

Self-Initiated Expatriates and the Role of IHRM

Overview

SIEs IHRM

“So far the literature has focused primarily on the individual perspective of SIEs, on the one hand, or Human Resource Management (IHRM) for international assignments within an organization, on the other hand. Little regard is paid to the opportunities IHRM can play in supporting self-initiated expatriates in their careers, e.g. in terms of adjustment to the new organisation and culture, family support, employment conditions or international career management.

This chapter addresses how organizations can contribute to successful employment of self-initiated expatriates via their organizational career management and general IHRM practices. In view of the context dependency of SIE careers, implications for the management of SIEs are considered.”

Drawing on the work of Selmer and Cerdin (2014) and Vaiman, Haslberger and Vance (2015) we define self-initiated expatriates (SIEs) as individuals who relocate internationally, have the intention to have regular employment, plan to stay in the country temporarily and are skilled/have professional qualifications. SIEs initiate their expatriation and secure a position in another country of their own volition. In other words, the SIE takes responsibility for their employment and career progression rather than relying on organisational support to progress their career. The profile of SIEs aligns to modern career theory whereby individuals are increasingly responsible for the own career and are less reliant on organisational support (Suutari, Brewster, Mäkelä, Dickmann, & Tornikoski, 2018). This has manifested itself in a rise in global mobility, often self-initiated as the section illustrates.

Global Talent Flows

Global migration, including highly skilled migrants is rising and is likely to continue to do so (OECD, 2017). Skilled migrants are defined as ‘highly educated and experienced individuals who have developed skills in diverse occupations such as management, engineering or medicine, among other professions’ (Crowley-Henry & Al Ariss, 2018, p. 2057). These individuals continue to be attracted to high-income destinations with better levels of wellbeing, primarily the USA, but also Canada, Australia and the UK, which collectively host 2/3rds of skilled migrants. They are drawn to these destinations because they are English speaking countries with high wages and, in the case of the USA, lower taxes. There has been a doubling of the tertiary-educated, mobile labour force globally and fierce competition globally to attract this talent (Kerr, Kerr, Özden, & Parsons, 2016). As Khilji, Tarique and Schuler (2015, p. 2) note, ‘the war for talent has intensified and gone global’, with not just organisations competing for scarce talent, but countries too.

This is due, at least in part, to an agglomeration effect i.e. a ‘worker’s productivity is enhanced by being near to or working with many other skilled workers in similar sectors or occupations’ (Kerr et al., 2016, p. 92). At a macro-level, governments act as gatekeepers to talent. For example, many countries have removed restrictions to attract global talent. For instance, the Start-Up Chile scheme pays foreign entrepreneurs to spend 6 months in the country to build a diaspora and develop global skill connections. Malaysia has a Residence Pass Talent Programme to attract foreign talent to the country. In The Netherlands, the new Expatcenter Entry Procedure has been established to attract high skilled migrants (Kerr, Özden, & Parsons, 2017). Other intermediaries enable the movement of skilled migrant labour, such as recruitment agencies and, also government department-led initiatives facilitate these talent flows for example, The Federal Skilled Worker Program in Canada (Harvey, Groutsis, & Van den Broek, 2018). At a meso-level, organisations are also seeking to attract

and support talent, through various strategies and policies, for example, in the USA firms can temporarily employ skilled, foreign workers in ‘speciality occupations’ and these employers can petition the US government for permanent residency on behalf of these workers (Kerr et al., 2016). The rise in global talent flows has resulted in a need for International Human Resource Management (IHRM) strategies to respond to the demands of such a contextually embedded mobile workforce, as explored in the next section.

International Human Resources Management – people strategies

There are significant challenges for international HR managers to identify and manage the varying types of expatriates within an organisation (Collings, Scullion, & Morley, 2007). The majority of research within the literature has focused on expatriate management within MNCs (DeCieri, Fox and Fenwick (2007). However, the increasing numbers of unskilled and partly skilled expatriates (Cooke et al. 2019) creates the need for differing approaches to IHRM strategy. This, combined with the increase in SIEs, provides an opportunity for IHRM to develop strategies to support expatriates within the organisation. Thus managing a talented resource (Vaiman et al., 2015), regardless of country origin or destination or type of expatriation, remains a complex endeavour.

