

Female Expatriate Managers: Barriers Experienced And Suggested Strategies

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INTRODUCTION

With the globalization of the world economy, the world is shrinking at a fast pace. The companies are not restricted to one country, but have crossed the boundaries and have a presence in other countries as well. This has led to increase in the multicultural workforce. The one phenomenon which is quite evident due to globalization is the increase in the number of expatriate managers. But if we compare the number of male and female expatriate managers, we will find a striking variation. The increase in number of female expatriates in comparison to their male counterparts is not on the same line. Women face discrimination in the company's selection policy as companies feel that sending a woman as an expatriate will not be a good business policy. They not only face discrimination in the company's selection policy, but also in their foreign assignments. Women face discrimination that prevents them from getting the international assignments and experience, which is important for the promotion to the top management level. The responsibility to eliminate the discriminations that women face is both with the female managers and the companies. While women in the recent past were able to reduce this discrimination in many developed countries, studies reveal that companies are still relying more on the male candidates for global assignments.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The number of working women in India rose from 129 million in 2002 to over 135 million by the end of 2007 and is forecasted to reach over 140 million in five year's time. (Serena Jian, 2008). It is estimated that only 13% of the Indian women (18 to 59 years) work. Close to nine out of 10 of these women work in the unorganized sector in a difficult job environment. And it's in the rural, poorer, more conservative India where more women work as against the urban India, implying that job is a necessity and not a choice for most. In fact, a large percentage of women workers (over 35%) work in farms. Most of them earn incomes at the bottom of the value chain — 45% of the women workers earn less than Rs 50,000 a year. And if all that was not enough, only 26% of these women can take independent financial decisions about their incomes (Malini Goyal, 2008). While women are making some progress in managerial work, it remains restricted largely to lower and middle ranks (Goodman, Fields, & Blum, 2003; Morrison, White, & Van Velsor, 1987). Of particular interest here, women are excluded from international assignments to an extent that relegates them sometimes to token status (Adler, 1984a; Caligiuri & Cascio, 1998; Caligiuri, Joshi, & Lazarova, 1999). The reason for their under-representation often stems from prejudice against women by the decision makers back home (Adler, 1984b; Linehan, Scullion, & Walsh, 2001) exerted through informal selection methods (Harris, 2002; Harris & Brewster, 1999). A number of studies have established that foreign women in many locations around the world have just as many chances to be successful as men (Caligiuri et al., 1999; Caligiuri & Tung, 1999; Linehan & Scullion, 2001; 1996b; 2001; Taylor & Napier, 1996a; Westwood & Leung, 1994). Women tend to be better adapted than men overall, and significantly so in such important areas as the building and maintaining of relationships with members of the host culture including customers, business partners and local employees. (Arnos Helsberger, 2007). The gender of the expatriates is not related with any dimension of international adjustment. (Jam Selmer, 2003)

There is a growing literature investigating the differences in patterns of adjustment to their new environment between female and male expatriates and the different variables influencing their adjustment outcomes (Caligiuri et al., 1999; Harvey, 1997; Selmer et al., 2003). Studies of female and male expatriates are one of the newest additions to the stock of research on sex- and gender-related differences.

The "breaking of the expatriate glass ceiling" lies in the hands of the two principal participants in this dilemma – female managers and the MNCs. Both parties need to realize that they have a responsibility -not only to be

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aware of the biases and limitations that exist regarding expatriate assignments, but they must also develop strategies to overcome these biases and limitations. Overcoming the dilemma requires frank discussion of the issues and proactivity from both sides. Research indicates that while many MNCs have either overt or unintended gender bias inherent in their cultures and international employment practices (Haines and Saba, 1999; Selmer and Leung, 2003a), female managers are not without blame either. Research also indicates that the lack of women's participation in expatriate assignments can be partially explained by female managers' greater passivity at the workplace (Fischlmayr, 2002). Specifically, many female managers do not, to the same degree as their male counterparts, actively engage in the self-promotion and development of social networks needed to be considered for expatriate assignments (Linehan and Scullion, 2001; Tharenou, 1999). Consequently, despite the ethical argument that females should not have to change their behavior to receive expatriate assignments, without such a change, they may still be passed over for these assignments.

