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Managing Yopatriates: A study of Generation Y Expatriates in an Indian Multi-National Corporation

Abstract

This paper provides a study of HRM practices for a new category of expatriates - "Yopatriates"- who we note as young, highly qualified and mobile, Generation Y (Gen Y) knowledge workers. In contrast to traditional expatriates, Yopatriates typify non-traditional forms of expatriation wherein they seek short-term international assignments to suit their individual (internal, rather than organisational or external) career orientations of learning and travel. We study this group using a case study analysis of a large Indian Multi National Corporation (MNC) delivering global information technology (IT) and business process offshoring (BPO) services. Our study presents the HRM practices adopted to manage both expatriates as well as Yopatriates at the case organisation being studied within an India setting. We further evaluate the extent to which internal HR practices of Yopatriates were characterised, by a desire to emulate or adopt what were regarded as global 'HR best practices'. Our distinctive contribution lies in extending the literature by developing a distinctive theoretical category of non-traditional expatriates that (1) highlights a need for a different set of HRM practices; and (2) extends the theory of cultural adjustment in the context of Yopatriates. Evidence suggests that these practices were complementary and at the same time contradictory to 'indigenous' localised practices during the period of research and complied with two of the four arguments we make in our model.

1. Introduction

Numerous classifications of working across national borders highlight an exciting debate about the differences in definitions, characteristics and the management of globally mobile workers. Traditional expatriates are typically assigned by the organisation for a period of between 2 to 5 years (Reiche and Harzing 2011), as opposed to and non-traditional expatriates such as self-initiated expatriates, women and younger expatriates on short-term assignments of less than 2 years (Andresen, Bergdolt, Margenfeld and Dickmann, 2014; Doherty, 2013; Suutari, Brewster, Riusala and Syrjakari, 2013) have been the subject of research for the past 30 years (Hippler et al 2015). Further refinement of the research agenda into expatriation has seen a growing interest in global mobility and the impact of human resources management (HRM) from different geographic regions (Sheehan and Sparrow 2013; Kawai and Mohr, 2015).

This paper is appropriately timed to address the definitional debates, typologies and distinguishing features of HR practices to manage distinct groups of non-traditional expatriates and explore the adjustment theorisation of one particular group: Generation Y or millennial expatriates. This study is timely because it extends the debates on how traditional versus non-traditional expatriates are managed using appropriate theoretical underpinnings such as generational and cultural adjustment theory within the international HRM literature and specifically answers the special issue's call to develop understanding within different geographical regions such as India. Our research explores the extent to which these established theoretical frames are applicable in the emerging country context of India's IT/BPO industry.

Practitioner reports suggest a steady increase in non-traditional expatriates (Brookfield 2013a; Cartus 2013; Ellis-Jones, 2015). However there is limited empirical research regarding the design and implementation of human resource management (HRM) practices of non-traditional expatriates. These trends also suggest an increasing number of non-traditional expatriates are younger, many of whom are Generation Y's or millennials, women and are highly qualified. An increasing number of globally mobile workers are from emerging market economies to both developing and developed economies. Although globalisation has transformed the way business and work is conducted; the complex, interlinked processes inadequately captured within the term globalisation have intensely local manifestations.

One context where this complex dynamic is played out is the Indian information technology and business process outsourcing (IT/BPO) industry. India as a nation has recently been noted as an important emerging market economy with a steady supply of not only migrant workers (Bach 2011), but also, an increasing number of expatriates. This is especially true in the case of the IT/BPO industry (NASSCOM, 2012, 2014a, 2014b; Gottipatti 2012), especially as one estimate suggests India has the largest share of about $US70 billions of expatriates' remittances to India (Feedbacq, 2014).

In this study, we develop a new and distinctive theoretical category of non-traditional expatriate who we refer to as Yopatriates, and define them as young, highly qualified and mobile, Generation Y (Gen Y) knowledge workers, who often work on short-term international assignments to fulfil their individual (internal, rather than organisational or external) career orientations of personal development and travel aspirations. We identify four main characteristics of Yopatriates. First, Gen Y represents the largest generational workforce (born between the years 1980-1995) and will continue to be a major proportion of the workforce (Ellis-Jones, 2015; Parry and Irwin 2011; Srinivasan 2012); second, Gen Y expatriates prefer short-term expatriate assignments (up to 18 months) (Brookfield 2013b); third, GenY's have different values and attitudes towards various work characteristics such as 'geographical mobility', (Brookfield 2013b); training and development and flexible hours (Myers, 2015) and developmental expatriation assignments (Shaw and Fairhurst 2008) rather than the typical strategic/information disseminator or other traditional roles fulfilled by the conventional expatriates (Dowling et al 2013).

We study this group of employees using a case study design (Yin 2014) in an extremely large (over 250,000 employees), diverse and complex Indian MNC delivering global IT/BPO services. We analyse the extent and nature of specific HRM practices evident in this MNC for their increasing population of Yopatriates and to understand whether cultural adjustment during their expatriation is different to traditional expatriates. Large IT/BPO firms operating in India, including this MNC, have sent nearly a third of their employees on an expatriate assignment at some stage of their employee's careers (Gottipatti, 2012; Saraswati, 2012). A significant percentage of its employees are under the age of 34. Thus our research setting, a fast-growing Indian IT/BPO MNC, can

provide rich insights into the HRM practices of both traditional and non-traditional expatriates.

We argue that Yopatriates are expected to undertake multiple short-term expatriate assignments and are more likely to exhibit Gen Y and knowledge worker values, attitudes and behaviours (Brookfield 2013b). Extant research has identified significant differences exist between attracting, motivating and retaining knowledge relative to other workers (Hewitt and Associates 2001; Horwitz et al. 2003, 2006; Huang 2011; Kinnear and Sutherland 2000). Furthermore, the literature on Gen Y (Benson and Brown 2011; Cogin 2012) suggests there are significant differences in values and attitudes between managing Gen Y and other generational groupings of employees (see recent research in the Indian IT industry context by Pereira et al, 2015). Understandably then, there are likely to be potential issues of intergenerational differences in the management of these groups. Thus, HR practices of non-traditional expatriates (Yopatriates, in this case) underpin the rationale and research questions which this paper seeks to address. Our research is undertaken in the context of a large Indian IT/BPO MNC, for confidentiality reasons, the case is hereinafter referred to as 'Alpha'. Our overarching aim is to extend our understanding of managing Gen Y expatriates (Yopatriates) and answer the following research questions:

1. What are the key differences between the expatriate adjustment processes of traditional expatriates and Yopatriates?

2. How did Alpha's HRM practices evolve over a period of time to manage expatriate adjustment issues of its increasing number of Yopatriates in organisations and what were the key factors influencing such changes?

We contribute in the following four ways. First, we identify a new nomenclature of non-traditional expatriates i.e. Yopatriates and argue that they should be managed differently than traditional expatriates mainly due to generational differences between the two groups. Second, we contribute through our case study, evidence of how Yopatriates are managed in the context of knowledge intensive industries such as Alpha. Third, we contribute by presenting a detailed account of the evolution of HR practices employed in managing Yopatriates over a five year period at Alpha. Fourth, we contribute by extending Black et al (1991)'s uncertainty reduction theory by integrating the learnings

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from intergenerational theory and this research and by exploring how the chosen case study organisation managed and reduced the uncertainty for this new type of expatriates i.e. the Yopatriates over a five year period of study.

