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HUMAN RESOURCE ISSUES IN INTERNATIONAL BUSINESS AND MANAGEMENT: A REVIEW

DEEPTI SEHGAL ASST. PROFESSOR DEEN DAYAL UPADHYAYA COLLEGE DELHI

ABSTRACT

When a firm chooses to internationalize itself one of the most crucial decision is to select an appropriate mode of entering a foreign market. The next challenge is to take a series of decisions associated to human resource. The present paper makes an attempt to review existing literature on human resource strategies for individual modes of entry that facilitates efficient management of international operations. Whereas mergers and acquisitions require that different decisions pertaining to people needs to be taken during three stages, in cooperative joint ventures decision has to be taken whether the human resource function has to be carried independently or jointly. Acquisitions have a significantly greater autonomy in operations than greenfield investment.

KEYWORDS

International entry modes, human resource management.

INTRODUCTION

There are a variety of reasons for which a firm wants to expand into overseas markets. Some firms pursue internationalization strategies to capture market share thereby maximizing its profits. While others desire to go global to compete internationally. Whatever be the reason may be a firm deliberates over a series of crucial decisions to ensure survival and growth in an ever-changing environment.

Deciding upon an entry mode in foreign market upholds much significance. An entry mode is the medium employed to enter into an overseas market. Alternate modes of entry ranging from exporting to foreign direct investment seems ideal in unique set of circumstances. Each individual entry mode necessitates idiosyncratic human resource strategy.

Much previous studies have stressed upon the role of human resource in survival and growth of an international organization. As firms open up to new markets human resource professionals dwell upon a set of diverse themes:

1. Which staffing model would be most appropriate?

- 2. How to exercise control over human resource function of subsidiaries abroad?
- 3. Is there a need for training and development programmes?
- 4. What strategies should be adopted to ensure efficient functioning of cross-cultural teams?
- 5. How to prevent cultural shocks especially amongst families of expatriates?

The present paper seeks to review present literature on human resource strategies employed in varied modes of entry and present a comparative picture of people-oriented policies and practices across various modes.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- 1. To identify different human resource strategies associated with international modes of entry.
- 2. To analyse global human resource strategies associated with international business.
- 3. To recognise differences in human resource strategies across entry modes

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Patricia H. Werhane (1988) argued that in the case of mergers and acquisitions the basic employee rights that are not always respected include right to information, the right to participate in management decision to accept or fight the merger, and job protection for long term loyal "at will" employees. The lack of respect for employee rights translates into equal loss of commitment, loyalty, responsibility and trust. The right to participate in management is an equal employee right not an unlimited one.

John Hannon Ing-Chung Huang Bih Shiaw Jaw (1995) empirically identified different international human resource (IHR) strategies and demonstrated how they relate to various interorganizational interdependencies. It was found that dependence on parent's resources is associated with globally integrated IHR strategies; dependence on local resources is related to locally responsive IHR strategies, and the influence of host institutions on IHR strategy depends on the level of the parent's ownership.

Peter Lorange (1996) observed that human resource(HR) function may differ dramatically among different types of cooperative ventures. In a project-based cooperative network, the HR function will largely be carried out by each partner in a "compartmentalized" manner and largely on behalf of his or her own organizational entity. A similar type of separate Human resource management(HRM) arrangement among the partners will have to be made in renegotiated alliances. The human resource function will probably also to some extent be dealt independently by each parent in the cooperative venture with permanent roles complementary by the parents. Finally, for the jointly owned ongoing cooperative venture business a strong and full-fledged HRM function will have to be established within the joint venture itself.

Karen Roberts Ellen Ernst Kossek Cynthia Ozeki(1998) empirically observed that managing a cross-national workforce differs from the traditional staffing mindset. SWAT team assignments can be useful in setting up new operations where start-up skills are needed for a brief period. Virtual communications that are not necessarily task-oriented but that foster interpersonal exchanges enable task information to flow more smoothly. Through long rotations with in-depth experience, aspatial careerists acquire globally applicable skills. These strategies allow firms operating on a global basis to make the best use of their widely dispersed internal resources and find innovative solutions to their HR problems.

Anne-wil-Harzing (2002)) argued that compared to greenfields, acquisitions were allowed to operate more independently with lower levels of control exercised towards them. This was also reflected in the lower level of expatriate presence in acquisitions in general and the lower importance of functions of expatriation

Barbara Myloni Anne-Wil Harzing Hafiz Mirza (2004) collected data from multinational subsidiaries located in Greece and local Greek firms and examined the degree to which several HRM practices in multinational subsidiaries resemble local practices. Cultural and institutional forces lead MNCs to adapt practices conforming to local norms up to a point. At the same time, they point to a considerable degree of HRM transfer, something that results in the use of hybrid HRM practices. Certain HRM practices are more localised and affected by the host country's cultural and institutional environment, while other practices are more likely to be integrated throughout the MNC and show a higher level of conformity to the headquarters' practices.

Randall S. Schuler (2004) recognized that effectively managing international mergers and acquisitions(IM&A) requires dealing successfully with many significant HR issues. Each stage of the IM&A process presents new challenges as well as new opportunities to create value by managing people effectively. Performance of a HR due diligence is crucial at pre-combination stage. The stage of combination and integration requires some degree of integration of systems and processes in order to achieve key synergies. Solidification and Assessment stage requires a thorough assessment of new HRM policies and practices.

Mark Fenton O' Creevy Paul Gooderham Odd Nordhang (2008) explored the determinants of subsidiary autonomy in setting human resource management practices within US parented multinationals in Europe and Australia. Subsidiaries with a domestic market orientation have a significantly greater measure of

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local HRM autonomy than those with international market responsibilities. Institutional location of the subsidiary and the degree to which it confronts labour unions are significant determinants of HRM autonomy of subsidiaries.