ISSUES EXPERINCED BY FEMALES

❖ DIFFERENT TREATMENT

Male and female expatriates tend to be treated differently in the home country as well as during their international assignment. The managers at the home country believe that women are, by and large, not interested in taking up foreign assignments. Some may also have a doubt over their competencies. Yet, researchers have found that neither assumption is well founded. Women are interested in global assignments - over 90% of the women in the catalyst study said they'd accept one. To overcome this assumption of disinterest, women said they had to work harder to get those assignments by taking the initiative in asking to be considered; men, in contrast, tended to be invited by their bosses to go.

❖ DIFFERENT FAMILY ROLES

Women's experiences in global companies are also significantly affected by their roles in their families, but again, not in the ways you might expect. While dual career concerns are assumed to be more common for female managers (and their husbands) than males ones (and their wives), in fact, great strides have been made in providing work and professional support for spouses and in finding creative solutions to these challenges. In today's world, there is no excuse for assuming that a woman manager would refuse an assignment because of her husband's career. Companies must let this be the couple's choice.

On the other hand, there are hidden ways in which a woman's role within her family can challenge an international assignment. Whether living at home or a new country, women tend to take greater responsibility for the care of their elderly parents and their children, regardless of whether they work outside the home or not. And they tend to be the "relationship tenders" - the ones who notice and worry about how people in the family are getting along, how each family member is feeling; who is excited about the new move and who is angry, and who just wants to pack up and go back home. Partner satisfaction and overall family concerns have consistently been documented as one of the key triggers of assignment failure; it's likely that this is especially true for women expatriates.

❖ DIFFERENT PERSONAL SKILLS

Psychologists describe women as tending to live "in relation," that is, to value their social networks and personal relationships, and to consider their relation to others as an important component of their identity. Women do not want to at look at themselves as a manager/ or employee of one company, but they also want to fit in their family roles of a wife, mother, daughter, sister as well. When women enter corporations, they bring this interpersonal style with them, building important bridges and networks as they go. Even on the job, they use this characteristic of their personality by building relationships at the workplace. Because of this tendency to look for connection, women benefit particularly from having a formal or informal mentor in the company - a senior employee whose job is to watch out for them, advise them about career moves, and help them take advantage of opportunities and avoid mistakes.

In the global business world, the kinds of hubs, or networks, that women build are often more functional than traditional hierarchies. Women who can help build and support these hubs are not only better adjusted themselves, but they also help build the networks in the office and become an invaluable asset to a company. They are better prepared as role models and, therefore, are mentors for those following in their footsteps.

❖ TOO HIGH A RISK

Recent studies suggest that corporates shows unwillingness in sending women for global assignments and Adler's research found that the potential risk was considered too high for companies to bear. Single women were thought to be subject to harassment and security issues; married women had the trailing male spouse to cope with and those with children presented even further obstacles to successful mobility. Research over the next decade reinforced Adler's early findings. Hilary Harris in the mid-1990s researched the impact of selection criteria and processes on women being selected for expatriate assignments. It seemed that networks and informal links, when used as part of the selection process, did discriminate against women.

BARRIERS EXPERINCED BY FEMALE EXPATRIATES PRIOR TO INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

Over the years, several researchers have attempted to explain the low numbers of female expatriates on expatriate assignments. Adler (1984) was one of the first to examine the issue—by exploring three myths:

1. Women do not want expatriate assignments.
2. Companies do not want to send women overseas.
3. Foreigners' prejudice against women makes them ineffective expatriates.

In this connection, Caligiuri and Cascio (1998) have also proposed that female expatriates were more likely to be negatively viewed by host country nationals as compared to their male counterparts. Harris, Brewster, and Sparrow (2003) have also argued that host nationals' attitudes towards female expatriates could be a reason for the low numbers. Clearly, if female expatriates are negatively stereotyped by HCNs, their ability to succeed on their assignment would be severely affected, as they would receive lower levels of support and cooperation from their hosts. However, in her research, Adler (1987) found that women did not experience prejudice when assigned to several countries in Asia. Westwood and Leung (1994) also examined the same issue with female expatriates in Hong Kong, and reported that females did not experience prejudice, as long as they were competent. Given these conflicting findings, others suggest that prejudice against women exists, but its presence and effects vary from country to country (Frontczak & Cateora, 1988).