This paper comprises of the following sections. First, we discuss the literature on HRM practices for expatriates and non-traditional expatriates with special reference to Gen Y knowledge workers as well as exploring the literature regarding cultural adjustment. Second, we provide a contextual overview of IT/BPO in India. Third, we account for methodological considerations, organisational context and methods of data collection. Fourth, we present our empirical data to analyse the HRM practices and discuss and theorise our findings. Finally we propose managerial implications for HR and future research opportunities whilst noting the current limitations of this study.

2. Literature Review

Sparrow, Brewster and Harris (2007, p. 206) suggest there is a 'need for a broader geographical base to further our understanding of international HRM.' Thus, to what extent can we assume HRM strategies and policies of traditional and non-traditional expatriates in these new multinational entrants are emulated by Western models such as the life cycle models of Adler and Ghadar (1990) or Heenan and Perlmutter (1979)? It is not clear whether the practices align with the Westernization of HR, in terms of non-traditional expatriates in Indian IT/BPO organisations, or is it a more multi-faceted cross-vergent process, incorporating cultural values of multiple nations (Ralston et al. 1997). Mariappanadar (2005) usefully distinguishes between multinational firms operating in India that use predominantly Western HR practices and others that amalgamate local and Western HR traditions more unevenly. This paper further contributes to the debate on cross-vergence in the context of HRM practices of non-traditional expatriates in the Indian BPO industry. We propose a new nomenclature of non-traditional expatriates: Yopatriates in the context of the Indian IT/BPO industry. To this end, the next section discusses the literature on traditional and non-traditional expatriates.

2.1 Traditional expatriates

Traditional expatriates are supported by their organisation through HR policy and practices for a limited period of time (Reiche and Harzing, 2011; Andersen 2014). This is echoed in various practitioner reports that note international assignments lasting more than one year are supported by the organisation (Brookfield 2013a; Expat forum, 2013; PwC Global Trends, 2013).

The profile of traditional Western expatriates is commonly reported to be men in middle to senior management typically aged between 38-44 years (Adams et al 2013; Black and Gregersen 1991; Black and Stephens 1989; Brookfield 2012; Selmer 2001: Caligiuri, et al 1998; Hays 1971; Shaffer, Harrison and Gregersen 2006) reflecting the age range of generation X (Cogin 2012; Strauss and Howe 1991). The proportion of women undertaking a traditional expatriation remains relatively low at twenty percent of expatriates (Brookfield 2013a).

Expatriate adjustment has been noted as a central research area in IHRM research (Hippler et al 2014a and b). Previous theoretical research on this topic focuses on expatriate adjustment during the overseas assignment (Black and Gregersen 1991). Black and Gregersen's (1991) model depicts a progression of adjustment to understand how individuals would respond to the expatriation experience through four sequential stages: honeymoon, culture shock, adjustment, and mastery, utilising social learning theory. The trajectory of expatriate adjustment over a period of time resembles a U-curve. Of the four phases, the initial, honeymoon phase is depicted as a rise in adjustment. The first few weeks of an expatriates arrival in a new country, is not sufficient time to experience the reality of day-to-day living and as such the initial experience is positive; the second phase is categorised by the expatriate experiencing obstructions and opposition in the host country highlighted by a fall in adjustment, this is described as culture shock. Phase three of adjustment highlights some adjustment, such as learning the local language, work skills, etc. the expatriate develops some proficiency in performing a new set of behaviours in the host country (Black 1988). The fourth phase, mastery, signals completion of the expatriate's foreign experience and the incremental degree of adjustment experienced is minimal. In this final phase, the expatriate can function effectively, without anxiety to cultural differences. Thus

expatriate adjustment is a process that develops of over a period of time (Hippler, Brewster and Haslberger, 2015).

Figure 1- The U-curve and the four phases of cultural adjustment in the context of Yopatriates

(Authors adaptation of model from Black & Mendenhall, 1991, p. 227)

There are four arguments we make when it comes to the above theorisation of 'expatriate adjustment' (Black & Mendenhall, 1991) in our research context. The first argument is that the U-curve model does not work in this particular research setting and context, i.e. for the Yopatriates, principally because of the short duration of foreign assignments (less than 18 months) in comparison to a long term assignment (over 24 months). Previous research has indicated that phase one honeymoon and culture shock can last up to three years (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al, 2005) the shorter time period is not considered in the original model that notes the first phase as up to two months and the second as four to six months. Thus, considering the duration of time for expatriate adjustment is crucial (see Hippler et al, 2015). The second argument is that the four phases i.e. honeymoon, culture shock, adjustment and mastery are all experienced within the 18 month period, which means they are crammed into shorter periods, as compared to the periods shown in the original model. The third argument we make is that Yopatriates would mostly experience only honeymoon (phase 1) and culture shock (phase 2) periods on their short expatriate assignments and develop shallow or no experiences of the remaining phases. Thus, before they fully experience and adjust (phase 3) and obtain mastery (phase 4), they return home or move to another country, where they are likely to again experience only the first two phases in full and the other phases only partially. Our fourth argument is an extension of our third argument, wherein we envisage Yopatriates over time will experience all four phases of adjustment by experiencing several rounds of honeymoons (phase 1) and culture shock (phase 2) periods, before moving to the deeper experiences of adjustment (phase 3) and mastery (phase 4). Through our study we explore whether the above argument(s) hold true in the context of Yopatriates. More specifically, we also examine whether Gen Y values noted above influence Yopatriate's attitudes and behaviours towards cultural adjustment.

Black and colleagues utilised uncertainty reduction theory (URT) (Berger and Calabrese (1975) to highlight adjustment to work and how an individual requires differing levels of communication before, during, and upon completion of an assignment towards expatriate adjustment in terms of host country culture, work role and group socialisation. Testing Black et al's theoretical framework, Stroh et al (1994) concluded that lower levels of uncertainty towards an expatriation is likely to result in a higher level of adjustment to the new country. The more information the expatriate gains prior to departure to prepare them such as their new role, cultural expectations etc. will decrease uncertainty and have a positive effect upon adjustment to the new location. However URT alone, as an underpinning theory, has been criticised as an individual's receptivity towards working overseas could be incorporated to explain adjustment (Tharenou, 2010). Considering the use of URT in conjunction with cultural adjustment provides an added dimension to explore the significance of support to the expatriate.

The organisation has a central role in assisting the expatriate to adjust to the new culture notably through interventions during the adjustment phases arguably at the most pertinent time (Hippler et al 2015). Within MNCs the role of HR to provide support via HR policies and practices to manage the expatriation is well documented (Collings et al 2007; Kraimer, Wayne, and Jaworski 2001; Mezias and Scandura, 2005; Peterson, et al 1996). Mentoring is noted to support adjustment; the challenge to HR is how to implement effective mentoring (Mezias and Scandura, 2005) for Gen Ys. Similarly, what is less well-known is how non-traditional expatriates such as the Gen Ys gain organisational support for expatriate adjustment.

