



# The Contemporary Adaptive Model for the Expatriates' Profile

**Catalin Popa**

*Naval Academy, Romania*

**Imre Reczey**

*ADMC-Higher Colleges of Technology, United Arab Emirates*

**David Quansah**

*British University in Dubai, United Arab Emirates*

**Filip Nistor**

*Naval Academy, Romania*

Considering the global realities and the technological evolution, within a knowledge-based economy, many organizations aim at the human capital development, setting up not just organizational standards but promoting environmentally HR's adjustment criteria in order to provide sustainability for recruitment and selection processes. Therefore, developing an adapted employee profile for expatriates should be one of the major imperatives for International Human Resources Management (IHRM) function. The work paper pleads for considering IHRM as an important organizational dimension, responsible for adjusting the international employee's behaviour in accordance with the organizational and external domestic environment, in order to promote the overall value of foreign employees for national economy, culture and society.

*Keywords:* international human resources, organizational culture, work environment

## Introduction

Globalization, technological evolution, and the ambition to become a knowledge-based economy has encouraged many countries and organizations to pursue new ways to maintain a competitive advantage, which in turn has given focus on the need to develop its *Human Capital* (HC). The HC, in a broad perspective, should be considered as a pool of resources comprising of all the knowledge, skills, experience, talents, and abilities possessed and valued on individual and joint scale, by the available human resources within a national territory or attached to a national economy. These resources represent the potential capabilities of a society as part of the national resources that should be valued in order to achieve the national goals.

Having a highly skilled labour force should fulfil a pivotal role in the na-

tional development, stimulating the domestic competitiveness and deepening the international involvement. Individuals, as aggregated in the *Human Resources* concept (HR), contribute to the global labour market by bringing distinctive sets of knowledge, skills, and abilities recognized as human capital within a large perspective. People have now become one of the most valuable assets recognized within the business framework as human capital. The dominant thinking is that individuals with advanced levels of competence can contribute to the development of any kind of business and, further, to the national progress by improving the productivity and bringing the innovation. At the organisational level, HC proves a vital importance for any business success, as improved through continuous education and valued by dynamic experience collection of its employees. It is, therefore, clear at this point that the human capital and *International Human Resource Management* (IHRM) are crossing on a common edge as for a national economy, considering together the international knowledge and the innovation transfer. The IHRM's link with HC determine one of the most critical functions of any organization, because it deals with people related issues, particularly when the organization is operating within a highly competitive global and uncertain environment. IHRM brings into prominence the developing and operational policies and strategies desirable in order to get the planned output by hiring the right person at the right place, with the best set of abilities as suited into a design role, in order to get the maximum out of an employee potential.

In lack of internal resources, for some countries, seeking to improve the human capital value to achieve global competitiveness and active participation in international trade meant to recruit high skilled foreign manpower in order to supplement the shortages in their local labour pool. Thereafter, more and more people travel abroad to work as expatriates in foreign countries. They might either be corporate expatriates, sent by their employer in their home country to work in a subsidiary, or they might be self-initiated expatriates, who, on their own initiative, have searched and found work abroad (Froese, 2012). These expatriates might encounter norms, values, customs and behaviours that are totally different from what they are used to do or to think like in home countries, the impact being not all the time fully compatible with their understanding and their adapting capacities. Involving skilled expatriate workforce in local businesses brings wide benefits to the national economy as described in international literature: it could encourage knowledge and technological transfer, creates a favourable environment for creativity and innovation, and can lead to better decision-making (Hofstede, 2001). The same theories underpin that a misaligned and less adapted management of expatriates' recruitment, selection and further work processes, could lead to miscommunication, conflicts, failure

of job satisfaction, damaged relationships, delayed productivity, producing finally an early return to home country and a diminished value exchange between parties involved (Hofstede, 2001). It could therefore be concluded that expatriate recruitment and selection processes should become vital concerns in the field of International Human Resource Management, as the first step to determine the employee suitability not only in the work place but in the environment as well.

The person's misfit in the environment could be considered as one of the major causes of the expatriate employee underperformance, as prior to any other non-conformity in personal profile. Many organizations are tempted to concentrate in the recruitment and selection processes prevalingly on those technical skills possessed by the prospective employees, as watching for punctual job requirements attached to a specific position, but ignoring most of other dimensions that defines a wider profile for an employee, especially when is deployed from abroad as an expatriates is. This diluted frame of selection criteria, excessively focused only on immediate organizational needs, often causes a dysfunctional relation between the expatriate (defined as *individual*), the organization (defined as *internal environment*), other employees within the organization (defined as *organizational relations and internal culture*), and the external environment (defined as *external driven forces*).

The complex relation of 'individual employee profile ↔ internal environment ↔ organizational relations and culture ↔ external environment' is the key for harmonizing the *individual perception* with the *organizational performance*. Afterwards, in practice, sometimes the organizational adaptive process is abruptly shorted to a simple relation 'individual skills → organizational rules and standards,' which becomes irrelevant for a long-term relation, neglecting the personal contribution in an institutional environment. This perspective is very useful only to determine the conditionality between individual conformity and personal issues. But an efficient integration of an expatriate employee in the whole frame of work environment is depending not only on the individual conformity, but also on the individual value, which can be counted as a contribution to the organizational culture and performance, consolidated namely in *human capital value*.

As examples, the personal differences and perceptions against the national culture or related to the organizational rules in case of an expatriate will determine a distorted performance of an expat. In most cases, the host country authorities should outline the required or desirable attributes for a specific prospective working expatriate profile, in order to help the companies to find out not just the matching employees in accordance with its internal rules, but also to value the foreign expertise and the knowledge transfer on national level, on economic, cultural and social dimensions.

