyze the proposed model using PLS-SEM, the required minimum sample size is 60. The available sample (102) is adequate to analyze the proposed model via PLS-SEM. Therefore, to test the proposed model, the current study employed PLS-SEM with SmartPLS. This study relied on cross-sectional and self-reported data. Self-reports might be suitable when the study focus is on perceived experiences (Saks & Ashforth, 1997), and it can be more appropriate in the process of employee socialization and adjustment.

Results

Descriptive Analyses

Means, standard deviations, and correlations appeared to be reasonable. The correlations between variables were below .61. The adjustment and engagement reasonably correlated with its predictor variables ranging from .46 to .61 and .40 to .51, respectively (see Table 1). The reasonable correlation values imply that constructs were independent and suitable for path model analysis.

Measurement Model

Individual items loadings were first examined for indicator reliability. The final factor loadings are all above .7 except 6 items from proactive behavior. Items of the construct with a loading less than .7 were treated as suggested by Hair et al. (2011) and Hulland (1999). Two items from proactive behavior were removed because of low loadings (<.4). CrA and composite reliability (CR) values were above the

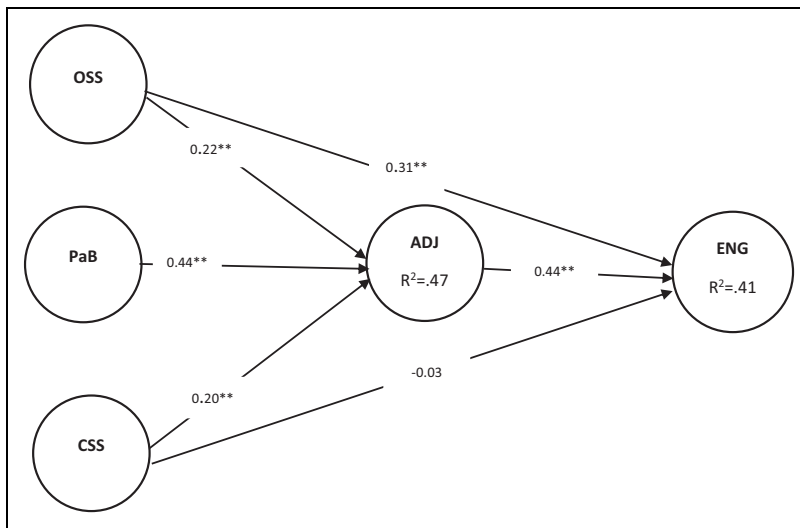


Figure 1. Path model with path coefficient and its' significance * $p < .10$. ** $p < .05$.

threshold value of .7 (Table 1) which confirms the reliability of the construct (Bagozzi & Baumgartner, 1994; Hair et al., 2013).

Average variance extracted (AVE) of all reflective latent variables were equal or greater than the threshold value of .5 (Table 1), demonstrating adequate convergent validity (Götz, Liehr-Gobbers, & Krafft, 2010; Hair, Black, & Babin, 2010). The square root of AVE is greater than inter-construct correlations (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Table 1). Each indicator's loadings to the specified constructs is significantly higher than the loading to any other construct (Hair et al., 2011). Further, heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio for all pair of constructs was below the threshold value of .90, and its bootstrap confidence interval value does not include 1 (Henseler et al., 2015). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is satisfactory discriminant validity among the measurement model as a whole (Fornell & Larcker, 1981; Hair et al., 2017, 2011, Henseler et al., 2015).

Structural Model

The determinant of the coefficient of the key endogenous construct was satisfactory (adjustment $R^2 = .47$, engagement $R^2 = .41$). The predictive relevance of the model was calculated using Stone-Geisser's Q^2 statistics. The cross-validated redundancy of dependent variables was more than the threshold value of zero, suggesting the model had predictive relevance. Moreover, inner variance inflation factor (VIF) values resulting from collinearity test were <5 , indicating that multicollinearity was not a threat.

