

## **Personnel Review Special Issue Call for Papers**

### **International mobility of workers: New forms, processes, and outcomes.**

The Deadline for the submission of papers is **May 31 2015**.

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This Call aims to attract contributions that will advance our knowledge and understanding of international mobility. International mobility is a phenomenon of large proportions whose complexity, forms, and impact are increasing. This necessitates clarification of concepts, identification of emerging forms, documentation of implications and impact, mapping impact processes, as well as further theory development.

The movement of individuals across geographic boundaries is not a recent phenomenon. However, its extent has intensified in recent years (e.g., International Labour Organization, 2010). This is due to a variety of reasons that include international treaties (e.g., the European Union, or other special bi-lateral agreements) that allow free movement of individuals across borders; the advent and rapid development of information technology that has facilitated the flow

of information on employment opportunities across the globe; developments in transportation; and the progressively global nature of the economy that has been mutually reinforced by the increasingly multi-national nature of organizations. Estimates bring the numbers of individuals worldwide who have moved to and live and work in countries other than their own to nearly 250 million (OECD-UNDESA, 2013), these estimates remaining conservative since they leave particular forms of mobility (e.g., globetrotting) unaccounted for. Hence, apart from being an interesting phenomenon, international mobility is also important for the substantive reason that it involves a significant proportion of the world population.

Until lately, international mobility was seen via the lens of expatriation. Furthermore, scholars had directed their attention principally towards the traditional form of expatriation, namely corporate-sponsored expatriation (i.e., involving individuals who are sent abroad by a corporation on a particular mission). Corporate-sponsored expatriation was the norm until the 1990s, and scholars had amassed substantial knowledge on the subject that could, for example, inform human resource practices.

But the changing geopolitical, demographic, and economic environment has increased the incidence and prevalence of other forms of international mobility. These are considerably different from traditional expatriation and therefore require fresh attention. To illustrate, the aging population, decreasing birth rates, and an asymmetric skill map and career opportunities across countries has been fostering self-initiated expatriation, which involves individuals who attempt the expatriation endeavour on their own (Andresen, Al Ariss, & Walther, 2012; Selmer & Luring, 2012; Suutari & Brewster, 2000). Self-initiated expatriates are not only more numerous than traditional expatriates (Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari, 2008), but they are also substantially different in their motives, needs, and attitudes (Altman & Baruch, 2012;

Bozionelos, 2009; Doherty, Dickmann, & Mills, 2011; Richardson & Mallon, 2005). In addition, the role of self-initiated expatriates in the lives of host countries is different from those of corporate-sponsored expatriates (Baruch & Bozionelos, 2010). This means that the way these individuals are treated and managed requires special attention from many aspects: host-state or local authority approach, human resource management (which includes assistance with family and social issues), and employment legislation (see for example, Thompson, Newsome, & Commander, 2013).

International mobility takes many additional forms, however. Hence, to corporate-sponsored and self-initiated expatriation we must add globetrotting, immigration (legal and illegal), government assignments (including armed services), voluntary international work, internships, and short-term assignments (Andresen & Biemann, 2013; Baruch, Dickmann, Altman, & Bournois, 2013; Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012). Overseas study and training (including internships and traineeships), which concern substantial numbers of individuals on a recurrent basis, should also be considered. Many of those individuals make the decision to stay and work in the country where they studied (Baruch, Budhwar & Khatri, 2007; Gungor & Tansel, 2008; Weeks, Weeks & Willis-Muller, 2010), hence switching from one type of international mobility to another. Moreover, even traditional expatriation has forms that have not been paid adequate attention (Selmer & Fenner, 2009), while at the same time the dynamic nature of new world order has raised new issues that need investigation (Bozkurt & Mohr, 2011). For example, there are many cases of individuals from developing nations who go abroad to study, typically in developed countries, and who are afterwards hired by multinational corporations from their own native countries in their operations abroad.

Furthermore, at the fundamental level of definitions, greater clarification is still needed. For example, there is still lack of clear-cut criteria to differentiate self-initiated expatriates from immigrants (e.g., Al Ariss, 2010; Al Ariss & Crowley-Henry, 2013). Instead, differentiation remains subjective and depends on researchers' preferences and understandings. This means that samples in respective research may lack purity (i.e., different types of mobile workers within a single sample), which may confound research findings, and lead to recommendations that are of questionable validity. It also means that comparisons and integrations of different studies can be risky.