2.2 Non-traditional expatriates

The growth of studies to explore the differences between traditional expatriates and non-traditional expatriates is clearly evident within the literature highlighting alternatives to traditional expatriates (Collings, Scullion and Morley 2007; Froese and Peltokorpi 2013; Hutchings, Lirio and Metcalfe 2012; McEvoy and Buller 2013; Welch and Worm 2006). Other forms of expatriation including self-initiated expatriates (SIEs) (Al Ariss 2010; Howe-Walsh and Schyns 2010; Suutari and Brewster 2001), stealth expatriates (McEvoy and Buller 2013), short-term assignments (Tahvanainen, Welch and Worm; Welch and Worm 2006), commuter assignments (Mayerhofer, Hartmann, Michelitsch-Riedl and Kollinger 2004) are gaining increasing interest in the literature.

Further research has highlighted the differences in demographics between traditional and non -traditional expatriates resulting in an increase in studies exploring female SIEs. Women are noted to be more likely to initiate an expatriation to develop their career (Fitzgerald and Howe-Walsh 2008; Tharenou 2010). This is supported by findings in Vance and McNulty's (2014) study that suggests women expatriates experienced less gender bias overseas than in their home location. Moreover recent research (Cole and McNulty 2011) indicates women experience higher levels of international and work adjustment than their male counterparts.

A study of Gen Y by PWC (2008) reported more than three quarters of the female respondents aspired to work as an expatriate during their careers, suggesting that Gen Y are receptive to expatriation. Whilst traditional expatriates and SIEs remain dominated by those aged over thirty four, Gen Y, noted as thirty four years and under (Parry and Urwin, 2011; Srinivasan, 2012), have received scant attention in the academic literature. Moreover, the implications for organisational support to flexibly support differing demographics have thus far received little attention.

Mellahi et al.'s (2013) research investigates why certain HRM practices converge and others diverge. Their study of Turkish companies supports the notion that MNEs do not adapt HRM practices that are easy to diffuse, control and manage and reflect a core organisational value to the local context such as merit based promotion (Mellahi et al 2013, p. 2362). Furthermore, their findings suggest that adapting HRM practices to suit local cultural and institutional imperatives inhibits the convergence of some HR practices. Exploring the influence of age to determine the level of convergence and divergence of HR practices requires further development. Researchers have suggested the need to consider HR support whatever the type of expatriation (Howe-Walsh and Schyns 2010) indicating the need to consider differing types of expatriations. We suggest that further research is required to explore whether age influences HRM practices to aid adjustment as well as the duration of the assignment. The next section reviews the literature regarding Gen Y.

2.3 *Generation Y's*

With an increasing incidence of multiple generations at work, numerous researchers have attempted to understand if there are inter-generational differences in work values of different generational cohorts (Cogin 2012; Srinivasan 2012). For example, the literature on generational theory classifies generational cohorts and their starting and ending periods in various ways: the Veterans (1925-1942), Baby Boomers (1943-1960), Generation X (1961-1981), and Generation Y (1982-2003) (Cogin 2012; Strauss and Howe 1991, with some even classifying GenY as 1982 and onwards (Parry & Urwin, 2011), after 2003 onwards there is limited academic reference to what some refer to as the next generation: Generation Z (Moeller, Napier McGourty, (2014). Of particular interest to us, for the purposes of this paper, is Gen Y, also called, the YOLOs (You Only Live Once) (Carroll 2014), Echo-Boomers, Millennials and Digital Natives (Shaw and Fairhurst, 2008). While there is considerable debate on the exact start and end periods of this generational cohort, beginning sometime during 1977-1982 and ending during 1994-2003 (Shih and Allen 2007), for the purposes of this paper we will follow the widely cited time period of 1980-2000 (Parry and Urwin 2011; Srinivasan 2012). Despite these classifications, one of the critiques levelled in generational studies is that those who are born on the cusp of these boundaries tend to share characteristics and values of two generations e.g. a Gen Y born in 1978, may exhibit Gen X and Gen Y values (Arsenault, 2004).

Estimates from a number of countries suggest that Generation Y constitutes one of the largest groups of employees in today's workforce (Crumpacker and Crumpacker 2007; Srinivasan 2012). For example, in India alone, there are close to 300 million Gen Y's (Srinivasan 2012). It is not surprising then, to see researchers study the impact of generational characteristics of Gen Y's work values on a range of HRM and work-related outcomes (Benson and Brown 2011; Cogin 2012; Jorgensen 2003; Roberts and Manolis 2000; Yu and Miller 2005).

Theoretical foundations of Generational Theory
The earliest theoretical underpinnings of the construct generations emanated from sociological studies (Mannheim 1952). According to Mannheim (2001) a generational cohort represents those groups of individuals who are born during a particular birth period (for the purposes of this paper we are focusing on Generation Y as individuals

born between 1980-2000). Such groups of people share common world views, historical milestones in terms of social, political and economic events that mark this time period and that these milestones have a profound impact on the early development of this group of individuals. Mannheim (1952) identified several characteristics that mark the emergence of a distinctive generation. For example, this tends to happen when the population notices either new population joining in a cultural process or certain populations disappearing from a cultural process. Additionally, Mannheim noted that participants in a generation can only in a limited temporal sense experience a particular cultural process and that cultural heritage has to be continuously passed on from one generation to another. Thus, participants or population that share a period of birth tend to also share the social and historical aspects of that time period. Mannheim further noted that mere membership or belonging to a period would not automatically present members with the characteristics of that generation; members must also be engaged in common social process with other members from the same period. It is through this socialisation process they share 'an identity of responses, a certain affinity in the way in which all move with and are formed by their common experiences' (Mannheim 1952, p. 306). In a similar vein, Kupperschmidt (2000 p. 66) defined generations as an "identifiable group that shares birth years, age location, and significant life events at critical developmental stages". The start of a generational cohort is often marked by certain set of historic events and a sudden growth in birth rates till such time that the cohort witnesses constant declines in growth rates, thus marking the end of that generation (Crumpacker and Crumpacker 2007). These events and influences shape and develop distinctive values for these group of individuals and as a consequence, it impacts on their specific work attitudes and behaviours (Egri & Ralston, 2004; Glass, 2007; Mannheim, 2001). Further, the cognition hierarchy of values influencing behaviours through attitudes has been well-established (Fishbein and Ajzen, 1972)

Work Values and Attitudes of Generation Y

There is some consensus regarding the characteristics of work values that Gen Ys hold. Work values that stand out for Gen Ys include career development opportunities, job security, team working, family connections, technology savviness, training and career development opportunities, greater transparency, instant gratification, empowerment, collaborative learning styles, and frequent feedback, especially one that focuses on their job satisfaction, retention and expectations at work (Cogin, 2012; Eisner 2005; Glass

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2007; Gursoy et al. 2008; Lancaster and Stillman 2002; Shaw and Fairhurst 2008; Terjesen, et al., 2007; Thompson & Gregory, 2012). Others have found challenging work and flexible workflow (Martin 2005) and less bureaucracy (Morrison et al. 2006) as key work values of Gen Y. Similarly, Twenge and Campbell (2008) found that Gen Y's demonstrate high levels of self-esteem, narcissism, anxiety, depression and a lower need for social approval and higher external locus of control. Their study suggests managing such employees requires managers to be prepared to deal with higher than average expectations, provide ongoing praise and feedback, be less critical of their work, and provide them with opportunities for creative work. Some studies suggest that Gen Ys do not prefer to work outside of the office (Baard & Thomas, 2010) or have limited personal contact as it reduces their ability to have meaningful discussions with their managers (Green & Leeves, 2013), however, this may be overcome by providing challenging work (Glass, 2007) and through the use of technology to connect with their work groups.

