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A RESEARCH FRAMEWORK FOR CROSS-CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT AND JOB PERFORMANCE OF HIGHLY SKILLED IMMIGRANTS

Abstract:

Given the importance of knowledge as a source of economic growth, Canada, like other industrialized countries, increasingly depends on a pool of highly skilled immigrants (HSIs), to remain competitive. However, the poor adaptation of some HSIs to their new cultural environment remains one major factor to their underperformance (Li, 2010). It is crucial for organizations to efficiently manage the cultural issues and to better help HSIs for their cross-cultural adjustment. This paper aims to propose a research framework with two predictors of cross-cultural adjustment from a theoretical perspective: transformational leadership (TL), and learning goal orientation (LGO). In fact, cross-cultural adjustment is a learning process during which an individual learns the norms and appropriate behaviors so as to function in a different culture. Several studies show that the LGO would constitute an important factor to explain how and why certain individuals adapt more than others in the context of cultural transition (Gong & Chang, 2007; Palthe, 2004). Furthermore, since adaptation is first and foremost a process through which incertitude (or stress) is reduced, the TL in diminishing this stress is a crucial factor (Gill and al., 2010; Gundersen and al., 2012). However, the studies that examine their relationships with cultural adaptation are still rather rare. In the light of existing researches in different fields of social sciences, we propose the following research framework for cross-cultural adjustment and job performance of HSIs in Canada:

Hypothesis 1. HSIs who have high levels of cross-cultural adjustment will have high levels of job performance.

Hypothesis 2a. LGO is positively correlated to the psychological adjustment of HSIs.

Hypothesis 2b. LGO is positively correlated to the socio-cultural adjustment of HSIs.

Hypothesis 2c. LGO is positively correlated to the work adjustment of HSIs.

Hypothesis 3. LGO is positively correlated to the job performance of HSIs.

Hypothesis 4a. TL is positively correlated to the psychological adjustment of HSIs.

Hypothesis 4b. TL is positively correlated to the socio-cultural adjustment of HSIs.

Hypothesis 4c. TL is positively correlated to the work adjustment of HSIs.

Hypothesis 5. TL is positively correlated to the job performance of HSIs.

Hypothesis 6. HSIs, under the influence of transformational leaders would have higher levels of LGO.

Hypothesis 7. Cross-cultural adjustment moderates the relationship between TL and job performance of HSIs.

Hypothesis 8. Cross-cultural adjustment moderates the relationship between LGO and job performance of HSIs.

Keywords:

highly skilled immigrants, cross-cultural adjustment, job performance, transformational leadership, learning goal orientation

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