

AN ANALYSIS OF CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT AND WORK ADAPTABILITY OF MIGRANT EMPLOYEES IN MANUFACTURING INDUSTRIES IN COIMBATORE

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Abstract—During recent years, Coimbatore has emerged as a leading industrial city with many migrant workers employed by manufacturing industries in this area. These workers make an important contribution to productivity of manufacturing industries because they possess various skills. Nevertheless, these people might have difficulties adjusting to a new culture, language, and working conditions. This paper aims at examining the degree of cultural adjustment and work adaptability of migrant workers employed in manufacturing industries in Coimbatore. Moreover, factors affecting migrant workers' adaptation will be analysed, and the relationship between cultural adaptation and work adaptation of these workers will be revealed. This study is based on the descriptive research design and involves use of the primary data obtained from migrant workers in manufacturing industries with the help of questionnaires. Percentage analysis, means, standard deviation, correlation and ANOVA will be used for data analysis. As the results of the research show, migrant workers experience many challenges connected with language, inability to communicate with other people, difference in food and lifestyle. At the same time, those employees who received necessary training and support from employers adjusted well and enjoyed their work more. The research indicates that organizations should prioritize offering training, enhancing communication, and fostering a supportive work environment to improve employee adaptability and productivity.

Keywords: Cultural Adjustment, Work Adaptability, Migrant Employees, Manufacturing Industries, Work Environment.

INTRODUCTION

The migration issue has come up as an important issue in the contemporary industrialized society, especially in developing countries such as India, where cities like Coimbatore have become attractive for migrants owing to rapid industrial growth. Coimbatore is popularly known as the “Manchester of South India” due to its remarkable progress in industries such as textile, engineering, and manufacturing, leading to the urgent requirement for workforce. The migrants usually come from diverse cultures and societies and may find themselves at odds when trying to adapt to the new job and society. Adaptation to culture requires assimilation into the new culture without losing oneself and includes problems related to language, food, customs, interaction, and profession. Alongside the cultural issues, flexibility in employment becomes essential since the employees need to adjust to their job responsibilities, corporate culture, technological advancements, and working environment. Adaptability helps to enhance efficiency, teamwork, discipline, and job satisfaction, but failure to adapt properly leads to stress, communication barriers, discrimination, and poor performance. This research intends to analyze the degree of cultural adaptation and job flexibility among migrant workers in various sectors of Coimbatore, especially in the manufacturing field, and to determine the elements affecting their adjustment and adaptability in their work environments.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Mahajan, A., & Hassan, R. (2025). Management International Review in this article as *Shades of Darkness in Expatriation: “The Effects of Cultural Discrimination and Underemployment on Role Adjustment”*. Several studies conducted after 2020 have highlighted those factors such as cultural intelligence, social support, organizational policies, and workplace inclusion significantly influence the adjustment process of migrant employees. Additionally, issues like discrimination, underemployment, and communication barriers have been identified as major obstacles affecting both cultural adjustment and work adaptability. **Baneviciene.I. (2024)**, in this article titled as “Adjustment of International Employees: A Bibliometric Study” this study conducts a bibliometric analysis of research on international employee adjustment. It highlights the trends, patterns, and gaps in current literature, particularly noting the lack of research on low – skilled migrant workers, who are prevalent in manufacturing industries. The study provides a Meta – perspective on what factors influence adjustment and where further research is needed. **Shi Mohammadi,M. etal. (2023)**, in this article titled as “Working Conditions and Mental Well – being of Migrants” This study focuses on the impact of working conditions on the mental well- being and adaptability of migrant employees. It emphasizes that stress, workload, and poor working conditions can hinder both cultural adjustment and work performance. **Kassim, A., & Mat Zin, R(2022)**, in this article as “Drivers of Migration and Integration Challenges”. This study examines economic and social drivers of migration and the resulting integration challenges faced by migrant employees. It emphasizes that understanding these drivers help organizations develop effective adaption and support strategies, confirms that economic and social factors influence migration and workplace adaptation, relevant for Coimbatore’s manufacturing industries. Highlights the need for organizational programs to support migrant employees.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

This research is significant because it focuses on the problem of cultural adaptation and work adaptability among the migrant workers employed in the manufacturing industry in Coimbatore. The increased reliance on migrant labor recently makes it necessary for organizations to be aware of the problems that may be experienced due to the same. The significance of the study also extends to the organizations since it will give them the knowledge about the impact of cultural difference and work adaptability on their performance. With this knowledge, they will be able to implement an appropriate HRM strategy. The significance of this research will be to the migrant workers since it will focus on some of their problems like language problems and stress.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

