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# A Study on Cross Cultural Management and International HR Practise in IT Sector - Bengaluru, India

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### ABSTRACT.

In an increasingly globalized business environment, understanding and adapting to cross-cultural dynamics has become essential for effective Human Resource (HR) practices. This study explores the real-life experiences and perceptions of working professionals in India regarding cross-cultural management and international HR practices. Drawing from diverse responses, the findings reflect a significant awareness among Indian employees about cultural alignment in performance evaluation, HR communication, and training practices. Many participants feel their performance goals are aligned with their cultural expectations, though a few express concerns about inadequate cross-cultural sensitivity in global HR strategies. While some organizations offer comprehensive cross-cultural training before international assignments, others still lack structured programs, leading to challenges in employee adaptation and cultural integration.

Respondents value HR practices that are culturally sensitive—especially in areas like feedback systems, promotion criteria, and managerial communication. The feedback also highlights discomfort among some employees when addressing cultural conflicts with HR, indicating the need for a more inclusive and empathetic environment. Employees stressed the importance of communication styles that respect regional and cultural nuances, suggesting that "one-size-fits-all" policies may not be effective in India's diverse context.

This survey-based study emphasizes the need for HR leaders to move beyond generic global models and develop policies that resonate with local culture. By integrating cultural sensitivity into performance management, training programs, and leadership development, companies can foster a more inclusive and motivated workforce. The research encourages organizations in India to rethink their global HR strategies, aiming for culturally attuned practices that enhance both employee satisfaction and productivity.

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**KEYWORDS:** Cross-Cultural Sensitivity, Inclusive HR Practices, Cultural Training Programs, Localized Global HR Strategy, Employee Experience in Multicultural Workplaces.

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### INTRODUCTION:

In today's interconnected world, especially within the fast-paced IT sector, managing a diverse workforce has become both a challenge and a necessity. As global teams collaborate across borders—from India to the U.S., Germany, or Japan—cultural differences in work styles, communication, and expectations often surface. This research shines a light on the growing importance of cross-cultural management and International Human Resource Management (IHRM) in such environments. It explores how HR professionals can create inclusive and effective strategies for recruitment, training, performance appraisal, and employee engagement that honor cultural diversity while aligning with organizational goals. With technology reducing geographical barriers but not cultural ones, the study highlights the urgent need for culturally intelligent HR practices that can bridge gaps and build cohesive, high-performing global teams.

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### RESEARCH OBJECTIVES.

1. To explore how people of different cultures define fairness in performance appraisal systems.
2. To learn about how expatriate families cope with cross-cultural environments and how they influence employee retention.
3. To determine personality characteristics that lead to effective international assignments.
4. To create workable HR strategies that combine global standards with domestic culture values.
5. To evaluate how cross-cultural training meets employees' expectations and minimises adjustment stress.

