

# Mncs in china: recruitment and selection practices



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## Research Proposal: The Study of Recruitment and Selection Practices of MNCs in China

As an increasing number of organizations enter the global business arena, the number and extent of business representatives crossing international borders has surged dramatically (Graf, 2004). It is, thus, imperative for multinational corporations (MNCs) to attract, select, develop and retain employees who can live and work effectively outside of their own national borders (Caligiuri, 2000). Simultaneously, accompanied by the increase of local employees, these MNCs have begun to recruit qualified members from local labour market in their host-countries. In China, owing to these MNC's competitive salary and good work condition, the recruitment often attracts many people's attention. However, China's historical development, political structure and culture, & international relations influence its economy and foreign trade. Also, China's special infrastructure and energy structure, legal framework pose a challenge to business. Therefore, some standardized recruitment and selection methods developed in home country have to be modified according to Chinese situation. In that case, the study of recruitment and selection practices of MNCs in China, actually, illustrates how to develop IHRM practices under conditions of high cultural and institutional distance between partners.

## **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Nowadays, a number of studies have examined the degree to which subsidiary HRM practices resemble those of host country organizations, an indication of transfer of practices from the MNC parent company to overseas units (e. g. Lu & Bjorkman, 1997; Wang, 2002; Dana, 2005). These body

researches have identified a range of host country, MNC home country, MNC, and subsidiary factors associated with the pattern of HRM in overseas units. However, these literatures speak more to describe the continuity and change between home- & host-country in strategic level and analyze the different patterns of HRM in foreign subsidiaries than to concentrate on one area of HRM practices in a specific and systematic way and the means of transfer. Additionally, the limited empirical work that has been carried out on the processes of HRM transfer has typically adopted an MNC control and coordination perspective to describe and explain how HRM is diffused across borders, often revealing the use of multiple mechanisms both 'direct' and 'unobtrusive' in nature (Myloni & Mirza, 2004). In depth case studies, on the other hand, have typically focused on a broader range of mechanisms or HRM practices, but have typically concentrated only on cultural or power relations explanations behind their usage (e. g. Martin and Beaumont, 1999; Ferner et al, 2005).

In light of the above discussion, my study will focus on recruitment and selection practices of MNCs in China through which detailed practices are transferred to foreign subsidiaries. The goals of this research are 1) to describe these recruitment and selection practices how to manipulate in their China's subsidiaries in a specific and systematic way, especially concentrate on their recruitment and selection methods in practical, 2), to analyze the means and influences of transfer these recruitment and selection practices to China's HRM and 3) to find out why there are systematic differences found in the use of integration mechanisms for different recruitment & selection practices.

As Gary (2006) said that there was basically no enterprise-level human resource management in China between 1949 and the 1990s. Until now, in terms of selection and recruitment process, Chinese enterprises do not have systematic policies as complicated as those of MNCs. When MNCs import the selection and recruitment process from their parent company, actually, they also introduce the advanced selection and recruitment concept to China. However, they have to pursue recruitment rules in line with the local legislations. Therefore, studies on the manipulation and transfer of recruitment and selection practices in MNCs will come to further recognise the pertinence of the individual HRM practices and the HR function. Furthermore, it is significant and practical to study the MNC's recruitment methods in China, which can help us to have a further understanding to the IHRM and the development of the HRM in China. This study seeks to fill the gap by evaluating the MNC's recruitment and selection practices in China and provide a new perspective to Chinese local enterprises in how to introduce these practices and manipulate them. From it we can know in what aspects the MNC's recruitment and selection practices are more rational and scientific than Chinese local enterprises.

## **RESEARCH QUESTIONS**

The purpose of the paper is to determine and empirically examine the multinational corporations how to manipulate recruitment and selection practices in China. For the purpose of this paper I present followed questions in order to exhibit a panorama of MNC's recruitment and selection status quo in China.