The research will be carried out in analyzing the degree of cultural adaptation and work adaptability among migrants in manufacturing organizations in the region of Coimbatore. The research will help in the identification of key determinants of cultural adaptation and work adaptability, interrelationship between the two and the challenges that migrant workers go through in the process. The research will also help in coming up with key recommendations on how to improve cultural and work adaptability. The research will enable us to understand key determinants and interrelationships of cultural adaptation and work adaptability and the challenges that migrant workers experience. It is quite important in today’s world considering that the level of diversity in the workforce has significantly increased and culture is a key determinant for any industry.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

- ❖ To examine the level of cultural adjustment and work adaptability among migrant employees working in manufacturing industries in Coimbatore.
- ❖ To identify the factors influencing cultural adjustment and work adaptability of migrant employees.
- ❖ To analyze the relationship between cultural adjustment and work adaptability among migrant employees.
- ❖ To examine the challenges faced by migrant employees in adapting to the cultural and workplace environment.
- ❖ To propose ways of ensuring that migrant workers improve their cultural adaptability and work flexibility in manufacturing industries.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on how the cultural adaptability and work flexibility of migrant workers take place in the manufacturing sector in Coimbatore. The research seeks to analyze how the migrant workers adapt to the new cultural environment, workplace, organizational culture, communications systems, and technology after their migration. At the same time, the research looks at different issues that influence the adaptability process, such as the proficiency in

language skills, social network systems, team performance, and the relationships at the workplace. Besides, the research identifies different challenges faced by the migrant workers, such as cultural differences, stress, discrimination, and communication barriers, and analyzes how they affect the performance of migrant workers at the workplaces.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- ❖ As the research targets the migrant workers employed in manufacturing industries in Coimbatore, it can only be used as a guide for addressing the same issue elsewhere. Moreover, the scope of the study is limited since it uses a sample of 192 individuals.
- ❖ This is self-reported data, and hence it might be subject to bias by participants. In addition, the selection of specific factors that influence work adjustment may lead to exclusion of other possible important factors.
- ❖ The cross-sectional design of the study implies that only current data was collected; therefore, change over time cannot be established. Time and resources available could limit the level of analysis conducted and the type of data collected.
- ❖ The study mainly focuses on quantifying the information without incorporating other measures of data collection like conducting interviews, and language barriers during data collection could hinder comprehension of the questions.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research adopts the descriptive type of research design in analyzing the cultural adaptation and work flexibility of the migrant workers in the manufacturing industry of Coimbatore. This research utilizes both primary and secondary sources of information. Primary information was collected by administering structured questionnaires to the migrant workers, while the secondary information was collected through journal articles, books, articles, and reports related to migration, cultural adaptation, and work flexibility. The sampling method that was adopted in selecting the participants is the convenience sampling method. In all, 192 migrant workers participated in this study. The data collected were analyzed using various statistical tools such as Mean & Standard Deviation, T-test, and Correlation.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table No.1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Demographic Factor	Options	No. of Respondents	Percent	Total Respondents
Age Group	Below 20 years	55	28.6	192
	21–30 years	109	56.8	
	31–40 years	26	13.5	
	41–50 years	2	1.0	
	Above 50 years	0	0	
Gender	Male	154	65.8	192
	Female	38	34.2	
Educational Qualification	Below SSLC	38	19.8	192
	Higher Secondary	42	21.9	
	Under graduate	48	25.0	
	Others	62	33.3	
Work Experience	Less than 1 year	36	18.8	192
	1–3 years	72	37.5	
	3–5 years	48	25.0	

More than 5 years	36	18.8
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Interpretation

The table shows that most respondents are young (21–30 years), indicating a youthful workforce. The majority are male, reflecting a male-dominated environment. Educational levels are moderate and varied, with many having undergraduate or other qualifications. In terms of experience, most employees have 1–3 years of work experience, showing that they are in the early stage of their careers. Overall, the workforce is young, moderately educated, and less experienced.