Setting up not just organizational standards, but promoting environmentally matching criteria at national level will provide sustainability for recruitment and selection processes, bringing not just profit to local business, but also a deep attachment to local values, countable in terms of personal fidelity, commitment and contribution of expatriates transformed in progress forces and not just as migrating variables in the employment market framework. Thereafter, considering the qualitative ratios between the expatriates' roles, the organisations' HR strategies and the national priorities on long term, it can be stated that developing a profile of an expatriate employee should be one of the major imperatives for IHRM functions. As an important organizational dimension, IHRM becomes responsible nowadays not just for placing the right person in the right place at the right time, but also for adjusting the international employee behaviour in accordance with organizational and external domestic environments, in order to promote the overall value of foreign employees for national economy, culture and society.

From this perspective, within a blurred context, 'without essential knowledge in this field, companies would rather not employ expatriates even though they know the benefits gained through the utilization of expatriates' (Abdullah & Jin, 2015, p. 326). Detailed analyses on the attributes of the desirable working expatriate profile has been anecdotal; therefore, it would be very difficult for domestic organizations to select and place them efficiently in those areas where their potential could be effectively and mutually valued. In most of the cases, the selection processes have been fulfilled without a proper framework adjusted to match the expatriate employee with the whole environmental complexity, defined both by the organisation (culture, relations and roles) and by the society or other driving forces. Considering these issues, the purpose of this paper is to develop a conceptual framework that can assist in the recruiting and selection processes of expatriates in order to value on a superior level the international human resources potential.

This paper will also try to provide a conceptual overview of the dimensions and the theoretical shape of an expatriate profile, thereby underpinning its significance, both for the organization and for the host society, as a whole. It is desirable as using these concepts and the corresponsive findings drawn from this paper would be helpful not only as an onset for a research basis, but also for organizations to complete the internal instruments for selecting the proper expatriate candidates, for social benefit and long-run purposes.

### **Research Methodology**

This study will follow an interpretive approach on a modelling basis: 'a way of researching a given topic in depth and with sophistication without a sta-

tistically secure universalization of findings' (Hackley, 2003, pp. 8–9). The authors have used in this paperwork the qualitative approaches, valuing the literature review findings in this respect; the modelling techniques have been mostly based on qualitative perspective, as considered at the moment more comprehensive and further being useful to open specific standpoints to be further empirically tested.

Therefore, the study starts as a theoretical onset for a further empirical study, based on interviews and questionnaires administration, in order to quantify the real proportions of the theoretical model and to assert the initial standpoints as refereed.

The qualitative approach has been used to design a comprehensive human profile matrix, to reveal the differences in theory and practice, between human resource management and human capital value. The qualitative approach has been based on reflecting graphically, in a systemic view, the human resources variables in recruitment, selection and employment processes, but under a static perspective, underpinning the major components of the personal and organizational profile of an employee. This matrix has been useful to determine in analytical manner the relations between human resources and the human capital, where the professional potential is valued by the organization, comprising all theories of expatriates together and adding the missing parts of the frame (Figure 1). Following the qualitative methodology of modelling, the authors have further designed the dynamic profile of the adding value process in human capital exploitation, on the same systemic perspective, considering the organization as a whole and the employee as a potential gear wheel for improving the performance or just as a static supportive pole, defined only by conformity and rule compliance (Figure 2).

The qualitative technique has been used also to collect and to interpret different heterogeneous data sources in literature, about expatriates' selection practices or expatriate adjustment processes, cross cultural strategies and International Human Resources management techniques and results. As a syntactical support, the study will undergo a scientific approach using an extensive literature reviewing and developing a conceptual framework, that can forth lead to the identification of those variables and relationships anticipated to be involved within Human Resources matrix (Maylor & Blackman, 2005, p. 143). As the way will be opened and a ground basis will be settled, in future studies the quantitative methods will be used in order to quantify the Human Resources valued impact within an organization by collecting data from different entities and interviewed professionals. Each profile variable should be further quantified based on multicriteria analysis, in relation with the matching criteria of an organization and in relation with the strategic goals stated by the host nation IHR policies.

### The Expatriates' Profile Fundamentals

As stated above, the globalization driving forces, together with the nations' ambition to be defined as knowledge-based economies in the contemporary age of information, innovation, communication and mobility, have encouraged many countries to pursue new ways to improve its competitive advantages by developing its human capital, within domestic organizations and economic systems. The development of the global economy into a high diversity has stimulated the cumulative expatriation level as being forecast to increase further into the third millennium (Richardson & McKenna, 2002).

Calling for a complete definition, an expatriate can be defined in general terms as anyone who is living and working at a moment in a foreign country (Doherty, Richardson, & Thorn, 2013). Expatriates are usually classified into two major groups of expatriates: *company expatriates* and *self-initiated expatriates* (Froese, 2012). The traditional view of IHR movements has been focused initially on the work deployment, initiated by those transfers made as reply to the organizational structure extension abroad. But nowadays, an increasing number of prospective expatriates make their own arrangements to find appointments abroad, as facilitated by the free labour movement incentive, within migration processes nourished by globalization and integration phenomenon development.

The selection of expatriates has historically been based on the technical competencies of identified candidates valuing the professional knowledge of the manager and of his board (Tung, 1981a). Unfortunately, other interpersonal factors have often been neglected (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1987; Tung, 1981a). Instead of continuing to be focused on the one-dimensional perspective of technical competence in human resources, as the primary consideration of assessing the expatriate managers, it has been suggested that multinational companies should focus on more comprehensive selection criteria than simple professional profile (Tung, 1981b). *Technical competences* on the job (knowledge, skills and abilities), as well as the *personality features, relational abilities, environmental factors, and family situation* can also significantly contribute to the managerial effectiveness in human resources' selection processes on international scale. But recent studies have empirically confirmed yet that expatriates' selection is a multi-faceted subject: personality variables, as well as interpersonal skills, are both very important as considered in a profile assessment (Caligiuri, Phillips, Lazarova, Tarique, & Burgj, 2001). The selection process should assign different importance weights to those factors that contribute or conduct toward success or failure in job requirements fulfilment.