Within the literature, there remains an opportunity to develop understanding regarding the HR function within expatriation (Pereira, Malik, Howe-Walsh, & Hirekhan, 2016). What appears less understood is how HR policies and practices are delivered to support expatriates (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010). Indeed, the role of HR remains poorly considered for both assigned expatriates (AEs) and SIEs (see Anderson, et al. (2014) for definitions and differentiations for AEs and SIEs). There are multiple strategic options to deliver HR

services. Most commonly, provision of HR activities are undertaken by an international HR function, specifically tasked with supporting expatriates. There are various modes of delivery of international HR activities, some organisations will centralise their international division in one location, and alternatively, decentralised HR may involve regional hubs of expertise. Another option commonly used is outsourcing expatriate HR. Outsourcing elements of the expatriation such as country specific and tax briefings, payroll, housing support, education etc. enables external expertise to support the expatriate and decrease costs to the organisation (McNulty & Tharenou, 2004). However, the SIE is unlikely to benefit from such outsourced expertise as they manage these activities without the assistance of IHRM. .

Generally, the expatriation of an AE is for a finite time up to five years (KPMG, 2016) to conform to differing tax regulations as well as limit the often-expensive support provided to the expatriate. In contrast, for SIEs, the timing of an expatriation is distinctly different with no predetermined period to remain in the position. The implication is that the position is on local terms and conditions (Furusawa & Brewster, 2018) and the SIE is treated, as any new joiner would be. Enabling an SIE to perform their role as quickly as any new joiner is clearly beneficial for the individual and organisation. Undoubtedly, the role of HR has received greater attention relating to the management of talented employees (see Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010) as we examine in the next section.

Global Talent Management

Talent management in a global context involves much more complexity in terms of interdependencies and the challenges of achieving the right balance between local adaptations versus global integration of HR practices (Vaiman et al., 2015). Global Talent Management

can be defined as involving: (1) ‘The systematic identification of pivotal positions that differentially contribute to the organisation’s sustainable competitive advantage on a global scale. (2) The development of a talent pool of high-potential and high-performing incumbents who reflect the global scope of the MNE to fill these roles and 3) the development of differentiated HR architecture to fill them with the best available incumbents to ensure their continued commitment to the MNE’ (Collings & Isichei, 2017, p. 3). The issue of commitment is particularly pertinent with regard to SIEs, a neglected source of global talent (Haslberger & Vaiman, 2013).

Self-Initiated Expatriates as Global Talent

Over their working lives, expatriates pursuing dynamic global careers may move along the continuum between assigned and self-initiated expatriation, thus it is important to develop flexible strategies to support these differing career orientations (McNulty & Vance, 2017). Motives for becoming SIEs include improved career prospects, personal development opportunities, financial benefits and the experience of internationalisation (Suutari, Brewster, & Dickmann, 2018). For those in ‘peripheral countries’, such as the United Arab Emirates, the pull factor for some is to increase their human capital by obtaining posts that they would not get in their home countries (Baruch & Forstenlecher, 2017). Although there are perceived differences in the value of international work experience depending on destination country, company size, type of expatriation etc. (Andresen, 2018), nevertheless such experience is generally valued, regardless of whether it is accrued through an assigned or self-initiated assignment (Suutari, Brewster, Mäkelä, Dickmann, & Tornikoski, 2018); firms are not averse to seeking to persuade SIEs to move along this continuum. This is reflected in the rise in

firms in developing countries seeking to appoint SIEs into senior positions. This is due to the belief that such individuals will better understand domestic market conditions, be better able to adjust and also in an enhanced position to act as boundary spanners (Kumar & Chhokar, 2018).

In the main, however, SIEs tend to be attracted to a location (and its attributes), rather than a specific organisation (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010) and generally receive little organisational support in terms of pre-departure training or associated benefits and tend to fund the expatriation themselves (Baruch, Altman, & Tung, 2016; Vaiman et al., 2015). Alternatively, they may be pushed from their own country due to unfavourable political or economic situations (Lindsay, Sharma, & Rashad, 2019). They are 'generally highly educated professionals who can add significantly to an organisation's talent pool' and have 'global competence and sophistication', which enables them to successfully facilitate cross-cultural exchanges. SIEs are represented at all age and career levels suggesting a heterogeneous group (Ceric & Crawford, 2016). They are likely to be resented less than assigned expatriates, who are perceived to have 'elite status', therefore they provide talent without the associated conflict with local hires (Chen & Shaffer, 2017).

