

CORPORATE CULTURE AND EXPATRIATE SELECTION STRATEGIES IN MNCs: ARE THEY RELATED? – SOME EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to examine whether an organisation's corporate culture has an impact on the expatriate selection strategies (including policies and criteria) used in multinational corporations (MNCs). In an exploratory study conducted in this paper, sixty-seven recruitment and selection professionals (such as human resource managers, employment consultants and recruitment agencies) responded to a survey questionnaire examining their organisation's corporate culture and expatriate selection strategies. The findings of the study indicate that an organisation's corporate culture does have some influence on its expatriate selection strategies, although the relationship between corporate culture and selection strategies is not strong. However, the small sample size, obtained in this study, prohibited the researcher from determining whether, given the influence of corporate culture, the expatriate selection criteria are also influenced by the preferred staffing policies of the MNC. Based on these results, the implications for International Human Resource Management (IHRM) are discussed and the limitations of the study and recommendations for future research are outlined.

CORPORATE CULTURE AND EXPATRIATE SELECTION STRATEGIES IN MNCs: ARE THEY RELATED? – SOME EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE

As an increasing number of organisations 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). However, it is surprising how little attention it has received in the International Human Resource Management (IHRM) literature (Huo, Huang and Napier, 2002). Furthermore, research has recognised the important role that corporate culture has played in determining the behaviour within the organisation (Sorensen, 2002). Past empirical research examining culture and expatriation is extensive, with the majority of research predominantly focusing on the influence of national culture (e.g., Cho and Yoon, 2001; Huo et al., 2002; Graf, 2004). As little research has been conducted to investigate the relationship between corporate culture and expatriate selection, the purpose of this paper is to address this gap by examining whether an organisation's corporate culture has an impact on the expatriate selection strategies (including policies and criteria) used in MNCs.

Corporate Culture

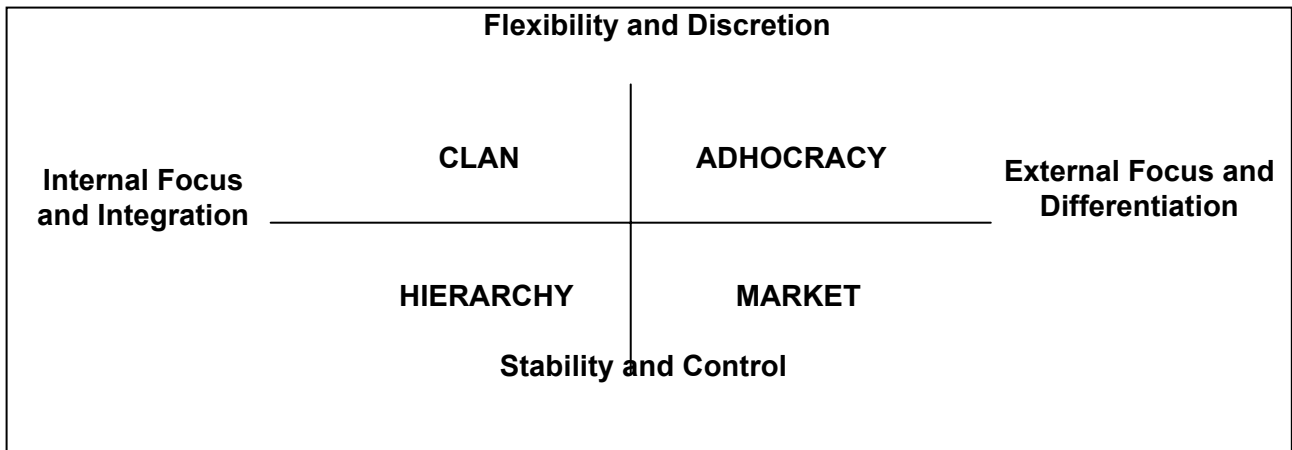
Despite its practical importance and face validity, corporate culture remains one of the most controversial areas among organisational theorists (Yeung, Brockbank and Ulrich, 1991), resulting in a lack of consensus among scholars regarding its definition. For example, Smircich (1983) attempts to define corporate culture based on two main uses. First, as an organisational variable which may "mould and shape internal culture to particular ways and how to change culture, consistent with managerial purposes" (p. 346); and second, as a root metaphor promoting "a view of organisations as expressive forms, manifestations of human consciousness" (p. 347). Other researchers (e.g. Van Muijen, et al., 1999: 555; Den Hartog and Verburg, 2004: 58), define corporate culture as "a set of core values, behavioural norms, artefacts and behavioural patterns which govern the way people in an organisation interact with each other and invest energy in their jobs and the organisation at large". However, this paper will refer to the term '*corporate culture*' (synonymous with '*organisational culture*') to mean a set of shared values, behaviours and norms shared by organisational members at the organisational level (Cho and Yoon, 2001).

