

Abstract of Doctoral Thesis

Title: Cultural-crossvergence, Embeddedness and Sustainable IHRM: A Chinese Central State-owned Enterprise and its Overseas Branches in Sub-Saharan Africa

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Chinese engagements in Africa have long been a contentious topic in media reports and academic studies. Chinese OFDI flows to Africa have been increasing steadily in recent years. Especially, the largest and most powerful state-owned enterprises (SOEs) are seen as bellwethers among Chinese MNEs that are investing and expanding their business overseas. Most of the previous International Business (IB) studies were conducted with Chinese private-owned enterprises (POEs), Chinese provincial SOEs, and Chinese self-employed entrepreneurs. Still, existing empirical studies about Chinese SOEs' organizational behaviors in sub-Saharan Africa, from and for emerging countries are inadequate.

The author aims to contribute to the discourse on Chinese engagement in sub-Saharan Africa by international human resource management (IHRM) discipline through a multilevel cross-cultural lens. The research utilizes the mixed methods embedded single case study approach. Both qualitative and quantitative data collection processes and analyses were conducted underpinned by an exploratory sequential design. The most important finding was that the practice of building trust relations by knowledge and information sharing among Chinese expatriate managers and local line managers spurs the development of a cultural-crossvergent IHRM system. Qualitative network analyses show that Chinese expatriates' social networks promote internal and external stakeholder engagement and cultural adjustment in the host locations. Quantitative analyses indicate that the improvement of Chinese expatriates' cultural intelligence (CQ) can be associated with specific types of intercultural experience, and thus, provide implications about how to design and improve intercultural training programs or other forms of interventions. Effective Human Resource Development (HRD) combined with ethical Guanxi networking behavior is helpful to improve internal and external embeddedness within the MNE and local context. To conclude, the cultural appropriateness of the IHRM system, practices, and organizational culture is of great importance to Chinese SOEs' organizational transformation in achieving sustainable long-term development.