The first question is 'Who do they want?' Large multinational corporations, along with domestic Chinese companies, are finding that acquiring talented employees is more than ever, one of their greatest challenges in China. Strangely, China has long been known as a largest source of labor. Why these MNCs still feel the shortage of employees? What kind of people do these MNCs want? Do they have some common characteristics? Do they have some different requests when they recruit people in China and from their parent country? Therefore, the first step is to define the job and the person firstly, namely, how to determine a job vacancy in these MNCs? How many steps to determine it? All of these relevant questions will be addressed in this part. It will portray an explicit scene to readers about the preliminary phase & demand of MNC's recruitment in China.

The second question is 'How do they attract the people they want?' As Iles and Salaman (1995) said, the actual channels or vehicles used to attract candidates...seem to influence whether the right kind of applicants are encouraged to apply, and to persist in their application. Organisations can choose from a wide variety of methods, including the use of informal personal contacts, formal personal contacts, notice boards, advertising, and external assistance. Which methods are the most popular and useful? How to choose the methods? Is it relevant to the level of the vacancy and its importance within the organization?

The third question is 'How do they identify them?' The stages described above constitute recruitment, and are primarily concerned with generating a sufficient pool of applicants. The focus now shifts to selection, and the next stages concentrate on assessing the suitability of candidates. There is no

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denying saying that various selection techniques are available, and a selection procedure will frequently involve the use of more than one. The most popular techniques will be outlined in my paper, and their validity, effectiveness and cost also will be discussed in China's context. Are they still useful? Are they need to be modified when introduce them to China?

The last question is ' How do they know they have got it right?' The final stage of the recruitment and selection process concerns measurement of its success, both qualitatively and quantitatively. ACAS guidelines suggest that any recruitment and selection system should be based on three fundamental principles: effectiveness, efficiency and fairness (ACAS, 1983). Furthermore, we should not forget that ethical issues arise concerning the treatment of people during recruitment and selection which always make the recruitment and selection be more complexity. Therefore, what methods could have been used to monitor the effectiveness of the recruitment campaign? And what could be done to integrate national and regional recruitment?

## **RESEARCH DESIGN**

### **Research Approach**

To avoid " analysis paralysis", it is important that the business analyst not delve into too much detail too early in a project. It is more important to understand the forest than worrying about each and every tree. Of key importance is not to fall into the black hole of technical detail and exception (Yin, 2003). Yet, as discussed by Whetten (1989), two different approaches may be taken, or combined. In the first, the researcher works within an explicit theoretical framework. Therefore, a theoretical framework becomes a researcher's first cut at making some explicit theoretical statements (Miles & <https://assignbuster.com/mncs-in-china-recruitment-and-selection-practices/>

Huberman, 1994). This approach is known as deduction. In the second, the researcher tries not to be constrained by prior theory and instead sees the development of relevant theory, propositions, and concepts as a purpose of the project. This approach is generally known as induction. However, it is often the case that much research starts with testing a given theory or literature but also seeks to generate new insights into these topics possibly by investigating this in different contexts and therefore, this research is iterative in its approach to theory. It adopts a flexible approach by seeking to use the literature but extend this to different research settings to generate new insights in order to modify, adapt or qualify the existing theory on the field of study.

In that case, in this research both approaches will be combined since the main intent is to study a relatively un-researched topic -from the practical manipulating perspective to study the MNC's recruitment and selection practices in the background of China, within the bounds of an already well-established research program (theory of recruitment and selection practices in MNC). Hence, I choose not to ignore previous work in the field. I intend to develop a conceptual model built on over ten years of research that is a conceptual advance on the literature. The model of the participation context within which MNCs in China operated is comprised of at least four sets of issues. These issues will be then used to develop the initial coding scheme for the qualitative analysis of data. However, given that this study is aimed at theory building, not theory testing, the theoretical framework and conceptual model will be used solely as a guide. It help make sense of what occurred in the field, ensured that important issues will not be overlooked,

provided a set of provisional constructs to be investigated, and guided my interpretation and focus. Subsequent analysis iterations can then delve into the exception situations and details. This use of the theory accords with Klein & Myers' (2001) recommendation that the empirical research needs to be guided by (or at least informed by) one or more social theories.