Since the emergence of empirical studies recognizing the importance of corporate culture, scholars have proposed a variety of dimensions and attributes (e.g., Cameron and Freeman, 1991; Van Muijen et al., 1999), which has ultimately resulted in a lack of consensus as to how to characterise corporate culture. Nevertheless, one of the most widely recognised frameworks for determining an organisation's corporate culture, and perhaps one of the most influential of current models, is the Competing Values Framework (CVF) (Kalliath, Bluedorn and Gillespie, 1999).

The CVF was originally developed by Quinn and Rohrbaugh (1983) from an investigation of the major indicators of effective organisations. The resulting model depicted organisational effectiveness along two dimensions. The first dimension is related to organisational focus, from an internal emphasis on the well-being and development of people in the organisation to an external emphasis on the well-being and development of the organisation itself (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983). The second dimension is related to organisational structure, from an emphasis on stability to an emphasis on flexibility, representing the way organizations handle their internal components while simultaneously meeting the external challenges of competition, adaptation, and growth (Quinn and Rohrbaugh, 1983; Kalliath et al., 1999).

Combining these two dimensions yields four quadrants, each representing a distinct set of underlying values that guide organisations' environmental management and internal integration (i.e. the four corporate culture types) (Cameron and Quinn, 1999; Kalliath et al., 1999). Figure 1 illustrates the resulting competing values framework.

Figure 1: The Competing Values Framework



Adapted from Cameron, K. S. and Quinn, R. E., (1999), "*Diagnosing and Changing Organizational Culture: Based on the Competing Values Framework*", Addison-Wesley Publishing Company, Inc., Cambridge, Massachusetts, p. 32.

The classification of these four cultures was illustrated by Zammuto and Krakower (1991) and Cameron and Quinn (1999). *The Clan Culture*, represented by the upper left quadrant in Figure 1, places a great deal of emphasis on flexibility and internal focus and is often likened to a family, due to its propensity to exemplify characteristics such as teamwork, participation and corporate commitment to employees. *The Adhocracy Culture*, represented by the upper right quadrant in Figure 1, places a great deal of emphasis on flexibility and external focus. Thus, an important characteristic of this type of culture is the ability to adapt rapidly to change and meet new challenges, with a strong emphasis on growth and resource acquisition. *The Market Culture*, represented by the lower right quadrant in Figure 1, functions as a market in itself and is primarily focused on creating competitive advantage through market transactions. Thus, organisations resembling a market culture are results-oriented, focused on increasing market share and are highly competitive. Finally, *the Hierarchy Culture*, represented by the lower left quadrant in Figure 1, "reflects the values and norms associated with bureaucracy" (Zammuto and Krakower, 1991: 87). Thus, the hierarchy culture type is characterised by a formalised organisational structure, with internal control maintained by centralised decisions and an emphasis on stability, predictability and efficiency. These four types of cultures have been adopted in this paper as the measurement of a firm's corporate culture.