**Table No.2 T- TEST
T- TEST (LEVEL)**

One-Sample Statistics				
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error Mean
Cultural adjustment	192	4.2542	.75390	.05441
Work adaptability	192	4.3250	.81671	.05894

One-Sample Test						
	Test Value = 3					
	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
					Lower	Upper
Cultural adjustment	23.051	192	.000	1.25417	1.1468	1.3615
Work adaptability	22.480	192	.000	1.32500	1.2087	1.4413

From Table No. 3 (One-Sample T-Test), we observe that both cultural adaptation (Mean = 4.25) and work adaptability (Mean = 4.33) are greater than the test value (3). Both p-values (0.000) are less than 0.05, implying that both values have significant differences. The large t-values (23.051 and 22.480) also prove that these differences are not accidental. It is evident that migrant workers have high levels of cultural adaptation and work adaptability; thus, they are well-adapted and competent at their workplaces.

HYPOTHESES:

- **Null Hypothesis (H₀):** There is no significant difference between the sample mean and the test value.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H₁):** There is a significant difference between the sample mean and the test value.

TABLE NO.3 PEARSON CORRELATION

Correlations			
		RELATIONSHIP CULTURAL ADJUSTMENT	RELATIONSHIP WORK ADAPTABILITY
RELATIONSHIPCULTURAL ADJUSTMENT	Pearson Correlation	1	.930
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	192	192

RELATIONSHIPWORK ADAPTABILITY	Pearson Correlation	.930	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	192	192
Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).			

The Pearson Correlation value ($r = 0.930$) indicates a very strong positive correlation between cultural adjustment and work adaptability. Cultural adjustment

increases, work adaptability also increases among migrant employees. The significance value (Sig. = 0.000) is less than 0.01, which shows that the relationship is statistically significant at the 1% level. The sample size ($N = 192$) is adequate, making the result reliable.

HYPOTHESES

- **Null Hypothesis (H₀):** There is no significant relationship between cultural adjustment and work adaptability among migrant employees.
- **Alternative Hypothesis (H₁):** There is a significant relationship between cultural adjustment and work adaptability among migrant employees.

FINDINGS

- ❖ Respondents are mostly males in the age bracket of 21-30 years, indicating young and dynamic nature of work force working in manufacturing industries.
- ❖ Most migrant workers are unmarried and have technical qualifications (Diploma/ ITI), indicating skill-oriented work force.
- ❖ A higher percentage of employees are working in production department and under contract basis, indicating insecure nature of jobs among migrant workers.
- ❖ Most of the respondents have an experience ranging from 1-3 years and earning average income, indicating initial stage of their career growth.
- ❖ High level of cultural adjustment can be observed in interaction with co-workers and adjustment with the company culture among the migrants.
- ❖ Strong level of work adaptability is also seen among respondents in terms of adjusting themselves to work pressure and job responsibilities.
- ❖ Slight problems may be observed in adopting local customs, language, and technology; however, they don't form a barrier.
- ❖ The results obtained using T test indicate that cultural adjustment and work adaptability of the migrant workers are both significantly high.

SUGGESTIONS

- ❖ Cultural orientation sessions and basic language courses should be conducted for the migrant workers to adapt easily to the new environment. Employees should be provided with proper training for better work adaptability.
- ❖ Job instructions should be given for better employee confidence. Organizations should provide better working conditions, pay scales, and job security for better employee satisfaction. The organizational management should provide a supportive work environment for migrant workers.
- ❖ Teamwork, equal treatment, and interaction between local workers and migrant workers should be encouraged. Facilities such as accommodation, transportation, and healthcare should be provided for better employee

satisfaction. Regular feedback sessions should be conducted for better employee satisfaction. Employees should be allowed to express their grievances for better organizational actions.

- ❖ There is a need for the development of skills among the staff through continuous training and up-skilling programs that increase the efficiency of the workers and their careers. There should be mentoring or buddy systems where senior personnel mentor and guide migrant.

CONCLUSION

The research conducted on the issue of cultural adaptation and job adaptability of the migrant workers at the manufacturing firms in Coimbatore provides valuable insights on the impact of cultural adaptation on the performance of the employees. It emerges from the study that factors like language problems, organizational culture, and social integration influence cultural adaptation among employees. The employees who receive support from their organizations and work in comfortable environments are able to adapt easily. There is also a correlation between cultural adaptation and the levels of job satisfaction and productivity. The research concludes that there is a need for companies to adopt human resource management strategies to facilitate cultural and job adaptations of the migrant employees. The paper highlights the importance of organizational interventions such as orientation program and teamwork. Addressing the issues of cultural differences and creating favorable environments could contribute greatly to reducing stress and increasing productivity.

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