PILOT STUDY ON SOCIAL MEDIA'S ROLE IN EXPATRIATES' ADJUSTMENT USING BLACK'S MODEL

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Abstract: Movement of significant number of expatriates from country to country has been increased with globalization. Every year expatriates face various challenges related to their individual characteristics, jobs and organizations where foreign assignment is major goal. It has become very easy for expatriates to socialize and meet with the other people of same culture and community in the host country with help of different social media. The paper seeks to reveal if social media could support expatriates' adjustment. Black's (1991) adjustment model is used for the pilot study. Results give primary insights of social media's usefulness in adjustment process.

Keywords: Expatriates' Adjustment; Social Media; Black's model.

INTRODUCTION

Today's modern world is considered as a global village. In this newly developed village full of technology and innovations, the global business expansions have shifted from domestic to global human resource practices. The diversity of professions coupled with advancement of technologies has started attracting candidates from all over the world to work in international organizations. According to a survey report published by Finaccord, there are total of 50.5 million expatriates, as of 2013, in all continents.[1]

Expatriates' adjustment has always been an important topic of research and discussion in all communities. The failure rate of international assignments in many countries is increased without proper adjustment of expatriates. After moving from the home country to the host country, expatriates face numerous adjustment related factors. While various researchers have stated different models comprising of several factors on which the complete adjustment process of expatriates depends. The most common and frequently stated factors are individual factors, organizational factors, job-related factors, and non-work-related factors. Each factor has its own importance when it comes to expatriates' adjustment.

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[1] Abdel-Rahman, G. M., Subramaniam, A., Ramalu, L. S., Chandrakantan, A., & Subramaniam, L. (2017). The Impact of Cultural Similarity and Social Network Characteristics on Re-Expatriation Intention Among Self-Initiated Academic Expatriates. *International Journal of Business and Social Research*, 7(9), 01-09.

In the last decade, a lot of scholars have worked on the role of organizations in expatriates' development. The term "perceived organizational support" is not considered as new day anymore.[2] Organizations have been known to play a vital role in the adjustment of expatriates. Initially, these roles were limited to providing logistic assistance and healthcare facilities. The demands of expatriates have been changed with time. The concept of "virtual communities" has also been introduced in societies. Expats have been known to use various virtual communities to meet and interact with each other of same origin or genre. The introduction of smartphones and social media platforms has completely changed the way expatriates socialize with each other. A variety of social media platforms such as *Facebook*, *WhatsApp* etc. are available to use for them. They have been making different virtual groups and pages in social media for socializing and connecting with each other. Their thought, experiences and characteristics are being shared in those social media.

As of now, decent amount of works has been directed towards the organizational roles leading expatriates' adjustment while giving importance to logistic support and workplace guidance support. Similarly, very less research works has been accomplished on social media platforms and networks that affect the way of expatriates' adjustment for making new environment. Till date, no study has been done on assessing the role of organizations to adjust expatriate through social media. Therefore, this **paper aims** to provide primary insights if social media could be useful in expatriates' adjustment process.

THEORETICAL BACKGROUND

Defining Expatriates

McNulty and Brewster (2017)[3] define expatriates as individuals who reside temporarily in a country of which they are not a citizen in order to accomplish a career-related goal, being relocated abroad either by an organization, by self-initiation or directly employed within the host-country. This definition advances the existing definitions by Edstrom and Galbraith (1977)[4] on individual who are transferred from home country to another country especially for employment purposes.

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[2] Rhoades, L., & Eisenberger, R. (2002). Perceived organizational support: a review of the literature. *Journal of applied psychology*, 87(4), 698.
[3] McNulty, Y., & Brewster, C. (2017). Theorising the meaning(s) of 'expatriate': Establishing boundary conditions for business expatriates. *International Journal of Human Resource Management,* 28(1), 27–61.
[4] Edstrom, A. & Galbraith, J. R. (1977). Transfer of Managers as a Coordination and Control Strategy in Multinational Organizations. *Administrative Science Quarterly*, Vol. 22.

Cohen (1977) defined expatriate as temporary migrant who is sent to stay in foreign country for successful completion of a project before returning to their home country.[5] There is at least one common understanding about expatriate adjustment: an individual enters completely new setting which is quite unknown and unfamiliar and leaves behind his native environment. The access in new place may make a psychological uncertainty for an expatriate.

It has been either argued or implied that an expatriate always wants to adjust him/her with new workplace to reduce psychological stress, especially new behavior can be expected or required, on the other hand old behavior could be considered as unsuitable or offensive, if these problems are already solved in new environment for an expatriate, expected adjustment can easily be issued.[6] If it is not possible for expatriates to adjust in host country, is called common reason for failed international assignments.[7], [8]

Most studies seem to agree that attention has been paid toward expatriate adjustment processes from late 1970s.[9] However, most of them were unable to account for the social, psychological and behavioral aspects which play a vital role in the expatriates' adjustment process. Therefore, it is important to conduct more necessary research in this field to better understand expatriate adjustment process.