Expatriate Selection Strategies

It has been widely recognised that the recruitment, selection and placement of employees in positions where they can perform effectively is a universal goal for organisations around the world, as a mismatch between jobs and people can substantially reduce the effectiveness of other human resource activities (Huo et al., 2002). Nonetheless, organisations around the world have never implemented a uniform process for the recruitment and selection of personnel (Huo et al., 2002). Moreover, the recruitment and selection of expatriate managers will vary quite considerably to that of domestic employees and can incur substantially higher direct and indirect costs (Selmer, 2001; Franke and Nicholson, 2002). Unfortunately, many expatriates either return prematurely or perform poorly (Selmer, 2001). As a result, a vast array of extant literature has emerged exploring existing IHRM practices. Yet despite the abundance of literature professing the importance of the topic, there is little agreement about what strategies should be applied to select expatriate managers, with much of the research suggesting that selection processes and criteria vary according to the type of organisation and nationality (Franke and Nicholson, 2002). Extant literature can, therefore, be categorised into two distinct areas: expatriate selection policies and expatriate selection criteria. The former discusses particular policies employed to select expatriate managers, whereas the latter discusses particular criteria that have been used over the years.

Extant literature on expatriate selection policies identifies three main sources from which expatriate managers can be recruited for an international assignment (Phatak, 1995: 176): *Host-country nationals* (HCNs) are citizens of the country in which the organisation's foreign subsidiary operates; *Parent-country nationals* (PCNs) are "the citizens of the country in which the headquarters of the multinational are based"; and, *Third-country nationals* (TCNs) are "the citizens of a country other than the parent or the host country". The decision to use these three sources of expatriate managers is often determined by the organisation's general staffing policy. Extant literature has identified four major policies to multinational staffing decisions, which tend to reflect the managerial philosophy towards international operations held by top management at headquarters (Dowling, Welch and Schuler, 2004).

The *Ethnocentric Policy* to expatriate selection results in a preference for all key positions, everywhere in the world, to be filled by PCNs (Dowling et al., 2004; Shen and Edwards, 2004); and is more likely to be adopted where the MNC is in the early stages of internationalisation and when there is a prevailing need for control and coordination (Shen and Edwards, 2004). *The Polycentric Policy* is one in which HCNs are recruited to manage subsidiaries in their own country, whilst positions at corporate headquarters are occupied by PCNs (Phatak, 1995). The advantages associated with a polycentric policy, include: reduced costs, the elimination of language barriers, and familiarity with the national culture (Dowling et al., 2004). *The Regiocentric policy* represents a mixed approach to expatriate staffing, and is primarily available to MNCs whose operations are divided according to geographical regions; and allows for executives transferred between regional headquarters and subsidiaries to interact. Finally, the *Geocentric policy* has no regard for the nationality of the candidate or the location of the assignment. MNCs adopting such a policy simply recruit and develop the best person for the job (Robock and Simmonds, 1989). However, this type of policy is most often only found in organisations which possess a substantial amount of international experience and a well-developed international structure (Shen and Edwards, 2004).

Expatriate success has most commonly been determined by examining cross-cultural adjustment, performance and completion of the international assignment (Caligiuri, 2000). However, extant literature has placed a greater emphasis on cross-cultural adjustment, thus, identifying an extensive list of factors which have been found useful in predicting an expatriate's success. However, there is little consensus regarding which of these should be used in the selection decision (Franke and Nicholson, 2002). Nonetheless, research examining expatriate selection criteria indicates that the more prevalent selection criteria currently used in the expatriate selection decision include technical competence (Franke and Nicholson, 2002); motivation (Welch, 2003); previous job performance, managerial talent, and independence of mind (Franke and Nicholson, 2002); language fluency (Franke and Nicholson, 2002; Graf, 2004); interpersonal skills (Huo et al., 2002); personality characteristics (Caligiuri, 2000; Selmer, 2001); family issues (Franke and Nicholson, 2002); and previous overseas experience (Franke and Nicholson, 2002; Huo et al., 2002).

Impact of Corporate Culture on Expatriate Selection Strategies

Few empirical studies have attempted to explore the direct relationship between corporate culture and expatriate selection. In contrast, empirical research examining the effects of culture on international selection has identified links between national culture and the use of expatriate selection strategies (e.g. Cho and Yoon, 2001; Huo et al., 2002). Therefore, since national culture has been found to have a profound impact on the expatriate selection strategies of MNCs, this paper aims to identify whether corporate culture may, likewise, impact upon the use of certain expatriate selection policies and criteria in MNCs.