### **Research Inquiry**

After this initial review of the research questions and research approach, the research inquiry most appropriate to the problem would be descriptive and exploratory. Descriptive research, also known as statistical research, describes data and characteristics about the population or phenomenon being studied. Descriptive research answers the questions who, what, where, when and how (Kotler et al., 2006). The object of descriptive research is to portray an accurate profile of persons, events and situations. Exactly, the first step of my research is to establish an explicit profile of these MNCs how to manipulate the recruitment and selection practices in China. Exploratory research, which also will be used in my dissertation is a type of research conducted because a problem has not been clearly defined (Kerlinger, 1986). Exploratory research helps determine the best research design, data collection method and selection of subjects. Given its fundamental nature, exploratory research often concludes that a perceived problem does not actually exist. The results of exploratory research are not usually useful for decision-making by themselves, but they can provide significant insight into a given situation (Kotler et al., 2006). In my dissertation, I will focus on through clearing about the MNC's manipulation practices on recruitment and selection in China exploring new insight to this topic.



When framing descriptive questions in research we must clarify our ‘ unit of analysis’. It is the major entity that is being analyzed in the study. It is the ‘ what’ or ‘ whom’ that is being studied (Earl, 2005). The unit of analysis in my dissertation is group, the MNC’s subsidiaries in China.

### **Research Design**

Exploratory research often relies on secondary research such as reviewing available literature and/or data, or qualitative approaches such as informal discussions with consumers, employees, management or competitors, and more formal approaches through in-depth interviews, focus groups, projective methods, case studies or pilot studies (Kotler et al., 2006). And the descriptive research describes characteristics of a population on phenomenon and tries to understand the nature of the problem. Therefore, the secondary research and survey are the main research design. Secondary data, which is historical data mainly include previously collected, census of population and literature survey. And the survey design is most frequently associated with deductive strategy because it is often based on testing a theory. As Saunders et al (2007) note that surveys allow for the collection of a large amount of data from a sizable population. The survey data also allows a lot of control over the data and makes generalizations by using sampling procedures rather than surveying the entire population. The type of survey is cross-sectional studies (also known as cross-sectional analysis), which form a class of research methods that involve observation of some subset of a population of items all at the same time, in which, groups can be compared at different sections with respect of independent variables (William, 2006).

**Research Site**

The type of organization that I would study is the subsidiary of MNC in China, especially the top 500 companies. Compared to other companies, these top 500 companies always have a good reputation at their mature, systematic and advanced management techniques. These companies almost spread all over the economic sector in China and produce important influences to Chinese economy and society. Furthermore, owing to these top 500 MNC's more competitive salary and good work condition, their recruitment often attracts many people's attention. Most of these companies are concentrated on Chinese big cities, such as Shanghai and Beijing. The theoretical sampling is the sampling way I will choose. The goal of theoretical sampling is not the same as with the probabilistic sampling; the researcher's goal is not the representative capture of all possible variations, but to gain a deeper understanding of analysed cases and facilitate the development of analytic frame and concepts used in their research (Charles, 1994).

**RESEARCH METHODS**

There are mainly two research methods would be used in my dissertation. The first is the review of current relevant articles focusing on recruitment and selection practices in MNCs. It will help me to build the main theory framework of the dissertation. This method is often the most feasible one, particularly for students or others with restricted time and resources, and can legitimately be used provided its limitations are clearly understood and stated. Furthermore, it also has the bigger and more representative sample in related field. I will screen papers by 'recruitment and selection' and by numerous variants of keywords, focusing specifically on 'China', 'MNC', '

assessment center', and 'work sampling' etc.. Source papers will be chose just from refereed research studies, surveys and empirical reports conducted by companies' official website, local offices of international HR consulting firms, and articles from professional journals and news sources.

The second research method is the survey, which is the most important source of supplementary material to the dissertation. That is, based on the theory framework, the results of survey can be a supplement to these theories and provide practices examples to them. These surveys covered five areas, including the recruitment and selection process, the recruitment methods, the selection methods, the recruitment and selection principles, and other archival documents will also be collected. Furthermore, it also can provide some new insight to the dissertation through the open-ended interviews. Here, personal interviews, telephone surveys, mail surveys, and computer direct interviews will be conducted. In-depth survey, based on semi-structured questionnaires and open-ended interviews with general managers, HR directors, and employees in HR Department will be carried out over a period of two months. Now, there are a lot of chat groups on the internet through QQ (the most popular chat software in China) and MSN. Once you join these HR professional chat groups, you can know hundreds of people who are engaged in the work related HR and get the contact way of them, most of time is email address. Through these chat groups I have known a lot of people who are working in different subsidiaries of MNCs in China. Some of them are employee in HR department, but some of them even are the HR directors in these company. Furthermore, some of my pre-

classmates and friends are working in MNCs, they also can help me to finish the surveys.