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## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. **Mendenhall et al. 1987 – “Expatriate selection, training, and career pathing”** – This review points out that many companies handle expatriate management in a reactive way, which often leads to problems. The authors suggest creating a structured system that includes the whole expatriate journey. This system should cover selecting the right people, training them well, and planning their career paths. By doing this, companies can reduce the chances of expatriate failure. Being prepared strategically helps employees adjust better to international roles and builds strong leadership for future positions in large companies.
2. **Mendenhall & Black et al. 1990 – “Cross-cultural training effectiveness”** – This paper looks at a lot of research on expatriate training over many years and offers a model for creating better training programs. The authors say that training expatriates before they go abroad, especially on cultural and interpersonal skills, is very important. This helps them adapt better and face fewer problems when they are overseas. Well-trained expatriates are more likely to stay and succeed in their international assignments.
3. **Caligiuri et al. 1998 – “Family adjustment and expatriate success”** – Many failures of expatriates are not because of work problems, but because of family challenges while living abroad. This study shows that HR should support not only the expatriate but also their spouse and children. Helping the whole family adjust to a new culture can reduce the chances of leaving the assignment early and improve performance.
4. **Richard D. Lewis et al. 1999 – “When Cultures Collide”** – Lewis provides a practical model that helps understand different cultural behaviors. This model divides cultures into three groups: linear-active, multi-active, and reactive. This tool helps HR and managers understand how people from different backgrounds communicate, make decisions, and work together. Using these insights can help international teams avoid misunderstandings and work more effectively.
5. **Aycan et al. 1999 – “Culture Fit Model in HRM practices”** – These authors suggest that HR practices like hiring, motivating, and evaluating employees should match the cultural values of the local area. When there is a good fit between HR practices and the culture, employees are more willing to accept them and the organization works better. This study gives a framework for companies to adapt their HR strategies locally while still maintaining global standards.
6. **Caligiuri et al. 2000 – “Big Five personality traits as expatriate predictors”** – This study finds that certain personality traits, such as openness, emotional stability, and being outgoing, are strong signs of success for expatriates. HR should consider these traits when selecting people for international assignments. This helps identify people who are more likely to adapt to new cultures and stay in their roles longer.
7. **Caligiuri et al. 2001 – “Met expectations theory in expatriate adjustment”** – This research applies the concept of “met expectations” to cross-cultural training. It shows that when expatriates’ expectations match what they actually experience, they adapt better to their new environment. Custom training that gives a realistic preview of the culture helps reduce anxiety and improves performance. This makes training an important part of global mobility strategies.
8. **Andreassi et al. 2014 – “Cultural impact of HR practices on job satisfaction”** – This study of 48 countries shows that good HR practices lead to higher job satisfaction, but how effective they are depending on the culture. The authors recommend a balance between keeping HR practices consistent globally and adapting them to local needs. This balance helps maintain employee happiness and supports business success in different countries.
9. **Brewster & Sparrow P et al. 2017 – “A new model for global HRM”** – This study suggests a three-part approach to global HRM: keeping a global standard, being responsive to local needs, and focusing on employee needs. The authors argue that being too strict globally or too local can both cause problems. HR must create systems that fit different cultures while still meeting company standards.
10. **Kim et al. 2019 – “HR integration challenges in cross-border M&As”** – Mergers between companies in different countries often fail when HR practices don’t match the cultural norms of the new company. The review says HR plays a key role in aligning practices, helping with change, and building trust. It emphasizes that HR should be involved early in the process to avoid issues caused by cultural differences.
11. **Mayrhofer et al. 2019 – “Context and HRM: Theory, Evidence, and Proposals”** – This paper says that culture alone isn’t enough to explain why HR practices work well. Other factors, like national laws, economic conditions, and institutions, also play a role. The authors use data to suggest a model that considers all these factors. They recommend that companies include different context layers into their HR strategies to succeed in foreign markets.
12. **Ashta et al. 2020 – “Work design expectations in Japanese MNCs”** – This study looks at how local managers in the U. S., Thailand, and India view work design under Japanese multinational companies. It finds that cultural values like hierarchy and independence shape expectations. Companies need to design HR practices that fit these cultural norms to keep employees engaged, productive, and reduce problems in international operations.
13. **Neher et al. 2022 – “Improving employee acceptability of performance management across borders”** – This study uses the idea of reciprocity to propose better performance management systems that fit different cultures. These systems help employees feel that the process is fair, which increases their motivation and teamwork. Multinational companies must tailor performance systems to local values to build trust with employees and reduce cultural resistance.

14. **Firliandini & Ahman et al. 2022 – “Human Resource Practices and Policies: A Literature Review”** – This review shows the trend in HR research, covering topics like green HRM, diversity, and managing Gen-Z workers. The research mostly uses qualitative methods, which means there is a need for more varied approaches to better understand how HR policies work in different cultural and organizational settings.
15. **Caligiuri & Caprar, Von Glinow et al. 2022 – “Developing cultural agility”** – This study defines cultural agility as the ability to understand different cultural contexts and act appropriately. Drawing from experiences around the world, it offers tools for HR to train leaders to work effectively in varied cultural settings. The paper highlights that flexibility and open-mindedness are essential skills for leaders in today’s global business environment.