Several studies examining the relationship between corporate culture and recruitment and selection, in general, have found that corporate culture is often used as a selection criterion when recruiting employees. Of particular interest to this study is the research conducted by Yeung et al. (1991) into the relationships between corporate culture and human resource practices. Yeung et al. (1991) found that all six domains of human resources activities (i.e. staffing, development,

performance appraisal, reward, communication, and organisational design) differ significantly across different types of cultures. This suggests that whilst domestic staffing practices have been found to differ among different types of cultures, the expatriate selection strategies of MNCs will, likewise, be influenced by corporate culture.

Therefore, based on the above findings, the following research questions are thus proposed for further investigation:

Research Question 1a: Is an organisation’s choice of expatriate selection criteria influenced by the organisation’s corporate culture?

Research Question 1b: Is an organisation’s choice of expatriate selection policies influenced by the organisation’s corporate culture?

Research Question 2: Given the influence of corporate culture, is an organisation’s choice of expatriate selection criteria also influenced by the approach/policy it would like to use?

METHODOLOGY

Sample

Five hundred and ten recruitment and selection professionals working in MNCs, such as human resource managers, employment consultants and recruitment agencies, were randomly selected for inclusion in this study. An overall response rate of approximately 15% was achieved, however, since 12 respondents indicated that their organisation does not or no longer recruit expatriates, only sixty-seven completed and returned questionnaires were useable for data analysis. The sample consisted of 38.8% Males and 59.7% Females. Sample demographics are shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: Gender and Age of Respondents

Age	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
Under 25	-	1	-	1
26 – 35	5	20	-	25
36 – 45	7	12	-	19
46 – 55	9	3	-	12
Over 55	5	4	-	9
Not Recorded	-	-	1	1
Total	26	40	1	67

Table 2: Areas of expertise of Respondents

Area	Male	Female	Unknown	Total
Human Resource Manager	3	11	-	14
Managing Director	4	2	-	6
Consultant	3	4	-	7
General Manager	-	1	-	1
Director	3	5	-	8
Human Resources Director	3	1	-	4
Vice President of Human Resources	1	1	-	2
International Human Resources Coordinator	1	-	-	1
Manager	4	6	-	10
Training & Development Manager	-	1	-	1
Other	1	4	-	5
Not Recorded	3	4	1	8
Total	26	40	1	67

Measures

Corporate Culture. Following many previous researchers investigating corporate culture (e.g. Cameron and Freeman, 1991; Yeung et al., 1991; Zammuto and Krakower, 1991), this study assessed corporate culture through the Organisational Culture Assessment Instrument (OCAI), a questionnaire, based on the CVF. Respondents were asked to respond to six items, each assessing the key dimensions of corporate culture (dominant characteristics, organisational leadership, management of employees, organisational glue, strategic emphasis, and criteria of success) (Cameron and Quinn, 1999). Within each of these six items, respondents were asked to rate four alternative scenarios, each representing the four culture types identified in the CVF, using an ipsative scale, in which a total of 100 points is distributed among the four scenarios according to how well they represent their organisation. For example, in item one, if a respondent perceives scenario A as representing their organisation to a large degree, scenario B and C as somewhat representative, and alternative D as hardly representative of their organisation, the respondent might give 50 points to A, 20 points each to B and C, and 10 points to D. Thus, the OCAI identifies the underlying assumptions of the organisation, whilst indicating both the type of culture(s) that characterise the organisation and the strength of the culture (Cameron and Freeman, 1991). It is important to note that an organisation's corporate culture can be comprised of all four culture types identified in the CVF, with various emphases on each of them.

Expatriate Selection Strategies. The questionnaire used in this study assessed the organisation's expatriate selection strategies as consisting of two parts. Firstly, respondents were asked to rate the extent to which their organisation utilised a given set of selection criteria, using a 5-point Likert Scale (1 = Not at all; 5 = To a very large extent). These criteria were drawn from previous empirical research examining the most commonly used selection criteria for overseas assignments (as discussed above). Second, respondents were asked to indicate whether they utilised a deliberate company policy for selecting parent, host or third country nationals. Respondents answering "Yes", were then asked to indicate their preferred method of expatriate selection on a scale from 1 to 3 (1 = Most preferred; 3 = Least preferred). Respondents answering "No" were then asked if there was a deliberate company policy against selecting host or third country nationals.