Carl F. Fey, Sergey Morgulis-Yakushev, Hyeon Jeong Park and Ingmar Björkman (2009) empirically demonstrated that HRM practices are levers through which employee ability and motivation can be increased, and these practices in turn increase MNE subsidiary performance.

Saul Estrin Delia Baghdasaryan Klaus E. Meyer (2009) argued that a cooperative mode may be more appropriate for multinational firms for which access to local resources is of greater significance than managing the relationship with local partner. In countries with very different human resources investors may prefer to set up greenfield operations that allow them to select and train their staff in such a way that they fit in. Companies entering foreign countries first time must adapt their organizational structures to make better use of available labour pool. Experienced investors may have already developed human resource systems adapted to the workforce characteristics in host country.

Sona Ferecikova, Daniel Krajcik, Lucia Krajcikova empirically showed that HR in many foreign direct investment companies has reverted to a transactional role, focusing on lay-offs, cost cuts, and the need to manage trade union relations. The economic crisis of 2008 has moved HR into pragmatic roles: to keep the employees engaged, motivated and loyal seem to be more important for the companies than to engage the HR function into strategies of the companies and to create a real strategic partner out of that.

HUMAN RESOURCE STRATEGIES

Author	Mode of Entry	Year	Human Resource Strategy
Patricia H. Werhane	Mergers and Acquisitions	1988	Engagement of employees in decision making is crucial for survival
John Hannon Ing-Chung Huang Bih Shiaw Jaw	Subsidiaries	1995	Greater parent dependency and ownership necessitates more reliance on global integration of workforce Greater socio-economic and legal differences will permit the development of localized Human Resource Management. Dependence on local resources of host country firm will select a local human resource strategy.
Peter Lorange	Multinational Cooperative Ventures	1996	HR function to be carried out in a compartmentalized way in project-based cooperative ventures Permanent complementary role necessitates solid coordination of HRM functions of parents
Karen Roberts Ellen Ernst Kossek Cynthia Ozeki	International firms	1998	Aspatial Careers -Provide cross cultural training for families and recognize family life cycle realities Awareness Building Assignments-Use to develop local nationals and rotate employees with demonstrable competence SWAT Teams-suitable for small locations Virtual Solutions-Encourage virtual friendships
Anne-wil-Harzing	Acquisitions and greenfield investments	2002	Acquisitions operate more independently as compared to greenfield investments with lower levels of control exercised towards them reflecting lower level of expatriate presence in acquisitions.
Randall S. Schuler	Mergers and Acquisitions	2004	Pre-Combination stage requires performance of HR due diligence Combination and Integration stage require motivated employees. Retention of key employees is equally pressing Assessment of new HR policies and practices and new culture is vital for solidification and Assessment stage.
Barbara Myloni Anne-Wil Harzing Hafiz Mirza	Subsidiaries	2004	Lesser transferability of human resource practices in subsidiaries with local union representation Negative relationship between level of transfer of Human resource practices and the degree of subsidiary interaction with organization belonging to host country
Mark Fenton O' Creevy Paul Gooderham Odd Nordhang	Subsidiaries	2008	U.S. multinationals impersonally control human resource practices in European and Australian subsidiaries in matters relating to payrolls, workforce expansion, Recruitment and selection, industrial relations but exert indirect personal control over management development and training and development
Saul Estrin Delia Baghdasaryan Klaus E. Meyer	Cooperative Joint Ventures and Greenfield Acquisitions	2009	Adapt organizational structures to make better use of available labour pool Preference for greenfield operations in countries with distinct human resources as it permits selection and training in such a way that they fit in.
Carl F. Fey, Sergey Morgulis- Yakushev, Hyeon Jeong Park and Ingmar Björkman	Subsidiaries	2009	Shower trust and support towards employees Performance based compensation promotes desired behaviour Use internal promotion systems Information sharing on strategy and performance of company
Sona Ferecikova, Daniel Krajcik, Lucia Krajcikova	Foreign Direct Investment	2013	Keep the employees engaged motivated and loyal which is more important than to engage the HR function into strategies of the companies

CONCLUSION

This paper has attempted to present a comparative view of differences in human resource strategies across diverse international entry modes. Each entry mode is distinct from other modes. Different entry modes throw unique set of challenges for numerous functional areas across organisation. Managing human resource in mergers and acquisitions is significantly different from carrying out HR function in cooperative joint ventures. Whereas mergers and acquisitions require that different decisions pertaining to people needs to be taken during three stages, in cooperative joint ventures decision has to be taken whether the

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function has to be carried independently or jointly. Majority of the entry modes including mergers and acquisitions, foreign direct investment and wholly-owned subsidiaries identifies trust and employee loyalty important for business survival and growth. Employees should be allowed to participate in decision making from the time when decisions relating to mergers are contemplated upon. In subsidiaries with a domestic market orientation there is existence of local HRM autonomy. HRM practices also differ across economies. Whereas in liberal economies, employee dismissal is a routine task, in coordinated economies long-term labour contracts is an essential feature. But if we compare acquisitions with Greenfield investments, acquisitions have a significantly greater autonomy in operations than greenfield. However, It has been also observed that in global companies the management of acquisitions. International human resource management also needs to be reinterpreted globally with a special focus on language, distance and cultural differences. Managers should move away from traditional expatriate management and select from plethora of contemporary strategies, for example, aspatial careers and the like depending upon the organizational needs.

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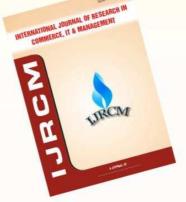
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