According to Linehan & Walsh (1999), it is more difficult for women to be selected for international assignments since companies believe that it is a higher risk to send a woman for international assignments. The social role of women is connected with the responsibilities at home while that of males is related to work. Dual career issues are also one of the important reasons that restrict women in taking up foreign assignments since the men's job is considered more important than the women's job.

Table 1 : Barriers For Females Taking International Assignments

External Barriers	Self Established Barriers
• Glass Ceiling • Glass wall • Glass Borders	• Limited willingness to relocate • The dual career couple • Behaving according to gender based role models

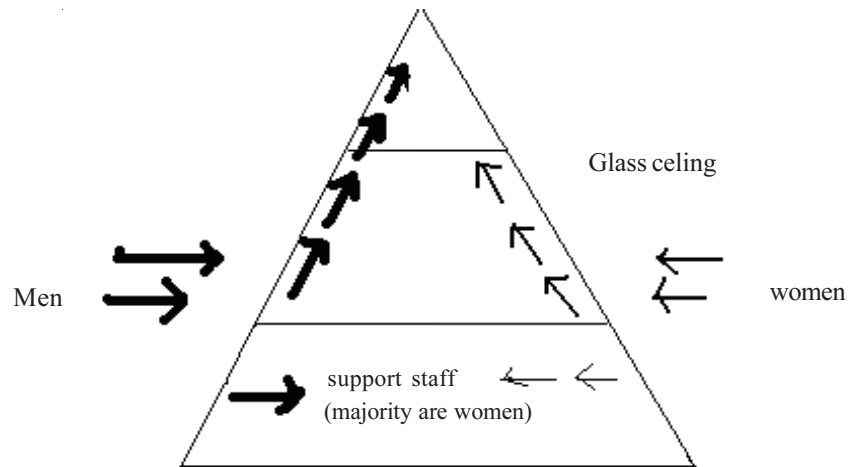
EXTERNAL BARRIERS

❖ GLASS CEILING

The term 'Glass Ceiling' was first used as a metaphor to describe what was occurring in corporate America and other parts of the world, and it referred to the unseen artificial barriers that bar women from top executive jobs. The author stated: "An invisible, yet quite impenetrable barrier serves to prevent all but a disproportionately few women from reaching the highest ranks of the corporate hierarchy, regardless of their achievement and merits" (Lampe, 2001, p. 346). These barriers were thought to be created by individual or organizational prejudices. According to Wirth (2001), the women's share of top management positions do not go beyond 20 percent, and the gender gap between the male and female is more clear the more senior the position is.

In some companies, the glass ceiling might be at top positions only while in some; it could be at the middle level and junior level also. The nature of the job also hinders the women to reach the top management positions. Women are more inclined towards jobs such as human resources and administration, which are 'non-strategic' in nature rather than in line or management jobs that often lead to senior management positions. Family responsibilities can also hinder women in reaching the senior management position. The phenomenon is described in the figure given below:

