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The Influence of Host Country Pull Factors on Re-expatriation Intention among Academic Repatriates

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Abstract

Unlike expatriation and repatriation, little is known about re-expatriation phenomenon especially the reasons why repatriates develop a re-expatriation intention after their return from abroad. Drawing on Push-Pull Theory, Theory of Family System and Expectancy Violation Theory, this study aims to examine the direct and indirect effects of host country pull factors (family outcomes and quality of life) on re-expatriation intention among Jordanian academic repatriates with the presence of psychological well-being as a mediating factor. In this quantitative research design, 153 Jordanian academic repatriates who had worked in foreign universities were surveyed using a snowball sampling technique. Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the proposed hypotheses of this study. The complementary mediation found in this study suggests that the relationship between host country pull factors and re-expatriation intention among Jordanian academic repatriates are both direct and indirect mediated though psychological well-being. The findings give rise to a number of implications, both theoretical and practical, in cross-cultural management research.

Keywords: *Host country, pull factors, re-expatriation intention, academic repatriates, family outcomes, quality of life, psychological well-being.*

Introduction

The liberalization and internationalization of higher education sector in many parts of the world has created job opportunities for academic expatriates, making way for rampant international relocation (Lee and Kuzhabekova, 2017; Romanowski and Nasser, 2014; Isakovic and Whitman, 2013; Selmer and Lauring, 2009; Silvanto and Ryan, 2014). The opportunities for academic expatriates to seek jobs abroad is greater since they are not committed to remain in a single university unlike the organizational form of expatriates who are required to return to home country once the overseas assignment is completed (Trembath, 2016). Accordingly, a handful of research has been conducted to understand the motivational factors behind the decision to relocate among the academic expatriates (Selmer and Lauring, 2010; Cerdin and Pargneux, 2010; Richardson and Mallon, 2005; Richardson, 2006). However, unlike expatriation, studies examining the re-expatriation among academics have been noticeably limited. It should be noted that expatriation and re-expatriation are not simply the two sides of the same construct, hence the reasons why academic expatriate relocate for the first time may not be the same as reasons why they re-expatriate. It is therefore crucial to ascertain the determinants of re-expatriation phenomenon among academics in order to retain them in home country (Joardar and

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Weisang, 2019; Tharenou and Seet, 2014). Furthermore, the re-expatriation among academics will result in brain circulation which is detrimental to home countries since it involves brain drain for the second time, taking away the international experience, advanced knowledge, skills and international linkages that the academics might have brought back to home country (Breitenmoser and Bader, 2016; Ho et al., 2016; Ho et al., 2018; McNulty and Inkson 2013; McNulty et al., 2013; Saxenian, 2005).

Handful of studies have suggested that the motivational factors behind the re-expatriation could be attributed to various push-pull factors in home and host country (Ho et al., 2016; Ho et al., 2018; Hoang and Ho, 2019; Pham and Saito, 2019; Tharenou and Seet, 2014; Tharenou, 2015). This is consistent with premise of Push-Pull Theory (Toren, 1976) which relates the motivation to migrate among individuals to home and host country push-pull factors. The theory posits that home country push factors are forces that drive individuals to move out of their country of origin and includes factors such as poor employment, re-entry hardships and financial issues (Jackson et al., 2005; Lauring et al., 2014; McKenna and Richardson, 2007). The host county pull factors on the other hand motivate individuals to move abroad and includes factors such as quality of life, family outcomes and the opportunity for better career development (Carr et al., 2005; Froese, 2012; Thorn et al., 2013).

The re-expatriation phenomenon in specific can be further explained with the Expectancy Violation Theory (Burgoon, 1995) that believes changes in expectations (condition in home country) trigger disturbances, and heighten cognitive arousal and might influence decision regarding relocation to new environment abroad. Applying this theory to our study, we believe that repatriates upon their return to the home country will make a comparison between home and host country conditions during three to nine months of their stay in home country (Gullahorn and Gullahorn, 1963). During this stage, the repatriates will seriously reflect on the various aspects of life they had experienced during their stay in the host country and shall the conditions of these factors are unfavourable in home country they might consider re-expatriation.

Extant studies suggest that family outcomes and quality of life are among the most important host country pull factors considered by individuals in making decisions related to migration (Jackson et al., 2005; Richardson, 2006; Richardson and McKenna, 2006; Shaffer et al., 2012; Thorn, 2009; Thorn et al., 2013). These factors also appear to have a significant impact on those repatriates who have returned from abroad and become sources of encouragement to re-expatriate (Ho et al., 2016). Family outcomes such as better education for children, better lifestyle and better environment play an important role in the decision related to expatriation (Carr et al., 2005; Cho et al., 2013; Doherty et al., 2011; Jackson et al., 2005; Richardson, 2006; Selmer and Lauring, 2010). Quality of life aspects such as better lifestyle, better life conditions and better physical environment are among the main attracting factors of host countries that motivates one to expatriate or re-expatriate especially if they hailed from less developed countries (Ewers and Shockley, 2018; Scurry et al., 2013; Wadhwa et al., 2009).