#### Research Gap:

While there is extensive research that points to the impact of culture on global HRM practices like performance management, expatriate adjustment, and cross-border integration, there is limited consensus-driven, applied frameworks for putting cultural sensitivity into practice under the dynamic, uncontrolled realities of the real world. Most studies are conceptual or standalone by region or by HR function. In addition, few studies probe the interaction among individual characteristics, organizational environment, and national culture altogether. There is also a requirement to go beyond qualitative insights and create predictive, scalable models to inform HR choices in multicultural settings.

**Table 1: Review of analysis**

Citations	Author/Year	Research Design	Objective	Findings
01	Mendenhall et al. (1987)	Review + Model Proposal	To critique expatriate HR systems and propose solutions.	Integrating career pathing and training lowers failure in global placements.
02	Mendenhall & Black (1990)	Literature review	To assess training effectiveness for cross-cultural assignments.	Structured training reduces cultural shock and improves performance abroad.
03	Caligiuri et al. (1998)	Quantitative	To study how family adjustment influences expatriate success.	HR must support entire expatriate families to improve retention and success abroad.
04	Aycan et al. (1999)	Theoretical Model	To introduce a culture fit framework for HR practices.	HR systems work better when aligned with local cultural values and norms.
05	Caligiuri (2000)	Quantitative	To assess the role of personality in expatriate outcomes.	Openness and emotional stability predict retention and positive supervisor ratings.
06	Caligiuri et al. (2001)	Experimental	To examine how expectation alignment affects adjustment.	Pre-departure cultural training improves expatriate adaptation and lowers failure rates.
07	Lewis (1999)	Conceptual Framework	To propose a cultural typology for better management.	The Lewis Model aids communication, leadership, and teamwork in diverse cultures.
08	Andreassi et al. (2014)	Quantitative	To explore how cultural values impact the effectiveness of HR practices.	HR practices boost satisfaction globally, but impact varies by cultural context; achievement orientation universally enhances satisfaction.
09	Brewster et al. (2017)	Theoretical	To develop a triadic model of global HRM.	Success lies in balancing global consistency, local adaptation, and people-centered policies.
10	Mayrhofer et al. (2019)	Mixed (survey + contextual)	To propose context-aware HRM beyond culture-only models.	National institutions and economic systems must also shape HR strategies for effectiveness.
11	Kim et al. (2019)	Literature review	To analyze HR integration in cross-border M&As.	HR must drive cultural alignment early in M&As to reduce friction and enhance synergy.

12	Ashta (2020)	Qualitative (interviews)	To examine cultural expectations of work design in Japanese MNCs.	Cultural clusters shape expectations; local alignment increases engagement and lowers conflict.
13	Firliandini & Ahman (2022)	Literature review	To map themes and trends in HR practices and policies.	Calls for more mixed-methods; HR practices vary across organizational and generational contexts.
14	Neher et al. (2022)	Conceptual framework	To propose a culturally sensitive framework for performance management.	Customizing performance appraisal by culture improves fairness perceptions and employee motivation.
15	Caligiuri & Caprar (2022)	Conceptual Study	To define and explain cultural agility in international work.	HR must cultivate adaptive behaviors and mindset for global leaders.