The process of Expatriates Adjustment

The expatriate adjustment process is defined by Torbiorn having four stages that are known as a U-curve.[10] The process is sequential and includes honeymoon, culture shock, adjustment and mastery. The adjustment rises during honeymoon phase, decreases as the cultural shock settles in, and starts rising again as the adjusting takes place; finally, it culminates with mastery. According to Torbiorn, the first phase takes places in the first few weeks of the expatriate's arrival in the host country.[11] This is a relatively stable phase because the expat finds the new culture fascinating. Once they start to understand the characteristics of the new country, the expats go through cultural shock, often categorized by negative feelings towards the host

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[5] Cohen, E. (1977). Expatriate communities. *Current Sociology*, Vol. 24 No. 3, 5-90.

[6] Black, J. S., 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.

[7] Shaffer, M. A., Harrison, D. A., & Gilley, K. M. (1999). Dimensions, determinants, and differences in the expatriate adjustment process. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 30(3), 557-581.

[8] Okpara, J. O., & Kabongo, J. D. (2011). Cross-cultural training and expatriate adjustment: A study of western expatriates in Nigeria. *Journal of World Business*, 46(1), 22-30.

[9] Black, J. S., Mendenhall, M., & Oddou, G. *op. cit.*

[10] Torbiorn, I. (1988). Culture barriers as a social psychological construct: An empirical validation. *Cross-cultural adaptation: Current approaches*, 168-190.

[11] *Ibid.*

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country; this happens because the expats learn that their behaviors and attitudes are not appropriate for the new country, but, in this stage, they do now know how to replace them. In adjustment stage, the expats start to develop their adaptability skills, they start to learn new appropriate behaviors; lastly, in the mastery phase, the expats are proficient in performing the appropriate activities, their negative feelings of hostility and anxiety towards the new country disappear and they can function appropriately in the host country.[12],[13]

The adjustment composed as the personal and work-role changes which are utilized during an expatriate's adjustment process. Every year, millions of people go through international assignments from home country to host country. A solid adjustment with work and non-work conditions in host country is mandatory for every expatriate to be successful on new project in host country which shows that expatriates' adjustment is not involved with only work-related adjustment, but also involved with foreign culture. Many researchers have found that the expatriates' adjustment starts in the home country, prior to moving host country. The process of expatriates' adjustment depends on multiple factors. Organizational support and social support are two of the important factors which have a significant impact on expats. The importance of research on expatriates' adjustment is evident from the fact that solely the adjustment issues are responsible for countless international employee turnover and failure of international assignments.

Social Media and Expatriates' Adjustment

Social interaction has been proven to be the primary predictor of expatriate change. However, the effect of cultural action on expatriate change may differ for those in other cultures. Contextual factors, e.g., geographical proximity and ethnic differences between the home nation and the host nation, may have a substantial effect on the expatriate change process.

There will be more than 5 billion users of smartphones in 2025.[14] Researches show that with the aid of smartphones and social media platforms, it has become even easier for people to get to know each other hence socialize in a better way. It would not be wrong to say that social media platforms have completely changed the way communities used to socialize. It is casual of expatriates to interact with people from diversified communities. Social media

[12] Black, J. (1988). Work role transitions: A study of American expatriate managers in Japan. *Journal of international business studies*, 19(2): 277-294.

[13] Bhaskar-Shrinivas, P., Harrison, D. A., Shaffer, M. A., & Luk, D. M. (2005). Input-based and time-based models of international adjustment: Meta-analytic evidence and theoretical extensions. *Academy of management Journal*, 48(2), 257-281.

[14] Miller, G. (2012). The smartphone psychology manifesto. *Perspectives on psychological science*, 7(3): 221-237.

platforms assist expats in staying in touch with co-workers, customers, partners, and business processes. It keeps them connected, responsive and efficient.[15] When expatriates are transferred for their overseas assignment they need to deal with a new environment and a foreign culture. In order to get support they start to access new social networks through interacting with the local society and by obtaining social capital.[16] Through this social capital individuals can for example receive economic resources and contact with experts[17], or it could be used to create socialites of for example a friendship character, which could be used in work settings as well[18].

In many cases, socializing with co-workers outside of business and engaging in employer-organized events has had a significant effect on expatriates' adjustment process. These findings are consistent with past discoveries which indicate that socio-cultural interaction with co-workers does expatriates think that their existence is respected and outcomes in a way of tolerance, belonging, and satisfaction, which ultimately serves to facilitate cross-cultural adjustment.[19], [20]

Research on Expatriates Adjustment Process

Research work done in past on expatriates' adjustment shows that social networks are of critical importance in controlling the pace of adjustment process. Social networking is defined as social relationships which link an individual or group with another individual or group.[21] According to Wang and Rabindra (2004), social networks in any form comprises of relationships between the expatriates and host country nationals and friends.[22] It was also found out that by obtaining information related to the job and culture of the host country through social media networks, the process of expatriates' adjustment became faster.[23] In short, all the

[15] Forbush, E., & Foucault-Welles, B. (2016). Social media use and adaptation among Chinese students beginning to study in the United States. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 50, 1-12.