To this end, it is clear to us that extant research has proved that family outcomes and quality of life in the host country can influence repatriates to consider re-expatriation. However, one question remains unanswered regarding the underlying mechanism that is responsible to explain the effect of host country pull factors (family outcomes and quality of life) on re-expatriation intention. We believe that while the relationship between the host country pull factors and re-expatriation intention among repatriates can be straightforward, we also expect indirect relationship between both variables mediated through psychological well-being. Psychological well-being is defined as a state of well-being in which individuals realize their own potentials and can cope with their overall life situations (Tung, 1981). Studies have shown the positive impact of the host country pull factors on the psychological well-being of expatriates (see Bader and Schuster, 2015; Wang and Kanungo, 2004). Psychological well-

being also contributes to reduce stress and uncertainty, a better adjustment, and the opportunity to remain longer in the host country (Aryee and Stone, 1996; Bader and Schuster, 2015; Wang and Kanungo, 2004). We believe host country pull factors namely family outcomes and quality of life will influence psychological well-being, which in turn influence the repatriates to re-expatriate.

There are several reasons why this study is important. First, there is a dearth of knowledge on the determinants of re-expatriation intention among the academic repatriates especially from the gulf countries like Jordan. While the knowledge on motivational factors of expatriation is well established, little is known about the determinants of re-expatriation intention. Secondly, the mediation examination in this study allows us to uncover the underlying mechanism that explains the relationship between host country pull factors and re-expatriation. Thirdly, by establishing the host country pull factors that are motivating repatriates to consider re-expatriation, various strategies can be devised to improve the conditions in home country in order to discourage the repatriates from leaving the country. Jordan is selected since there is an evidence of growing number of Jordanian academics moved out from the country seeking better life conditions abroad (Khasawneh et al., 2017).

Theoretical background and hypotheses development

Re-expatriation intention

Re-expatriation is a new topic that appeared in the global mobility literature. It is defined as the process where returnees/repatriates initiate an international move or the second subsequent experience of expatriation that involves departure from the home country on their own initiatives (Dorsch et al., 2013; Ho et al., 2016). The research on re-expatriation has gained momentum ever since the role of repatriates who are generally skilful and talented are regarded as an important source of country's development. Their advanced knowledge, professional skills and international experience and linkages that they had developed while working abroad are valuable assets for the home country organizations (Breitenmoser and Bader, 2016; McNulty et al., 2013; McNulty and Inkson 2013). The skilled professional individuals/returnees may have high opportunities to be "transnational" in a phenomenon known as "brain circulation" as a result of their re-expatriations many times within their careers (Saxenian, 2005). To date, majority of the research have studied the talented individuals who had moved to live and work outside the country of origin (i.e. brain drain) (Tzeng, 2006). Likewise, a significant number of studies also have been conducted among those talented individuals who repatriated back to their home country bringing along skills and knowledge to their own home country (i.e. reverse brain drains) (see Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010; Tzeng, 2006). To date, abundance of studies have concentrated on brain drain (expatriation) and reverse brain drain (repatriation). However, the re-expatriation (brain circulation) phenomenon remained under researched in the expatriate literature (Ho et al., 2016; Tharenou, 2015; Tharenou and Seet, 2014). This has resulted in lack of understanding on the dynamic nature of the factors that influence their decision to expatriate for the second time. Additionally, while majority of research studies have focused on the reasons and motivations of employees travelling to live and work overseas (see Carr et al., 2005; Jackson et al., 2005; Saxenian, 2005; Selmer and Lauring, 2010), however, only a handful of studies have investigated the reasons for re-expatriation among the self-initiated expatriates like academic expatriates (e.g. Ho et al., 2016; Tharenou and Seet, 2014). Research is imperative in this regard since the reasons and motivational factors behind the relocation may differ depending on whether these individuals were attracted to move abroad for the first time, or they planned to re-expatriate one more time after their repatriation.

Push-Pull Theory (Toren, 1976) has provided much needed theoretical explanation that underpinned the expatriation and re-expatriation phenomenon. The theory suggests that force or motivation for expatriation can be influenced by both push and pull factors in home and host countries. Push factors are factors in home country that force individuals to consider expatriation which include issues like poor employment, re-entry hardships and financial issues (Doherty et al., 2011; Suutari and Brewster, 2000; Shortland, 2015; Tharenou, 2010). Studies also have suggested that financial difficulties and re-entry hardships in the home country can force individuals to consider expatriation or re-expatriation from their country of origin to a different location for a better life conditions and a better opportunity for change especially when such aspects are not available in their home country (e.g. Lidgard, 2001; Lounsbury et al., 2004; Richardson and McKenna, 2002; Selmer and Lauring, 2012; Tharenou and Seet, 2014). The host country pull factors on the other hand motivate individuals to move abroad and include factors such as peace and safety, a chance of a better job opportunity, better education, social security, a better standard of living in general as well as political and religious freedom (Carr et al., 2005; Froese, 2012; Jackson et al., 2005; Tharenou and Seet, 2014). Research also has found factors related to family outcomes and quality of life in host country motivate individuals to move out from their home country (see Jackson et al., 2005; Richardson, 2006; Richardson and McKenna, 2006; Ridgway and Robson, 2018; Thorn, 2009; Thorn et al., 2013). Against this backdrop, this study therefore focuses on the re-expatriation intention among Jordanian academic repatriates who had returned to the home country. The current study aims to shed more light on the dynamic nature of host country pull factors that encourage Jordanian academic repatriates to re-expatriate. Additionally, the inclusion of psychological well-being as mediating variable in this study will provide much sought explanation on the underlying process that is responsible to shift the effect of host country pull factors on re-expatriation intention.