### CONCEPTUAL MODEL.

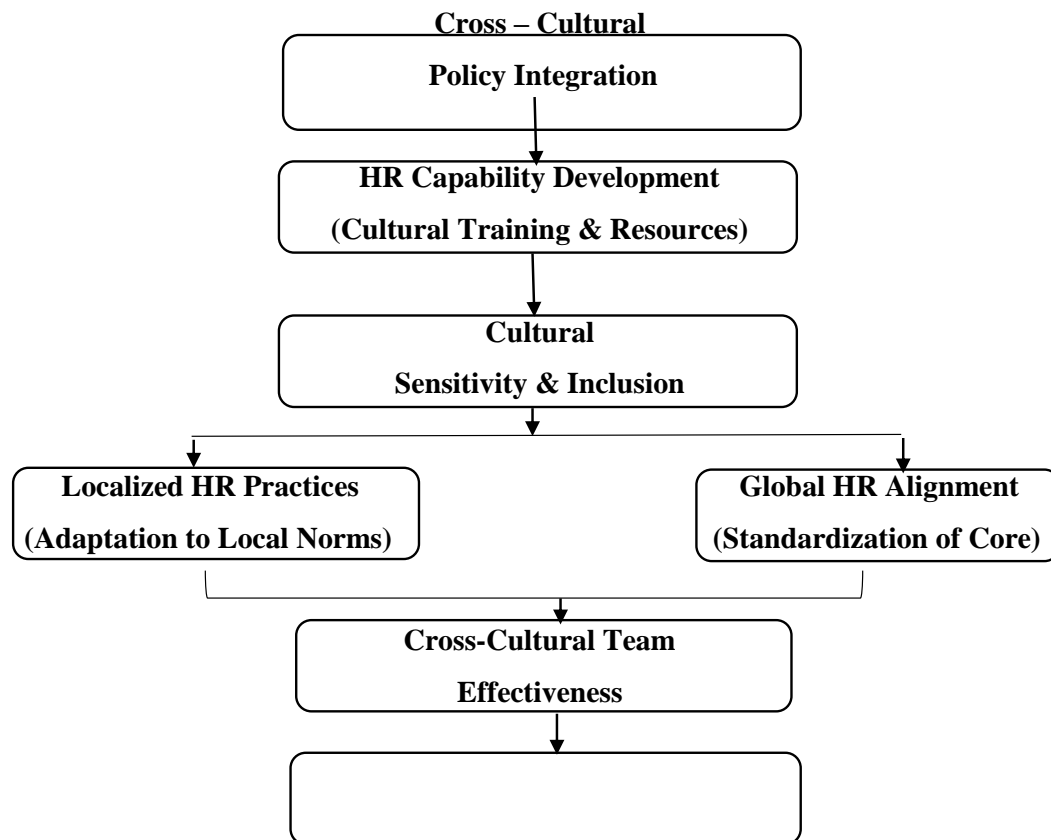


Figure No 01: This figure showing the conceptual model HRM.

### PROBLEM STATEMENT

In today's global work environment, organizations are becoming increasingly diverse. Yet, when it comes to mental health and employee well-being, many companies—especially in manufacturing sectors—fail to consider the cultural sensitivities and differences that exist across international teams. Despite global awareness and policies such as the Mental Healthcare Act (2017), many HR departments still focus only on physical health, absenteeism, and output, overlooking the emotional and psychological needs of employees.

In cross-cultural settings, this problem becomes even more complex. Different cultures view mental health in different ways, and unfortunately, HR practices often do not reflect this diversity. As a result:

- Employees from various cultural backgrounds may feel unheard or misunderstood.
- HR teams often lack training in culturally appropriate mental health support.
- Stigma around mental illness prevents open conversations in international teams.
- Policies rarely include clear, inclusive guidelines for psychological well-being.

This mismatch between cultural realities and HR practices leads to stress, miscommunication, and disengagement, affecting employee satisfaction, retention, and overall performance. A more inclusive, culturally sensitive approach to HR is urgently needed in international workplaces.

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## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

To understand how cross-cultural management and international HR practices are being experienced and applied in the IT sector of Bangalore, this study adopts a **mixed-method research approach**. This method allows us to explore both the measurable trends and the lived, human experiences behind those trends.

### A. Method

#### 1. Primary Data Collection:

The heart of this research lies in direct interactions with professionals working in Bangalore's IT sector. A **sample size of 54 respondents** was selected using **purposive sampling** to ensure participants had relevant experience in multicultural teams or exposure to international HR practices.

The primary data was collected through:

- **Structured Questionnaires:** Distributed to HR managers, team leads, and IT professionals working in multinational companies. The questionnaire focused on areas like cultural challenges, global HR practices, employee engagement, and training.
- **Semi-Structured Interviews:** Conducted with selected HR professionals to gather deeper insights into how they address cross-cultural issues on the ground. These conversations helped capture practical experiences and real-world HR responses that a survey might miss.

This blend of quantitative and qualitative data allowed for both measurable results and context-rich narratives.

#### 2. Secondary Data Collection

To support and validate the primary data, secondary sources such as:

- Academic journals on cross-cultural HRM.
- Company HR policy documents (where accessible).
- Reports from consulting firms like Deloitte, PwC, and SHRM.
- Government and industry reports on Bangalore's IT workforce.

