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Abstract of Diploma Thesis

**Exploration of expatriate management practices -
Case study of pharmaceutical company in the Republic of
Kazakhstan**

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Summary

With growing globalization and international business opportunities the employment of expatriates becomes a usual thing. The representation of the expatriates depicts a valuable source of advanced skills and knowledge. This is a crucial issue for young countries, such as Kazakhstan. Hence, Kazakhstan demands and tries to employ such skills and knowledge. However, Kazakh employers are faced with pressing issues in international human resource practices. A case study approach is being used for this research paper. Case study- Kazakh pharmaceutical company. This paper aims to explore and analyze how international human resource practices, such as selection, preparation, extended management support and repatriation is being employed in this organization. This study also focuses on the importance of such practices and how they contribute to expatriate management success. Also, domestic and international literatures are reviewed.

The methodology for this paper consists of the electronic questionnaires, focus group interviews and existing document study. As it was hypothesized, all mentioned international human resource practices are employed in LLP “KP” in different degrees. The implications of findings are generally discussed and recommendations are given. This research paper also proposes a straightforward model based on the literature and the findings. Finally, suggestions for the future research are proposed.

Key words: Expatriate Management, International Human Resource Management, pharmaceutical company, selection, preparation, repatriation, management support, the Republic of Kazakhstan, Expatriates.

AIMS

The main aim of this diploma thesis is:

- to analyze the expatriate management in LLP “KP” in accordance with international practices in the Human Resource Management.

The following objectives with regard to main aim are:

- to address and analyze expatriate management issues in IHRM practices, such as selection, preparation, management support and repatriation;
- to propose appropriate recommendations and develop a model for successful expatriate management based on the research findings.

RESEARCH QUESTION

How thoroughly is LLP “KP” implementing the IHRM practices, such as selection, preparation, management support and repatriation processes?

- How successfully is the selection process held in the selected company?
- Why is preparation practice important for the expatriates?
- What kind of management support is provided by the company? How effectively is it provided?
- Why the repatriation program significant for the company?

The findings from the research are compared with the literature reviewed in this paper in order to answer the research questions.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology is based on qualitative and quantitative research methods. The primary and secondary data are collected. Primary data consists of the information gathered from questionnaires and focus group interview. The data is analyzed using mix of both qualitative and quantitative methods. The secondary data is obtained through collecting limited information of internal sources of the company. Hence, the data and methodological triangulation are present in this research. Methodological tools constructed in order to gather data that represents the experience of expatriates and HR managers in the selected company, the company’s management systems and how these can be compared to IHRM practices: selection, preparation, expatriate management support and repatriation.

1. Questionnaires

The research is conducted using a questionnaire, which is sent via e-mail to sample group. The questions are the mixture of rating scales, open-ended questions and dichotomous questions. The obtained data is analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively. The data obtained from questionnaires is grouped and processed according to common features. The program Excel and/or SPSS are used in order to analyze the data in greater depth. The open-ended comments are grouped according to the themes and interpreted according to theories described in literature review.

2. Focus Group

The focus group interview is organized in order to obtain detailed information from HR managers of LLP “KP”. It is required to collect information about the expatriate management system from the company’s point of view.

The questionnaire was chosen for the research because of the time limits and the quite large size of sample population. It is done of mixture of different types of questions in order to increase reliability of the responses.

The focus group interview was chosen in order to discuss the main issues with HR managers in the company and understand in-depth the whole processes of expatriate management processes. These two methods of research can help to analyze the expatriate management practices from both sides: HR managers and expatriates working in the pharmaceutical firm.

KEY FINDINGS

The findings of this research paper confirmed the importance of international human resource practices such as selection, preparation, continued support and repatriation in contribution to expatriate success. As it was found, the selected company seeks for the expatriates with technical competence and advanced skills and knowledge.

The findings show that the expatriates are satisfied with selection process, but do not indicate as the most important comparing with other IHRM practices. LLP “KP” provides preparation programs for “traditional” expatriates where other categories of expatriates can also participate. In general, expatriates are quite satisfied with preparation programs in the company and highlighted that this practice is more important comparing with other IHRM practices.

Management support is focused mostly on organizational support and the role of expatriates in the company. The company provides both financial and non-financial support for its expatriates. the expatriates are satisfied with continued management support. But they indicated this practice is one of the most important comparing with others. The company LLP

“KP” does not have clear policies on repatriation process. However, the expatriation is important as it generates “reverse cultural shock”. It is recommended that repatriation process should be supported in the company in order to provide some assistance and obtain a useful feedback from repatriates. Even if the company is not responsible for repatriation process, it should provide some exit interviews and evaluation. The answers during interview and responses from questionnaires concerning expatriation were quite poor and lacked detailed information. The company expressed mixed views about the importance of expatriation within LLP “KP”.

LLP “KP” Company seems to be closer to what is suggested in the international human resource literature. The company should always bear in mind that expatriates are higher educated group of people than the local employees so the significant attention should be paid to support and communication with them. Greater attention should be paid also equally to all categories of expatriates and also for those who brought their families to Kazakhstan. The spouse and family issues require greater integration into expatriate management. It is also recommended to the company to contribute to the repatriation programs by providing exit interviews and dual evaluations by both the company and a repatriate.

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