[16] Wang, X., & Nayir, D. Z. (2006). How and when is social networking important? Comparing European expatriate adjustment in China and Turkey. *Journal of International Management*, 12(4), 449-472.

[17] Portes, A. (1998). Social capital: Its origins and applications in modern sociology. *Annual review of sociology*, 24(1), 1-24.

[18] Adler, P. S., & Kwon, S. W. (2002). Social capital: Prospects for a new concept. *Academy of management review*, 27(1), 17-40.

[19] Aycan, Z. (1997). Expatriate adjustment as a multifaceted phenomenon: Individual and organizational level predictors. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 8(4), 434-456.

[20] Stroppa, C., & Spieß, E. (2010). Expatriates social networks: The role of company size. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(13), 2306-2322.

[21] Hwang, K.-K. G. (1998). Conflict resolution in Chinese society. *Intercultural Communication Studies*, 7(1): 17-38.

[22] Chiu, Y. P., Wu, M., Zhuang, W. L., & Hsu, Y. Y. (2009). Influences on expatriate social networks in China. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 20(4): 790-809.

[23] Van Vianen, A. E., De Pater, I. E., Kristof-Brown, A. L., & Johnson, E. C. (2004). Fitting in: Surface-and deep-level cultural differences and expatriates' adjustment. *Academy of Management Journal*, 47(5), 697-709.

researchers have proved that the presence of social networks and social media platforms induce a positive impact on expatriates' adjustment and boost it.

In 2006, Erbacher et al. showed that organizational support in form of the parent and the local company providing assistance in different forms, to expatriates, played an important role in the adjustment of expatriates in host country.[24] This support can be in form of financial assistance, general assistance, and family support. Providing organizational support to the expatriates can reduce the level of stress and facilitate the process of interaction adjustment among expatriates.[25] Kaimer (2001) has described about towards the fact that to enhance the level of organizational support being provided to expatriates, the organizations should provide language training and social networking opportunities to expats.[26]

Torbiorn showed expatriate adjustment process consists of four stages arranged in U-curve.[27] These four stages are honeymoon, culture shock, adjustment and mastery. The adjustment rises during honeymoon phase, decreases as the cultural shock settles in, and starts rising again as the adjusting takes place; finally, it culminates with mastery. According to Torbiorn the first phase takes places in the first few weeks of the expatriate's arrival in the host country.[28] This is a relatively stable phase because the expat finds the new culture fascinating. Once they start to understand the characteristics of the new country, the expats go through cultural shock, often categorized by negative feelings towards the host country; this happens because the expats learn that their behaviors and attitudes are not appropriate for the new country, but, in this stage, they do now know how to replace them. In adjustment stage, the expats start to develop their adaptability skills, they start to learn new appropriate behaviors; lastly, in the mastery phase, the expats are proficient in performing the appropriate activities, their negative feelings of hostility and anxiety towards the new country disappear and they can function appropriately in the host country.[29, 30]

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[24] Carraher, S. M., Sullivan, S. E., & Crocitto, M. M. (2008). Mentoring across global boundaries: An empirical examination of home-and host-country mentors on expatriate career outcomes. *Journal of International Business Studies*, 39(8), 1310-1326.
[25] Toh, S. M., & DeNisi, A. S. (2005). A local perspective to expatriate success. *Academy of Management Perspectives*, 19(1), 132-146.
[26] Andreason, A. (2003). Direct and indirect forms of in-country support for expatriates and their families as a means of reducing premature returns and improving job performance. *International Journal of Management*, 20(4): 548.
[27] Torbiorn, I.
[28] *Ibid.*
[29] Black, J.
[30] Bhaskar-Shrinivas, P., Harrison, D. A., Shaffer, M. A., & Luk, D. M.

In the past decade, there have been numerous studies carried out on various factors related to expatriate's adjustment.[31, 32] Among these studies, one of the most influential and frequently cited theoretical treatments of expatriates' adjustment is Black's model.[33] Different researchers have proposed different factors related to expatriates' adjustment process. Black and Stephens (1989) proposed three genres of such factors i.e. general, work and interaction.[34] Bhasker (2005) also proposed his model which summarized five such factors i.e. anticipatory, individual, job, organization and non-work related. Hechanova, Beehr and Christiansen (2003) classified it as four such factors namely individual related, work related, environmental and family related.[35] In the same way, tremendous studies have been carried in past which relate expatriates' adjustment to different models. For this study, conventional and most influential Black's model has been adopted.

