



The Choice of Tactics for Multinational Enterprises to Strengthen Organizational Culture in China

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Abstract. This essay starts with taylor's definition of culture in the book of primitive culture to sort out the organisational culture. In addition, through the review of existing studies, the article concludes that among the factors affecting the culture of multinational organisations in China, the leader's style is relatively the most important, and in terms of the tactics that organisers can choose to strengthen the organisation's culture, the act of setting up exemplary employees has a better efficacy in China. Finally, this article lacks an empirical analysis component, although it draws some new conclusions from existing research and can provide some management ideas for multinational organisations opening branches in China.

Keywords: Multinational organisation culture, New tactics

1 Introduction

Edward B. Tylor, in his seminal work 'PRIMITIVE CULTURE'^[1], defined culture as 'the complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, law, morals, custom, and any other capabilities acquired by man as a member of society'. After a few more decades, in 1976 Charles Handy, building on Tylor's work, considered that organisational culture includes not only values and beliefs, but also the mutual identification of the organisation's employees with each other^[2]. After 1980, the study of multinational organisational communication began to receive attention from some scholars, and was mainly applied to US-Japanese cooperation early on^[3].

Recently, following the advances of the last years, the study of organisation has been divided into two main branches. One on the measure of the organization research^{[4][5]}, and the other on the relationship between the organization culture and corporate performance^{[6][7]}. As the global economy continues to develop, many organizations have become multinational organizations^[8]. These organizations may face some problems caused by employees with different geopolitics, different national cultures, and different historical backgrounds.

Under this circumstance, many scholars have begun to study what factors can best influence China's organizational culture^{[9][10][11]}. Most of these studies conduct correlation analysis and discussion based on Hofstede's six dimensions^{[12][13][14]}, or study

the correlation between leader style and performance^{[15][16]}, but none of them specifically studies the impact of leader style on organizational culture.

Based on this research gap, the essay will focus on explaining why in china leadership style is also a more powerful factor affecting organizational culture, and shaping clear employee role models is the most effective strategy to strengthen organizational culture.

2 Factors Affecting MNOs Culture

According to existing research, the top three factors that most influence the culture of multinational organisations are leadership style, employee engagement and organisational structure.

In this regard, leadership style is related to the behavioural patterns of the leader. Leaders use different behavioural patterns to achieve their goals when influencing others. Often, the constant repetition of a particular leadership strategy leads to the development of certain characteristics in the leader^[17].

Employee engagement actually refers to an employee's emotional and intellectual commitment and dedication to the organisation. When they feel valued or motivated, they work harder and exhibit a range of behaviours that positively impact the company's operations^[18].

The third point of the organisational structure typically covers administrative elements such as hierarchy, reporting mechanisms and decision-making mechanisms within the organisation, which can influence the corporate culture in terms of employee communication and co-operation^{[19][20]}.

Generally, organisational culture is initially shaped by rules or beliefs created by leaders, such as Ben and Jerry's Ice Cream Company, which, even after being acquired by Unilever, still maintains a culture of environmental protection and philanthropy^[21].

Moreover, in practice the principle of attraction-selection attrition (ASA) is followed between the employees and the enterprise, the employees will be attracted by the enterprise culture which is similar to their own personality. For example, a tech company with an innovative approach may attract people who are willing to try new things, and those people are more likely to be retained by the company. In other words, actually, the influence of the employees on the enterprise culture is not a decisive factor. Therefore, the factors contained in employee engagement are usually only moderating factors to the corporate culture, and it is the performance of the organisation that is affected by employee engagement that really influences the corporate culture in this process^{[21][22]}.

Even if organisational structures are similar in each country, there are variations in traditional cultures, which can lead to differences in the effectiveness of a unified organisational structure in improving efficiency. In Ghana, high power distance and high ambiguity avoidance together have a significant positive effect on organisational culture, which can be manifested in inefficiencies in the reporting process or in the emergence of cliques headed by individual managers in the company^[23]. In some countries in the East European and Latin countries, the factor of power distance is not

high^[24]. In this case, the impact of organisational structure on organisational culture in China will undoubtedly be influenced by factors with Chinese characteristics.

Through the above description, it can be found that these three factors are not independent of each other, but have some kind of affiliation. Here the author argues that in the China region, inside the organisation, leader style can affect employee engagement and organisational structure^{[11][25]}. And outside the organisation, especially for multinational organisations, having a strong leader in the China region can have a decisive impact on the organisational culture of the whole branch^{[9][10]}.

To sum up, in most probability, as leader style can change other factors indirectly or directly, it is undoubtedly the factor that has the relatively strongest influence on organisational culture in Chinese companies of multinational organisations.

3 Tactics That Can Enhance Organisational Culture

As evidenced by scholarly literature, establishing model employees, improving internal communication strategies among employees and strengthening cross-cultural training are all tactics that can effectively strengthen organizational culture.

An effective communication strategy is about providing clear and consistent messages to employees in all locations. Developing cross-cultural training programs can help employees understand and respect different cultural norms and values^[26].

The act of establishing employee role models refers to selecting and promoting employees who embody the company's organizational culture and serve as examples for others to follow. For instance, Google uses a programme called "Noogler of the Month" to recognise employees who embody the company's values^[27]. Secondly, employee role models can also serve as mentors, providing guidance and support to other employees, which can foster learning and development within the organization.^[28]

But in fact, effective communication strategies, such as instructions and teachings from superiors to employees or strengthening training on cross-cultural projects, are only instilling organizational culture into employees through external means. However, the method of establishing model employees is different from the two. This is because it is a tactic that allows other employees to spontaneously learn the organizational culture. Besides, in Chinese organisational culture, "ren" or "benevolence" is highly valued. Employees who are seen as "role models" can set an example for others to follow, thus creating a positive organisational culture^[11].

High power distance refers to the acceptance of hierarchical structures and authority, and this environment can make it easier for exemplary employees to influence others, because typically when an employee is seen as a positive role model by his superiors, he is more likely to use his power to influence others. On the other hand, when employees see that those exemplary employees are rewarded with praise and money for following the organisational culture or rules within the organisation^{[29][30]}, they are more likely to follow suit, which in turn serves to strengthen the organisational culture^[31].

In addition, the strategy of setting exemplary employees creates a sense of community and camaraderie within the organisation and contributes to a more positive organisational culture. It also helps to develop a shared set of values and expectations, which in turn fosters better communication and cooperation, which can likewise contribute to the development of an organisational culture.

Over all, the strategy of establishing employee role models is an effective means of enhancing the influence of organizational culture in China. This approach fosters a shared understanding of organizational values and expectations among employees, and helps to create a culture that aligns with organizational goals.

4 Conclusion

In conclusion, this article systematically evaluates existing research on the determinants of organisational culture and the tactics that can potentially be effective in enhancing organisational culture in the Chinese branches of multinational corporations. The analysis highlights the primacy of leadership style as a determining factor in shaping organizational culture. Additionally, the establishment of employee role models is deemed the most efficacious tactic for enhancing organizational culture. While this article contributes to the literature by exploring the under-researched tactic of establishing employee role models, several limitations must be acknowledged. First, the analysis does not comprehensively assess all potential factors or strategies impacting organizational culture. Second, the study's findings are primarily relevant to the Chinese context, and thus may not be universally applicable to other cultures, particularly those with lower power distance or differing economic systems.

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