However, due to a lack of tenure with the firm, SIEs tend not to identify closely with the organisation and its values and goals (Vaiman et al., 2015). This presents challenges to HR professionals who need to emphasise links between the organisational and individual needs in order to promote loyalty and commitment. Few organisations actively engage in IHRM strategies and practices to attract and retain SIEs (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010). It is especially important for HR professionals to understand how to support such skilled migrants as the social capital these individuals have accrued offer leverage to obtain a competitive

advantage in the global market (Crowley-Henry, O'Connor, & Al Ariss, 2018). Career and adjustment support is particularly important as it can enable SIEs to develop a relational, rather than transactional psychological contract with the organisation, thus enabling them to embed within the organisation (Chen & Shaffer, 2017). Such support increases both career satisfaction and SIEs' intentions to remain with the organisation, particularly if the SIE has few host country nationals in their network (Cao, Hirschi, & Deller, 2014).

To provide the tailored support needed by SIEs, Vance, Vaiman, Cosic, Abedi and Sena (2014) call for 'smart talent management', which they describe as a hybrid of knowledge and talent management. They assert this should include: setting clear organisational expectations, establishing mentoring systems, offering family and spousal support, providing taxation and banking assistance and support for issues relating to personal life including work-life balance and wellbeing. In addition, SIEs need to be offered opportunities for development, learning, autonomous and challenging work and for promotional opportunities (Vaiman et al., 2015).

Non-local SIEs need more adjustment support than AEs as they are moving to a new organisation and a new country. Evidence suggests (Hussain & Deery, 2018) that higher levels of on-the-job embeddedness, positively impacts on SIEs' retention. Strategies such as team working, careful matching of SIE skills to the role and offering career development initiatives are therefore key to developing strong co-worker relationships and interpersonal ties at work (Hussain & Deery, 2018). Other support, such as language and cross-cultural training, information on social support services and resources, job specific training is also important and 'unique reward packages that support SIE retention' (Vaiman et al., 2015, p. 284). The importance of non-financial rewards too has been emphasised, such as membership of business associations and clubs to help SIEs to develop networks and career advice for

accompanying spouses (Kim & Von Glinow, 2017). It has been suggested that facilitating networking in local communities and even supporting the move of family members to the country can help develop community ties and engender a sense of belonging for SIEs (Clark & Altman, 2016). In short, it is important to understand how SIEs socially relate within the context in which they are living, as the stakes they invest go beyond the work environment (Guttormsen, 2018). Such difficulties face all SIEs in their global careers, however, there are particular challenges for non-traditional, self-initiated talent, as the next section reveals.

Non-Traditional Self-Initiated Talent

Non-traditional expatriates are those who are different from the conventional senior, western males in their late 40s or 50s with a trailing spouse and/or children. According to McNulty (2015) they include; step families or blended families (one or both parents have children from a previous relationship that are not biologically related to one parent); single parent families; split families (i.e. one parent in home location and the other is an expatriate or commuter); overseas adoption families (an expatriate who adopts a child from the country in which they are resident or from another country); multi-generational families (i.e. dependent relatives accompanying the expatriate); individuals who are lesbian, gay, bi-sexual or transsexual; families with special needs children; female breadwinner; single males or females and those who are semi-retired. Due to changes in societal attitudes and the rising demand for talent, global talent pools are increasingly being filled with non-traditional (McNulty & Hutchings, 2016) and this is particularly true for female SIEs, as discussed in the next section.

Female SIEs

Gender identity and sexual orientation continue to have a great influence on migration. The migration of highly skilled women grew by 80% between 2000-2011, compared with the

60% growth rate of males migrating in the same period. Women now number almost half of all migrants (IOM, 2018). As multinational organisations continue to struggle to attract global talent, female SIEs are a source of untapped potential (Böhmer & Schinnenburg, 2016). The case for recruiting and retaining female talent is a compelling one. Not only is there an ethical imperative to promote equality in the selection, reward and development of expatriates (Tharenou, 2010), but women also represent a highly valuable source of talent (Tatli, Vassilopoulou, & Özbilgin, 2012). Female SIEs are reported to have better interaction and work adjustment levels than men (Salamin & Davoine, 2015) and evidence suggests that they equal male SIEs in many respects, such as premature return, commitment and job satisfaction (Bastida, 2018).

Though not dissimilar to the barriers facing corporate assigned female expatriates, SIEs need support that extends beyond organisational boundaries to facilitate their adjustment within a new country, as well as a new organisation. This is particularly the case in some locations where prevailing cultural values and attitudes to women create additional barriers for female SIEs (Fitzgerald & Howe-Walsh, 2009; Salamin & Davoine, 2015). At a macro-level, governments can intervene to introduce support for working mothers, such as that offered via the Danish welfare state (Bjerregaard, 2014). Other initiatives to support female SIEs include the establishments of international women's organisations, such as the International Women's Club of Budapest (Vaiman et al., 2015).