This shows that a significant amount of research work has been done on the role of organizational support and social media networks in facilitating the process of expatriates' adjustment but as such, no study has been carried out relating these two i.e. the role of organizations in expatriates' adjustment with social media platforms. This research study will fill the aforementioned gap in order to link the organizational role and social media platforms for expatriates' adjustment.

The most popular model for expatriation's adjustment was proposed by Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991)[36] and will be presented in the next subsection.

Black's Model of Expatriates' Adjustment Process

Black's model is considered as the most significant and commonly used theoretical model in expatriates' adjustment related research. Black, Mendenhall and Oddou (1991)[37] proposed a major framework indicating two components of expatriates' adjustment, as shown in the Figure 1. The model is divided into two parts. The first part, anticipatory adjustment, identifies topics that exist before expatriates leave their home country; the second part, in-country adjustment, deals with topics that turn into crucial after the expatriates arrive at their foreign assignments.

[31] Shaffer, M. A., Harrison, D. A., Gregersen, H., Black, J. S., & Ferzandi, L. A. (2006). You can take it with you: Individual differences and expatriate effectiveness. *Journal of Applied psychology*, 91(1), 109.

[32] Van Vianen, A. E., De Pater, I. E., Kristof-Brown, A. L., & Johnson, E. C.

[33] Black, J. *op. cit.*

[34] Black, J. S., & Stephens, G. K. (1989). The influence of the spouse on American expatriate adjustment and intent to stay in Pacific Rim overseas assignments. *Journal of management*, 15(4), 529-544.

[35] Hechanova, R., Beehr, T. A., & Christiansen, N. D. (2003). Antecedents and consequences of employees' adjustment to overseas assignment: a meta-analytic review. *Applied psychology*, 52(2), 213-236.

[36] Black, J. S., Mendenhall, M., & Oddou, G.

[37] *Ibid.*

Anticipatory adjustment consists of three important elements such as pre-departure education, past overseas experience, and organizational choice mechanisms. In-country adjustment includes four dimensions: personal skills, job-related factors, organizational factors, and non-work components.
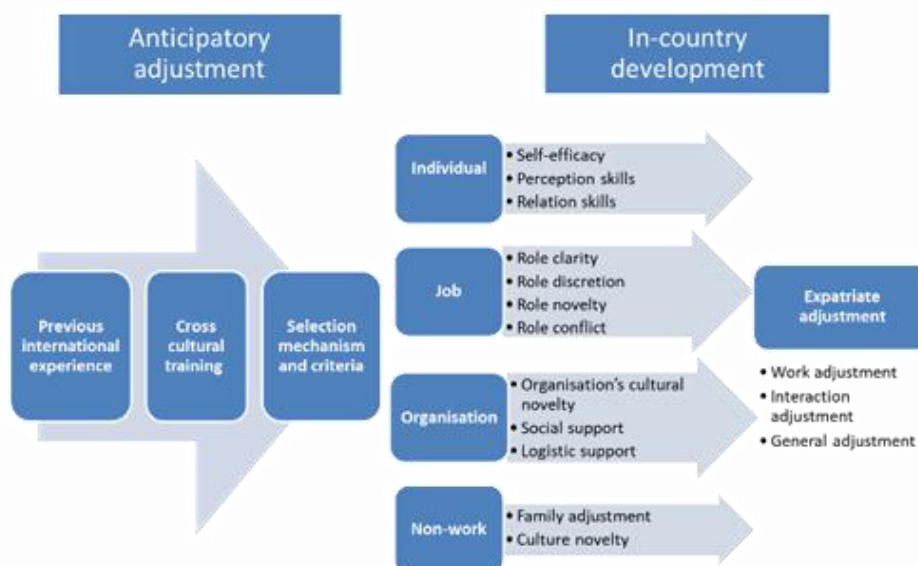
Figure 1. Black's Model for Expatriates' Adjustment

Individual Factors

Technical, managerial competence, social relations skills, open-mindedness and expats' desire are considered as individual factors to adjust in new country.[38] Recent studies have shown that the five big personality traits which are predictive for the adjustment of expatriates include openness, neuroticism, agreeableness, extraversion, and conscientiousness.[39] Another important factor is emotional intelligence as defined by Tan et al. (2005), which contributes to adjustment based on the fact that expat's emotion has a significant impact on international experience.[40] Apart from that, other researchers like Okpara and Kabongo (2011) suggested that further individual factors can be added to Black's model.

Job-Related Factors

According to Black (1988)[41], job-related factors are responsible for either easing or constraining the expatriates' adjustment process. One of the dominant factors in this regard is

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[38] Goldberg, L. (1993). The structure of phenotypic personality traits. *American psychologist*, 48(1): 26.

[39] Osman-Gani, A. M., & Tan, W. L. (2005). Expatriate development for Asia-Pacific: A study of training contents and methods. *International Journal of Human Resources Development and Management*, 5(1), 41-56.