Some other authors have identified major variables also relevant for an expatriate's profile that can lead to a successful adjustment overseas as:

*cultural sensitivity, empathy for others* or the willingness to accept *intercultural challenges* (Yavas & Bodur, 1999). This frame is completed by the ability of the *expatriate's family* to adjust successfully into the new environment, as a larger dominant perspective of expatriate success (Hung-Wen, 2007). Additionally to the family matter, careful consideration should be given to the cultural and social particularities enforced of settled in the country of assignment or deployment. The larger the differences between the host and home countries the employee and his family will face, the more emphasis must be placed on finding and developing individual adjustment strategies or tools, considering not just the professional requirements but a wider picture of external environment, prior to any organizational adjustment.

Several scholars have attempted to design the expatriates' profile, describing the major required variables and skills for an expatriation successful process, considering the cross-cultural interactions (Benson, 1978; Muller & Turner, 2009). These attempts were useful to compile the essential skills identified for assuring a successful expatriate job performance (Leibra-O'Sullivan, 1999). Other authors proposed a multifaceted approach for the selection process of expatriate employees, consistent enough to link behavioural tendencies to the expected overseas performance (Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985).

The most recently conducted study has revealed that within an expats' profile the *professional expertise, adaptability to new culture, flexibility, positive attitude* and *ongoing motivation*, as well as the *tolerance* and *open-mindedness*, are the most important expatriate selection criteria (Abdullah & Jin, 2015). In this context, expatriates need to have the ability to effectively interact with diverse colleagues and have an understanding of cultural differences (Jackson & Toit, 2014). There were even identified twenty-five sub-criteria for the selection of expatriate candidates, as an interesting attempt to create a soft computing-based preference selection index method for selecting expatriate professionals' human resource management (Vahdani, Mousavi, & Ebrahimnejad, 2014). These 25 criteria most predominant and significant in the selection of expatriate candidates sub-criteria fall within the categories of personal factors, competencies, job characteristics, family factors, environmental factors, and organization relocation support activities.

Therefore, the development of a proper expatriate profile seems to be a turning point for any organization, when using international human resources in their operation or when acting abroad, crossing the national territory. This frame should not only enable to provide a right job-candidate fitting, but should also enhance the success of managerial practices, which, in turn, lays the functional foundation for a strong organization in a sustainable manner. Identifying the various dimensions of an expatriate profile will

result in an appropriate regulation of incoming and outgoing mobility of the talented human resource. In this respect, developing a profile for an expat, framing together with the professional requirements also the social and cross-cultural variables, will serve as a strong onset to the selection processes, design and implementation, as for further HR training and development planning, increasing the managerial performance and effectiveness.

Employers will seek to select those people who will meet the job requirements, but who will also adapt to the environment changes, opting to be loyal to the organization for a longer term, making the difference between a simple attachment to the organizational rules or regulations and a further deeper commitment and understanding of organizational values. On the other hand, the potential employees would like to work for an organization providing their knowledge, skills and abilities but will expect the organisation itself to care about individuals, meeting their particular needs and expectations, on both professional and personal levels. The real result of a bivalent perspective should not be just about rules compliance, but about personal contribution value as well, in order to improve the processes and the output within an organization. Accomplishing these goals asks for a forth development of a taxonomy that combines the profile features of a potential working expatriate, together with both organizational environment requirements and personal expectations.

### The Contemporary Design of Expatriates' Profile

In order to define and to shape the contemporary model for expats' profile, the most visible theories have been considered together, by analyzing the literature on the collective dimensions outlined by Tung (1981a), Black, Mendenhall, and Oddou (1991), Shaffer and Harrison (1999), and Mendenhall and Oddou (1985) (Figure 1). In this respect, the expatriates' profile has been designed as having four distinctive but overlapping dimensions, namely: *professional profile*, *organization-specific requirements*, *individual personality profile*, and *social & intercultural*. These 4 dimensions compound together, as basic determinants, the static perspective of an expatriates' HR profile (Figure 1). But this perspective is focused on a 'single way' functional model, as from the organization toward employees, based on conformity and compliance with internal rules and organizational culture. In this case, the profile is assessed just based on those features assumed through internal environment variables, the employee being in the position to adjust his behaviour in predicted parameters. This is a sort of static organizational profile, mainly oriented toward economic performance as market reactive strategy, in terms of economic output consistency and growth. The organizational behaviour will be just explained by a static perspective, as sum of all employees' behaviour (Figure 2 and Figure 3).