However, organisational support is 'particularly crucial' for female expatriates, particularly social support that which is designed to facilitate interaction with other women (Salamin & Davoine, 2016). Other important sources of support should include career management guidance and compensation to facilitate the transition into the new country and organisation

(McNulty & De Cieri, 2016). Support should encompass pre-departure training and providing adequate role information (Varma & Russell, 2016), as well as assistance during the assignment, such as mentoring and help with personal and family issues (Shen & Jiang, 2015). Support, in the form of role models, is starting to be derived from a growing group of non-traditional SIEs, namely older women. According to Myers, Inkson and Pringle (2017, p 158) self-initiated expatriation is a liberating experience from 'pressing mid-life issues' for women over 50 years old. The authors' point to the rise in numbers of these non-traditional SIE women from New Zealand and report that the findings from their study reveal that these women's focus is more on 'how best to live their lives' (p. 169) rather than developing their careers. Another highly mobile, non-traditional SIE population are lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people. They too face barriers to being globally mobile, as explained in the next section.

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (LGBT) SIEs

The LGBT community are a very mobile group, and possess social capital, making them valuable to organisations, however they are a 'stigmatized' and 'unprotected group who are marginalized globally' (McPhail & Fisher, 2015, p. 296). They represent a growing sector of the global talent pool, but they face barriers in a number of different countries e.g. being gay is illegal and punishable by death in some countries; there is a lack of legal status for them in others and in some countries the social climate acts as a deterrent (Hutchings, McNulty, & McPhail, 2016). LGBs are 'rightfully sceptical, and at times fearful, of international assignment experiences' because of the 'hostile reception' they get based on their sexual orientation (Moeller & Maley, 2018, p. 325). These 'unique safety and security concerns'

may lead them to hide their sexual orientation to protect themselves against bias and discrimination, causing them psychological stress (Paisley & Tayar, 2016, p. 766).

LGBTs may use duplicity as an adaptive strategy, hiding this aspect of their identity, however this may increase their levels of anxiety and stress (McPhail & Fisher, 2015). This perceived need to conceal aspects of their identities is required more in some contexts than in others and therefore influences their adjustment and expatriation success (Paisley & Tayar, 2016). Kim and Von Glinow (2017) argue that there are three contextual determinants that influence disclosure; personal (past experiences and attitudes to sexual orientation); organisational (workforce diversity and inclusive organisational culture) and country-level. The latter is influenced by factors such as a lack of legal protection for the LGBT community. On the other hand, such SIE talent can be attracted to countries that support LGBT populations, such as the change in Taiwan's law in 2017 making same sex marriage legal.

In addition to country-level initiatives to engender more gender-inclusive cultures, employers can facilitate acculturation through the introduction of practices and policies to account for the different needs of LGBT talent (Moeller & Maley, 2018). This can include schemes such as setting up local spouse associations to provide networking opportunities, helping to source jobs for partners, providing advice for them to set up new businesses and offering legal guidance and counsel (Hutchings et al., 2016). McPhail and Fisher (2015) suggest that social media can be used to facilitate connections between SIEs and the LGBT community and thus add a further layer of support. Such measures will enable organisations to attract and retain LGBT SIEs. The next section briefly examines a final, under-researched pool of SIE talent, namely, split families.

Split Families

Data relating to assigned expatriates shows that 55% of respondents state that spouse/partner career concerns are the key reason for self-selected single status on expatriate assignments (Brookfields Global Relocation Survey, 2016). It is not clear, however, what the figure is for SIEs. Research in this area is scant, however it is clear that split families represent an opportunity to attract a broader range of talent, however such families require organisational support, particularly in relation to childcare. It is suggested that the support this group of talent needs includes organisational help with partially-funded or organisationally-provided childcare (especially in the developing world where costs are high). Support for regular contact between the split families, such as a travel allowance or funded holidays to enable the families to meet up and flexible working arrangements to accommodate time zone differences and possibilities for extended leave (Hutchings & McNulty, 2018). However, encouraging such lifestyles does raise ethical questions about the role of the organisation in facilitating a good work-life balance and championing family friendly global mobility policies and practices.