In order to examine the hypothesized relationships, firstly the significance of each path coefficient was assessed via bootstrapping technique. Bootstrapping procedure requires no distributional assumption (Preacher & Hayes, 2008) and produces reasonable standard error estimates (Tenenhaus, Vinzi, Chatelin, & Lauro, 2005). In PLS-SEM setting, the current study used no sign changes option, .05 significant levels, and 5,000 samples in the bootstrapping setting to generate standard error and t statistics. The results demonstrated a higher number of significant paths (Figure 1).

The path coefficient and their significance indicates that the first three hypotheses (H1, H2, and, H3) that predicted repatriates' perceived organizational support ($\beta = .22$, $p < .05$), coworker support ($\beta = .20$, $p < .05$), and proactive behaviors ($\beta = .44$, $p < .01$) positively related to repatriation adjustment. Organizational support, coworker support, and proactive behavior together explained 47% of variance on the adjustment. Both the organization support ($\beta = .311$, $p < .01$) and adjustment ($\beta =$

.440, $p < .01$) positively related to engagement and explained 41% variance in engagement. But, unexpectedly H6 that predicted the positive influence of coworker support on engagement ($\beta = -.031, p > .05$) was not supported.

Considering the indirect effect, organization support ($\beta = .10, p < .05$) and proactive behavior ($\beta = .19, p < .05$) had positive and significant influence in predicting engagement. Although the direct effect of coworker support on engagement was not significant, the indirect effect of coworker support was significant ($\beta = .09, p < .10$) at .10 significance levels. The total effect of organization support ($\beta = .41, p < .05$) and proactive behavior ($\beta = .19, p < .05$) on engagement was significant. While indirect effect of coworker support on adjustment was significant, the total effect of coworker support ($\beta = .06, p > .05$) on engagement was not significant.

Discussion

Academics with international experience have more opportunities outside of their organization, and thus, one can expect that academics who return to their home university have high expectations; they may expect that their home university should value their global expertise and that they will be provided with opportunities to use such expertise for their personal and career success. When they perceive that the organization provides resources to satisfy their expectations, they feel happier and experience positive energy. Hence, in the context of repatriation of academics, it is a predictable result that repatriates who perceive a higher level of organizational support are more likely to report higher levels of (better) repatriation adjustment.

According to SRT, coworkers' support is a valuable resource that facilitates repatriation adjustment by enabling repatriates better at using their existing resource, to cultivate more resources, learn the repatriation context, and reduce uncertainty (Gruman & Saks, 2013; Hobfoll, 2002). Scholars consistently suggested that supportive relationships were the resources that facilitate employees to deal with stressful events (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Saks & Gruman, 2012). Consistent with these views, this study has suggested that when repatriates are supported by their coworkers, they are able to better adjust to their repatriation. Further, findings of this study corroborate with previous studies that claims that an organization's supportive practices facilitate repatriation adjustment (Adler, 1981; Greer & Stiles, 2016; Lazarova & Caligiuri, 2002; Lazarova & Tarique, 2005; Stroh, 1995).

As expected, repatriates' engagement in proactive behaviors positively relates to repatriation adjustment. When individuals see challenges as opportunities, they can increase their self-confidence and self-efficacy and can take advantage of the situation (Taylor & Brown, 1988). Repatriates' positive view enables them to restore their broken networks and adjust their repatriation better (Jassawalla & Sashittal, 2011). Consistent with this view, findings of this study suggest that when repatriates engage in proactive behaviors, they can better adjust their repatriation. Findings of this study corroborate with previous theoretical and empirical studies (e.g., Black et al., 1992; Feldman & Tompson, 1993; O'Sullivan, 2002).

This study expected that as a resource, perceived coworker support positively influences repatriates' engagement. While this hypothesis was plausible, surprisingly it was not supported. Although JD-R model and previous studies have highlighted that support practices as resources predict employees work engagement (Bakker & Demerouti, 2007; Demerouti et al., 2001), this study found the coworker support has no significance influence on work engagement. However, perceived coworker support was found to be related to adjustment which was the significant predictor of repatriates' engagement. Considering the indirect effect of perceived coworker support on repatriates' engagement, it was significant. Therefore, it can be said that coworker support indirectly influences repatriates' engagement in their work; it influences the strong predictors (adjustment) of repatriates' engagement and influences repatriates' engagement through adjustment. In other words, adjustment mediates the relationship between coworker support and engagement.