Extant literature also lacks an over-arching theory. Such theory is useful because it provides a framework for interpreting all forms of international mobility. In addition, it can assist in the development of a picture of future trends. Development of an over-arching theory may be based on adaptation or extension of existing general frameworks. For example, Social Cognitive Career Theory (Lent, Brown, & Hackett, 1994, 2000) may form the basis for mapping the process of expatriation, from the initial contemplation to taking the decision to move abroad, and further to measuring the degree of success of the endeavour. Development of a complete theory, however, awaits realization.

Finally, apart from new forms of mobility, the rapid movement of labour across national borders has created other phenomena that deserve consideration. To illustrate with one example, the brisk economic development of many countries in recent years (e.g., China, India) coupled with relative stagnation in the economies of areas that have traditionally served as desired destinations for immigrants and self-initiated expatriates (e.g., North America, "Western" Europe) have created phenomena such as "reverse talent flow". In a similar vein, it is not an unusual phenomenon these days to have self-initiated expatriates who move from the

traditionally strong economies to emerging economic powers. These phenomena create new challenges. For example, countries that are destinations for ‘reverse’ self-initiated expatriates are emerging markets and their human resource support systems and structures may not be fully developed yet (e.g., Chatterjee, 2007; Cunningham & Rowley, 2010; and see Soltani, Syed, Liao & Shahi-Sough, 2012).

The same might hold for state systems and structures (e.g., easiness to deal with government agencies and local authorities). “Reverse self-expatriates” from traditionally economically developed regions who move to emerging economic regions are accustomed to more “Westernized” and mature human resource and other support structures, including employment legislation. This is likely to create a gap between expectations and existing systems and mentality. The same might hold for aspects of everyday life. As another illustration, corporations from emerging economies nowadays establish operations in traditionally developed countries. This may create issues of adaptation into more complicated legislations and human resource systems. Furthermore, in these operations firms from emerging economies are likely to employ their own nationals in senior positions, while locals may be placed into roles with less kudos. This would likely be a source of friction because ethnocentric host-country nationals may have difficulties accepting such a reversal of the old “status quo”. These are issues that need to be considered for the sake of maximizing positive outcomes and minimizing negative ones.

These are some of the knowledge gaps, associated with the above developments, which we would like to address with this Special Issue. We are looking for empirical or theoretical papers that address contemporary and future key developments in the context of international mobility from a social science perspective. A list, by no means exhaustive, of potential topics includes the following:

- How can we refine existing terms/concepts so that they can accurately capture the different types of international mobility and internationally mobile workers?
- What other forms of international mobility may be emerging, how, and what are their implications for individuals involved, organizations, and social systems?
- What new theoretical frameworks and concepts, or adaptations of existing ones, would be useful in recognizing the complexity of global mobility?
- What are the implications of new forms of international mobility for the management of the workforce?
- What is the role of stakeholders such as corporate leaders, governments, educational institutions, and international institutions in shaping talent management of international mobile workers?
- What are the views and attitudes of employers and natives in host countries towards internationally mobile workers such as self-initiated expatriates and immigrants? And where do these views meet the views and needs of internationally mobile workers themselves?
- What may be the specific issues that need to be addressed in phenomena such as “reverse self-expatriation?”
- What issues for career management, and global talent management, from both individual and organizational points of view, do the new forms of international mobility pose?
- What demands or new considerations do the new forms of international mobility imply for the management of the psychological contract and idiosyncratic deals (Rousseau, 2005)?
- Which management practices that are indigenous to developing country organizations may replace Western-originated human resource policies, and how do these practices intersect with values and behaviours of immigrant or expatriate employees?

- What are the diversity issues (e.g., ethnicity, religion, gender) raised by the increasing prevalence of international mobility, including its new forms? And how can this diversity be managed?
- Is there a need for reconsideration of constructs such as organizational commitment and employee engagement within the context of new forms of international mobility?

We are interested in papers that take the perspective of every level of skill or status, including mid-level professions and occupations, elite status occupations, but also low- paid or low-status (including illegal) workers. With respect to the latter, those arguably constitute the largest proportion of internationally mobile workers, such as self-initiated expatriates and immigrants. However, the attention they have received in the literature is disproportional to their numerical importance. Hence, work that takes their perspective is welcomed.

We would also like to see comparative studies: for example, comparing corporate-sponsored and self-initiated expatriates, or expatriates and reverse expatriates; or studies with cross-national comparisons.

### **Manuscript Submission and Review**

Manuscripts will be double-blind refereed by experts in the area, according to the journal's standard procedures. Please upload your submissions to the Personnel Review ScholarOne Manuscripts website <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/prev> - select 'Special Issue' and submit to the issue listed with the title *International mobility of workers: New forms, processes, and outcomes*.

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