Gender Inclusive Global Talent Management

As the discussion in this chapter has revealed, multinationals continue to struggle to attract global talent (Kirk, 2016). Non-traditional SIEs represent a source of untapped talent, however there is a need for gender-inclusive approaches to global talent management to take advantage of this (Böhmer & Schinnenburg, 2016). Only 10% of organisations state that there is an alignment between the global mobility function in their organisation and the wider

talent agenda (Brookfields Global Relocation Survey, 2016). This raises questions as to how ready firms are to take advantage of this talent. In order to attract a broader range of talent, and to ensure that organisations are engaging in both ‘smart’ (Vance et al., 2014) and ethical talent management (Painter-Morland, Kirk, Deslandes, & Tansley, 2018), there is a need for a flexible approach to global talent management that caters for both changing business needs and the different support needs of traditional and non-traditional self-initiated expatriates. Here IHRM has a central role, as explored in the next section.

SIEs and IHRM

Previous literature on traditional expatriates has often viewed AE support throughout a life cycle of the assignment. In attempting to draw upon key career transitions points, the subtle differences in terms of IHRM support to SIEs, within the organisation provides a deeper understanding of the stages an SIE experiences in terms of support from IHRM. IHRM policies and practices are influential from selection of a candidate (Collings et al., 2007) as well as ongoing expatriate performance (Aycan, 1997) to repatriation.

Pre-departure

Selection

There is considerable discussion within the academic and practitioner literature to highlight the challenges of selection (Caligiuri, Tarique, & Jacobs, 2009). This includes the informal nature of selecting a candidate to undertake an expatriation, often focusing on technical skills rather than cultural competence (Black & Gregersen, 2007; Harris & Brewster, 1999; PwC, 2016). In contrast, SIEs apply for non-expatriate positions, which may exclude them from the

additional support offered to AEs. This could lead to difficulties for them adjusting to the culture and their new role (Howe-Walsh & Schyns, 2010). IHRM practices could provide additional support to aid smooth transition within the workplace and specifically address cultural differences. The selection process for an AE is supported by knowledge of the candidate from their initial employment as well as information regarding previous cultural work and personal experiences. Without this prior knowledge SIEs' cultural experiences may not be taken into account. Thus, SIEs that have been in the host location prior to selection may still require additional support from IHRM to aid work adjustment including activities such as visa changes etc. associated with the new position.

Training and development

Before the start of an assignment, AEs have a position organised for them before they move to the host location. Within this context, AEs gain support for their move through specific IHRM activities. For example, training to support the expatriate in terms of language (Selmer & Luring, 2015); leadership development (Kossek et al 2017); cross cultural awareness (Bird & Mendenhall, 2016). This may require several months of training and development before the actual expatriation. The SIE may be located in the country and sufficiently competent and not require additional language support. However, without assessing the SIEs' competence, language training could be overlooked by the recruitment process.

Support activities

Guided by the organisations HR policy, a series of pre-departure activities are often provided to AEs to enhance their ability to expatriate. Pre-departure briefings offered by the organisation provide an opportunity for IHRM to explain the expatriate policy and support available from the organisation. Central to the discussion is changes to compensation such as,

allowances to account for currency exchange and fluctuations, hardship allowances and tax liabilities etc. Additionally, support in terms of securing housing in the host location, shipping of personal goods etc. form part of the supportive practices available to the expatriate often extending to potential family members accompanying them. Supporting the family aids adjustment of the expatriate (Van der Laken, 2019, p. 12). IHRM activities to support the family such as employment support in the host location for the partner/spouse or help with establishing networks are valuable to the whole family's adjustment. Further support for families expatriating extend to schooling and the challenges to maintain consistent education experiences (Wilkins, 2013). These pre-departure activities noted to support the adjustment of the expatriate and their family (Ali, Van der Zee, & Sanders, 2003) provide insights to the host country and preparation to facilitate the initial move.

In contrast, SIEs may not have to move location, as they might already be located in the host country either employed or seeking employment. IHRM approaches may not take into account their personal situation nor offer support to accompanying family members. Indeed, during the recruitment phase, beyond the right to work in the location, IHRM professionals may not consider any support to the SIE. However, opportunities exist at this early stage of employment to offer further consideration to the personal situation of the SIE and align HR support accordingly. Furthermore, this offers opportunities to access sources of untapped global talent and promote smart and ethical talent management.

During expatriation

During the next stage of expatriation in the host location, support from IHRM for AEs and SIEs may be relatively similar in terms of access to mentoring, development opportunities etc. However, while the AE is likely to benefit from additional support, such as ongoing

contact from the home organisation, the SIE continues to be treated as a new hire. As a new hire the SIE may face adjustment challenges to their new position (McDonnell & Scullion, 2013).