Method of Analysis

Following the procedure recommended by Cameron and Freeman (1991), data analysis first focused on identifying the types of cultures present in respondents' organisations. A mean score was created for each culture type (A, B, C, and D) by averaging the points given to each of the four alternative scenarios in the OCAI (i.e. For each of the six items, all of the A responses were

averaged to create a mean score, all of the B responses were averaged to create a mean score, and so on). Each of these scores relate to a type of corporate culture (A = Clan Culture, B = Adhocracy Culture, C = Market Culture and D = Hierarchy Culture). Respondents were then classified into the different culture types based on the highest mean score (i.e. the dominant culture). For example; if a respondent scored higher on culture A (the clan culture type) than on B, C, or D, they were classified as a clan. If a respondent scored higher on culture B (the adhocracy culture type) than on A, C, or D, they were classified as an adhocracy; and so on. Respondents scoring equally high on two culture types could not be classified, and hence were not included in the analyses.

Using the culture type classifications, a Kruskal-Wallis test was used to determine whether an organisation's choice of expatriate selection criteria is influenced by the organisation's corporate culture. In addition, a chi-square test was used to determine whether the organisation's corporate culture has an impact on the decision to use a deliberate policy for selecting PCN, HCN or TCNs. However, no one respondent was completely characterised by one culture type, suggesting that each organisation is comprised of all four cultures. Therefore, Spearman's Rank Order Correlation was also used to further investigate the relationship between an organisation's choice of expatriate selection strategies (including the policies and criteria used) and the organisation's corporate culture.

Since the number of observations recorded for each preference of PCN, HCN and TCNs was very small (e.g. most had cell counts < 5), there was insufficient data to test whether an organisation's choice of expatriate selection criteria is influenced by the organisation's preferred policies, given the influence of corporate culture. Consequently, results and data analysis relating to research question 2 cannot be discussed.

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS OF DATA

No organisation was completely characterised by one culture type (i.e. no respondent gave 100 points to the same quadrant on all items in the OCAI); however dominant cultures were identified by the majority of respondents. For example; 40% of the firms surveyed were classified as having clan culture as a dominant culture, 3% were classified as having adhocracy cultures, 40% were classified as having market cultures; and 15% were classified as having hierarchy cultures.

A Kruskal-Wallis test was used to determine whether an organisation's choice of expatriate selection criteria is influenced by the organisation's corporate culture. Table 3 displays the results of the Kruskal-Wallis test. The Kruskal-Wallis test revealed no statistically significant difference at the $p < 0.05$ level for the four dominant culture types.

Table 3: Summary Statistics for the Kruskal-Wallis test

Expatriate Selection Criteria	Type of Culture								Chi Square	df	Sig.
	Clan		Adhocracy		Market		Hierarchy				
	Mean Rank	% of Firms	Mean Rank	% of Firms	Mean Rank	% of Firms	Mean Rank	% of Firms			
Technical Competence	32.36	37	40.25	3	28.98	39	34.44	13	1.483	3	0.686
Previous Job Performance	30.64	37	29.50	3	32.74	40	34.11	13	0.424	3	0.935
Motivation	34.72	37	27.00	3	28.67	40	35.56	13	2.347	3	0.504
Managerial Talent	30.70	37	25.25	3	31.28	40	39.28	13	2.132	3	0.545
Independence of Mind	34.02	36	29.50	3	29.70	40	30.61	13	0.904	3	0.825
Language Fluency	36.16	37	48.50	3	29.48	40	24.33	13	5.356	3	0.147
Interpersonal Skills	35.10	36	50.50	3	30.07	40	21.94	13	7.093	3	0.069
Personality Characteristics	32.34	37	45.00	3	32.04	39	24.61	13	2.865	3	0.413
Family Issues	29.90	37	22.50	1	32.87	40	32.83	13	0.695	3	0.874
Psychological Tests	30.16	37	58.50	3	34.20	40	24.61	13	6.813	3	0.078
Previous Overseas Experience	30.72	37	54.00	3	31.65	39	28.22	13	3.784	3	0.286