Psychological well-being

The psychological well-being concept is defined as the positive psychological functioning of individuals (Ryff, 1995). Psychological well-being also refers to the state of which an individual can function psychologically well enough to realize his/her true potential (Wang and Kanungo, 2004). To date, psychological well-being received overwhelming research attention in expatriation studies due to its role in facilitating the effective functioning of expatriates in international assignments (Bader and Schuster, 2015; Wang and Kanungo, 2004). Psychological well-being is a fundamentally important factor that facilitates an expatriate's adjustment and his/her performance, which, in turn, leads them to complete their international assignment effectively. It is also a strong predictor of the ability of expatriates to utilize their own skills to perform well and effectively during their international assignments (Tung, 1981). Additionally, expatriates with a high level of psychological well-being were found to show positive attitudes toward various situations in their lives (Ryff and Keyes, 1995). Conversely, the lack of psychological well-being is often cited as one of the causes for expatriate failures in international assignments such as premature return, poor performance and maladjustment to host country environment (Bhaskar-Shrinivas et al., 2005; Shaffer and Harrison, 1998). The poor performance of expatriates is not only as a result of insufficient technical skills, but also due to poor psychological well-being (Tung, 1981). According to Tung further, even if an expatriate were properly selected based on his/her technical and managerial skills, poor psychological outcomes could affect their productivity negatively. One area that expatriates

rely on to attain psychological well-being is through social networks which enable expatriates to overcome stress and reduce complexity and uncertainty experienced while living in unfamiliar location (Bader and Schuster, 2015; Wang, 2002; Wang and Kanungo, 2004). This is because the social network offers much needed social support resources such as informational, instrumental, appraisal, and emotional support that will be helpful

in the development of psychological well-being and expatriate success (Van der Laken et al., 2019). This is consistent with premise of Social Capital Theory (Adler and Kwon, 2002) which posits that the more social relations expatriates have with others in the host country, the greater opportunity for more benefits to be obtained, which, in turn, helps them to adjust faster and then enhances their lives during international assignment. Wang and Kanungo (2004) in their study among the sample of 166 expatriates from different backgrounds who worked in China found that psychological well-being is positively influenced by the social network interactions of expatriates.

To this end, the discussion has been limited to causes and consequences of psychological well-being on expatriates in the host country location. However, it should be noted that psychological well-being is also matter when repatriates already returned to his or her home country. Expatriates return to their home country with reasonable level of expectations to be met (Tharenou, 2010). In this regard, the more repatriates are not satisfied with their expectations upon repatriation, the more they are psychologically and emotionally affected (Ho et al., 2016). Unfavourable home country push factors such as poor employment, re-entry hardships and financial issues (Froese, 2012) can lead to stress and uncertainty among the repatriates, which in turn may affect their psychological well-being. At the same time, the repatriates will compare and reflect on the state of psychological well-being they enjoyed while stayed in host country as a result of various favourable host country pull factors such as family outcomes and quality of life. Shall the perceived level of psychological well-being experienced in host country is greater than home country, repatriates may consider re-expatriation to seek better conditions of life (Ho et al., 2016; Lidgard, 2001; Lounsbury et al., 2004; Richardson and McKenna, 2002; Selmer and Lauring, 2012; Tharenou and Seet, 2014). Therefore, any difficulties experienced in the home country among these repatriates may influence their intentions to re-expatriate for better economic and social outcomes with the aim to restore their previously enjoyed psychological well-being. Thus, the following hypothesis sets to examine the relationship between psychological well-being and re-expatriation intention among academic repatriates:

H1: There is a positive relationship between psychological well-being experienced in host country and re-expatriation intention

Family outcomes

Family outcomes are considered as one of the main host country motivational factors related to the benefits that individuals expect to obtain from their re-expatriation or even as a reason to expatriate (Carr et al., 2005; Doherty et al., 2011; Ho et al., 2016; Jackson et al., 2005; Ridgway and Robson, 2018; Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010). Family outcomes referred to the potential benefits and advantages that individuals may obtain for their family members in the host country (Ho et al., 2016; Tung, 2007). The theoretical support for family outcomes as one of the motivational factors for expatriation or re-expatriation can be found in the Push-Pull Theory (Toren, 1976) as discussed earlier. In addition, Theory of Family System (Minuchin, 1974) posits that the intention of individuals to move away out of the country of origin is influenced by factors related to spouses, relative and parents. Family factors can be sources of encouragement motivating professionals to expatriate (Richardson, 2006) seeking a better future for whole family in terms of better education, better lifestyle, and better environment, especially for children (Carr et al., 2005; Cho et al., 2013; Ho et al., 2016; Jackson et al., 2005; Ridgway and Robson, 2018; Tung, 2007) when such relative opportunities and benefits are not available in their home country after repatriation (Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010, Tharenou and Seet, 2014). Richardson (2006) for example in his study based on 30 British academics working in Turkey, Singapore, UAE, and New Zealand found that family outcomes played an influential role in the decision regarding expatriation. In a related study, Selmer and Lauring (2010) based on sample of academic expatriates working abroad revealed that family outcomes are associated with their willingness to

move abroad especially when such outcomes are not available in the home country organisations. Tung (2007) pointed out that a better quality of life for the family is considered among the main host country pull factors motivating individuals toward living abroad. The findings also revealed that individuals upon their repatriation often suffered from issues associated with family-related outcomes and will consider moving out of home country for a better life conditions for them and their families. Generally, repatriates who used to provide greater benefits for their families abroad may consider to re-expatriate rather than remaining in their home country for a long period of time especially if the reality of situation in their home country in terms of family outcomes is unsatisfactory (Ho et al., 2016; Tharenou, 2015; Tharenou and Seet, 2014). This is obvious especially if the returnees had repatriated from a more developed country than their own and they had experienced the differences in development status between the two countries. Family outcomes also can be important determinants of psychological well-being of expatriates since these factors are considered support resources that provide individuals necessary psychological and emotional support abroad to overcome stress and reduce complexity and uncertainty. Several studies in the expatriate literature have recognised the influence of host country pull factors such as family outcomes on the psychological well-being of expatriates during an international assignment (Bader and Schuster, 2015; Li and Rothstein, 2009; Wang and Nayir, 2006). Drawing from above discussion, we therefore propose the following hypotheses:

H2: There is a positive relationship between family outcomes in host country and re-expatriation intention

H3: There is a positive relationship between family outcomes in host country and psychological well-being

Quality of life

In the expatriate literature, quality of life is often cited as one of the important motivational factors that encourage individuals to move abroad (Thorn et al., 2013; Tung 2007). Quality of life is defined as the characteristics, values, norms, infrastructure and lifestyle of a country that improve the way one can live his or her life (Ho et al., 2016; Thorn et al., 2013). Quality of life could include a variety of benefits for expatriates and their entire families such as better lifestyle and other economic issues especially for those expatriates who came from less developed countries (Scurry et al., 2013; Siekierski et al., 2018; Wadhwa et al., 2009). Life aspects such as security and safety, a better social environment and a better natural environment are also part of quality of life expatriates pursue in host country (Ho et al., 2016; Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010; Thorn, 2009). Willingness to relocate from individuals' own country to another country increases when these individuals estimate that the benefits and the advantages (e.g. higher standards of living) will exceed the costs of moving abroad (Shortland, 2018; Tharenou and Seet, 2014). Wadhwa et al. (2009) in their study found that Indians move to United States seeking better quality of life conditions compared to what their country can offer.

Similarly, professionals from Chinese were attracted and encouraged to move and then remain for a long period of time in New Zealand due to quality of life factors like safety, fresh air and better physical environment compared to their own country (Manying, 2006). In a related study, Thorn et al. (2013) found that among many motivational factors, quality of life was considered to be the most significant factors in the decision of professional New Zealanders to move abroad. Others also have found quality of life aspects such as better lifestyle and better life conditions are important motivating factors for expatriation among professionals (see Benson and O'Reilly, 2009). A handful of studies conducted among academic expatriates also revealed a similar pattern. Selmer and Lauring (2010) for example found that academic expatriates accepted an international assignment to have a better life conditions abroad. Richardson and Mallon (2005) in their study among Britain academic expatriates also found that the respondents are motivated

to move abroad to seek a life change. Similarly, a research conducted by Cerdin and Pargneux (2010) among French academic expatriates revealed that quality of life is the most important determinant factor in their decision for expatriation. Notably, individuals who live in places with a lower level of quality of life tend to move to other places that provide a better quality of life (Ewers and Shockley, 2018). From the repatriate's point of view, the most challenging part in their life is to adjust to poor quality of life conditions in their home country especially after experiencing the differences between home and host countries in terms of quality of life and lifestyle. It was found that the high level of quality of life obtained from abroad lead to a high level of psychological well-being (Aryee and Stone, 1996). Hence, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H4: There is a positive relationship between quality of life in host country and re-expatriation intention

H5: There is a positive relationship between quality of life in host country and psychological well-being

Mediation effect of psychological well-being

As discussed earlier, family outcomes and quality of life are among the most influential host country pull factors that motivate expatriates/repatriates to move out from their country of origin (Ho et al., 2016; Jackson et al., 2005; Richardson, 2006; Richardson and McKenna, 2006; Thorn, 2009; Thorn et al., 2013). These factors also found to enhanced expatriates psychological well-being while abroad (Aryee and Stone, 1996; Bader and Schuster, 2015; Li and Rothstein, 2009; Wang and Nayir, 2006). However, there are many instances where returnees are not able to enjoy similar conditions in home country especially if their home country is less developed than the host country. Unmet expectations in home country coupled with home country re-entry hardships and other push factors such as financial difficulties will result in frustration and disappointment among the repatriates (Ho et al., 2016). Comparison will be made with host country conditions and resulting psychological well-being which they had enjoyed earlier during their stay abroad. In an attempt to restore their previously enjoyed psychological well-being, the repatriates will consider re-expatriation to a different country which will provide better family outcomes and quality of life (Ho et al., 2016; Lidgard, 2001; Lounsbury et al., 2004; Richardson and McKenna, 2002; Selmer and Lauring, 2012; Tharenou and Seet, 2014). In other word, the host country pull factors namely family outcomes and quality of life which had enhanced their psychological well-being while they were abroad will be critically reflected and if similar conditions did not exist in home country upon repatriation, the repatriates will consider re-expatriation to host country. In this light, the psychological well-being is proposed to mediate the relationship between host country pull factors and re-expatriation intention among repatriates. Based on the above discussion, the following hypotheses are proposed:

H6: Psychological well-being mediates the effect of family outcomes on re-expatriation intention

H7: Psychological well-being mediates the effect of quality of life on re-expatriation intention

Our hypotheses are summarized in the conceptual model depicted in Figure 1 and 2.