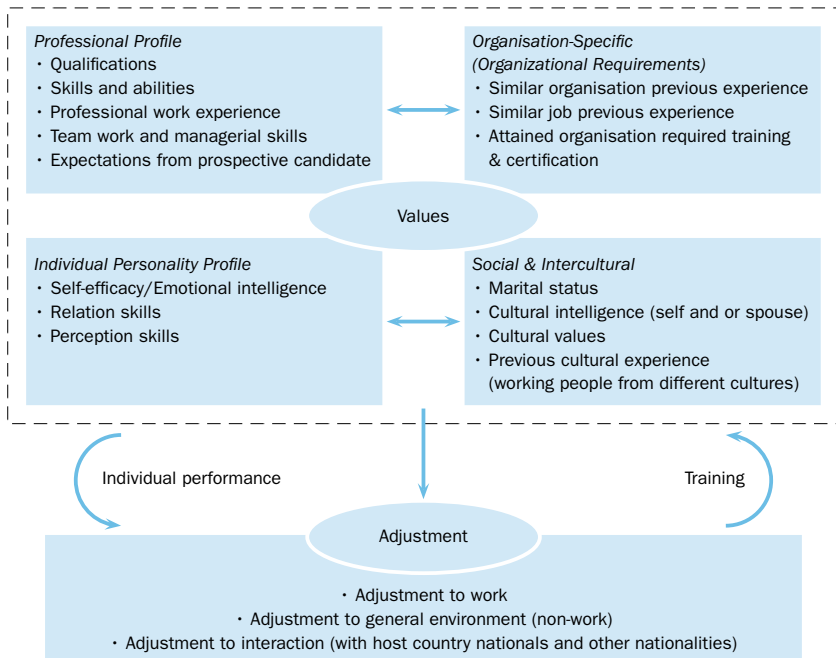


### **Professional Profile**

This dimension of professional profile seeks for expatriate's qualifications, skills, abilities, work experience, managerial skills, cumulating the professional performance expectations from a prospective candidate, all of which should be aligned with the organization's needs. In theory, individual job performance is a function of knowledge, skills, abilities, and motivation directed at role prescribed behaviour, such as formal job responsibilities. Black et al. (1991) and Shaffer and Harrison (1999) also further introduced two moderating variables: previous assignments and language fluency, and provided confirmation of the importance of language fluency as a selection criterion. Since organizational culture might be different one organisation to another, this means that employees should possess the right knowledge, skills and abilities (KSA's) that match the requirements of the organisation, being able to fit accordingly in the predicted standards. If the employee's KSAs are matching the expectations, then he is more likely to have a smooth transition into the new organization environment, performing efficiently the new job tasks, at 'full' capacity. At this level, the expatriate employee will not be treated as an exception, major differences coming mainly from social and cross-cultural dimensions.

### **Organisational Specific Dimension**

This variable is connected to the professional dimension, completing the professional profile frame (Figure 2). As previously indicated, organizational culture and previous experience of employees might differ from organization to organization. This means that employees should possess the right certifications that match the requirements of the organization. In some cases, the organization might require the employee to have attained a specific qualification that might only specific to the particular organization and probably not required by any other similar organization in the industry. We are not referring to the common professional requirement that is linked to a specific profession (e.g., teacher requiring teaching qualification or a nurse who has attained a professional nursing certification). This dimension refers to the organization requirement imposed by the regulatory authorities in the host country. These requirements are country specific and only applicable to that country or state, being sometimes transferable to another country or not. It is important for an expatriate employee to meet first the initial organizational requirements as demanded by the national and or regional authorities. In some cases, the expatriate employee might not be required to meet this requirement prior to employment, but however should be willingly or further forced to attain the certification or requirement fulfilment within a specific period of employment. A good example is the IELTS certification (International English Language Testing System) for non-native En-



**Figure 1** Static Perspective of Expatriates' HR Profile Determinants

glish teachers for teaching English-based subjects or courses in a native English country or even in non-native English countries in some other cases (Haslberger, Brewster, & Hippler, 2014).

These two dimensions, professional and organizational, are the major pillars for defining and assessing the *expatriate's professional profile*, of human capital, any lack of these being a compulsory condition to be priority fulfilled or further acquired by specific training programs. But for completing the profile frame, the employee should be depicted through its *individual identity* dimensions as well, as defined by the personality or by social and inter-cultural interactions.

### **Individual Personality Profile**

The identified individual personal traits or relational abilities are one of those consistent variables that contribute to success or failure on the job appointment and, therefore, should be used to guide the selection process. This variable is not limited to a simple knowledge of another culture features, but include also the ability to live and work with people whose axiological systems, beliefs, customs, manners and ways of conducting businesses may greatly differ from one's own (Tung, 1981a). In this respect,

some authors found that extraversion, emotional stability, and openness to change had a significant, positive impact on expatriate adjustment, while agreeableness positively influences expatriate job performance (Downes, Varner, & Hemmasi, 2010). Other scholars have indicated that all personality traits, apart from conscientiousness, can bring a significant influence on expatriate effectiveness and success, asserting that 'expatriates who are emotionally stable, who are outgoing and agreeable, and who are high in openness to experience seem to function better than others' (Shaffer & Harrison, 1999, p. 122). Hence, individuals who possess the appropriate personality features for a given role in a given environment will perform better in their job, compared with those who do not possess the appropriate personality characteristics for that same role (Caligiuri et al., 2001).

In a broad view it can be concluded that the personality variables can be considered valid predictors of expatriate job performance. In order to establish the relationship between personality and job performance, a brief literature review has been carried out, depicting individual different variables related to expatriate job performance such as: personality trait, self-efficacy, motivation, communicational ability, stress tolerance, relational ability, and prior international experience (Holopainen & Björkman, 2005; Shaffer & Harridon, 1999). Personality itself has been defined as an enduring emotional, interpersonal, experiential, attitudinal and motivational style that explains individual's behaviour in different situations (McCrae & Costa, 1989).

Looking further it should be found that some attributes, such as self-efficacy, relation skills, perception skills, emotional intelligence, can be also considered vital to the effective performance of an expatriate; other variables as the self-dimension, the relationship dimension, and the perception dimension being very skills, essential for expatriate success (Black & Gregsen, 1991). These expatriate skill requirements were based, as the initial research stated, on the 'self-efficacy' centres of skills that an expatriate needs to have in order to be self-effective in relation with the stress management and psychological well-being (Mendenhall & Oddou's, 1985). Several scholars have established that individuals who are more flexible in learning new behaviours will get on higher self-efficacy levels, proving themselves more likely to adjust faster and more efficient in a new environment since they are prepared and wishful to try and learn new behaviours (Harrison et al., 1996; Black, Gregsen, & Mendenhall, 1992; Mendenhall & Oddou, 1985; Foster, Weber, Sumpter, & Temple, 2000; Kraimer, Wayne, & Jaworski, 2001).

The relational skills are very relevant component of this dimension involving a wide range of expertise that can facilitate 'easy' interaction, this attribute referring to the 'interaction adjustment facet' about how the individual relates to the nationals of the host country (Mendenhall & Oddou,

1985). In this regard, 'possessing relational skills can decrease the uncertainty related to an unfamiliar environment' (Cerimagic, 2012, p. 55). An expatriate should find it easier to understand a foreign culture and to interpret properly the environment variables when he possesses greater perception skills, being able to adopt an appropriate behaviour in the new environment (Cerimagic, 2012).