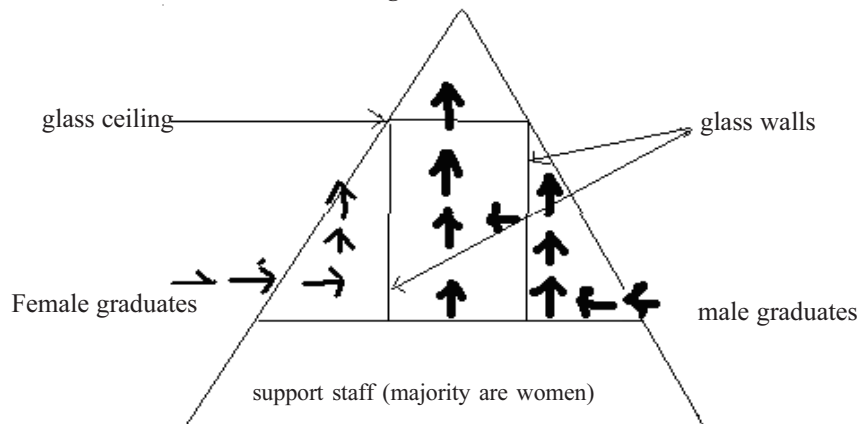
Fig. 1 : The Expatriate Glass Ceiling



❖ THE GLASS WALLS

Wirth (2001) explains that it is quite evident that females are restricted to few sectors in the corporate jobs only, which is referred to as 'Glass Walls'. He says MNC's in which women reach senior management positions are those areas which are less central or strategic in nature. Women often find difficulty to advance into strategic areas such as product development and finance, which are actually a pathway to reach the top management position. These barriers are referred to as 'Glass Walls' and are described in the figure given below:

Fig. 2 : The Glass Wall



❖ THE GLASS BORDER

According to Linehan et al (1999) and Vander Boon (2003), the Glass Border is the stereotypical assumption in the mind of managers at the home country regarding the women's appropriateness, availability and preferences for international assignments. The low percentage of female expatriates itself suggests that the 'glass border' issues are problems for women's selection for international assignments. Different kinds of barriers exist in the companies that contribute to the 'Glass Border', such as recruitment & selection barriers, stereotypical image of the women, informal processes in the companies which may restrict women to take up global assignments. Senior female expatriate managers claim that they have to be equally qualified and sometimes more qualified, more ambitious and more mobile than their male counterparts to be chosen for international assignment (ibid).

INTERNAL BARRIERS

❖ CAREER COUPLES

Linehan & Walsh (2001) and Linehan & Scullion (2004) conducted a survey of Vice Presidents and Managers from 60 MNC's, which demonstrated that over 50 percent hesitated to send women on international assignments;

the reason was that their commitment to their family limits their mobility. Dual career couples encounter different types of issues viz., based on host country visa law, the couple's marital status and the trailing spouse's career. Furthermore, it is more difficult when women have trailing husbands, because it is more unusual, and it is the norm in the society that as in comparison to a man, a woman's career has less priority.

❖ **LIMITED WILLINGNESS TO RELOCATE**

Sometimes women themselves do not want to take up international assignments because of their family responsibilities. They do not want to leave their family and it may not be possible for them to take their families with them when they are on their foreign assignments. The husband may have his job or the children might be going to school and they (women) do not want to disturb the things. Sometimes, they do not have enough independence to decide on their own about their career. These factors prevent them from taking up international assignments.

❖ **BEHAVING ACCORDING TO GENDER BASED ROLE MODELS**

Sometimes, women themselves have this thing in their mind that family is their priority and not the job. They behave according to gender based role models -that for men, the career is the priority and for women, the family is the first priority. Therefore, even when they get the opportunity to go for international assignments, they don't grab the opportunity.

ISSUES EXPERIENCED BY FEMALE EXPATRIATES DURING INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

Adler (1994) states that the issue of foreigner's prejudice against women can be one of the reasons that women have difficulties in succeeding in their foreign assignments. One fundamental prejudice impacting women is the historical discrimination against women that still exists. Janssens et al (2006) suggests that in some cultures, women do not have the same status as that of men. Though this myth is often applied by managers during the selection process, research has found that this myth is not correct. Adler (1994) conducted a survey in which over 100 women expatriates participated; 97 percent of them were successful in their international assignments, and it is significantly higher than their male colleagues. The females claimed that there are several advantages of being female and being highly visible is a great advantage. A female expatriate in Japan expressed – "it's the visibility as an expat, and even more as a woman. I stick in their minds. I know I've obtained more business than my two male colleagues... my clients are extra interested in me" (Adler, 1994). Female expatriates also discovered that their interpersonal skills were an advantage. The foreigners could have more comfortable discussion about a wider range of topics with the female expatriates than with their male counterparts. Additionally, many women also experienced that 'Halo effect'. The majority of the female foreign clients had never worked with a female before, and they were also aware of the uncommonness of women to be sent by companies for international assignments. Hence, they believed that the women who were sent for the international assignments are the best.