#### 3. Data Analysis

- **Quantitative responses** (from surveys) were analyzed using descriptive statistics to identify patterns and trends across the sample.
- **Qualitative responses** (from interviews) were examined through thematic analysis to bring out recurring challenges, strategies, and culturally sensitive practices shared by professionals.

#### Sample Size

**Total Firms Covered:** 18 IT companies across the Bangalore region.

- **Respondents:**
  - Around **2–3 employees per company**, representing different departments and roles involved in culturally diverse teams → **44 employees**
  - **1 HR Manager or professional** per firm, involved in shaping or implementing global HR strategies → **10 HR professionals**

#### Sampling Technique

- A **stratified purposive sampling** method was adopted to select employees from small, medium, and large IT firms in **Bangalore**.
- The stratification was done based on:
  - ✓ **Organization size** (small, medium, large),

- ✓ **Team diversity level** (multicultural, expatriate, local),
- ✓ and **international HR exposure** (companies with global operations or clients).
- This approach ensured that the selected participants were relevant to the research focus—individuals with actual experience in **cross-cultural collaboration and international HR practices**.

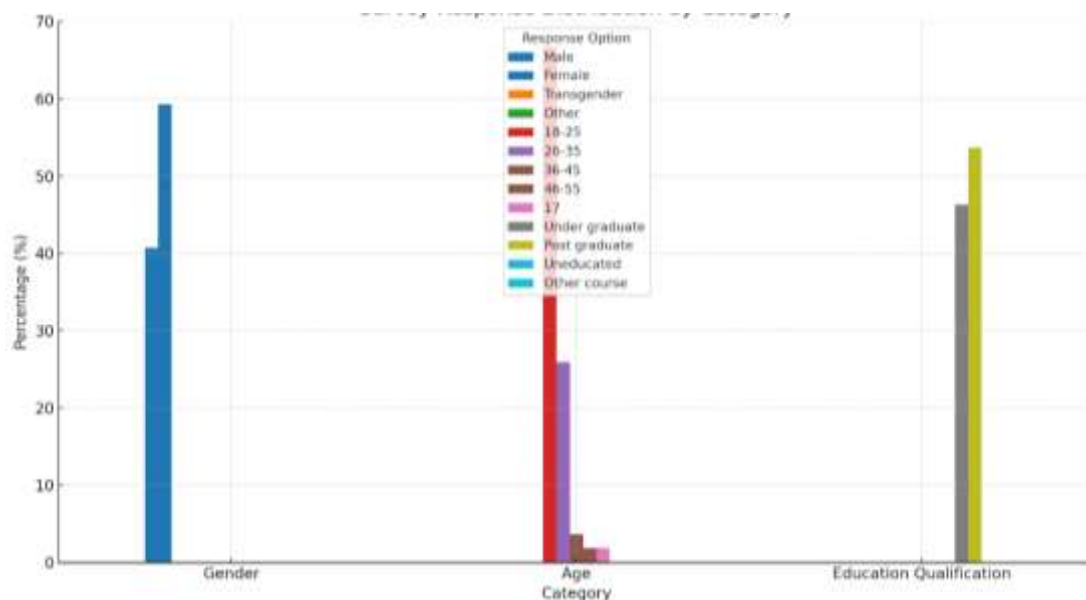
**B. Table 02: Variable description.**

Variable Type	Variable	Description
Independent	Cross-Cultural Policy Presence	This checks whether the IT company has a clearly defined policy for managing cultural diversity. It's a simple yes or no: does the policy exist or not?
Independent	HR Cross-Cultural Training Index	This measures how often and how effectively HR provides training related to cross-cultural communication and global team management. It's scored from 0 to 5.
Dependent	Employee Inclusion & Integration Score	This reflects how well employees from different cultural backgrounds feel included, respected, and engaged. It's measured using a validated employee inclusion scale.
Dependent	Workplace Conflict or Miscommunication Rate	This tracks the frequency of culture-related miscommunications or conflicts in teams, often recorded through HR reports or employee feedback.
Mediator	Availability of Cross-Cultural Support Tools	This includes the availability and use of cultural support systems like intercultural mentors, diversity committees, or language resources.
Control	Team Size, Company Type, Employee Experience	These are background variables used to control the study results. For example, a larger or more globally exposed company may naturally handle diversity differently.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION (SURVEY FINDINGS)

### ► Demographic Profile of Respondents:

- **Age Group:** The majority of respondents were aged 18–25, indicating a youthful, early-career professional base.
- **Gender:** Female respondents outnumbered males, with a small representation from transgender individuals.
- **Educational Background:** Most participants held undergraduate or postgraduate qualifications, showing an educated sample typical of the IT sector.