While there is widespread support for the impact of intergenerational differences in values and attitudes towards work and its impact on HRM practices, there are few studies that have pointed to little or no differences between various generational cohorts (Parry and Urwin 2011; Treuren and Anderson 2010). A commonly noted criticism of research undertaken in this area relates to limited number of longitudinal research designs (Smola and Sutton 2002; Twenge and Campbell 2008) and problems of consistency in conceptualisation. For example, various studies have utilised age, generational cohorts, and time periods as possible typologies in explaining the drivers of intergenerational differences, thus, making meaningful comparisons very difficult (Joshi et al. 2010; Parry & Urwin, 2011)

Expatriate Adjustment and Gen Y Values
Studies of expatriate GenYs (Brookfield 2013b) found that relative to Gen X, Gen Ys were not averse to geographical mobility and overseas assignments (Ellis-Jones, 2015). Gen Ys often see change as an opportunity for advancing their knowledge and skills, and as such they value opportunities for training and development (Myers, 2015). In relation to skills development, Gen Ys learning styles are very different. They value self-directed and collective reinforcement of their learning (Shaw and Fairhurst 2008). Being more self-directed learners, they rely extensively on technology for collective consensus and approval from their social groups as they have a high sense of belonging to a peer group

(Shaw and Fairhurst 2008; Shih and Allen 2007). This approach to learning may explain why Gen Ys are more open to change (Brookfield, 2013b), challenging work (Martin, 2005), geographical mobility (Brookfield, 2013b; Ellis-Jones, 2015), and relative to other generational cohorts, have higher adjustment levels to learning that is unfamiliar in both content and context. This suggests that Gen Y may not experience cultural adjustment as previously noted in the literature and that they may experience the U curve over time from multiple assignments. Similarly, as Gen Ys seek frequent feedback from their work colleagues and managers on a range of employment matters, the level of preparedness this creates for expatriate adjustment may be improved through the support offered by HR policy and practice.

Gen Y values noted elsewhere in the literature bears significant resemblance and overlaps with the conceptualisation of the Indian Gen Y workers (Srinivasan 2012). For instance, studies of Indian Gen Y or as the researcher classified GenY asY2Ks, have identified the following work values: ambitiousness, emphasizing financial reward, entrepreneurial, tech savviness, valuing work-life balance, fearless of career aspirations, low need for economic and geographical security and high need achievement orientation (Erickson 2009; Ghosh and Chaudhari 2009; Hole et al. 2010; Srinivasan 2012). The term Y2Ks is been used as it depicts people born between 1985 and 1995, marking the generation entering the workforce from the year 2000 (Y2K) (Ghosh and Chaudhari 2009). Interestingly, this period also coincides with a major historical event- the era of India's economic liberalisation and reforms, increased competition, and higher levels of technical education.

The previous studies point to several human resource management implications in the context of Yopatriates. As highlighted in a recent study (Brookfield 2013b) Gen Ys will form 40% of the workforce by 2020 and many will occupy some form of leadership roles. In evidence of firms from the USA, Europe and Asia, this study found, firms need to employ proactive talent management approaches, offer strong and clear career paths, offer shorter term developmental assignments with extensive learning and development opportunities to Gen Ys. The Brookfield (2013b) report also noted Gen Ys undertaking an international assignment were single and sought more flexibility in their overall compensation package.

2.4 HRM in Indian IT/BPO Industry

In India the IT/BPO is still the fastest growing segment of the economy, both in terms of revenue and employment. Even during the global financial crisis the Indian IT sector has shown remarkable resilience (Malik 2013; Sheehan and Sparrow 2012). According to the Industry body NASSCOM (2014a), in 2012, the overall Indian IT/BPO aggregate revenues exceeded USD 100 billion, with exports in 2014 expected to cross USD 84-87 billion. NASSCOM (2014b) further reported that as a proportion of national GDP, the sector revenues have grown from 1.2 per cent in financial year 1998 to over 8.1 per cent in 2014. Saraswati (2012) terms the global IT/BPO leaders as 'giants' and the Indian leaders as 'majors'. He argues that both global giants and Indian majors businesses are entwined and they operate across the globe, so much so that one in three Indian IT/BPO employees from these companies work abroad and one in five of the global giants employees work in India. Our case study researches one of these Indian IT/BPO majors.

This paper contributes to the foundation literature in the Indian IT/BPO context where patterns of HR practices relating to the recruitment and retention, training and development, reward and the management of the employment relationship have been subject to rapid change (Malik 2009; Malik and Nilakant 2011; Pereira and Anderson 2012; Pereira and Malik 2015). More specifically this paper contributes to the literature in context of non-traditional expatriates in Indian IT/BPO organisations. Research on International HRM practices in India suggests certain context-specific features of Indian management (Budhwar and Baruch 2003; Budhwar and Varma 2010; Cappelli, Singh, Singh, and Useem 2010; Chatterjee 2007; Pereira and Anderson 2012).Thus suggesting that HR practices in India are culturally specific (Laleman Pereira and Malik 2015; Pereira and Malik 2013; Malik and Pereira 2015), particularly in the areas of pay, recruitment, employee communication and training and development (Budhwar and Khatri 2001). In a similar vein, Budhwar and Varma (2010) indicate the less structured, and formal approaches of Indian HRM systems are rapidly disappearing. Pio (2007) noted evidence of 'cross-fertilisation' between Indian and Western HRM practices. However, with India's population reaching close to 1.2 billion, of which Gen Y's constitute a major part, further research examining the management of Yopatriates is necessary and hence timely.

3. Research Methodology

Methodologically, longitudinal in-depth qualitative case-study examination has been rare in management and organisation research and more so within international HRM and the Indian context. This research design contributes by being longitudinal as it examined HRM practices for "Yopatriates" over time. Thus the fieldwork for this research took approximately six years from June 2006 to December 2012. The data collected comprised a total of 22 interviews and 3 focus groups generating 37 and 5 hours of recorded data respectively. Each individual and focus group interview ranged from 45 to 105 minutes, respectively. At Alpha the interviewees were the chief human resource officers in the two research sites Mumbai and Bangalore. The aim of the focus groups at each site was to probe further into the participants' views and experiences of implementing HRM practices and policies in the changing organisational and market context in which they operate, such as an increase in Yopatriate numbers. The focus group enabled a process of group interaction to produce data and insights that might otherwise have been less accessible, particularly to facilitate a discussion not only of what participants' views were but also why they held those views (Eisenhardt, 1989). Interviews were recorded (with permission) and extensive summaries were produced from the recordings and from the focus group discussions. The repeat visits to the organisation made possible the verification of the data summaries providing an in-depth case study. Secondary data such as company reports, HR policies, company brochures and information from the web site were also utilised (Hammersley and Atkinson 1983; Cassell and Symon 1994). Through these various means, the research attempted to uncover internal meanings to actors and to reveal temporally changing meanings over a six year timeframe.