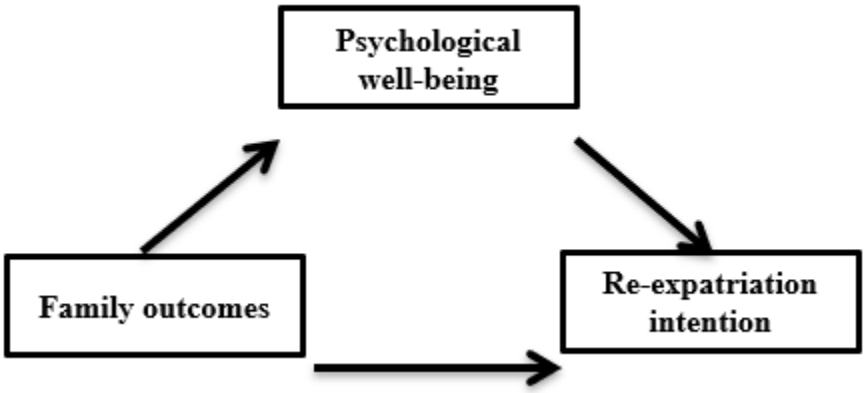


Figure 1: The relationship between family outcomes and re-expatriation intention, family outcomes, and psychological well-being, psychological well-being, and re-expatriation intention, as well as the mediating effect of psychological well-being on the relationship between family outcomes and re-expatriation intention.

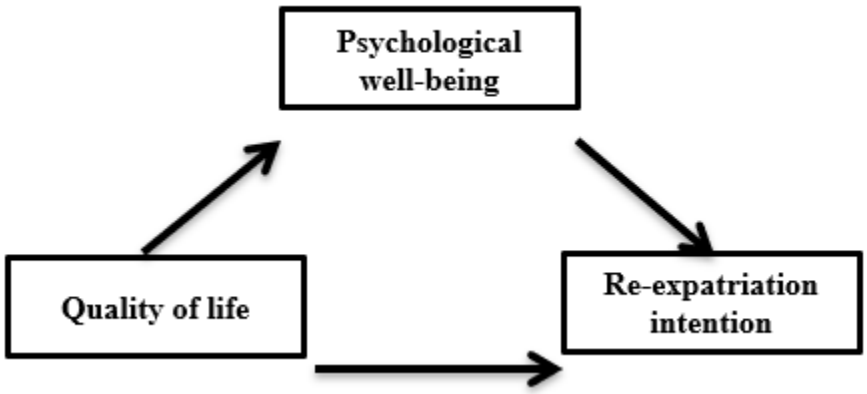


Figure 2: The relationship between quality of life and re-expatriation intention, quality of life, and psychological well-being, psychological well-being, and re-expatriation intention, as well as the mediating effect of psychological well-being on the relationship between quality of life and re-expatriation intention.

Methods

Research design and sample

In this study, Jordanian academic repatriates who had worked in foreign universities were surveyed. Since it is not feasible to establish population size of Jordanian academic repatriates who had worked in foreign universities, the nonprobability sampling method is deemed appropriate for this study. Accordingly, the snowball sampling technique was employed in this study to select the respondents. In this exercise, firstly, the universities in Jordan were identified and list of academic repatriates and their contacts were established. Secondly, initial conversation was held with few respondents who had reported their international experience in their faculty profile. This allows the researcher to identify some of the academics who had worked in foreign universities as faculty members. Thirdly, visits were made to the respective universities and academics were asked to complete the questionnaires and then refer the researcher to other academics whom they know had worked in foreign universities. The researcher then moved through Jordanian universities based on the contacts given by the respondents to distribute questionnaire to those who had worked in foreign universities. Although the original instrument was developed in the English language, the questionnaire was prepared in the

Arabic language to allow respondents answer in the language that they were most familiar with. Back translation was employed in that the original instruments were translated into the Arabic language by academic experts in both languages. The translated version was later back translated into the English language to examine the match between the original and the English translated version by a different group of academics. This back translation process followed the procedure suggested by Brislin (1970). The pretest was conducted to assess the face validity, and very minor changes were incorporated into the final questionnaire.

A total of 160 questionnaires were sent of which 154 were returned. One questionnaire was discarded due to incompleteness. The above procedure has yield in 153 usable questionnaires. Majority of the respondents were male (95%). Those married were 91%. In terms of education, majority of the respondents were Ph.D holders (71%) followed by those with Master qualification represented by 24%. On average, the participants are relatively young, i.e. 48% are in age group of 32-41 years old and 75% have worked less than 5 years in their respective universities. Majority of the respondents (52%) are assistant professors in their respective universities.

Measures

In this study, we relied on established measures that have been used in previous studies. We used Likert scales ranging from 1 to 7. The respective scales are presented here.

Re-expatriation intention

The intention to re-expatriate was measured using five items developed by Ho et al. (2016). Respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the items. A sample item is “If the opportunity arises, I will return abroad to live”. The internal consistencies (Cronbach’s Alpha) value for the scale was reported to be 0.84 in a study conducted by Ho et al. (2016).

Family outcomes

This construct was measured using three items adapted from Ho et al. (2016). Respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the items. A sample item is “Better opportunities for children's future”. These three items reported a Cronbach’s alpha value of 0.92 in a previous study conducted by Ho et al. (2016).

Quality of life

Quality of life was measured by using four items adapted from Ho et al. (2016). Respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the items. A sample item is “Better lifestyle”. Cronbach alpha value of 0.74 was reported in a study conducted by Ho et al. (2016).

Psychological well-being

Ryff and Keyes’ (1995) eighteen-items scale was adopted to measure psychological well-being in this study. Respondents were asked to indicate how much they agreed or disagreed with the items. A sample item is “In general, I feel I am in charge of the situation in which I live”. Cronbach alpha value of 0.86 was reported for this measure in a study conducted by Wang and Kanungo (2004).

Analysis and findings

Partial least squares structural equation modelling (PLS-SEM) was used to test the proposed hypotheses in this study. The causal-predictive based PLS-SEM was preferred over the confirmatory-based CB-SEM because of its relevancy to addresses the objective of this study, that is, to examine the proposed hypotheses that are grounded in causal explanations (Jöreskog and Wold, 1982). Following through, the study employs SmartPLS 3.2.9 (Ringle et al., 2015) to estimate the model parameters (Sarstedt and Cheah, 2019).