The "Gaijin Syndrome" – Enderwick, Chen and Dunning (1993) stated foreigners are seen as foreigners, and there is no difference between men and women. A foreign woman is not expected to act as a local. Hence, the rules limiting the local women to acquire managerial positions do not apply to foreign women. Therefore, not sending a woman to some locations because of their cultural differences or because women are generally not working there at the top managerial positions is not a wise move. Local managers perceive women just as a foreigner who occurs to be a woman, and not the woman who occurs to be a foreigner.

NATURE OF THE ASSIGNMENT

Sometimes, women are offered temporary assignments because the company doubts their capability to succeed. It may affect the image of women that they are not as committed as their male counterparts. Clients may also not take them seriously. This mindset creates problems for females in handling the clients abroad and also in successfully completing their assignments.

LIFESTYLE OPTIONS

Women also have to take care of other issues that are closely related to them that are more difficult for them to

handle when they are on international assignments. Some of these issues are:

- Whether or when to get married.
- Whether or when to have children.
- Planning for childcare and house work.
- Managing the requirements from different life roles.

As compared to men, working women bear more responsibilities at home. In case of international assignments, the woman also has to think about her husband's career, since the relationship with the spouse is one of the most difficult and sensitive factors to manage. During international assignments, their male partners often become the trailing spouse, which in turn could create some life quality issues and commuter marriage is common. Balancing work and family life for women is difficult. Women have to sacrifice more of their life for family issues than men and having a child automatically changes a women's life drastically, although this is not the case with men.

CULTURAL ISSUES

The demands on an expatriate's predisposed personality, however, may be greater for women. Women, for example, need to possess the stress management skills to cope with possibly being the only female in a work setting. The expatriate women are often working in host countries that have lower rates of women as managers. Thus, women not only need to understand cultural differences, but also the gender differences that might be present in cultures that see more traditional roles for women in society. Female expatriates may be placed in situations where these cultural differences have a more direct impact on their performance on the job, and the ability to be open to differences in values, norms and behaviors may be all the more important. These women will need to be flexible (and tolerant) in their attitudes toward cultural differences.

STRATEGIES FOR FEMALE EXPATRIATES

In order for female expatriates to successfully complete their foreign assignments, some strategies at three stages are suggested.

- ❖ Strategies for female expats before they go for the international assignment.
- ❖ Strategies for female expats during an international assignment.
- ❖ Strategies when female expats successfully complete an international assignment.

❖ STRATEGIES FOR FEMALE EXPATS BEFORE THEY GO FOR THE INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENT

Many women exclude themselves from international assignments because they take a more passive approach to their careers and often communicate in ways that demonstrate little self-confidence (Fischlmayr, 2002). Janssens et al. (2006) state "the idea is that women, beyond their own control, have been socialized into specific behaviors and orientations emphasizing family life and peers rather than their jobs and careers, towards rejecting power and towards attributing their work performance to external factors rather than to internal ones, underestimating their own capabilities". (PP-134-135)

❖ SELF AWARENESS

For females, it's important to recognize the values and norms that they identify most based on their upbringing and culture. This type of self-awareness may help in planning one's life as well as one's career. Janssens et al. (2006) note that "the existing literature on female expatriates largely portrays them (women) as powerlessly caught in a penalizing structural context"(P-133). They argue that successful female expatriates must act purposively and produce identities that contribute to their professional success. To produce a successful identity, women must be aware of their own beliefs, values, and emotions.

An understanding of one's beliefs, values, and emotions may also lead to the development of higher levels of social awareness and astuteness with regard to organizational culture and norms. In some organizations, female expatriates may be accepted and international experiences may be encouraged for women at both formal and informal levels. In some cases, while formally, women might be told they are on equal footing with men, they may actually have to be more proactive in pursuing for foreign assignments.