In terms of sampling strategy and data access it was necessary to locate an appropriate case study organisation. Five potential organisations were identified from which Alpha (pseudonym for the organisation, changed to protect identity) was selected for two main reasons: first, the lead researcher had networking contacts with the organisations and second, wider and deeper access to data over a longer time period was agreed by the organisation. Alpha was selected as a critical and revelatory case (Yin 2014) as it is an Indian MNC, with a global presence. The choice of an unusually revelatory case study

has been suggested by several scholars as it presents with the opportunity to study a novel phenomenon in-depth (Siggelkow, 2007; Yin , 2014).

3.1 Organisational Case Study Context: Alpha

Alpha started its IT/BPO operations in 1968 and is a part of one of India's largest business conglomerates employing some 250,000 persons worldwide in 2012 (Alpha secondary documents) from more than forty countries and revenues exceeding US$ 6 billion. Alpha's influence transcends national borders as its operations are themselves of an increasingly global reach and internationally significant in scale. Alpha is one of India's main indigenous IT/BPO providers and grew rapidly over the period of the research. Most of Alpha's revenues are derived from the United Kingdom and United States, catering to the banking, financial services and insurance industries. The organisation offers a comprehensive range of information and communication technology (ICT) services and business process outsourcing (BPO) to seven of the top ten Fortune 500 companies and an increasing number of other clients. Over the period of the study, Alpha modified its approach towards being a global player in the global market.

The context of the IT/BPO industry and Alpha as an emerging market Indian MNC itself was an ideal case for younger hires. Alpha estimated that Gen-Y employees made up over 70% of their workforce and predicts that this will increase to about 85% by 2016. In fact by the end of this study, Gen-Y was already dominating the Alpha workforce, leading to differing expectations in the workplace. With respect to their HR practices when it comes to Yopatriates and the transfer of the same between subsidiary and HQ, this paper identifies what they do and how these practices have evolved. In order to address our research questions the data was analysed utilising processual analysis (Pettigrew 1997).

3.2 Data analysis

A processual approach to analysis focussed particularly on the changes during the six years of longitudinal research to enable widening interpretations through the presentation of complex and contextualised change data (Pettigrew 1997; Dawson 1997). We followed Pettigrew's (1997, p. 339) three steps in processual analysis. First, we searched for 'patterns in the process' of HR practices and managing Yopatriates at Alpha and compared the shape, character and incidence of this pattern over time and against HRM of traditional expatriates (our first research question); Second, having established patterns, we explored the underlying mechanisms which shape the observed patterns i.e. influences of change (second research question); Third, we studied the extent to which patterns across different levels of analysis were embedded (in the context of our overarching research question).

The analysis process involved cycles of both induction and deduction (Pettigrew, 1997, p 343), reflecting a continuous interplay between 'academic pre-conceptualisation (based on a comprehensive literature review of the area under study) and detailed empirical descriptions of emerging themes and topics' (Dawson, 1997, p. 390). New themes were refined and interpretations developed in the findings and analysis section. The intention was to gain an appreciation of dynamic organisational life; to consider issues of organisational adoption, change, innovation, and redesign of HR processes in the context of Yopatriate knowledge works in the Indian BPO industry.

4. Findings and analysis

In this section we analyse the key differences between the expatriate adjustment processes of traditional expatriates and Yopatriates at Alpha. We further analyse how HRM practices at Alpha evolved over a period of time to manage expatriate adjustment issues of its increasing number of Yopatriates in its population and investigated the major influences for changes. We do this through the processual analysis, by presenting excerpts in the form of evidence from the interviewees and then summarise our findings and analysis. We further portray temporal evidence of the changes in the HRM themes during the three periods of study.

4.1 HR Policy and Strategy

The extensive growth rate experienced by Alpha witnessed a higher number of Yopatriates being recruited and this placed some strain on its HR capacity. A disproportionate HR effort

was expended for Yopatriates, (see quotes by respondents). Evidence from our data further highlighted HR practices for Yopatriates within Alpha evolved over the research period.

Table 1: Changes in HRM Policy and Strategy

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Since we are an old organisation, we have **old set ways of doing things**…..and the same is for our expats… Thus the management at Alpha felt that by and large employees tended to go straight by the book...for example, though Dr. DeBono's techniques were introduced and expat employees trained on these techniques to encourage innovation, there was still a need to scale up on perceived rewards for experimentation, both individually and for our global diversified teams. Thus there is a need to move on from the traditional way of managing our expats as the needs and value systems of our newer generation of expats are different. **(Chief HR manager, Bangalore, Phase 1, August 2007)**	We need to understand that the human resources function plays a significant role in this globally competitive marketplace and thus, the need for it to evolve is greater...more so for Alpha as it is growing at such speed and we are in the process of keeping up with growth – **HR Manager, Mumbai, Phase 2 (September 2008)**	...as it seems...determining what matters most to our expatriate associates and then aligning it to our organisational goals is a strategic challenge for HR here at Alpha. As HR professionals at Alpha, [...eh...you have been following our journey...]...we must not only create a mix of practices that retain and motivate a very diverse workforce, but they also must continually fine- tune that mix. The more global we get the more this will matter...the world is watching and looking up to us... – **HR Manager, Focus Group, Mumbai, Phase 3 (April 2010)**

Phase 1: In the first phase of its evolution, Alpha had an old and established way of working relying upon practices suited to traditional long term expatriates. The focus often was on servicing the clients' immediate needs.

Phase 2: In the second phase of its evolution, with an increasing level of turbulence in the external market environment, coinciding with the global financial crisis, there was a need to proactively manage the increasing intake of young expatriate talent. The HRM function was quick to realise this issue in a period of high uncertainty. With the financial crisis looming large, the organisation needed to recruit and retain key talent as businesses had started offshoring at an increased pace.

Phase 3: There was pressure to expand some services in India and also close certain client accounts that were severely affected by the crisis. This duality created an opportunity to have an approach of "fine-tuning" to the mix.

As is evident above, a cross-vergent employment strategy emerged at Alpha as a result of evolving recruitment and training strategies. Table 1 highlights Alpha's proactivity in the design and implementation of HR policies and strategy for non-traditional expats such as Yopatriates. Further, their overall strategic focus took into consideration the needs, value systems and trends of this large generational group. Changes in specific HRM practices over the study period are discussed in greater detail in the following sections.

4.2 Recruitment and selection

Phase 1: At the beginning of the research period Alpha's recruitment and selection policy pursued global 'best practices' that were suited to the traditional expatriates. However over time they became more strategic in their approach, as they realised the value systems of the increasing number of Yopats were different from the traditional expats. During the period of the research 100,000 people across the globe were recruited to Alpha.

Phase 2: Table 2 below shows how incremental growth in employment numbers at Alpha in the period 1996 to 2003 was followed by much higher absolute and relative increases during the research period. Employment growth was largely uninterrupted at Alpha despite the global recession (Phase 2: second quarter of 2008 to third quarter of 2009), although the recession punctuated other HR processes. Of these the vast majority (up to 70%) were Gen Y age group employees that also included Yopats.