Preliminary analysis

Hair et al. (2019) postulated several preliminary considerations prior to model estimation using PLS-SEM. This study follows the recommendation to assess several considerations which includes the distributional assumption, the common method bias concern as well as statistical power analysis. The distributional assumption was addressed through multivariate normality assessment (Cain et al., 2017). The Mardia's multivariate kurtosis coefficient ($\beta = 40.508$) was above the threshold value of 20, indicating that the data is non-normally distributed (Byrne, 2013; Kline, 2011). This further justify the use of PLS-SEM as it is a non-parametric inferential analysis tools by mean of bootstrapping (Sarstedt et al., 2017). To address common method bias, the full collinearity assessment (Kock, 2015; Kock and Lynn, 2012) was conducted. The full collinearity yields a VIF value of lower than 3.3, implying that common method bias is not a concern in this study. Finally, a power analysis is conducted to assess if sufficient statistical power is obtained from the sample collected. The power analysis was conducted using Kock and Hadaya (2018) inverse square root and gamma exponential method. Both tests suggest that the minimum sample size to obtain a power of 0.8 is 64 and 77 respondents, respectively. This concludes that the sample size of 153 yield sufficient statistical power for inferential analysis

Measurement model assessment

The measurement model assesses the relationship between the observed variable (indicators) and the latent variable (constructs) (Ramayah et al., 2018). Measurement model assessment involves checking the factor loadings, composite reliability (CR), and average variance extracted (AVE) to measure the convergent validity (Hair et al., 2017). As depicted in Table 1, all the items' loadings value is above the recommended value of 0.708 (Hair et al., 2017). Likewise, the CR value of all the constructs is above the threshold value of 0.7 (Nunnally and Bernstein, 1994). The AVE is within the desired threshold value which should be above 0.50 (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 1. Reliability and validity results

Construct	Items	Loadings	CR	AVE
Family outcomes	Fo1_1	0.866	0.869	0.689
	Fo2_1	0.824		
	Fo3_1	0.800		
Quality of life	Lq1_1	0.889	0.926	0.759
	Lq2_1	0.856		
	Lq3_1	0.891		
	Lq4_1	0.848		
Psychological well-being	Psy10_1	0.813	0.972	0.658
	Psy11_1	0.770		
	Psy12_1	0.797		
	Psy13_1	0.754		
	Psy14_1	0.833		
	Psy15_1	0.802		
	Psy16_1	0.811		
	Psy17_1	0.832		

	Psy18_1	0.839		
	Psy1_1	0.806		
	Psy2_1	0.805		
	Psy3_1	0.809		
	Psy4_1	0.794		
	Psy5_1	0.825		
	Psy6_1	0.821		
	Psy7_1	0.809		
	Psy8_1	0.846		
	Psy9_1	0.827		
Re-expatriate intention	Reex1_1	0.847	0.92	0.697
	Reex2_1	0.822		
	Reex3_1	0.818		
	Reex4_1	0.842		
	Reex5_1	0.845		

Discriminant validity is assessed by means of Fornell and Lacker and Hetrotrait-Monotrait (HTMT) ratio of correlation criterion. According to Fornell and Lacker criterion, discriminate validity is established if the square root of AVE of every single construct is higher than the latent construct correlation in the model (Hair et al., 2013).

Table 2. Discriminant validity matrix

	Family outcomes	PWB	Quality of life	REI
Family outcomes	0.83			
PWB	0.600	0.811		
Quality of life	0.627	0.579	0.871	
REI	0.668	0.663	0.549	0.835

Note: PWB=Psychological well-being, REI= Re-expatriation intention

As shown in Table 2, AVE square root value was above the other latent constructs correlation. Table 3 denotes the HTMT assessment for the research model. The result suggest that discriminant validity was achieved with the HTMT correlation value among the constructs is lower than the threshold value of 0.85 (Kline, 2011).

Table 3. HTMT

	Family outcomes	PWB	Quality of life	REI
Family outcomes				
PWB	0.688			
Quality of life	0.755	0.619		
REI	0.8	0.708	0.613	

Note: PWB=Psychological well-being, REI= Re-expatriation intention

Structural model assessment

The structural model assesses the relationship between the latent variables in the hypothesized model (Ramayah et al., 2018). Bootstrapping with a re-sampling of 5000 was performed to estimate the significance of the path coefficient (Hair et al., 2017). In the current study, five direct relationships were tested. Based on the assessment of the path coefficients at 0.05 significance level (see Table 4), psychological well-being (H1: β=0.381, p-value < 0.05) has a positive influence on re-expatriation intention. Family outcomes showed a positive relationship with re-expatriation intention (H2: β= 0.384, p-value < 0.05). Family outcomes (H3: β=0.391, p-value < 0.05) has a positive significant influence on psychological well-being. Quality of life (H4: β= 0.088, p-value > 0.05) however, has no impact on re-expatriation intention. The study also found quality of life (H5: β=0.334, p-value < 0.05) has a significant positive influence on psychological well-being. The finding supports H1, H2, H3, and H5 while H4 is not supported