This study suggests that repatriates who experience a higher level of adjustment are more likely to report higher levels of engagement at work. When repatriates successfully adjust, they reduce their stress and increase feelings of comfort. Since, the adjustment influences repatriates' work engagement, retaining repatriates with poor adjustment may not be much useful to the organization. Even though repatriates experience adjustment difficulties, they may remain in the organization because of various reasons. For example, repatriates may have agreed with their organization that they will work for their home organization for a particular period upon their repatriation (it is common if an academic's expatriation was financially supported by their institution), or repatriates may have sentimental attachments to their family and society. In such situations, repatriates remain with their organization even though they find difficulties in adjustment; however, unfortunately, such repatriates' work engagement is likely to be low. Therefore, keeping repatriates with better adjustment and engagement is essential for an institution for its development and continued success.

Although SRT admits that different resources have different degrees of influence on various socialization outcomes such as adjustment and engagement, it does not highlight which resources have strong influence on adjustment and work engagement of repatriates. Results of the current study disclosed that when compared to organizational support and coworker support, repatriates' proactive behavior had more influence on repatriation adjustment which intensely influence repatriates' engagement. Therefore, this study highlights the important role of repatriate's proactive behavior in the process of repatriation adjustment and their engagement. Above all, by unearthing the fact that the repatriation adjustment has more influence on engagement than the perceived support practices (organization support and coworker support), this study introduces the adjustment as a more powerful predictor of work engagement among repatriates and suggests that predictors of work engagement are not constant to all types of employees.

There were some limitations to this study. First, since this study's data were collected from only one country, the study needs to be replicated with other samples for the findings to be generalizable. Second, as this survey was self-report and cross-sectional, it may be vulnerable to common method bias. To minimize common method bias at the survey design stage, absolute anonymity and confidentiality were maintained; ambiguities, vague, and unfamiliar terms were excluded, and each item was placed as concisely as possible. At the analysis stage, Harman's one-factor test (Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, & Podsakoff, 2003) and full collinearity assessment (Kock, 2015) were performed to assess the common method bias, and both tests confirmed that there is no evidence for a substantial amount of common method variance in this data set. Third, this study entirely depends on cross-sectional data to understand the repatriation adjustment process well, adjustment has to be measured over the time from the beginning to the end. The longitudinal method may be suitable for testing the different degrees of adjustment and can provide further insights into the repatriation process. The final limitation is that some slight modifications were made on the existing scale/items used in this study. These modifications were made to suit the scale to the repatriation context and to maintain consistency with other scales. These modifications might have the potential to change the meaning of the construct. However, the reliability coefficient of the modified scales was almost the same to the average reliability coefficient of the previous studies.

Implication for Academic Research and Practice

The proposed model was empirically validated among academic repatriates, thereby providing a model for further empirical investigations. Testing this model among academic repatriates in different countries and cultural contexts would ensure the external validity of the model. Further, by discovering that the adjustment plays a significant role in determining work engagement than perceived support practices among repatriates, this study highlights that the determinant and its effect on work engagement is

not constant among all types of employees and thus open the path for further research to find context-specific predictors of work engagement.

In terms of practical implications, this study helps both academic repatriates and institutions for their success. It helps academic institutions to understand their role in managing repatriation transition and to identify and provide the necessary resources which can facilitate adjustment. For repatriates, to better adjust to their repatriation and engage in their work, they need to engage in proactive behaviors such as job change negotiation and positive framing. Repatriates need to engage in job change negotiation and find agreement on a desirable job, task assessments, and role expectations. In addition, repatriates need to cognitively map their repatriation situation as an opportunity rather than as a threat or obstacle to overcome repatriation challenges and engage in their work.


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