

SUMMARY

WSB University in Gdansk

Faculty of Business

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT PRACTICES OF SCANDINAVIAN CORPORATIONS IN POLAND

Doctoral thesis written under the direction of

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The subject of the research work was corporations with Scandinavian capital with subsidiaries in Poland, pursuing business objectives also through human resources management (HRM) activities. The term is understood as "a strategic and consistent approach to managing an organization's most valuable assets - the people working in it who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of its goals." Behind the choice of such a dissertation topic was the author's conviction that the Scandinavian management model, including Scandinavian human resource management, is relatively poorly researched, especially in Poland. This was confirmed by the literature studies conducted by the author and presented in the dissertation.

As part of her research, the author of the dissertation attempted to find out whether the country-of-origin effect (COO) is evident in HRM practices. The theoretical work as well as the empirical work was to bring an answer to the main research question: What is the degree of transfer of HRM practices and what are these practices in the studied subsidiaries of Scandinavian corporations in Poland in the context of the country-of-origin effect? The conducted research process was to indicate whether a divergence or convergence approach is evident in the way of management in Polish subsidiaries, and in which specific area of HRM. The specific problems of the presented work are:

- 1. What are the features of the Scandinavian HRM model?*
- 2. In which HRM practices is the country-of-origin effect visible in the surveyed companies in Poland?*
- 3. What factors (cultural, institutional) favor and what factors hinder the transfer of Scandinavian human resource management practices in the studied companies in Poland?*
- 4. How do stakeholders in the studied companies in Poland perceive Scandinavian features or lack thereof in human resource management (favorable/negative impact)?*
- 5. What management model is prevalent in Scandinavian companies and visible in human resource management in these organizations?*

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The aforementioned problems were analyzed in the context of institutional theory, which assumes isomorphism. The author sought an answer to the question of which pressures the subsidiaries of Scandinavian corporations were subjected to: isomorphic, local conditions, or pressures from the parent company?

The work is based on sequential mixed-methods research, in which a quantitative study preceded a qualitative study. However, the qualitative study, which is part of the ethnographic research stream of the organization, carried the greater research weight of the main research objective. In this regard, the author explicitly stated that the paradigm that underpinned the work was constructivism - typical of qualitative research, in which it is assumed that individuals seek to understand the world around them, giving the surrounding reality and their experiences subjective meaning¹.

In connection with the chosen research strategy, the author of the thesis used the following research methods:

- literature studies, including previous scientific research in the area related to the subject of this dissertation,
- analysis of secondary sources - which include statistical data collected by both state entities (CSO), commercial research institutes and correspondent companies, reports and studies from the area of interest to the researcher,
- a pilot quantitative survey conducted using a standardized and structured questionnaire, on a group of 100 respondents,
- a multiple case study carried out by means of face-to-face, non-standardized and unstructured interviews and observations conducted in six Scandinavian companies.

The results of the author's research indicated the existence of management characteristics typical of the home countries of the companies surveyed (Denmark, Finland, Norway and Sweden). They also indicated the degree of transfer of this home management style, i.e.: in which areas in the company, the implemented solutions are more "characterized by Scandinavianism", and in which the culture of the host country, i.e. Poland, is more visible.

The theoretical and empirical work is composed of five chapters, and the way the dissertation is structured serves the main purpose of the work, described above. The first four chapters of the work are theoretical in nature, the fifth chapter, deals with methodological issues, and in it the author also extensively discusses the results of the empirical research conducted.

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¹ J. W. Creswell, *Research Design*, Jagiellonian University Publishing House, Krakow, 2013, pp. 33-36

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Keywords: cross-cultural management, human resource management, country of origin effect, transfer of management practices, HRM, divergence, convergence, trust in management, management by values.