Table 4. Hypotheses testing results

Hypothesized Path	Beta	Std Error	T Value	P Value	2.50%	97.50%	F.size	VIF	R^2	Q^2
Model 1									0.557	0.380
H1: PWB -> REI	0.381	0.081	4.732	0.000	0.232	0.546	0.188	1.748		
H2: Family outcomes -> REI	0.384	0.076	5.036	0.000	0.222	0.522	0.174	1.914		
H4: Quality of life -> REI	0.088	0.078	1.125	0.261	-0.069	0.235	0.009	1.842		
Model 2									0.428	0.275
H3: Family outcomes -> PWB	0.391	0.069	5.687	0.000	0.250	0.522	0.162	1.647		
H5: Quality of life -> PWB	0.334	0.090	3.693	0.000	0.156	0.506	0.118	1.647		

Note: PWB=Psychological well-being, REI= Re-expatriation intention

The R^2 described the level of variance in the endogenous variable explained by all the exogenous variables. Following through, the in-sample predictive power is assessed. The results revealed that family outcomes, quality of life and psychological well-being accounts for 55.7% of variances in re-expatriation intention (refer to Model 1 of Table 4). On the other hand, both family outcomes and quality of life explained 42.8% of variances in psychological well-being (refer to Model 2 of Table 4). Subsequently, Cohen's f2 is used to assess the effect size of each constructs on the outcome variables. The value of 0.02, 0.15 and 0.35 represent small, medium, and large effect size respectively (Cohen, 1988). In this study, the effect size values are showing small and no effect by having the value of 0.162, 0.174, 0.188, and 0.11, 0.009, respectively. Finally, the predictive relevance of the model was assessed via Stone (1977) and Geisser (1975) Q2 blindfolding approach. As illustrated in Table 4, both endogenous variable (psychological well-being, Q2 = 0.275 and re-expatriation intention, Q2 = 0.381) exhibit predictive relevance as the Q2 has a value of larger than 0 (Hair et al., 2017).

Mediation analysis

The mediation effect was examined by using bootstrapping technique suggested by Preacher and Hayes (2008). Bootstrapping is a "non-parametric re-sampling procedure" which has sufficient power to calculate the required effect and there is no assumption of variable distribution to be met and highly recommended for mediation analysis (Hair et

al., 2017; Preacher and Hayes, 2008). As depicted in Table 5, the indirect effect of family outcomes (H6: $\beta = 0.149$, $p < 0.05$, CI [0.087, 0.244]) and quality of life (H7: $\beta = 0.127$, $p < 0.05$, CI [0.057, 0.239]) on re-expatriation intention through psychological well-being were found to be significant. Also, the 95% bootstrap confidence interval (Preacher and Hayes, 2008) does not straddle a 0 in between the confidence interval implies that there is a mediation, providing support for H6 and H7. Further assessment on the types of mediation using Zhao et al. (2010) approach suggest that this is a complementary mediation where both the direct and indirect effect shares the same sign.

Table 5. Mediation Result

Hypothesized Path	Path coefficient	Std Error	T Value	P Value	2.50%	97.50%
H6: Family outcomes -> PWB -> REI	0.149	0.038	3.906	0.000	0.087	0.244
H7: Quality of life -> PWB -> REI	0.127	0.045	2.838	0.005	0.057	0.239

Note: PWB=Psychological well-being, REI= Re-expatriation intention

Discussion

Main findings

The positive relationship found between psychological well-being and re-expatriation intention suggests that greater the perceived psychological well-being experienced in host country, greater the intention to re-expatriate among the Jordanian academic repatriates. This finding could be as a result of comparison made on the state of psychological well-being experienced between home and host country. It appears that in this study, the Jordanian repatriates had rated the psychological well-being experienced in host country is greater than what they are experiencing in home country prompting them to consider re-expatriation. While psychological well-being attained in host country is related to positive psychological functioning as a result of ability to overcome stress and reduce complexity and uncertainty experienced while living in unfamiliar location (Bader and Schuster, 2015; Wang, 2002; Wang and Kanungo, 2004), the nature of psychological well-being experienced upon re-entry to familiar location could be different yet vital to overall assessment of general psychological well-being. Hence, in order to restore their overall psychological well-being the repatriates may consider re-expatriating.

Family outcomes in host country were found to be important motivational factor leading to psychological well-being and re-expatriation intention among Jordanian academic repatriates. This finding is expected since family outcomes often become one of the main sources of encouragement motivating professionals to expatriate/re-expatriate seeking a better future for the family in terms of quality education for children, greater lifestyle and general living environment (Carr et al., 2005; Cho et al., 2013; Ho et al., 2016; Jackson et al., 2005; Richardson, 2006). Hence, inability to provide similar benefits to the family in home country compared to what was enjoyed in host country prior to return can influence returnees to consider re-expatriation. Theoretical support for the role of family outcomes in decision related to expatriation/re-expatriation can be found in Theory of Family System (Minuchin, 1974) which associate the decision to move away out of the country of origin is influenced by factors related to spouses, relative and parents. Support for the positive relationship between family outcomes and both the psychological well-being and re-expatriation are plenty (Bader and Schuster, 2015; Carr et al., 2005; Doherty et al., 2011; Ho et al., 2016; Jackson et al., 2005; Li and Rothstein, 2009; Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010; Wang and Nayir, 2006).

The positive relationship found between quality of life and psychological well-being suggests that greater the quality of life experienced in host country, greater the felt

psychological well-being experienced by the Jordanian academic repatriates. The finding is as expected since quality of life aspects such as better lifestyle and life conditions will help individuals to mitigate the stress and uncertainties experienced while working in new cultural environment abroad and enhance their psychological well-being (Bader and Schuster, 2015; Ho et al., 2016; Tharenou and Caulfield, 2010; Thorn, 2009; Wang and Kanungo, 2004). The quality of life will provide much needed support to expatriates to function psychologically well enough to realize their true potential while abroad (Wang and Kanungo, 2004). The insignificant direct relationship found between quality of life and re-expatriation intention suggests that although the perceived quality of life is better in host country, it may not necessarily influence repatriates to consider re-expatriation. As the mediation result suggest, quality of life will not directly effects re-expatriation intention but indirectly related through psychological well-being. The intention to re-expatriate among repatriates is apparent only when the psychological well-being is activated as a result of quality of life.