Therefore, I intend to distribute approx 400 questionnaires through email and at least 20 interviews through face-to-face, computer, or telephone to achieve

from June through August of 2008 in Beijing and Shanghai. Compared to the telephone interview, face-to-face interview, and computer direct interview, email surveys are both very economical and very fast. It allows the respondent to answer at their leisure, rather than at the often inconvenient moment they are contacted for a phone or personal interview. For this reason, they are not considered as intrusive as other kinds of interviews. However, many people dislike unsolicited email even more than unsolicited regular mail. (Selwyn and Robson, 1998). Furthermore, in order to get more detail data, face-to-face interview is necessary. Longer interviews are sometimes tolerated. Particularly with in-home interviews that have been arranged in advance. People may be willing to talk longer face-to-face than to someone on the phone. Considered some inconvenient factors, telephone interview and computer direct interview also can be a supplementary method.

## **METHODOLOGICAL CONSIDERTATIONS**

The empirical paradigm holds assumptions based on the supposition that an external world of objects exist, that the assumptions “ can be measured independently of one another, that these objects are lawfully interrelated, and that the relationships are mediated by a real force in objects that is

called causation” (Cook, 1983). In order to determine causal relationships in a test environment, generalizability is of utmost importance (Runkel and McGrath, 1972). Yet if I wish to generalize my findings, scope and variance must be emphasized generalizability. One solution to this problem is to perform a greater number of observations, which has a dual effect: first, it increases the sample population, which heightens generalizability; second, precision can be reasonably maintained because the random errors between observations will average out. However, no matter how carefully these three forms of generalizability are applied, there is no absolute guarantee that the results obtained in a study will occur in every situation outside the study (Firestone, 1993).

Reliability refers to the degree of consistency with which instances are assigned to the same category by different observers or by the same observer on different occasions. As mentioned in above, through studying MNC’s recruitment and selection practices in China, I hope it could be a good reference to Chinese local enterprise when they introduce and use these recruitment and selection methods. Therefore, I should consider more related environmental and social factors in a big background. Furthermore, in order to enhance the reliability of study, all of the respondents I will choose are those who are working in subsidiaries of MNCs in China.

Generally, in qualitative research measurement validity is considered to be high because the researcher is close to the research setting and is responsible for data collection. Therefore, in qualitative research validity always relates to ‘ whether there is a good match between researchers’ observations and the theoretical ideas they develop’ (Bryman, 2001) On the <https://assignbuster.com/mncs-in-china-recruitment-and-selection-practices/>

one hand, I choose to use the literature review to build the basic framework of the dissertation, which can make sure I can get the most reliable, extensive and completed data. On the other hand, questionnaires and interviews can help me to get new insight and practical examples to this topic. Furthermore, there are a lot of conventional approaches to enhance the validity of qualitative data. Generally, theoretical sampling which I intend to use in this dissertation can be viewed as a technique of data triangulation: using independent pieces of information to get a better fix on something that is only partially known or understood (Charles, 1994). Also, the Refutability Principle which I will obey stresses that we must avoid the temptation to jump easily into conclusions just because there is some evidence that seems to lead in an interesting direction. Instead, we must subject the evidence to every possible test.

Compared to other practices, recruitment and selection are always assumed to have high compatibility between countries because they are characterized by the technical ingredients attached to various positions (cf. Anderson, 1992; Watson, 1994). However, owing to directly utilizing some commonly-applied western theoretical frameworks and instruments, findings may not fully detect the cultural nuances in the Chinese employees; the narrowly geographically-concentrated sampling and access may prevent generalization of findings to the broad Chinese context. Obviously, with the limitation of the data, additional research is needed to develop the topic further, which until now has been largely black-boxed.

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