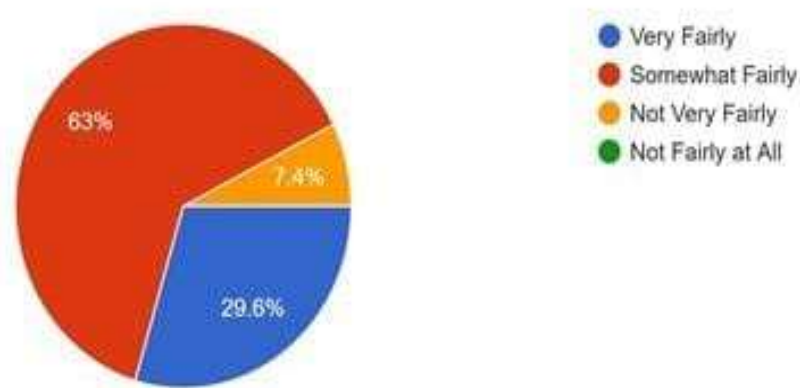
**Figure No 01: Showing the demographic profile of respondents.**

### Interpretation:

The dominance of young, qualified professionals suggests that insights gathered are shaped by people still forming global workplace attitudes. Their responses may reflect both adaptability and vulnerability when faced with cross-cultural challenges.

► **Perception of Performance Evaluation Fairness:**

- Most respondents felt their performance is "Very Fairly" or "Somewhat Fairly" evaluated.
- A minority believed it was "Not Very Fairly" done.



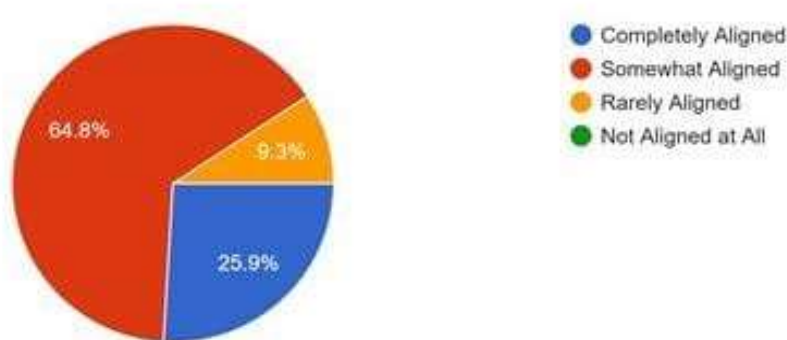
**Figure No 02: Showing the perception of performance evaluation fairness.**

**Interpretation:**

While a large portion sees performance reviews as fair, there remains concern among some about bias—possibly due to cultural differences not being fully acknowledged in evaluation processes.

► **Alignment of Performance Goals with Cultural Expectations:**

- Over half of the participants reported that their performance goals were "Completely Aligned" or "Somewhat Aligned" with their cultural values.
- A smaller group indicated "Rarely" or "Not Aligned" responses.



**Figure No 03: Showing the performance goals with cultural expectations.**

**Interpretation:**

Alignment between personal cultural norms and organizational expectations is generally positive, but organizations still need to bridge gaps where goals feel misaligned or disconnected from cultural identity.

► **Access and Effectiveness of Cross-Cultural Training:**

- A significant number had received some form of cross-cultural training, with feedback ranging from "somewhat helpful" to "very effective."
- A notable portion still indicated no training provided or minimal exposure.