Total number of Firms = 67

Since the number of observations for each of the preferred PCN, HCN and TCN policies of expatriate selection was very small (e.g. most had cell counts < 5), no test could be used to determine whether an organisation's chosen policy of expatriate selection is influenced by the organisation's corporate culture, as this would create biased results. However, a chi-square test was used to determine whether the organisation's corporate culture has an impact on whether the organisation had a deliberate policy for selecting PCN, HCN or TCNs. Results revealed no statistically significant difference at the $p < 0.05$ level.

As no one firm was completely characterised by one type of culture, Spearman's rank order correlation was also used to further investigate the relationship between an organisation's choice of expatriate selection criteria and policies and the organisation's corporate culture, thus providing a different perspective. Table 4 displays the correlations between the variables. Due to the small number of observations provided for each of the preferred PCN, HCN and TCN policies of expatriate selection, and the fact that no firms had a deliberate policy against selecting HCNs or TCNs, these variables were omitted from Table 4.

Table 4: Correlations for the four Culture Types and Expatriate Selection Strategies

Expatriate Selection Strategies	Type of Culture			
	Clan	Adhocracy	Market	Hierarchy
<i>Expatriate Selection Criteria</i>				
Technical Competence	-0.025	0.266*	-0.026	0.056
Previous Job Performance	-0.161	-0.038	0.244	0.088
Motivation	0.169	0.103	-0.123	-0.019
Managerial Talent	-0.201	0.238	0.042	0.122
Independence of Mind	0.089	0.124	-0.200	-0.078
Language Fluency	-0.005	0.104	0.006	-0.075
Interpersonal skills	0.067	0.169	-0.170	-0.360**
Personality Characteristics	0.120	0.043	0.041	-0.197
Family Issues	-0.059	0.237	0.152	0.169
Psychological Tests	-0.030	0.040	0.001	-0.108
Previous Overseas Experience	-0.113	0.423**	-0.062	-0.014
<i>Expatriate Selection Policies</i>				
Deliberate policy for selecting PCN, HCN, &TCN	0.078	0.142	-0.254	0.110

** p<0.01

* p<0.05

Results revealed that an organisation's choice of expatriate selection criteria is weakly correlated within each of the four types of corporate culture. Moreover, an organisation's decision to utilise a deliberate policy for selecting PCNs, HCNs and TCNs is also weakly correlated with the culture types. Therefore, despite the fact that no significant differences were found between the firms' dominant culture and the expatriate selection strategies used, this finding indicates that an organisation's choice of expatriate selection criteria and policy is, in fact, slightly influenced by the organisation's overall corporate culture, which is comprised of all four culture types. Thus, based on this study it can be concluded that both research question 1a and 1b are supported. As mentioned previously, research question 2 could not be tested.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSIONS

Previous research exploring the relationship between corporate culture and expatriate selection is limited. Therefore, in an attempt to fill this gap in the literature, this paper aimed to investigate whether an organisation's corporate culture has an impact on the expatriate selection strategies (including policies and criteria) used in MNCs.

Based on the survey results, the links between the expatriate selection criteria and policies and the four types of corporate culture were examined. No significant differences were found on any of the criteria or policies, initially suggesting that a relationship does not exist. However, no one respondent was completely characterised by one culture type, suggesting that the corporate culture of each respondent's organisation was characterised by all four culture types. Therefore, Spearman's rank order correlation was also used to further investigate the relationship between the corporate culture and expatriate selection strategies of the firms surveyed. Results indicated a weak relationship between the two variables, suggesting that an organisation's corporate culture does in fact have a slight influence on its expatriate selection strategies.

Despite having limited research to compare findings, the results of this study reinforce the findings of earlier research conducted by Yeung et al. (1991), which demonstrated corporate culture's influence on a number of different human resource practices (including staffing). Furthermore, the findings of this research also confirm speculations that one of the influencing factors in determining the use of particular expatriate selection strategies is corporate culture.