### **Social and Intercultural Dimension**

This final dimension completes the expat's individual identity depiction, being responsible to detail the employee's ability to identify and to cope with environmental structures and constraints, such as institutional and governmental structures, unions, competitors and customers, as crucial work hypothesis toward effectiveness and efficiency. This dimension is very relevant to the individual adapting skill since the political, legal and socio-economic structures, which constitute the macro-environment in the host country, may consistently vary from those ones with which the expatriate is familiar. A recent study has revealed that socio-cultural similarities would facilitate general environmental fitting of a person and a smoother living adjustment of expatriates, once they are able to understand the systems' variables and how to operate with them (Koveshnikov, Wechtler, & Dejoux, 2014). The family situation should also be considered as another important aspect of the social and intercultural dimension, outlining the ability of the expatriate's family or dependants to adjust to a different foreign environment. Their adjustment is essential to the employee equilibrium in daily life, as in professional daily activities, affecting very consistent the performance and the personal attitudes on a medium and long range. The consistency on an expatriate adjustment is related to the individual components as a whole, the employees' retention for long term in the companies being sensitive to family perceptions (Feitosa, Kreutzer, Kramperth, Kramer, & Salas, 2014).

### **The Contemporary Design of Expatriates' Dynamic Profile**

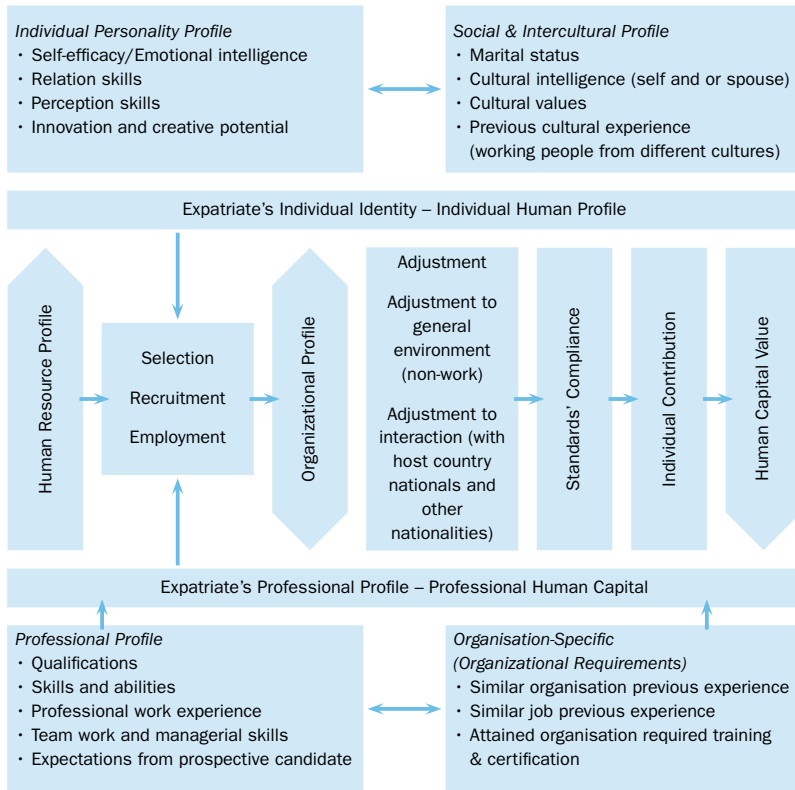
An expatriates' profile matrix can be represented like in the drawing above in order to describe on a common basis the most important determinants that should be considered in a *static perspective* against human capital selection and adjustment processes. In this matrix the major profile components should be subordinated to the adjustment process as variables in the adapting process of an expatriate to the *work environment*, *non-work environment* and to the *interactive environment*. But we have to think about both reminded ways of the adjusting process: a) as from the employer standards and expectations to the employee compliance, but also b) as from the employee expectations toward the employers' standards and requirements. In

Figure 1 the first perspective is prevailing, neglecting the sustainable human resource evolution and the human capital values. The process should be a bivalent one, in order to transform a simple *active employee* considered part of *Human Resources* concept, complying with the organizational rules, into a *proactive employee*, part of the *Human Capital* concept, contributing to the added value processes in the organization.

That's why, in Figure 2, in the case of the expats' description, the authors felt the need to improve the initial matrix (which defines just the personal profile simply adjusted to the environment), inserting a clearer design of both sides of the profile, segregated in *expatriate's individual human profile* (appealing the individual personality and social and intercultural profiles) and the *expatriate's individual professional profile* (professional profile and organization specific requirements). In the designed model three steps will be identified:

1. *Human Resource Profile definition* – where the expatriate is defining dynamically an ongoing profile, cumulating expertise, knowledge or cultivating psychological, cultural and social characteristics. With this profile the expatriate will onset the individual potential offer to the potential employers. The expats will mostly consider here the professional and individual assets that can help them to suit the organizational expectations, thinking more to comply then to contribute or to develop themselves as added values with the organizations.
2. *Organizational Profile definition* – where the organization is stating its requirements standards and rules, interacting with the individual profiles, overtaking the selection, recruitment and employment processes. The organizations try to identify the most important component for selection process as debated above. Further, the organization will identify the most reliable tools to manage the adjustment processes of their new expatriate employees in the most effective manner.
3. *Human Capital Value definition* – this last stage comes as a result of the two previous profile interactions. After the employment procedures fulfilment, human resources will adjust and adapt themselves to those environment variables as defined by the organization or by the external environment in all its components (e.g., professional, cultural, social dimensions). Once the compliance with all these variables is fulfilled, the expatriate will start contributing to the organizational progress valuing his potential, not just in execution but also in creating value, as a specific form of a capital.