This understanding requires the astuteness born of higher levels of social awareness. High social awareness may also help women function in "a man's world" or in cultures where women may not be considered on equal footing with men. Increased self and social awareness may also lead to the development of the relationships and social networks often necessary for securing foreign assignments.

CROSS CULTURAL TRAINING OF FEMALE EXPATRIATES/ PREDEPARTURE TRAINING

Recent studies show lack of pre-departure training for female expatriates. Pre-departure training generally exposed the candidates to the situations that they are supposed to face in the host country and the training is related to cross-cultural adjustment of both men and women. For female expatriates, this Cross-cultural training could involve training of norms, traditions, values of women in the host country which can ease the adoption to the new culture as well as facilitate potential problem solving. Further, Multinationals could offer development experience to the female expatriates in the same extent as they are offered to males. They should also be given a chance to role play or simulate through interactive videos. In order to handle stressful situations, and to reduce anxiety, that may be a fact when being a newcomer in a position in a host country, the female expatriates should be exposed to realistic job previews. Realistic job previews give the expatriates the possibility to form a realistic impression of their future post. (Caligiuri & Cascio, 1998)

SELECTION CRITERIA

MNCs need to begin with a thorough review of their selection criteria for overseas assignments. Management should eliminate, through policy and training, any overt or subtle gender biases in the selection process. A starting point is to train selection decision makers to avoid the bias that female managers do not desire expatriate assignments and/or that dual-career issues would impede a female manager from succeeding in a foreign assignment (Buzzanell, 1995). Adler (1984, 1994) indicated that female managers desire expatriate assignments and that dual-career decisions and success are not that dissimilar from their male counterparts.

A potential area for gender bias exists in the treatment of “dual-career” couples. Many top-level managers may preclude female managers from expatriate assignments because of undue concern regarding the unwillingness of a trailing spouse to make the move. Although many male expatriates may have trailing spouses who focus solely on the home during the expatriate assignment, MNCs should not make the assumption that the female managers’ spouses or significant others will jeopardize the assignment. In essence, the selection process should not be that different than those for domestic positions. Similarly, MNCs’ attitudes toward the success of women expatriates may need to change. Numerous studies have shown that women’s success level in expatriate assignments is no different than that of their male counterparts (Adler, 1987; Caligiuri and Tung, 1999; Taylor and Napier, 1996). Moreover, many researchers have argued that the inherent “female attributes” may actually be better suited for international assignments than traditional “male attributes” (Caligiuri and Cascio, 1998; Napier and Taylor, 2002).

STRATEGIES FOR FEMALE EXPATS DURING INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

Research indicates that international assignments often lead to increased levels of stress for women. This additional stress often comes from the fact that even though they are working in an international setting, women often retain responsibility for childcare, parent care, and the management of personal relationships (Linehan and Scullion, 2004).

❖ MENTORING

One way to counter or reduce stress would be to find a mentor. The role of a mentor cannot be overemphasized, particularly when it comes to expatriate adjustment and success. Women executives have consistently reported that help from higher-level mentors was a key to their success (Burt, 1992, 1998; Morrison et al., 1987). The need for a pro-active, formal mentoring program may be even more important for female managers seeking expatriate and eventually upper-management assignments due to the significant lack of available same-gender mentors. Ibarra (1997) stated that upper-level women mentors are particularly needed because lower-level female executives desire advice, help, and support from women who have faced similar obstacles and challenges. If a strong mentoring program is not offered by the organization, women need to be proactive in finding a mentor. Recent literature on knowledge flow has focused on the benefits for expatriates who can acknowledge and take advantage of reverse learning (Napier, 2006). In other words, rather than assuming that the knowledge transfer goes from MNC expatriate representative to the host country, often in a developing economy, expats that recognize opportunities for learning can be more effective. Thus, any expatriate, but perhaps especially women, who develop the willingness and skill to absorb knowledge from the local settings, will likely be more successful in carrying out their jobs on site.

