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Special issue on expatriates and psychological contracts
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CALL FOR PAPERS

Special issue on expatriates and psychological contracts

Paper submission deadline: 29th May 2015

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Rationale for special issue
It has been 25 years since the publication of Rousseau (1989) seminal article outlining the concept of the psychological contract (PC) which marked the beginning of a period of sustained academic interest in the concept and its application as a means to better understand the employee–employer relationship. Although a large body of theoretical and empirical literature dealing with the PC in domestic business environments has been published in the intervening time, much less attention has been paid to the development and application of PC theory specifically in relation to expatriate management (Pate & Scullion, 2009).

The year 2014 marks the 20th year since the first article (Guzzo, Noonan, & Elron, 1994) was published which dealt specifically with the development and application of PC theory for the management of expatriate employees. However, research interest in the expatriate PC since that time has, at best, been sporadic, and the extant literature does not form a coherent thematic body of research upon which international human resource management (IHRM) researchers and management practitioners can draw to improve their understanding of how the expatriate experience (pre-, during and post-) can be fully maximized for the benefit of both the individual and the organization.

An increasing body of literature within the field of IHRM has noted the changing nature of expatriation, with suggestions that there may be greater reluctance for individuals to accept international assignments for a mix of reasons, including dual career couples, concerns about security and career implications. Notable changes include a shift to shorter assignments and commuter assignments (see Collings, Scullion, & Morley, 2007), a growing number of self-initiated expatriates whose career capital may be differentiated from organizationally assigned expatriates (Jokinen, Brewster, & Suutari, 2008) and a changing expatriate profile with more women being represented (see Brookfield Global Relocation Services, 2013). It has also been argued that there is need to consider more fully the expatriation of people from developing countries and expatriates working in the not-for-profit sector (Hutchings & Michailova, 2014). The constantly challenging and changing contemporary environment within which expatriation occurs necessitates that researchers and management practitioners address the plethora of issues...
PC researchers Pate and Scullion (2009) recently called for a reassessment of the expatriate PC. They highlight the following issues as being worthy of further research: (1) business/industry context, assignment location, nature of the assignment and individual differences (e.g. personality) as influential factors in the development and evaluation of the expatriate PC; (2) the assumption of a predominantly relational PC type for expatriates, and lack of studies on the employer’s perspective; and (3) limited understanding of management techniques for effectively aligning organizational and individual PC expectations, particularly in regard to career development and post-assignment advancement. Haslberger and Brewster (2009) also call for more research using PC theory to link adjustment, success and careers, as well as using the sense-making literature and narrative theory to explore the process of psychological contracting for expatriates. Another issue of interest is the role of congruence/incongruence between individual ethical frameworks and organizational ethical climates as an influence on the PC (O’Donohue & Nelson, 2009), which has yet to receive attention as an issue in the management of expatriates and assignment success.

This Special Issue of the *International Journal of Human Resource Management* will enhance our knowledge by focussing attention on contemporary empirical and theoretical contributions in PC and IHRM scholarship which aim to address key expatriate management issues.

In this Special Issue, we invite original qualitative and quantitative research and theory development papers. Some topics which might be addressed in papers include, but are not limited to:

- a review of the expatriate PC literature and future research agenda;
- PCs for expatriates (parent country nationals), host country nationals and third country nationals in the same organization;
- possible multiple PCs for expatriates (e.g. with HQ and the subsidiary firm);
- PCs for expatriates from developing countries;
- PCs for expatriates working in the not-for-profit sector;
- the nature of the PC for self-initiated expatriates;
- differences in the PC for male and female expatriates;
- the role of ethics and other values in the PC for expatriates;
- PC and assignment success;
- PCs for expatriates working in dangerous locations (e.g. war zones, areas of civil unrest, natural disasters).

Given the acknowledged shortage of process and longitudinal studies in PC research, the Special Issue Editors would also welcome contributions adopting such approaches.

Authors intending to submit papers are requested to advise the Special Issue Editors of their proposed topic within 2 months of the publication of this notice. The Special Issue Editors are available to discuss proposed papers/focus by email.

**Submission guidelines**

All submitted papers will be initially assessed for suitability by the Special Issue Editors and those deemed suitable will be subject to a full double-blind review process by two independent reviewers which may include members of the *International Journal of Human Resource Management* Editorial Board. Papers may be required to be revised more than once throughout the review process.
Final acceptance of articles will be contingent on the Special Issue Editors and International Journal of Human Resource Management Special Issue Editor’s assessment of papers taking into consideration reviewer comments. The papers will be assessed against several criteria:

1. Relevance and contribution: Does the paper extend our existing understanding of PCs in relation to expatriation?
2. Theoretical contribution: Does the paper offer new and novel ideas and insights or meaningfully extend existing theory?
3. Empirical contribution (where applicable): Does the paper offer new and unique findings? Are the study design, data analysis and results rigorous and appropriate for testing the stated hypotheses or research questions?
4. Practical contribution: Does the paper contribute to improved expatriate management from the perspective of organisations and employees? Does the paper provide guidance for future research directions?

All contributors should prepare their manuscripts for double-blind review by removing any information that potentially identifies authors, and submit them on-line through the International Journal of Human Resource Management website according to the submission instructions available at: http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/rijh. Submitted papers must not be under consideration at any other journal or publishing outlet.

Key dates:
Paper submission deadline: 29 May 2015, 12.00 (midday, noon) GMT (UK).
Expected notification of acceptance: March 2016.
Expected publication of Special Issue: Late 2016.

References