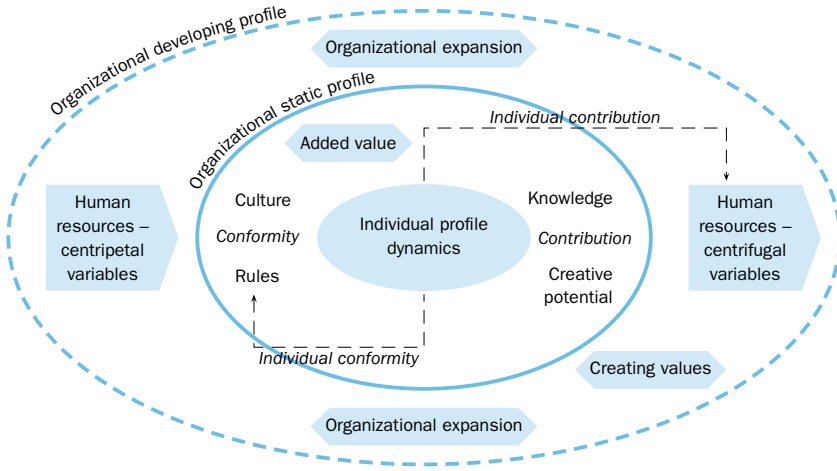
The concept of developing an expatriate profile is based on a components' depiction starting from the concept of 'person ↔ environment' ad-



**Figure 2** The Human Capital Profile for Expatriates

justment ( $P - E$ ), defined as an interactive ratio based on the degree of compatibility or match between individuals and some aspect of their work environment. This concept of employee compatibility is outlined in a vivid perspective considering that behaviour ( $B$ ) is a function of the person ( $P$ ) and his/her environment ( $E$ ), where  $B = f(P, E)$ . (Oh et al., 2014, p. 2). This equation underpins that personal characteristics and environmental variables are the two major forces that interact to shape the individual behaviour (Oh et al., 2014). Accordingly, individuals will seek to achieve and to preserve the full compliance with their environmental variables, looking for positive workplace relationships and further for a career successful path.

In order to reveal the personal behaviour in ratio with the environment variables and dynamics, the authors have described the human capital impact within an *Organizational Development Model* (DMO), in order to understand the international human resources particularities, but in all its complexity. The DMO should reflect in human capital assessment and valuation, both interaction relations: (a) from the organization toward the employee, as



**Figure 3** The Dynamic Human Capital Profile for Expatriates within an Organizational Development Model

centripetal variables, and (b) from the employee toward the organisation, as centrifugal variables (Figure 3).

First of all, it should be clear that not all organizations need development models but just proper functional models; since they are oriented toward preserving the internal values, based on economic performance and production quality compliance, they will rather prefer to look for efficiency rather than for growth. Therefore, thinking about human resources, for these type of business related to the *conservative type of organizations*, i.e., oriented toward profit and economic rationales, is mostly needed just for an *optimum allocation of resources*. In this case, the human resources are adjusted in one way, as from the organization toward the employee, the conformity and the compliance with the internal rules, regulations and culture, being the most important imperatives. In this case, we can draft an *Organizational Static Profile*, represented in the drawing above as the inner circle, determined by the centripetal ruling and cultural variables, the organization being focused in its performance on human resources efficiency. Following this perspective, the expatriate's profile is only related to the components described above in Figure 1, more related to a human resources definition.

But, if the organization is looking to grow and to develop itself within a determined environment, then an optimum allocation of resources will not be enough, also considering the human resources. The organization should seek not just for profit and economic performance, but also for a higher value of resources allocated, using the innovation and the human capital knowledge to improve the processes and to create value. Then the human resources, depending on its position on organizational chart, would con-

tribute not just to *adding value* processes for the final product by fulfilling the requirements, but also to *creating value* processes by innovation, developing its potential and contributing to the organizational capital valuation. In that case, the category of 'Human Resources – HR' will not comprise the real substance of the developing model of an organization anymore. There is a real need to make a clear distinction when human resources act in both ways, not just complying but also contributing and bringing their innovative skills and expertise to improve the environment, the processes and the system functionality. That organizational dynamics, when a human resource is involved in creating value together or distinctively from adding value processes, could define widely the Human Capital category, as has been used in the Organizational Development Model (ODM), described in drawing above.

In our case, expats have the possibility not just to act accordingly with the stated rules within the environment, but should also they are able to contribute with their own individual axiological system to the organizational values and culture, using their knowledge and creative potential, considered as centrifugal forces for an organizational evolution, determining not just performance but also development and sustainable growth. The relation between expats and the organization becomes in this case a bivalent one, the international employees being able both to comply and to transfer knowledge and innovative potential to the hosting employer. In this case, the institutional throughput will not be centred exclusively on conformity, as a present imperative, but it will consider the human capital value as a sum of human resources proactive contributions for development and innovation, embedding a dynamic character to the organization (Figure 2).

### Summary and Concluding Remarks

As resulted from the literature review endeavour, the international human resources role is unquestionably recognized. The expatriates' migration wave is adding value to most industrialized or developing economies already and the most relevant authors were concerned about how the selection and recruitment processes should be improved to hike this impact on the organizational level, and further on the national level. As outlined from the literature, the expatriates' profile has been set up in main streams and connections with the organizational environment were depicted, following some relevant steps in the qualitative methodological approach. First, the present research has synthesized the major concepts in the international human resources definition, depicting the major descriptor of expatriates' profile, under the matrix of a *Static Perspective of Expatriates' HR Profile Determinants* (Figure 1). Secondly, once the profile features were revealed, the study has been enlarged in order to update the contemporary relation between expats



and organizational environment, under the matrix of *The Human Capital Profile for Expatriates* (Figure 2). The differences between those two perspectives are related to the new considerations about the expats' selection, recruitment and adjusting processes, designed for knowledge transfer and better retention of valuable international human resources.

