ABSTRACT

Expatriation from India and the socio-economic challenges faced by Indian expatriates in host countries is an area less researched, and one which solicits policy attention too. The present research study focuses on the Indian expatriates in the United Arab Emirates (UAE). It studies the framework within which an Indian expatriate works in the UAE. This study thus determines the causes of labour migration from India to the UAE and investigates the process of expatriation of Indian expatriates to the UAE. It also investigates the socio-economic challenges faced by the Indian expatriates in the UAE. In fact, the challenges faced by the expatriates have been seen in this research both from the practical aspects as well from the policy aspects. In case of practice, it is related to the multicultural contexts and international human resource management practices, while as a matter of policy, it relates to national labour laws and conventions like that of International Labour Organisation (ILO). Both these aspects have been analysed in the present research.

The objectives of this study have been the following: to study the causes of labour migration from India to the UAE and assess it within relevant theoretical frameworks; to analyse the process of expatriation of Indian workers from India to the UAE; to examine ILO’s conventions and in this light assess the challenges faced by Indian expatriates in the UAE; to analyse expatriate management practices in the UAE and decipher cross-cultural training needs for Indian expatriates; and, to suggest policy measures for adopting best cross-cultural practices for expatriate management in the UAE.

In order to meet the objectives of the study, both qualitative and quantitative research methods have been used. Considering the objectives of this research, a multi-pronged approach has been adopted to carry out the research which encompasses primary survey, case studies and interviews with stakeholders. This has been done through secondary data research as well as through primary (field study) data. The primary data has been collected in 3 phases which includes: Phase-I: Questionnaire-based field study in Delhi; Phase-II: Questionnaire-based field study in the United Arab Emirates (UAE); and, Phase-III: Conducted interviews of
the following professionals: Officials of Ministry of Overseas Indian Affairs (MOIA) Government of India, Employers in UAE, Official of International Labour Organisation (ILO) Delhi, and, Returned Migrants from UAE to India. For survey, the pre-test of the instrument used for data collection has been carried out. The data collection procedure and the reliability test of instrument have been discussed.

The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software version 20.0 has been used for statistical analysis. The key findings of this research have been presented in Chapter 6 of this thesis. A sample of data comprising from each skills segment has been used in this study, which constitutes of expatriates from three major segments of labour viz. skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled. The respondents are from three Emirates of the UAE – Dubai, Sharjah and Abu Dhabi – which have been chosen owing to their respective relevance of being an economic centre, a city with high population density and Abu Dhabi being the capital city. Some of the statistical techniques used in this study include test of homogeneity of variances by Levene statistic, correlation analysis, ANOVA test, and multiple comparisons by Post-Hoc test.

Moreover, the present research study thus contributes to the body of literature on various aspects including examining the socio-economic challenges, ILO conventions, causes of migration from India to the UAE within the context of theoretical frameworks, and the cross-cultural contexts. It will be beneficial in many ways for the society, community development, prospective migrants and their families, expatriates already working in UAE and for the policy makers.