Table 2: Headcount growth at Alpha

Year	Total headcount (rounded to nearest thousand)	Percentage increase (% rounded off)
1996	6,000	-
1999	12,100	102%
2000	14,300	18%
2001	16,800	17%
2002	19,000	13%
2003	22,000	16%
2004	30,000	36%
2005	46,000	53%
2006	**66,000**	**43%**
2007	**89,000**	**35%**
2008	**111,000**	**25%**
2009	**144,000**	**30%**
2010	**166,000**	**15%**
2011	**210,000**	**26%**
2012	**250,000**	**19%**
Source: Alpha. ▪ - Denotes longitudinal research period		

Phase 3: A key recruitment challenge for Alpha during the research period was the management of its global recruits (expatriates) as other IT/BPO organisations were competing for the same pool of talent and faculty development programmes were utilised across the globe. The process was initiated before the research period, but evolved and expanded during the six year research period. It involved accrediting institutions, from which students were recruited through a programme called the 'academic interface programme' (AIP) (see quotes in Table 3 below). As opportunities for learning and development and career progression are key values that this generational group appreicated, such an approach is not surprising. The AIP process framework and infrastructure which included an expert panel from Alpha interacted, collaborated and worked together with global academic institutes to design its academic curriculum based on industry requirements and the latest knowledge within the ICT domain was continuously being extended to include newer academic partners. For any Institute to be accredited, Alpha needed to comply with a set of parameters which included standard of entrance tests, library facilities, faculty and availability of computers. Thus Alpha was proactive in terms of learning and attracting quality employees by partnering with global academic institutes to ensure that the potential Gen Y employees value such skills required for pursuing a global career, a change that was evident at the organisation. The following figure 1 depicts the various career streams

and paths designed over the research period to suit Gen Y employees (including Yopats) at Alpha. The major change was the introduction of management development progress and job rotation for expatriates who could now choose and rotate their career paths between delivery, practice and R&D streams (see three way arrows in figure 1).

Figure 2: Alpha career streams and paths
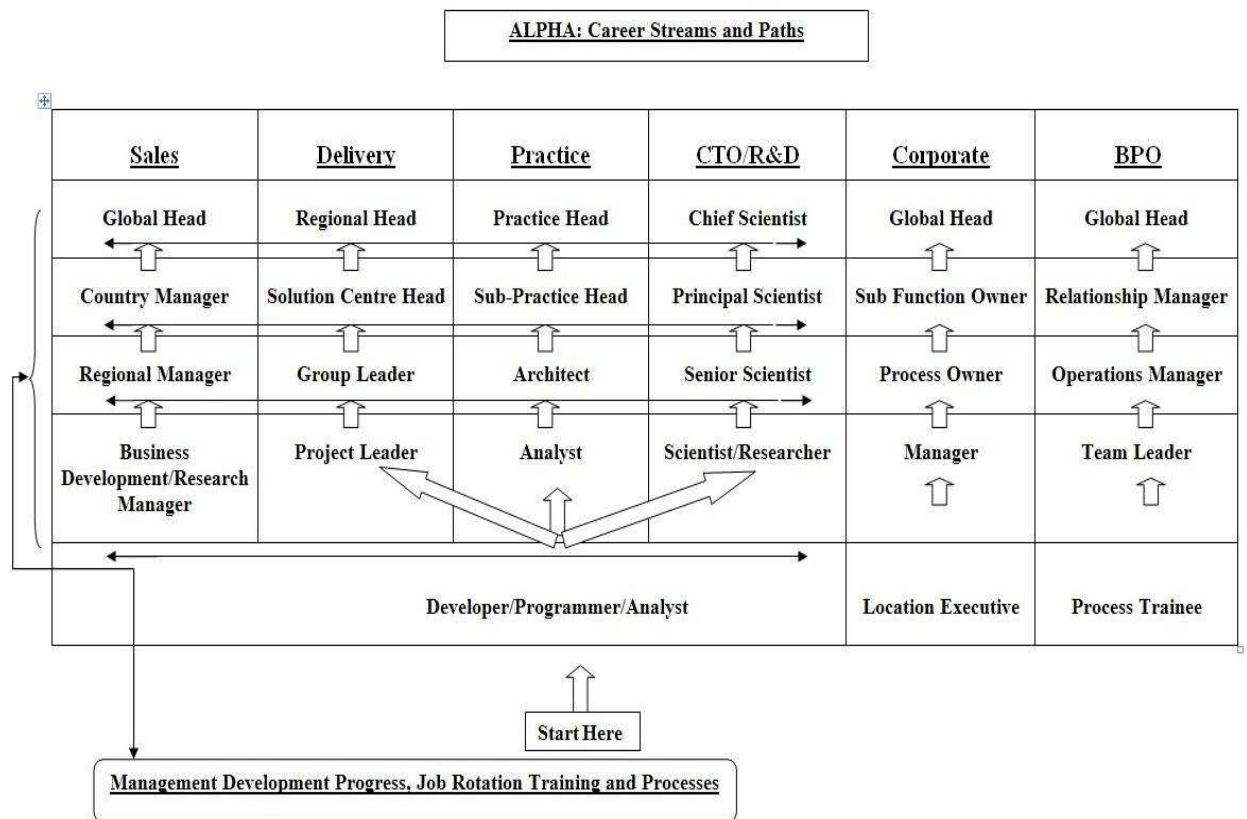
Note: Rotation at appropriate levels into other career streams is possible based on performance and organisational needs

Insert Table 3: Changing in recruitment and selection

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
....AIP [academic interface programme] also offers an excellent platform in shaping and tailoring the students towards developing the global mindset that is fast becoming a need for the industry. This helps Alpha in spotting, engaging and attracting global talent. We really think this is a great platform and programme for us. We have also realised that the future younger generations have different value sets and hence we need to move towards catering to them. – **HR Manager, Mumbai, Phase 1 (December 2007)**	...branding and image building strategies were not yet an area of focus...though we had a global brand presence... and, in a way... this affected the sense of pride of employees. For example, among educational institutions, where we dealt with faculty and students...this meant greater difficulty in terms of attracting quality new and younger talent, which further aggravated stress among the few key performers in the organisation...who also spread the word...whether good or bad... (**Chief HR Manager, Interview, Mumbai, Phase 2, September 2008)**	…We are now a truly global organisation. We have people from several countries working for us. Most of our intake are the Gen Y's. As a futuristic business we no longer prescribe that these younger associates across our global operations think and behave like their managers the Gen X or their senior bosses the baby boomers. In fact we have suggested training our recruitment and selection managers in the needs and motivations of Gen Y's…. **HR Manager, Mumbai, Phase 3 (April 2010)**

In summary, there was evidence of an evolving recruitment and selection strategy to align to Gen Y's expectations such as partnering with Academic institutions to design curriculum to aid recruitment facilitating industry requirements. The career streams at Alpha catered to Gen Y's expectations to reflect the future of knowledge-intensive industries such as the IT/BPO industry largely depended on the demand and supply of quality Yopatriate recruits.

4.3 Training, learning and development

Concurring with previous studies on the BPO sector (Malik 2009; Malik and Nilakant 2011; Pereira and Anderson 2012), training, learning and development (TL and D) at Alpha was also available to all categories of employees globally. As a market leader, Alpha's TL and D 'spend' was uniform at circa 10 percent of its revenues annually, across the duration of the research.