[40] Bhaskar-Shrinivas, P., Harrison, D. A., Shaffer, M. A., & Luk, D. M.

[41] Black, J.

"role novelty". It is defined as the difference between the previous job role and the current job role. Job ambiguity also plays an important role, role conflict and role overload. Black also proposed three more additional factors such as sole discretion, previous work experience and previous knowledge.

Organization Related Factors

Organization related factors also play a vital role in the adjustment process.[42] The better expatriates match the organizational needs, the easier it is for them to adjust. Black (1991) stated that it was the duty of organizations to offer logistical support such as assistance in schooling, housing etc. to expats. Those will ease the process of expatriates' adjustment by meeting their demands that arise in a foreign environment and supply them with necessary resources when they need them. Simply, organizational support acts as a stress buffer for the expatriates and increases their job satisfaction by providing them with high-quality assistance when required.

Non-Work-Related Factors

Tung (1982) found out that one of the leading factors which controls the negative or positive progress of expatriates' adjustment was family adjustment. He carried out a study on American Expatriates and concluded that the primary cause of expats' failure was the fact that their spouses was unable to adapt in new environment of host country. There is a strong and positive relationship between spouse adjustment and expatriates' adjustment.[43] Culture novelty shows that some countries are harder to adjust in, as compared to others. In other words, it will be very easier for expatriates' to adjust in a host country if there is similar environment and culture between host and home country.[44]

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The objective of this study was to find out if respondents see social media's usefulness in adjustment process. The research survey has been carried out with a formal questionnaire prepared in relation with Black's (1991) adjustment model comprising of structured and closed questions.

As shown in Black's (1991) model, four genres of expatriates' adjustment factors i.e. individual, organization related, job-based, and non-work related, were linked to the corresponding key performance indicators with the help of two to four questions each. From

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[42] Black, J. S., Mendenhall, M., & Oddou, G.
[43] Black, J. S., & Stephens, G. K.
[44] Selmer, J., Torbiorn, I., & de Leon, C. T. (1998). Sequential cross-cultural training for expatriate business managers: predeparture and post-arrival. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 9(5): 831-840.

literature, Black's model provides various key performance measures to assess factors related to four main categories based on which the expatriate's adjustment in a certain country is affected. These four factors include individual factors, job related factors, organizational factors and non-work-related factors. The key performance measures of individual factors include self-efficacy, perception skills and relation skills. The KPI's of job-related factors include role clarity, role discretion, role novelty and role conflict. Those of organizational factors include organizational novelty, social support and logistic support. Finally; the KPI's of non-work-related factors include family adjustment and culture novelty. With help of questions in questionnaire form, each KPI is assessed to check whether it has direct impact on expatriate's adjustment or not. The only difference is that the questions have been asked with reference to expatriates' adjustment using social media platforms. So, this shows that the same practice has been used by other researchers before in various contexts. All these determinants based on which questionnaire is developed (attached in the end), are taken out from Black's model (1991).

The questionnaire comprised of six demographic questions and 12 questions related to the role of organizations in expatriate's adjustment using social media platforms. 5 point Likert scale was used for answers, where 1 is strongly disagree and 5 strongly agree (Annex 1). Descriptive statistics was used for analysis of data.

The questionnaire was distributed to an online company Glassdoor having more than 500 employees. Glassdoor is one of the world's largest job and recruiting online sites with Subsidiaries all over the world. The company was selected for the survey since it is known for its diversified work environment which attracts expatriates from all around the world.

The response of the 30 expatriates was collected, organized and analyzed. According to Isaac and Michael (1995)[45,] "samples with N's between 10 and 30 have many practical advantages, including simplicity, easy calculation, and the ability to test hypotheses" shows that the sample size of 30 is sufficient for research survey on subject research statement.

RESULTS

General information about respondents is presented in Table 1. Of all the 30 respondents, 57% expatriates were male while 43% of the respondents were female. 47% of the participants

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[45] Isaac, S., & Michael, W. B. (1995). *Handbook in research and evaluation: A collection of principles, methods, and strategies useful in the planning, design, and evaluation of studies in education and the behavioral sciences.* Edits publishers.

are belonged to the age group of 26-35 years. This finding is of critical importance because the most dominant group of individuals in utilizing social media platforms are in the same age group. 33% of the respondents belonged to the 36-45 years age group. The 18-25 years age group represented 10% of the total respondents. The 46-55 years age group also comprises of 10% of the total respondents. 10% of the respondents earn a salary of below $20,000, 40% earn between $21,000 and $30,000, 37% earn between $31,000 and $40,000, 10% earn between $41,000 and $50,000 and 3% earn above $51,000.