Work adjustment for both AEs and SIEs benefits from the support of the expatriate's immediate supervisors. Increased commitment, performance and retention can result from establishing strong relationships with supervisors (Van der Laken, van Engen, van Veldhoven, & Paauwe, 2019). Whether the supervisor has experience as an expatriate or is an expatriate himself or herself arguably strengthens the supervisory relationship. For example, Singh et al. (2019) indicate that a HCN's perspective can aid adjustment, supporting the expatriates to feel part of an 'in-group'. The differentiation between whether a supervisor is a HCN or expatriate himself or herself offers an interesting perspective to consider differences in support to understand local terms and customs. However, a certain amount of caution is needed as the country combination of nationals may equally create cultural challenges (Sing, Pereira, Mellahi, & Collings, 2019).

Mentoring

Mentoring is widely viewed as beneficial to the work adjustment of employees (Shen & Jiang, 2015). The line manager plays a pivotal role in supporting the expatriate (Howe-Walsh & Torcka, 2017). An AE often has contact with their home and host line manager providing additional support. IHRM provides guidance to line managers through training and education, internal information etc.

The delivery of IHRM activities might be through internal HR provider, delivered via a centralised HR hub or decentralised. Some or all of the HR activities could be outsourced.

Outsourced providers often maintain contact with the AE for some or all of the expatriation and this provides another support mechanism to the AE.

Appraisals

Continuity of employment provides a track record of the performance of the employee (PwC, 2016). When an expatriate moves from one country to the other as an AE, depending on the ability of HR to share data, it should be relatively straightforward to gain access to previous appraisals and details of strengths and weaknesses of the expatriate. Information regarding past performance of the SIE is unlikely to be gained from the interview and reference process to the same level as an existing employee. This highlights the need to ensure robust IHRM practices during the selection process of SIEs that considers previous work and cultural experiences. Therefore, the selection process of SIE's requires IHRM practices including assessment of cultural and work competencies.

Development

While AEs may have an ongoing series of development activities, planned pre-departure aligned to their career goals, SIEs are likely to wait until employment is underway. Potential gaps in language skills and competency deficiencies could be avoided by HR interventions that are similar to those for an AE.

Differentiation of work and non-work related adjustment highlights further challenges that the SIE may experience due to a lack of HR intervention. While the focus is on work adjustment, AEs often benefit from non-work related support (Van der Laken et al., 2019).

Repatriation


Interest in repatriation continues to grow (Chiang et al., 2018). Repatriation policy encompass IHRM activities to facilitate the AE to return to their home location. This may involve support to return to the same or new position. Supportive activities such as shipping, tax advice etc. are in essence a reversal of the expatriation policy, although are often documented in a separate repatriation policy. Although IHRM activities support the repatriation process, it is worth noting there are multiple stakeholders including line managers in home and host location who may provide additional support (Howe-Walsh & Torka, 2017). The repatriation process highlighted in various research and practitioner literature, suggests this process can be far from straightforward for some AEs and is a time when the repatriate is likely to feel dissatisfied and leave the organisation (Olds & Howe-Walsh, 2014).

It seems reasonable not to consider the SIE in terms of repatriation, after all, in general terms they are treated as a new hire. Tharenou and Caulfield (2010) highlight SIEs are more likely to repatriate when it is easy for them to do so. They note repatriation results from personal circumstances pulling them back to their home location such as family illness. In contrast to an AE, the SIE may not feel supported to return home for a length of time resulting in their resignation upon repatriation. HR support practices to account for personal circumstances may not align to the provision for an AE. Return trips home may form part of an initial relocation for the first year for the SIE, but are unlikely to extend beyond twelve months. This may then become a pull to attract the SIE back to their home country.

Managerial implications

As discussed, the contextual push/pull factors influencing global mobility for SIEs differ from those of AEs. This presents both opportunities and challenges for IHRM. Push factors such as the political and economic environment within the SIE's home country offer an opportunity for IHRM professionals to target talented resources within emerging economies. Employers can utilise pull factors, such opportunities for career development and increased pay, to attract and retain such SIEs. Non-traditional SIEs, similarly, represent an untapped pool of potential talent. IHRM professionals can take strategic advantage by developing flexible HR policies and practices that account for the differing needs of SIEs identified in this chapter. This will necessitate some standardisation of approach, for instance relating to base pay, however may also require some customisation, for example, support to acquire a visa etc. In short, a cafeteria-style approach to IHRM policy is called for that allows flexibility to meet the needs of each SIE's career plan (Biemann & Andersen, 2010).

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