Phase 1: Training for the Yopatriates at Alpha was more 'need-based' and often had a focus on short-term courses, whereas learning and development was longer term and career linked, as is evident from figure 1 which was designed to cater to Gen Y employees. Of this 10 percent, approximately 6 percent was technical training and a significant proportion of this was on soft skills development. For example, Alpha's focus was to develop the communication skills of their global workforce for everyday workplace experiences.

Phase 2: Training was highly interactive and was specifically and uniquely designed for its different service offerings and different geographical locations. It included decision-making, collaborative working techniques, and change management training. This training was spread across all phases of the expat process. Alpha also invested about 4 percent of its annual revenues on 'Learning and Development'. The emphasis here was placed on providing necessary learning interventions to its global associates with leadership potential in the company. Dedicated training centres across the globe at Alpha were equipped with the latest developmental tools and programmes built over the six year research period. In addition training became more specialised during the last six years due to its evolving needs.

Phase 3: During the third phase necessary learning interventions were introduced with potential of developing future leaders within the organisation. More specifically, the learning, training and development function of the organisation had matured and were able to offer highly customised training and development opportunities for distinctive employee groups.

Table 4: Changing focus of LT and D

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
Knowledge sharing was very head office and centre-oriented, and although, informally, several best practices were spread by interaction and word-of-mouth, we were yet to evolve a formal system which would capture these for ease of duplication across assignments. For example, multiple centres, teams and multiple assignments within the same centre and teams ended up resolving the same sort of issues, and so this resulted in replication and in avoidable rework...teams needed to be aware of what each did...especially because we now recruited younger employees whose training needs were different from our traditional older employees (**Chief HR Manager, Interview, Mumbai, Phase 1, November 2006**)	Over time, there was a diffusion of expertise and we were yet to focus on building strategic expertise in individual learning centres for new younger expats and expert assignment teams...it was frustrating...associates were rotated across domains, teams and skills in the interest of a learning and knowledge sharing and gaining ability as well as for meeting requirements....so really we were multitasking...and in a sense, there was heightened focus on streamlining our training learning and development for our expat employees...and teams. (**Chief HR Manager, Interview, Mumbai, Phase 2, September 2008**)	The challenge facing Alpha is to redefine training and development to the majority of our workforce profile... currently with a large section still struggling to keep pace with change...of...a new age HR is what we are striving for. We are getting there as we have now tailored our LT and D processes to suit the needs of the Gen Y employees– **HR Manager, Interview, Bangalore, Phase 3 (April 2010)**

In summary, training needs analysis for non-traditional expats such as Yopatriates were tailored accordingly at Alpha to include a mix of technical and soft skills as well as consultancy, which was absent earlier. Over time there was a realisation at Alpha that a one size fits all argument will not be successful, especially in the case of the knowledge intensive industry, where the majority of the workforce is Gen Y.

4.4 Yopatriate Support

Phase 1: At the first stage of data collection Alpha's wider organisational approach was apparent as focusing on one-off individual expat assignments however this approach of gradually evolved into one that focused on reflecting upon collectivist cultural characteristics. Initially when this research started, support within Alpha was an offshoot of the broader Alpha group.

Phase 2: As growth occurred, a uniform system that encompasses the traditional values, beliefs, and attitudes was introduced to its global operations, as discussed below. During the period of this research a voluntary association of partners of Alpha's employees, called 'XYZ' association (pseudonym) was established. Such an approach to managing Gen Y expectations is understandable as extant studies on Gen Y values have pointed their affiliative nature, work for personal enjoyment, and needs for caring others in a work group. As the workforce at Alpha became more globalised with an increase in Gen Y's, Alpha involved and acknowledged 'XYZ's' efforts in offering tailored activities at all stages of the expat process, such as social meetings, theatre, adventure sports, trekking and so on for Alpha's Yopatriates in different global locations.

Phase 3: Over the five year research period 'XYZ' has evolved and developed its approach to: socialisation within the community of associates; easing relocation; and serving the wider community aiding adjustment of the expatriate (Black et al, 1991). This strategic move has been recognised by its Yopatriate associates as it allowed them to stay connected with their families while also acknowledging their efforts. To this end, Alpha has been rated highly for this initiative (through internal Alpha associate surveys for the years 2009 and 2010).

Table 5: Changing emphasis of Yopatriate Support

Phase 1	Phase 2	Phase 3
The support and reward structures and processes at Alpha was, at this point in time, primarily focusing on individual expats and we were yet to explore the institutionalisation of global multi-cultural teams at the organisational level. We felt this was needed to be done... as we were increasing our count of expats globally…**(Chief HR Manager, Interview, Mumbai, Phase 1, November 2006)**	It is with any large organisation...the pressure to retain its strong globally growing expat population was leading Alpha to tend towards short-term benefits… from a HRM point of view, it was a challenge to cater to Gen Y's as their focus was on obtaining short-term assignments...there was lesser focus on 'what can I get long term'...Thus our approach, by and large, was of reactive reward management and benefits... **(Chief HR Manager, Interview, Bangalore, Phase 2, June 2009)**	We needed to know if we were doing the right thing...with this aggressive expansion and dispersion of ever-growing associate strength...all over ...globally...areas such as relationship, communication, benefits etc.. or the lack of it, will lead to drawbacks in expat motivation and managerial decision-making….**(Chief HR Manager, Interview, Mumbai, Phase 3, April 2010)**

In summary, Alpha took into account the changing expectations of Gen Y in terms of the support offered to expatriates with clear intention to change to reward structure and

support to align with the increasing short term nature of expatriations the use of informal networks has facilitated adjustment.

5. Discussion

In this section we aim to answer the research questions and then proceed with additional discussion on the various temporal influences that help us answer the study's overarching question to develop our understanding of managing Gen Y expatriates.

In terms of the first research question, we found strong support for distinctive differences between the expectations and approaches to manage traditional expatriates and Yopatriates (Glass 2007; Gursoy et al. 2008; Lancaster and Stillman 2002; Shaw and Fairhurst 2008; Srinivasan, 2012). This became evident only through the course of our analysis of changes Alpha undertook in managing the increasing participation of Yopatriates in Alpha's overall workforce. Evidence from the study suggests that generational differences were beginning to be noted and acknowledged by the management at Alpha in the second and the third phases of the study. Whilst in the first stage, the organisation adopted an undifferentiated approach to managing expatriates as per established global best practices for traditional expatriates, in latter stages two and three; this was proving challenging as Alpha began to have an increasing reliance on hiring Gen Ys. For example, in the later stages of the first phase, the population of Gen Ys at Alpha increased and they were also the most accessible and qualified pool of employees for the organisation to meet its sustained needs for growth.

Our findings further suggest that Alpha changed its policy of short-term assignments to accommodate Yopatriates' values of ease of high geographical mobility facilitating boundary less careers (Brookfield 2013b; Arthur 2014) and developing a portfolio of short-term learning events (Brookfield 2013b; Shaw and Fairhurst 2008). This is evident from figure 2 which depicts the changes made from their traditional career paths to more career choices between delivery, practice and R&D streams. Additional strategies were put in place to develop an external support network 'XYZ' to meet the Gen Y's need of external approval through their own peer and social networks.