Table 1. General information about respondents

| | | | Gender | | Total |
			Male	Female	
Age	18-25 years	Count	1	2	3
		% of Total	3.3	6.7	10
	26-35 years	Count	8	6	14
		% of Total	26.6	20	46.6
	36-45 years	Count	7	3	10
		% of Total	23.3	10	33.3
	46-55 years	Count	1	2	3
		% of Total	3.3	6.7	10
Annual Income	Below $20,0000	Count	0	3	3
		% of Total	0	10	10
	$21,000-$30,000	Count	7	5	12
		% of Total	23.3	16.7	40
	$31,000-$40,000	Count	7	4	11
		% of Total	23.3	13.3	36.6
	$41,000-$50,000	Count	2	1	3
		% of Total	6.7	3.3	10
	Above $51,000	Count	1	0	1
		% of Total	3.3	0	3.3
Education	College	Count	1	4	5
		% of Total	3.3	13.3	16.6
	University	Count	12	8	20
		% of Total	40	26.7	66.7
	Postgraduate	Count	4	1	5
		% of Total	13.3	3.3	16.6
Total		Count	17	13	30
		% of Total	56.7	43.3	100

66% of the respondents have attained an education up to university level while 17% have attained up to college level and the other 17% is covered by those who have attained post-graduate level education.

Figure 2 presents means of every of adjustment factor. Results revealed that respondents found the highest social media usefulness supporting role conflict. Social support, perception skills and self-efficacy are on the second place. Respondents noted the least social media

usefulness on role clarity. However, it could be noted that all factors were evaluated more than average, varying from 3.5 up to 4.0 from 5 available points.
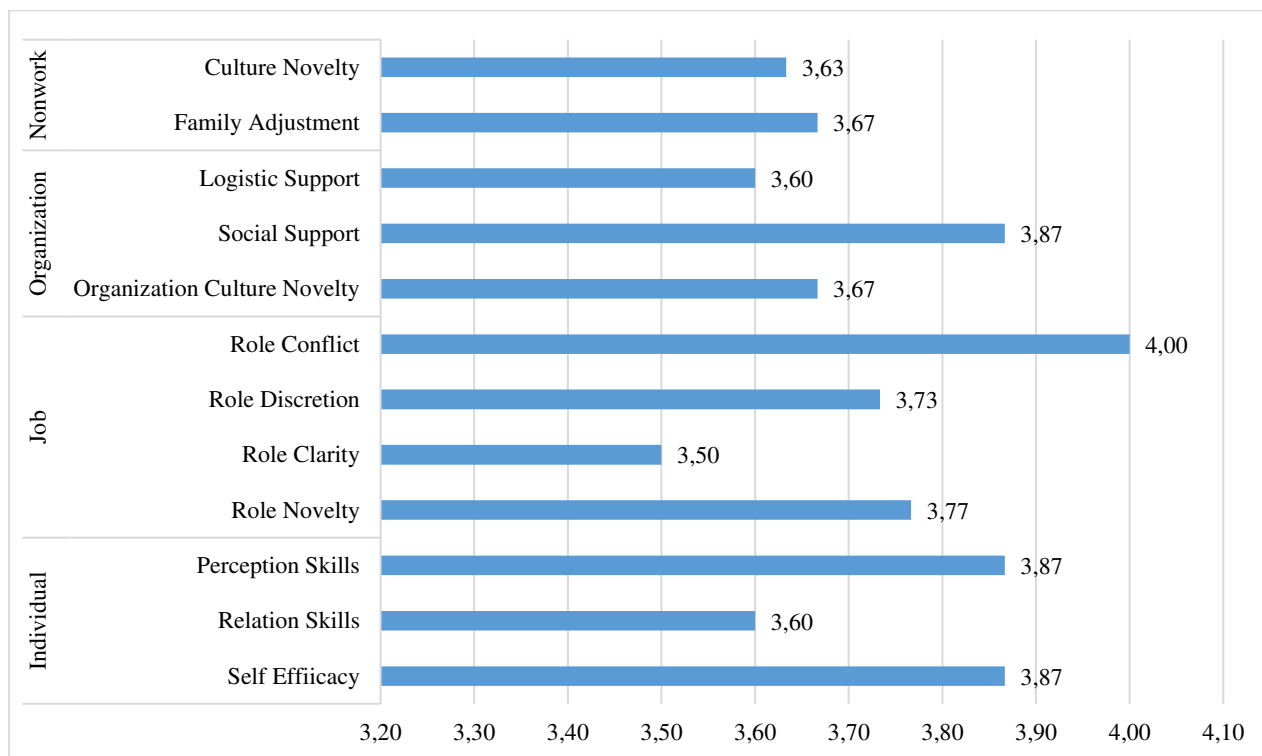
Figure 2. Means of adjustment factors

Results in relation with comparison with gender and education are presented in Table 2. According to Table 2 in relation with gender, we could see, the preferences of four factors of in-country development are different. Total 30 respondents consist of 17 males and 13 females are surveyed to better extract the information related to the importance of four in-country development factors for expatriates to better adjust in the host country through social media platform. Table 2 shows the result taken out of survey.