Just resuming to a simple static perspective as presently asserted, an organisation will be efficient but will miss the developing and growth potential that will affect the overall national potential for sustainable development, based on innovation and value chain creation. Then the expats will just generate added value but will not create values, the major purposes of their performance being related just to the labour trade off in income terms and personal wealth. The relation of environment-expatriate will be an univalent one, where the organizations will pay for skill, knowledge and expertise but with no retention on a sustainable basis, and will no further benefit from knowledge transfer. In this respect, the authors tried to underpin that in the lack of human capital valuation, knowledge transfer and innovation will be hampered, with no benefits for the hosting nation except the economic results in the short run. There should be a conflict between the organizational goals (referring to a short-run perspective of profit and efficiency) and the national interest that is seeking for sustainable development in the long run, targeting innovation and creative potential. For this reason, the authors promote the idea of differentiating between the Human Resources concept, which is limited to the relation of 'organization ↔ employee (expatriate),' and the concept of Human Capital, which reflects both sides involved in these dynamics, seeking for a bivalent relation of 'organization ↔ employee (expatriate).'

Seeking to describe the major organizational model from an expats' point of view, the authors found that there are two major types of organizations, namely: a) *conservative organizations* (static profile), classically oriented toward economic performance and HR conformity, following the market trends and the shared knowledge; and b) *developing organizations* (dynamic profile), focused on value chain creation and knowledge improvement, using human capital, and creative and innovative potential (Figure 2).

In synthesis to this dual perspective, we have to deal with two organizational models as revealed by the analysis carried out (Figure 3):

- The *static model*, described by the next equation: 'static organization ↔ human resources profile ↔ rules compliance ↔ individual performance ↔ added values' – one way perspective organizations shaping expatriates' profile based on compliance and adjustments;
- The *dynamic model*, described by the next equation: 'dynamic organization ↔ human capital profile ↔ adjustment and contribution ↔ inno-

variation → value creation' – one way perspective organizations shaping expatriates' profile based on compliance and adjustments.

- In this respect, once accepted the imperative of expatriates' HR policies reassessment, the next measures should be implemented within the corporate system in order to improve the dynamic performance of the organizations in the overall endeavours of knowledge transfer and growth: an implementation of an *individual dynamic profile* assessment in the recruitment and selection processes is needed, following the major descriptors in the static matrix as presented in Figure 2, considering both individual potential and organizational requirements, with a greater stress on the creative and innovation potential of international manpower;
- the prior analysis of internal manpower needs is necessary, in order to identify the real *requirements for innovation in a growing perspective* and the implementation of those inquired policies and procedures accordingly to support the continuous process of organizational improvement on a sustainable basis, as depicted in Figure 3;
- prior to any selection process launched for expatriates recruitment, a *general organizational/team profile should be described* as to define the individual further fitting variables in the group variables – thus the employer will find out with accuracy the effective needs and expectations from its international human resources that will impact the organizational development potential;
- after recruitment but before expatriates' involvement in daily tasks and assignments, considering the group profile defined as above described, *wider adjustment training programs* should be applied, in order to accommodate the employee to the organizations' cultural issues;
- among the key performance indicators, various vectors of *individual valuable contribution to the organizational/team culture* should be included, as to stimulate the knowledge transfer from expatriates toward the organization – the expatriates' human capital should be assessed in terms of various group impact factors, quantified based on accepted individual contributions to the group profile definition (e.g., process improvements, risk/crisis management, innovative initiatives, cultural understanding and norms/values ratio of acceptance, etc.).

In conclusion, the host nations should be more interested to be able to stimulate not just the qualified expatriates' recruitment but also the knowledge transfer and HR value retention in a wider area of expertise, into a sustainable manner. Different proactive organization acting in the academic

area, technological field, energetic sector or even in public services need to adopt the contemporary dynamic model, once they assume continuous development and innovation as imperatives. If the expatriates' movement will not bring but only additional manufacturing potential with no innovation and knowledge transfer valences, then the whole process will be diluted to simple trade-offs in labour and money remittance flow, in which case the host nation will not retain much from the added value and will no further create value for their future societies. This imperative becomes essential in order to get real advantages from the globalization phenomenon, assumed to be the most relevant driven force of the humanity at least for the next decades.

### References

- Abdullah, D. N. M. A., Jin, C. S. (2015). Determining the selection criteria for expatriates: Through the eyes of Malaysian HR practitioners. In *Proceedings of the Colloquium on Administrative Science and Technology* (pp. 325–334). Singapore: Springer.
- Benson, P (1978). Measuring cross-cultural adjustment: The problem of criteria. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 2, 21–37.
- Black, J. S., & Gregersen, H. B. (1991). Antecedents to cross-cultural adjustment for expatriates in Pacific rim assignments. *Human Relations*, 44(5), 497–515.
- Black, J., Mendenhall, M., & Oddou, G. (1991). Toward a comprehensive model of international adjustment: An integration of multiple theoretical perspectives. *Academy of Management Review*, 16(2), 291–317.
- Black, J. S., Gregersen, H. B., Mendenhall, M. (1992). *Global assignments: Successfully expatriating and repatriating international managers*. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Caligiuri, P, Phillips, J., Lazarova, M., Tarique, I., & Burgi, P (2001). The theory of met expectations applied to expatriate adjustment: The role of cross-cultural training. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12(3), 357–372.
- Cerimagic, S. (2012). *Cross-cultural characteristics and training of Australian project managers working in the United Arab Emirates* (Unpublished doctoral dissertation). Bond University, Robina, Australia.
- Doherty, N. (2013). Understanding the self-initiated expatriate: A Review and directions for future research. *International Journal of Management Reviews*, 15, 447–469.
- Downes, M., Varner, I. I., & Hemmasi, M. (2010). Individual profiles as predictors of expatriate effectiveness. *Competitiveness Review: An International Business Journal*, 20(3), 235–247.
- Feitosa J., Kreutzer C., Kramperth, A., Kramer, W. S., & Salas, E. (2014). Expatriate adjustment: Considerations for selection and training. *Journal of Global Mobility: The Home of Expatriate Management Research*, 2(2), 134–159.