As for the indirect effect of family outcomes on re-expatriation intention, the finding suggest that greater family outcomes experienced by repatriates and their families while abroad will result in positive experience of psychological well-being, which will then spill over to re-expatriation intention. The finding consistent with premise of spillover theory (Wilensky, 1960) that posits psychological reactions (psychological well-being) as a result of one's affective responses to conditions in a social setting (host country pull factors) will be manifested in behavioural outcomes, such as re-expatriation. Additionally, the findings of mediation analysis also suggest that the effect of family outcomes passes directly to re-expatriation intention among Jordanian academic repatriates.

Implications

The findings of this study therefore give rise to a number of implications; theoretical, practical and suggestions for future research. Theoretically, the findings of this study will further enhance our understanding about dynamics of re-expatriation phenomenon which is still unclear. Unlike expatriation and repatriation, studies on re-expatriation intention among the returnees is scarce perhaps due to the lack of interest among the researchers and practitioners to study behaviour of returnees who are assumed already completed the expatriation phases upon their repatriation to home country hence re-expatriation is considered as a 'non-issue' in comparison to going abroad first time (expatriation). Unfortunately, the fact is second expatriation is possible if repatriates are not happy with home country conditions hence this study is timely to uncover such possibility. The knowledge obtained from this study will help to shed light on the causes of the re-expatriation phenomenon which has been assumed to be similar with expatriation and repatriation. It is proven through this study that the host country pull factors namely family outcomes and quality of life are important determinants of re-expatriation intention. While the family outcomes are related both directly and indirectly with re-expatriation intention, quality of life however is indirectly related to re-expatriation intention implying that decision to re-expatriate is only made once psychological well-being is affected. Secondly, the findings of this study will enhance our knowledge about the final expatriation phase that self-initiated academic expatriates might go through in their professional career cycle. In other word, self-initiated academic expatriates upon their return to home country might consider re-expatriation if host country conditions perceived to be more appealing than what they are experiencing in home country. To date, research among this community has been limited despite their growth in size in global labour market. Thirdly, while majority of the studies have been focused on the various expatriation phases among the expatriates from developed country, little is known about expatriation/re-expatriation motives among expatriates/repatriates from emerging economies like Jordan. It should be noted that expatriation has become global phenomenon and not just limited to certain part of the world. Finally, the mediation effect of psychological well-being that was established in this study has important theoretical

implication in terms of providing much sought theoretical explanation on the underlying process that accounts for relationship between host country pull factors and re-expatriation intention among repatriates. This implies that psychological well-being is an enabler factor that should be given equal attention in the expatriation studies.

From the practical point of view, the findings of this study will help home country organizations like higher education institutions to identify factors that lead to re-expatriation among academic returnees. Although emerging economies like Jordan unable to match the advanced economies in terms of benefits related to family outcomes and quality of life it can provide, efforts should be taken to improve these aspects at home country to retain the talents. At the organizational level, various HR interventions such as financial, informational and social support should be made available for these talents and their families to ensure smooth re-entry into the home country cultures. Secondly, through this study, Jordan will be able to identify the factors that contribute to talent migration and appropriate remedies can be taken to address the issue. Talent management policy at the national level should be introduced to guide the talent retention strategies especially the international returnees. Finally, through the findings of this research, the returnees themselves can assess the conditions in home and host country in their decision regarding repatriation/re-expatriation. The host country pull factors such as family outcomes and quality of life should be taken into consideration during the repatriation phase itself in order to avoid the possibility of disappointment which will lead to re-expatriation in future upon return.

Limitations and future research recommendations

This study has several shortcomings that could limit the extent to which the findings may be generalized. First, the sample consisting of Jordanian academic repatriates only may limit the generalization to this setting. Any attempt to apply the findings of this study to general organizational expatriates or other segments of self-initiated expatriates is not recommended. Likewise, the findings only confined to re-expatriation phenomenon and should not be interpreted in the context of expatriation or repatriation. Secondly, the variables were measured at the same time from the same source; hence, common method variance cannot be ruled out (Selmer and Lauring, 2011). However, adhering to the suggestion of Kock and Lynn (2012), the full collinearity assessment was conducted. The full collinearity yields a VIF value of lower than 3.3, demonstrating that the common method bias was not a serious problem in this study. Thirdly, since the study applied cross-sectional research design, establishing cause and effect (causality) is not possible. A longitudinal research design could have resulted in the establishment of some form of causal effect. Finally, the use of a small sample size is another limitation of this study. One possible explanation for poor participation is that the unavailability of sampling frame and the use of nonprobability sampling of snowball technique has posed challenges to approach the wider population of academic returnees. While the findings of this study shed light on host country pull factors contributing to re-expatriation intention among academic repatriates, future research could expand upon this study beyond family outcomes and quality of life by investigating a comprehensive list of host country pull factors covering factors related to personal, organizational, and social/contextual resources that influence psychological well-being and re-expatriation intention. Likewise, future research should also include home country push factors that are capable of motivating individuals to consider re-expatriation. Additionally, future research may include other possible moderating or mediating factors to understand better how various push-pull factors affect re-expatriation intention among repatriates.

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