• **Yes, very comprehensive** – 20.4%

• **Yes, somewhat helpful** – 63%

• **Minimal training only** – 9.3%

• No training provided – 7.4%

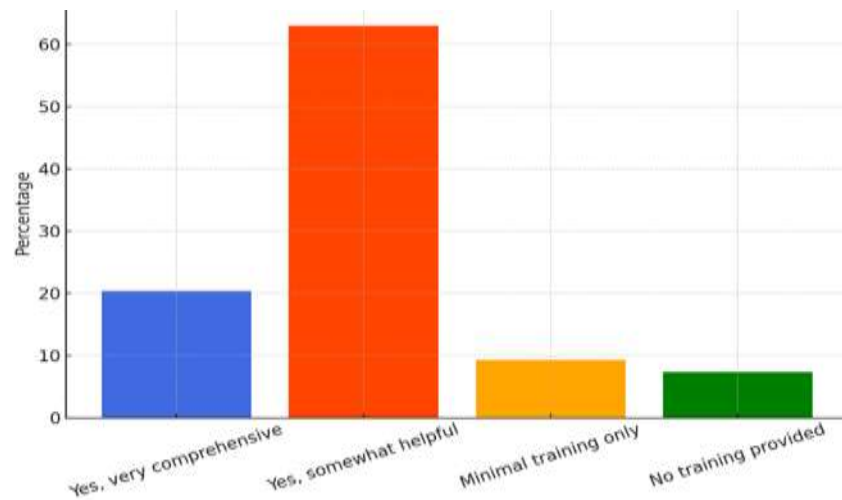


Figure No 04: Showing the access and effectiveness of cross-cultural training.

#### Interpretation:

While many IT firms offer training, consistency and depth vary. There's a clear need to standardize and personalize cross-cultural training programs, especially for global assignments.

#### ► Organizational and Family Support During International Assignments:

- Many respondents felt their organization “fully” or “partially” supported family relocations.
- Several said family support strongly influenced their decisions to accept or remain in global roles.

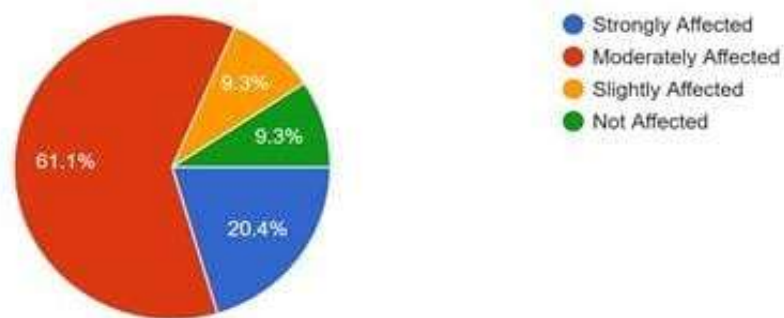


Figure No 05: Showing the Organizational and Family Support During International Assignments.

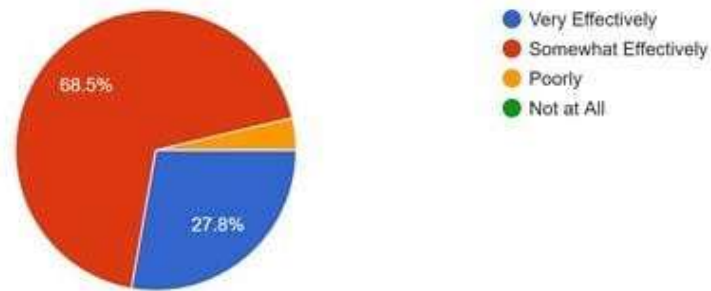
#### Interpretation:

Family wellbeing significantly affects international HR mobility. When support is lacking, employees may avoid or prematurely end foreign assignments.

#### ► Cultural Concerns During Mergers/Acquisitions:

- Many agreed that cultural issues were “very effectively” or “somewhat effectively” addressed.
- A few expressed concerns that such transitions lacked cultural consideration.