Due to the small sample size, there was insufficient data to statistically confirm or deny the relationship between an organisation's choice of expatriate selection policy and the respective criteria, given the influence of corporate culture. Future research may be able to test such a relationship using larger sample sizes. Nevertheless, this research has raised at least two implications for managers. The researcher admits that these implications are speculative due to the exploratory nature of the study; however findings from this study do make these propositions plausible.

Firstly, the corporate culture of the subsidiary in the host-country may be substantially different to the corporate culture of headquarters in the home-country. Since the selection strategies used reflect the corporate culture of the MNC, although weakly correlated, the MNC is effectively selecting the expatriate to fit the corporate culture. Therefore, since effective expatriate selection has been identified to enhance the chance of success of an international assignment (Graf, 2004), human resource managers should consciously align their selection strategies with the corporate culture found in the host-country subsidiary. This will ensure that the impact of the MNCs corporate culture, in the home-country, will be minimal, as the expatriate chosen will be selected on their overall suitability to the assignment and the environment of the host-country subsidiary.

Secondly, despite not being able to test whether an organisation's choice of expatriate selection criteria is influenced by the organisation's preferred policies, at least one implication has arisen as a result of observations of the data. As the majority of respondents indicated that they do not maintain a deliberate policy for expatriate selection, although anecdotal, this suggests that human resource managers in MNCs do not place a high emphasis on the type of expatriate being chosen for the international assignment, but rather emphasise the skills and attributes that the candidate can contribute to the overall success of the assignment. Therefore, human resource managers should re-evaluate their expatriate selection policies to ensure that the use of ad hoc policies is avoided and the most appropriate expatriate is selected.

This study experienced a number of limitations to be considered for future research. The small sample size obtained in this study often made it difficult to detect a significant relationship between corporate culture and expatriate selection strategies. In addition, several factors contributed further to this limitation. In particular, following the methodology of Cameron and Freeman (1991), each respondent was classified into the four culture types based on their highest mean scores. Classifying respondents in this way further reduced the ability to conduct statistical tests and to detect significant differences between the cultures. Furthermore, the questionnaire was designed to identify respondents who utilise a deliberate policy for selecting expatriates, and, as such, acted as a 'filter'. Consequently, few respondents indicated that their organisation maintained a deliberate policy for recruiting expatriates (PCNs, HCNs, and TCNs) reducing the survey data further.

In addition, some researchers have argued that the use of an ipsative scale in the OCAI is a limitation in itself. For example, Quinn and Spreitzer (1991) argue that the scores assigned to each scenario are dependent on one another, consequently restricting the types of statistical tests appropriate for analysis. Furthermore, Cameron and Quinn (1999: 145) argue that statistical analyses "which are based on the assumptions of independent responses on each item are not appropriate for analysing this kind of data". To alleviate this limitation, some researchers have utilised similar instruments, to the OCAI, that are designed using likert scales. Nevertheless, many researchers have conceded that there are important advantages to using an ipsative scale in the OCAI, such as the ability to highlight and differentiate the cultural uniqueness that exists with organisations; and the fact that respondents are forced to identify the trade-offs that exist within the organisation (Quinn and Spreitzer, 1991; Cameron and Quinn, 1999).

Further research examining the relationship between corporate culture and expatriate selection strategies is needed in order to determine whether these factors contribute to the failure of overseas assignments. Despite the fact that this study only detected a weak relationship between corporate culture and expatriate selection, further research may reveal a stronger relationship.

With larger sample sizes and a focus on those organisations that specifically utilise a expatriate selection policies, different conclusions may be drawn. Thus, further research should try to replicate and extend the focus of this study.

Overall, this study illustrates a determinant of international recruitment and selection policies and practices, which has previously been under researched, and should, therefore, be viewed as contributing to the current IHRM literature. While the relationship between corporate culture and expatriate selection was found to be weak, human resource managers still need to be aware of the impact that the corporate culture of the MNC's home-country may have, not only on the recruitment and selection of expatriate managers, but also on the success of the international assignment as a whole.

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