The kind of support Yopatriates sought from the organisation in relation to adjustment was different than the traditional expatriates for short term nature of assignments versus long term work roles (Erickson 2009; Ghosh and Chaudhari 2009; Srinivasan 2012).

Alpha provided relatively limited types of 'generic country briefings' to Yopatriates. Thus Yopatriates relied on a number of resources for familiarising themselves with the new expatriation location including resources such as the internet, social media, and personal networks (Shaw and Fairhurst, 2008). Similarly, in relation to the role, like Gen Y's, Yopatriates exercised considerable input and say (Srinivasan, 2012) in the actual shaping of the terms and conditions of the expatriation assignment including the ability to tailor their training needs which may in part explain the lack of cultural adjustment issues being noted by the Yopatriates. This is reflected in the duration of the assignment, the nature of support and benefits they seek as part of the short-term assignment to develop their careers. Cultural expectations also varied as given the age and stage of their careers and the desire to travel and learn about new cultures (fearless of aspirations, see, for example Ghosh and Chaudhari (2009) helped Yopatriates adjustment in different cultural settings. Yopatriates were receptive to new cultural experiences concurring with previous research of early graduates (Tharenou 2002).

In terms of the second research question, a range of 'indigenous' and 'foreign' HRM influences on HR strategy and practice over the duration of the research were evident. First, adaption of a business strategy of consciously internationalising operations, expatriate assignments and staff recruitment beyond India was initiated, alongside greater use of sophisticated best practices. Second, a residual domestic orientation exploited in the idea of 'brand India' and 'employer branding' strategies. Third, the continuing focus on the 'domestic' influences partly issuing from the broader Alpha group level, become gradually layered over by Western HR practices. These also reverberated in a feedback loop to affect, in turn, the HR policies of the overall Alpha group. Training and development expenditures for its global staff can be understood as part of a conscious shift by Alpha towards the adoption of so-called high performance work systems. However, in other respects we see the residual influence of support and Alpha's wider organisational ethos in relation to providing sources of uniform support for all its expatriate employees. The development of Alpha's overall form of employee support and social network proved crucial to extending HR support beyond purely 'corporate' issues within such a multinational BPO firm. Company reputation also became increasingly important for recruitment and retention.

Evidence from our study further suggested three main influences that affected the evolution of HR practices for expats. First, the rapid growth of the company,

underpinned a gradual systemisation of HR, through such factors as the use of technology, TL&D, and support, as part of the wider adoption of global best practices such as high performance practices and a business partnering HR model. Additionally there was evidence of the use of various strategies to more closely match recruitment, selection and training with required global skill sets that matched Yopatriates. Additionally, expansion as a factor was closely linked in turn to the increasing globalisation and diversification of the workforce, contributing to a cross-vergent hybrid of domestic cultural values overlaid with more international HR practice; an increased emphasis on diversity and expatriation management, and through training and support interventions.

The second factor affecting HR was the increasing global footprint of Alpha and an increasing complexity of its contracts, assignments, and clients, and as a consequence, the need for highly qualified, flexible employees who are open to frequent international assignments. This is seen through such examples as the company's use of 'image branding' and the exploitation of internationalisation in order to enhance staff retention through training opportunities and the autonomy to choose where to work.

The third factor was the external economic context. In the period of recession, this factor assumed a more dominant influence over HR changes than did growth. Evidence suggested that there were some distinct changes in HR priorities for Yopatriates as a result of the recession that affected the Indian industry between the second quarter of 2008 and the third quarter of 2009. During this downturn, the new HR challenges for its Yopatriates proved to be maintaining the motivation and morale, employee engagement and a concern to enhance skills development in readiness for the economic upturn. The end of the global recession saw a renewed influx of major international IT/BPO contracts that, in turn, required large-scale recruitment drives (Malik 2013). In the recession, on-going HR concerns about the quality of its Yopatriate recruits (both local and expat) to meet this renewed expansion, and addressed by a deliberate strategy to recruit a greater proportion of experienced subject specialists and to cast the recruitment net increasingly transnationally (i.e. expatriates) in order to broaden the firm's geographical base beyond India. An increased focus on performance and a 'harder' approach to HRM was, to some extent, characteristic of this period, with an increased focus on staff performance and the coupling of performance and reward management.

Based on the above discussion, when it comes to the adjustment theorisation (refer to figure 1) evidence from this study suggests that the Yopats underwent a combination of both the second and fourth arguments we make in our model. Thus, there was evidence of second argument which was that the four phases i.e. honeymoon, culture shock, adjustment and mastery were all experienced within the 18 month period, which means they were crammed into shorter periods, as compared to the periods shown in the original model. There was also evidence of our fourth argument wherein the Yopatriates over time experienced all four phases of adjustment by experiencing several rounds of honeymoons (phase 1) and culture shock (phase 2) periods, before moving to the deeper experiences of adjustment (phase 3) and mastery (phase 4).

6. Conclusions

We acknowledge the limitations inherent in a single case study design and note that the findings cannot be generalised to the wider population. Nevertheless, we believe that our choice of this particular case to portray the term Yopatriate is appropriate for theoretical replication. Furthermore, a longitudinal qualitative analysis best suited to a study where a new phenomenon such as the non-traditional expat could be defined. In future, large scale quantitative studies could test the application of our findings to new and different contexts, where large proportions of employees are Gen Ys. Similarly, the managerial implications identified in the preceding section are practical and relevant for managers in modern businesses, such as global knowledge intensive industries.

In conclusion, our study makes the following key contributions. Our aim was to extend understanding of managing Gen Y. Through an examination of traditional expatriate adjustment versus non-traditional expatriates we propose that Gen Y provide additional management issues due to the flexible nature of shorter expatriate assignments. Whilst Gen Y are proactive in seeking support from the organisation regarding their overall compensation package they differ from traditional expatriates in terms of adjustment support. Organisations that provide flexibility of international experiences and good links to easy to access information are more likely to align to the expectations of Gen Y expatriates. Instant communication utilising technology can aid adjustment to work and socially and appears to be apposite to Yopatriates. Indeed, further development on the part of organisations will be required to align future strategies with the expectations of the next generation Z.

First, our study identifies a new category of non-traditional expatriate i.e. Yopatriates, and adds to the existing body of literature of expatriates on attraction, motivation and retention of Gen Y's and non-traditional expatriates. Second, for this new and distinctive theoretical category of non-traditional expatriates we highlight how and why this group of employees require a different set of HRM practices answering the call to broaden the geographical reach of international HRM (Sparrow et al 2007). This paper further contributes to this debate on cross-vergence in the context of HRM of international expatriates in the Indian BPO industry (Mariappanadar 2005; Paik et al 2011). Third, by studying an unusual exemplar case, we contribute methodologically to the voluminous literature of expatriate management, by presenting a longitudinal account of the evolution and maturing of HRM practices for managing Yopatriates. Fourth, our paper contributes by offering deep insights into how this firm not only 'kept pace' with the changing demographics of its expatriate population but also made conscious attempts to 'institutionalise' its HRM practices for a significant percentage of its 250,000 plus employee base, from more than 100 nationalities working in 42 countries.

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