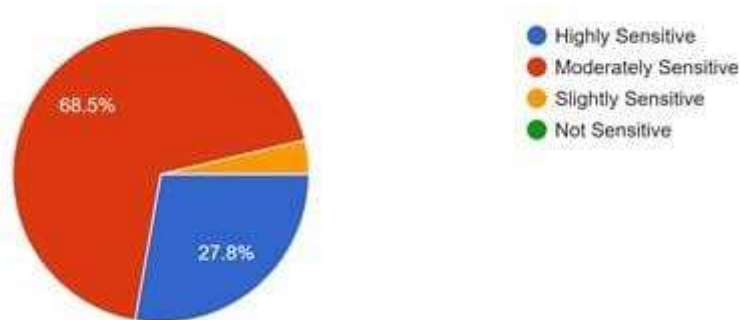
**Figure No 06: Showing Cultural Concerns During Mergers/Acquisitions**

**Interpretation:**

Effective communication and cultural integration remain vital in M&A settings. Misalignment can erode trust and performance.

► **Communication and Cultural Sensitivity:**

- Most employees reported that their communication styles were respected and that managers showed high cultural sensitivity.
- Comfort with expressing cultural differences to HR was also generally high.



**Figure No 07: Showing Communication and Cultural Sensitivity.**

**Interpretation:**

This is a promising indicator that inclusive and respectful communication practices are present, though continued efforts are essential, especially in culturally diverse teams.

► **Views on One-Size-Fits-All HR Policies:**

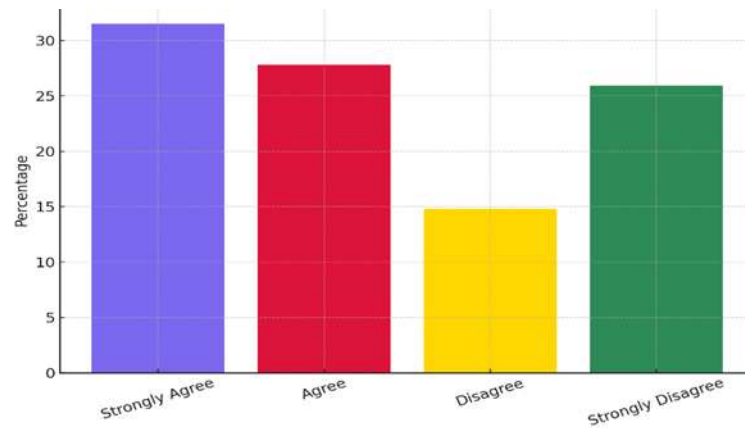
- A significant number of respondents disagreed with standardized global HR policies, citing cultural conflicts and misfits.
- Many supported customized feedback and recognition systems based on cultural context.

· **Strongly Agree** – 31.5%

· **Agree** – 27.8%

· **Disagree** – 14.8%

· **Strongly Disagree** – 25.9%



**Figure No 08: Showing Views on One-Size-Fits-All HR Policies**

#### Interpretation:

Employees are clearly calling for a shift from uniform policies to tailored, culture-aware HR solutions that reflect their unique identities and work values.

#### Conclusion, Limitations of the Study, Practical Implication, Future Recommendations:

This study highlights that while global connectivity has made collaboration across borders easier, true integration comes from understanding and respecting cultural diversity within organizations. In Bangalore's IT sector, employees value culturally responsive HR practices—especially in performance evaluation, training, and family support during international assignments. The research underscores that inclusive and flexible HR strategies, not rigid global templates, drive employee satisfaction, retention, and cross-cultural harmony.

The study was limited to 54 participants from select IT firms in Bangalore, which may not represent all industry perspectives. The purposive sampling technique, while effective for relevance, may have excluded voices from less-experienced or non-HR personnel. Additionally, cultural interpretation is subjective, and the findings may vary across regions or industries.

Organizations should invest in tailored cross-cultural training, redesign performance appraisals with cultural fairness in mind, and support the families of international assignees. HR teams must act as cultural bridges—fostering inclusion, reducing miscommunication, and adapting policies that celebrate cultural uniqueness rather than suppress it. These changes can lead to more engaged teams and stronger global performance.

Future research should adopt a larger, more diverse sample across different regions and industries to enhance generalizability. Studies could also explore the long-term impact of cultural agility training and develop predictive models that help HR practitioners proactively manage cultural dynamics. Integrating AI and data analytics into cross-cultural HRM may also offer new insights for improving inclusivity and decision-making.

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