For males, the job-related factors have more important for adjustment of expatriates in the host country in the presence of social media platform as compared to other three factors as the mean value is the highest among all four which is 3.84. In other words, the male respondents selected the job-related factors in Black's model to help the expatriates to adjust in host country by using social media platforms. After that, the individual factors (mean value 3.80), non-work related factors (mean value 3.79), and organisation related factors (mean value 3.69) are ranked respectively as per the mean values of the responses. In case of females, as per Black's model, the individual factors organization related factors are more important among all four factors with mean value 3.74. Unlike males, females prefer individual factors to better adjust in the

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host country by using social media platforms. The cumulative result of both genders validates the opinion of the females in which the individual factors with mean value 3.78 are the most important factors among the four which help the most to the expatriates for adjustment in the host country followed by job related factors (mean value 3.75), organisation related factors (mean value 3.71) and non-work related factors (mean value 3.65).

Table 2. Results comparison in relation with gender and age

			Individual Factors	Job Related Factors	Organization Related Factors	Non-Work Related Factors
Gender	Male	Mean	3,80	3,84	3,69	3,79
		N	17	17	17	17
		Std. Deviation	0,62426	0,45878	0,67155	0,75122
	Female	Mean	3,74	3,63	3,74	3,46
		N	13	13	13	13
		Std. Deviation	0,62589	0,56472	0,73477	1,18078
	Total	Mean	3,78	3,75	3,71	3,65
		N	30	30	30	30
		Std. Deviation	0,61484	0,50855	0,68779	0,95728
Age	18-25 years	Mean	3,67	3,75	3,78	4,17
		N	3	3	3	3
		Std. Deviation	0,33333	0,43301	0,69389	0,57735
	26-35 years	Mean	3,55	3,70	3,71	3,50
		N	14	14	14	14
		Std. Deviation	0,71141	0,54753	0,72627	1,09193
	36-45 years	Mean	4,07	3,78	3,57	3,60
		N	10	10	10	10
		Std. Deviation	0,51640	0,55840	0,75441	0,96609
	46-55 years	Mean	4,00	3,92	4,11	4,00
		N	3	3	3	3
		Std. Deviation	0,00000	0,38188	0,19245	0,50000
	Total	Mean	3,78	3,75	3,71	3,65
		N	30	30	30	30
		Std. Deviation	0,61484	0,50855	0,68779	0,95728

There is also the difference of perception of the respondents based upon their age group. The survey consists of four different age groups and asked about the factors highlighted in the Black's model. Each age group has different opinion regarding the significance of four factors for the adjustment of the expatriates in the host country through social media platforms. The age group of 18-25 years perceived that the non-work related factors are the most important for the adjustment of the expatriated in the host country with the highest mean value of 4.17 followed by organisation related factors (mean value 3.78), job related factors (mean value 3.75) and then individual factors (mean value 3.67). Second age group is having people from 26 to 35 years. 14 respondents are surveyed in this group and the result shows that the organisation related factors with the mean value 3.71 are more important for the successful

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adjustment in the host country through the social media platforms. After this, job related factors (mean value 3.70), individual factors (mean value 3.55) and non-work-related factors (mean value 3.50) are important respectively in the Black's model. Third age group consists of age from 36 to 45 years. This group responded that the most important factors are individual with the highest mean value of 4.07 which play significant role in the adjustment of expatriates through social media platforms. Last but not least, the last group of 46 to 55 years has different opinion which responded that the organization related factors with the mean value 4.11 are the most important factors among others to have a significant role in the adjustment of expatriates. When the results are combined of the age group then it will be inferred that the most important factors in Black's model are individual factors having mean value 3.78 in the in-country development which support the expatriates to better adjust through social media platforms. This result also validates the result inferred from the gender-based responses.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Primary insights of this study concludes that if organizations will provide social media network support, such as the development of virtual communities, *Facebook* pages, and *WhatsApp* groups then it will should help for better adjustment of expatriates'.

The results also show that socializing in lieu of social media platforms, with other expatriates of the same origin, will increase the likelihood of the success of the employees sent to other countries on international assignments. The absence of social networks is one of the primary reasons for the failure of international assignment.[46]

A lot of work has been done on expatriates' adjustment while keeping the focus on the various individuals, cultural, work-related and organization related factors. Although many researchers have highlighted the importance of organizational support and social media networks in assisting the process of expatriates' adjustment, non-relates to the relationship between these two. Organizations should play an important role by providing necessary support and mentoring their employees on international assignment. It is also important for the organizations to further strengthen the expatriates' adjustment process with the help of social media networks.

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[46] Stahl, G. K., Miller, E. L., & Tung, R. L. (2002). Toward the boundaryless career: A closer look at the expatriate career concept and the perceived implications of an international assignment. *Journal of World Business*, 37(3): 216-227.

