

**Cross-Cultural Adjustment of Expatriate Managers:
A Comparative Study of Australian Managers Working in
Korea and Korean Managers Working in Australia**

A Thesis

By

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DECLARATION

I declare that this thesis is my own account of my research and contains as its content work which has not previously been submitted for a degree at any tertiary education institution.

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ABSTRACT

International assignments are increasingly important in the global business world but many assignments end up in failure causing heavy losses on many expatriates and their organizations. This study employs a multi-dimensional approach, as suggested by much of the literature on international assignments of Australian expatriates in Korea and Korean expatriates in Australia.

Hierarchical regression indicated that their expatriate success in performance can be accurately predicted by 'Family Adaptation' how well the family adapted to the overseas location, 'Nationality' where Korean respondents reported a much higher level of family adaptation with the move compared to Australian managers, and 'Age' that older managers were more likely to report success with an overseas posting. 'Family adaptation' with overseas work assignments, was determined by the level of 'Spouse Agreement' and 'Nationality.'

Overall, Korean expatriates rated their own performance and level of adaptation much higher than those of Australians in all measurement categories. The Korean group may have outperformed the Australian expatriate group in adjustment and performance, possibly due to their strength in language skills, educational level, religious and socialization commitments, situation-orientation, but most importantly, due to the stability in family and spouse relationships. The outcome suggests that organizations should address the issues related to spouse adjustment in order to ensure successful expatriate operations, from the stage of accepting assignments to the repatriation stage. There is some evidence at least in this research to suggest that these findings need to be replicated with larger samples and considered in future management policy.

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