- Foster, T. M., Weber, S., Sumpter, C., & Temple, W. (2000, May). *Controlled reinforcement in human self-control research*. Paper presented at the 26th Annual Convention of the Association for Behavior Analysis. Washington, DC.
- Froese, F. J. (2012). Motivation and adjustment of self-initiated expatriates: The case of expatriate academics in South Korea. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 23(6), 1095–1112.
- Hackley, C. (2003). *Doing research projects in marketing, management and consumer research*. London, England: Routledge.
- Harrison, D. A., & Bell, M. P. (1996). Using intra-national diversity for international assignments: A model of bicultural competence and expatriate adjustment. *Human Resource Management Review*, 6(1), 47–74.
- Haslberger, A., Brewster, C., Hippler, T. (2014). *Managing performance abroad: A new model for understanding expatriate adjustment*. London, England: Routledge.
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences, comparing values, behaviours, institutions, and organizations across nations* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- Holopainen, J., & Björkman, I. (2005). The personal characteristics of the successful expatriate: A critical review of the literature and an empirical investigation. *Personnel Review*, 34(1), 37–50.
- Hung-Wen, L. (2007). Factors that influence expatriate failure: An interview study. *International Journal of Management*, 24(3), 403–413.
- Jackson, E. J., & du Toit, L. (2014). Personality and work success among expatriate educational leaders in the United Arab Emirates. *Middle Eastern and African Journal of Educational Research*, 7, 58–73.
- Koveshnikov, A., Wechtler, H., & Dejoux, C. (2014). Cross-cultural adjustment of expatriates: The role of emotional intelligence and gender. *Journal of World Business*, 49(3), 362–371.
- Kramer, M. L., Wayne, S. J., & Jaworski, R. A. (2001). Sources of support and expatriate performance: The mediating role of expatriate adjustment. *Personnel Psychology*, 54(1), 71–99.
- Leibra-O'Sullivan, S. (1999). The distinction between stable and dynamic cross-cultural competencies: Implications for expatriate trainability. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 30(4), 709–725.
- Maylor, H., & Blackmon, K. (2005). *Researching business and management*. Basingstoke, England: Palgrave Macmillan.
- McCrae, R. R., & Costa, P. T. (1989). The structure of interpersonal traits: Wiggins's circumplex and the five-factor model. *Journal of Personality and Social Psychology*, 56(4), 586–595.
- Mendenhall, M. E., & Oddou, G. (1985). The dimensions of expatriate acculturation: A review. *Academy of Management Review*, 10(1), 39–47.
- Muller, R., & Turner, R. (2009). Leadership competency profiles of successful project managers. *International Journal of Project Management*, 28, 437–448.

- Oh, I. S., Guay, R. P., Kim, K., Harold, C. M., Lee, J. H., Heo, C. G., & Shin, K. H. (2014). Fit happens globally: A meta-analytic comparison of the relationships of person-environment fit dimensions with work attitudes and performance across East Asia, Europe, and North America. *Personnel Psychology, 67*(1), 99–152.
- Richardson, J., & McKenna, S. (2002). Leaving and experiencing: Why academics expatriate and how they experience expatriation. *Career Development International, 7*(2), 67–78.
- Shaffer, M. A., & Harrison, D. A. (1999). Expatriates' psychological withdrawal from international assignment: Work, nonwork, and family influences. *Personnel Psychology, 51*, 87–118.
- Tung, R. L., (1981a). Selection and training of personnel for overseas assignments. *Columbia Journal of World Business, 16*, 68–78.
- Tung, R. L., (1981b). The new expatriates: Managing human resources abroad. *Academy of Management Executive, 1*(2), 110–120.
- Tung, R. L. (1987). Expatriates assignments: Enhancing success, minimizing failures. *Academy of Management Executive, 1*(2), 117–126.
- Vahdani, B., Mousavi, S. M., & Ebrahimnejad, S. (2014). Soft computing-based preference selection index method for human resource management. *Journal of Intelligent and Fuzzy Systems, 26*(1), 393–403.
- Yavas, U., & Bodur, M. (1999). Correlates of adjustment: A study of expatriate managers in an emerging country. *Management Decision, 37*(3), 267–278.

**Catalin Popa.** Associate Professor in Naval Academy (Romania) since 2002, acting Vice-Rector for International Programs, former Director for Research Center in Naval Engineering and Management, Lecturer for Higher Colleges of technology (UAE) between 2014–2015, PhD in International Economics of Romanian Academy of Sciences, published 13 books, over 30 articles in international journals and more than 40 participations on international scientific conferences in international business area of knowledge. [catalin.popa@hotmail.com](mailto:catalin.popa@hotmail.com), [catalin.popa@anmb.ro](mailto:catalin.popa@anmb.ro)

**Imre Reczey.** Chair of Business Program in Higher Colleges of Technology since 2001 and acting Associate Dean for Business Division from 2014, former Senior Lecturer for TMC Singapore between 1998–2001 and for Budapest Corvinus University between 1981–1985, PhD in International Economics of Budapest Corvinus University, published five books, more than 15 articles in international journals and more than 20 participations on international scientific conferences in international business area of knowledge. [imre.reczey@hct.ac.ae](mailto:imre.reczey@hct.ac.ae)

**David Quansah.** Lecturer of Higher Colleges of Technology since 2013, former Lecturer/Instructor for Abu Dhabi University between 2010–2014, PhD student of British University of Dubai (UAE) since 2014, published three articles in international journals and three participations on international scientific conferences in human resources and international business area of knowledge. [quamegyan@yahoo.com](mailto:quamegyan@yahoo.com)

**Filip Nistor.** Assistant Professor/Senior Lecturer in Naval Academy (Romania) since 2007 and acting Head of Naval and Port Engineering and Management Department, PhD in Human Resources of Romanian Academy of Sciences, published seven books, more than 20 articles in international journals and more than 30 participations on international conferences in human resources area of knowledge. *filip.nistor@anmb.ro*



This paper is published under the terms of the Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International (CC BY-NC-ND 4.0) License (<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/>).