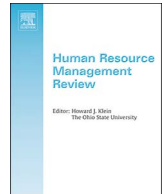




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Antecedents and consequences of host-country nationals' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates: What we do and do not know

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ABSTRACT

Host-country nationals' (HCNs') attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates are critical for expatriate success. Thus, this study systematically reviews the existing literature on the antecedents and consequences of HCNs' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates. It is revealed that HCN personality, the perceived compensation gap between expatriates and HCNs, social categorization, HCNs' previous contact with expatriates, expatriate justice, task cohesiveness, interpersonal affect, and interpersonal relationships (*guanxi*) directly or indirectly predict HCNs' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates. The attitudes and behaviors of HCNs toward expatriates are significantly related to expatriate adjustment and performance. This review indicates that the extant research on HCNs' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates is limited, and the findings of past studies are often contradictory. Theoretical and practical implications as well as future research directions are discussed.

*You're an expatriate,
You've lost touch with the soil.*

—Ernest Hemingway

1. Introduction

Expatriates play several significant organizational roles, ranging from agents of knowledge transfer to boundary spanners between headquarters and subsidiaries; hence, expatriate success is crucial to the success of international business (Dowling, Festing, & Engle, 2017). Expatriates may experience many difficulties when working overseas, yet host-country nationals (HCNs) can offer expatriates emotional and instrumental support (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002; Kraimer, Wayne, & Jaworski, 2001). As socializing agents, HCNs can provide expatriates with social and work-related support, thereby helping expatriates better understand the subsidiaries, assignments, and social behaviors in the host country (Morrison, 2002; Toh & DeNisi, 2007). Such support facilitates expatriates' adjustment to the new environment (Toh, DeNisi, & Leonardelli, 2012). Consequently, expatriates are more likely to succeed if they receive adequate support and help from HCNs (Caligiuri & Lazarova, 2002).

However, HCNs do not automatically and unconditionally provide support and help to expatriates (Toh & DeNisi, 2007). Hence, it is important to understand what motivates or demotivates HCNs to offer support and help to expatriates. An exploration of the existing literature reveals that HCNs' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates are interpreted in several ways, for instance, willingness to provide role/work information and social support, willingness to help, prejudice toward female expatriates, trust in

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expatriates, knowledge/information sharing, cooperation and support, and helping behavior. Recognition of the importance of HCNs' attitudes toward expatriate success can be traced back to the late 1970s. For example, Ziera (1979, p. 66) stated that "the success of subsidiaries of multinational corporations depends on favorable attitudes of host-country organizations which interact with these subsidiaries." The past three decades have witnessed growing academic attention devoted to HCNs' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates. For example, Toh and her colleagues proposed a number of conceptual frameworks to understand HCNs' social categorization of expatriates and their willingness to help them (e.g., Toh & DeNisi, 2007). In addition, Varma and his colleagues (e.g., Varma, Pichler, & Budhwar, 2011) conducted several empirical studies on HCNs' willingness to help expatriates. However, thus far, the existing studies have not reached a consensus on the antecedents and consequences of HCNs' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates. Thus, a systematic review is timely and is urgently required to improve understanding of HCNs' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates. Therefore, the goal of this review study is to synthesize the scattered literature regarding what we do and do not know about the antecedents and consequences of HCNs' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates, as well as to identify directions for future research.

2. Research method

We searched the literature from Google Scholar, Web of Science, and a range of academic journals. These journals included the *Journal of Global Mobility*, *Academy of Management Journal*, *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *Personnel Psychology*, *Organizational Behavior and Human Decision Process*, *Human Relations*, *Journal of World Business*, *Journal of International Business Studies*, *Human Resource Management*, *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, *Journal of International Management*, *International Management Review*, and *Human Resource Management Journal*. The search terms were "host-country nationals," "expatriate," "host-country nationals/local employees' attitude toward expatriates," "host-country nationals' / local employees' willingness to help expatriates," "host-country nationals/local employees' helping behaviors," "host-country nationals and support," and "host-country nationals and help." We initially discovered over 200 papers. The titles and abstracts of the identified articles were checked for eligibility and relevance. Two researchers then independently gathered, synthesized, and reported the evidence presented in the selected studies. Only empirical studies were included in this review. Any differences in the researchers' reports were resolved through discussion.

We used HistCite software to create a citation index and identify the important literature and citation relationships. The Local Cited Score (LCS) indicated the number of citations to papers in the collection, while the Global Cited Score (GCS) indicated the number of citations from all sources reported in Web of Science. Therefore, the HistCite software enabled us to trace the bibliographic antecedents and descendants of the cited papers both within and outside the set, thereby facilitating the process of historical reconstruction of the fields of science (Lucio-Arias & Leydesdorff, 2008). Fig. 1 presents the citation frequencies and citation relationships among the top 50 most cited articles relevant to this topic. The figure indicates that articles 17 (Toh & DeNisi, 2003), 18 (Johnson, Kristof-Brown, Van Vianen, De Pater, & Rigsby, 2003), 24 (Varma, Toh, & Budhwar, 2006), and 26 (Toh & DeNisi, 2007) had been cited more frequently than the other articles.

3. Findings: What we know about HCNs' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates

3.1. Antecedents of HCNs' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates

Previous research has revealed that HCN personality, HCN social categorization, the perceived compensation gaps between expatriates and HCNs, HCNs' previous contact with expatriates, the justice of expatriates, expatriates' task cohesiveness, interpersonal affect, and interpersonal relationships (*guanxi*) are the primary antecedents of HCNs' attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates.

3.1.1. HCN personality

It is generally recognized that personality as an individual's fundamental traits is a significant determinant of attitudes and behaviors (Barrick & Mount, 1991; Judge, Thoresen, Bono, & Patton, 2001). Three empirical studies have tested the direct relationships between HCNs' personalities and attitudes and behaviors toward expatriates. Specifically, Arman and Aycan (2013) tested the relationships between HCNs' openness to experience and extraversion with HCNs' attitudes toward expatriates. This research involved two studies. The first study developed the measure of HCNs' attitudes toward expatriates through interviews with 15 Turkish HCNs and 10 expatriates from Europe, North America, and Egypt, as well as a survey of 198 Turkish HCNs. The second study involved a survey of 228 Turkish employees; it found that HCNs who were open to experience and were extravert in nature were more interested in new experiences and more comfortable working with expatriates.

Wang and Fang's (2014) study explored the relationship between HCN personality and HCN helping behaviors toward expatriates. This study collected data through a survey of 169 local Taiwanese people in 35 foreign multinational enterprises (MNEs). When HCNs' age, gender, education, and tenure were controlled for, the study revealed that agreeableness was the strongest personality trait predicting HCNs' willingness to help expatriates with work-related issues and adjustment to the local environment. Conscientiousness was marginally significant with HCNs' helping behaviors. Inconsistent with Arman and Aycan (2013), this study did not find any relationship between extraversion and openness to experience and HCNs' helping behaviors.

Meanwhile, Ng, Ang, and Tee (2015) examined the relationships of collectivist tendency, self-enhancement, and HCNs' openness to change with HCNs' willingness to support expatriates. The data for the study were collected through a survey from 170 local Malaysians in one Japanese MNE. The results revealed that only the relationship between HCNs' openness to change and willingness

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