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The usage of smartphone and other electronic devices have increased for technological innovation, based on which it is very important for organizations to organize, arrange various opportunities and welcome expatriates to become members of available social media platforms matchable to their respective cultures. This will not only provide a necessary answer to the social media related awareness and eagerness found in expatriates, but it will also contribute towards the success of international assignments.

Since most of youth is used to be hired on international assignments that's why organizations must target young generation for better adaptability to a new environment with the help of social media platforms i.e. *Facebook*, *WhatsApp* etc. While planning for initiatives to be taken with respect to the introduction of social media platforms, the organizations based on their development on "non-work related" factors since expatriates are influenced by these factors the most, apart from individual and job-related factors. Examples of non-work-related factors include the logistic assistance and importance of family adjustment.

Lastly, the introduction of social media platforms will impart positive effects on the adjustment process of expatriates. If the string of social media platforms in introduced in all the factors influencing expatriates' adjustment, such as organizational factors, individual factors, job-related and non-work-related factors, the process of their adjustment will gain more pace. Also, the socialization of expatriates with other members of community sharing same language or culture will increase the success rate of international assignment on which companies spend a significant amount of resources each year.

Future recommendations

This research shows how organizations can play their role in understanding and improving the process of expatriates' adjustment with the help of social media platforms. Following are the research areas in which researchers can be extended this research:

- To conduct future studies of social media's impact of expatriate's adjustment.
- To reveal what kind of support using social media organizations could provide for their employees. Different ways and practical methods by which organizations can actually provide opportunities to expatriates regarding adjustment including social media are still to be discovered.
- Nowadays different social media platforms have different influences on the lives of the users. It is important to find out that which social media platform is most suitable in aiding expatriates when it comes to their adjustment through organizational support.

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Annex 1

"QUESTIONNAIRE"

I am a student of (Name of Degree), from (Name of University). Currently, I am carrying out a research on the role of organizations in expatriates' adjustment using social media platforms. The main objective of this questionnaire is to obtain your response in order to access the ways in which organizations can contribute towards expatriate's adjustment in host country with the help of social media platforms. The information obtained from you will be confidential and will only be used for academic purpose only. I therefore kindly request you to answer the following questions
*Please note that this questionnaire to be filled by expatriates only.

A: DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION:

1. **Please specify your gender:**
(a) Male   (b) Female

2. **What is your age?**
(a) 18-25 years   (b) 26-35 years
(c) 36-45 years   (d) 45-55 years
(e) Above 55 years

3. **What is the highest level of formal education you have completed? (please check one)**

(a) High School   (b) College
(c) University   (d) Postgraduate

4. What is your total annual income?
(a) Below $ 20,000   (b) $ 21,000 – $ 30,000
(c) $ 31,000 – $ 40,000   (d) $ 41,000 – $ 50,000
(e) Above $51,000

5. From which country you belong?

6. Please mention your host country.

B: Role of Social Media Platforms in Expatriates Adjustment

Please answer the following questions as per the scale defined below:

Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree		
1	2	3	4	5		

1.	**Individual Related Factors**					
1.a	Presence of social media networks in an organization will help you in adjusting to new environment.	1	2	3	4	5
1.b	Availability of virtual communities in workplace will enable most of the expatriates to socialize in a better way.	1	2	3	4	5
1.c	Organizational support in form of enhanced social media awareness will make you more open minded towards making new social relationships	1	2	3	4	5
2.	**Job Related Factors**					
2.a	The guidance and trainings obtained through social media platforms will help you in in resolving job novelty (i.e. what you used to do in past and what you will have to do now)	1	2	3	4	5
2.b	The information exchanged through virtual communities (Facebook & WhatsApp groups etc.) will play an important role in clarifying job ambiguity in new workplace.	1	2	3	4	5
2.c	Social networking groups will enable you to use previously employed behavioral mechanism to minimize ambiguity in job role.	1	2	3	4	5
2.d	By completely understanding your job role through organizational support in aforementioned ways, you will be able to manage workload in better way.	1	2	3	4	5
3.	**Organization Related Factors**					
3.a	Not being a part of any social platform in new workplace will make it difficult for you to perceive new organizational environment.	1	2	3	4	5
3.b	Social support from social media platforms will enable overcoming new workplace barriers.	1	2	3	4	5
3.c	Logistic tips and assistance provided by virtual communities at organizational level with help you in adjusting to new place.	1	2	3	4	5
4.	**Non-Work-Related Factors**					
4.a	Social networking groups at organizational level, based on country of origin or language, having the ability to provide adjustment related guidance to your family members, will contribute towards your overall adjustment in host country.	1	2	3	4	5
4.b	By joining social platforms, it would be easy for you to adjust your attitude, reduce anxiety, uncertainty and learn accepted behaviors of the host country.	1	2	3	4	5

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