❖ **ON-SITE SUPPORT**

The MNCs should provide female expatriates the in-country support network during the foreign assignments, since the difficulties the female expatriates face during their international assignments are far more than what their male counterparts face. Continued training while on assignment is critical for the continued success of expatriates, and for their eventual return to the organization. MNCs need to be clear regarding the purpose and career implications of the assignment. Broken psychological contracts are detrimental to expatriate performance and are particularly damaging to the successful repatriation process (Yan et al., 2002).

❖ **CAREFUL SELECTION OF COUNTRY ASSIGNMENT FOR FEMALES**

To increase the likelihood of success, MNCs must carefully select country assignments for female expatriates'. Using Hofstede's four dimensions, Caliguiri and Tung (1999) reported that self-reported adjustment was lower for female expatriates in countries with greater uncertainty avoidance and masculinity. Therefore, MNCs should send female expatriates to the country where they can adjust and adapt easily and can have room to work more independently. Recognizing that work adjustment issues create additional stress on work and family relationships, therefore, the countries to which female expatriates have to be send should be assigned carefully.

On the other hand, some women may time their overseas assignments to match their family life stages, when possible (Napier and Taylor, 2002). Single unmarried women or older women whose children are grown up may be more likely candidates for foreign assignments, because they have fewer family responsibilities to discharge.

STRATEGIES WHEN FEMALE EXPATS SUCCESSFULLY COMPLETE INTERNATIONAL ASSIGNMENTS

❖ **UTILIZING THE EXPATRIATES' EXPERIENCE ABROAD**

Expatriates generally report that their experiences abroad are rarely used to the fullest extent when they return to their home countries (Black et al., 1999; Taylor and Napier, 1996). The MNCs should utilize their international experience in their own corporate policies. Such a realization may also force women to think and act more responsibly, taking even greater interest in managing their careers.

❖ **SUCCESSFUL REPATRIATION**

To break the barrier, corporates need to make sure that returning female expatriates are repatriated successfully. Recognizing that international experience is becoming an increasingly important characteristic of senior-level managers, MNCs should pay particular attention to the continued mentoring and training available for returning female expatriates. The pre-departure psychological contract must be fulfilled when an expatriate returns. A significant number of returning expatriates leave their firms due to unfulfilled expectations upon their return (GMAC Global Relocation Services, 2006). With the high premium on qualified managers with successful international experience, corporates need to review their repatriation policies and the opportunities for expatriates to use their new expertise when they return to their home country.

CONCLUSION

Several studies have shown that females are experiencing discrimination in home as well as host country. But, the most discrimination that they face is the home country's attitude towards female efficiency to take up an international assignment. Unfortunately, female managers already face a "glass ceiling" that seems to prevent their promotion to upper-level corporate positions. Yet, these women may actually face a second pane of glass—the lack of expatriate assignments and international experience – that is keeping them from reaching the top positions of the corporate hierarchy. Breaking the "expatriate glass ceiling" is the responsibility of both the female managers and the MNCs that need expatriates. The corporates must not assume that women (or their husbands) are not interested in international assignments. They should select the very best person regardless of gender. The women managers who desire expatriate assignments must be more proactive in managing their careers, but at the same time, the MNC's must also accept this fact that gender actually does not play a role in success or failure of the assignment. MNCs must review their current policies and procedures regarding expatriate selection to weed out any gender biases. If necessary, these corporate policies and procedures must be revised to eliminate biases, and gender diversity training for corporate decision makers should be provided. Corporates

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their non-core areas, which in turn translate into increased productivity. It becomes essential for the companies to outsource their HR functions due to the intense competition and internal limitations of the companies. In the upcoming future, there has been a huge increase in the number of companies that outsource their HR functions. However, there are certain aspects which companies should know before selecting an outsourcing service provider such as the market image of the vendor, clear vision of what outsourcing achieves, scope of the HR functions (which is to be outsourced). HR outsourcing is not a panacea. It can just add impetus in their growth journey. The companies must focus on their core competency.

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should offer in-country support networks, mentor programs, and company policies supporting women on overseas assignments. Corporates must also support the entire family, including the spouse/partner as well as the children and teens, during the entire assignment.

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