

## ***Call for Papers Journal of Management Special Issue***

***Deadline for paper submissions: 30 September 2016***

# **Global Work in the Multinational Enterprise: New Avenues and Challenges for Strategically Managing Human Capital Across Borders**

### **Introduction**

As today's business activities have largely transcended national boundaries, global forms of work become an increasingly common phenomenon in multinational enterprises (MNEs). Such global work arrangements are defined as situations in which employees that are collaborating with each other are not only culturally diverse, but often also geographically distant from one another, and thus embedded in different national cultures and contexts (Hinds, Liu, & Lyon, 2011). The presence of cultural, linguistic, spatial, and temporal distances involved in global work, as well as distinct political, economic and societal institutions make the coordination of work and the management of people within MNEs particularly challenging (Aycan, 2005; Brock, Shenkar, Shoham, & Siskovick, 2008; Edwards & Kuruvilla, 2005; Kostova & Roth, 2002; Raghuram, Garud, Wiesenfeld, & Gupta, 2001; Welch & Welch, in press). These firms hence face pressures to continually realign their human resource (HR) systems with strategies aiming at operating in a global context. Moreover, identifying, attracting, developing, managing and retaining talent capable of effectively handling global complexity is of critical importance for MNEs and their HRM systems (Farndale, Scullion, & Sparrow, 2010).

Within the fields of International Business (IB) and Human Resource Management (HRM), global work, strategic HRM, and global talent management have thus far remained largely separate research streams. Existing IB research has mainly focused on the strategic design and local adaptation of HRM systems (e.g., Rosenzweig & Nohria, 1994; Schuler & Rogovsky, 1998), the role of HRM as an antecedent to MNE-level outcomes (e.g., Caligiuri, 2014) and the management of international assignments (e.g. Reiche, Kraimer, & Harzing, 2011; Wang, Tong, Chen, & Kim, 2009). Existing HR research has largely focused on potential cultural differences in responses to HR policies and practices, as well as the appropriateness of global versus local HR strategies. While previous research has significantly contributed to the academic debate and progress of the field, topics on global work and strategic HRM continue to be underrepresented. In particular, what is missing is a more explicit integration of research on the various aspects of global work, strategic HRM and global talent management.

Further, although scholars have started to study various global work arrangements in MNEs (see Shaffer, Kraimer, Chen, & Bolino, 2012), the design of global HR systems (Pudelko & Harzing, 2007) as well as the generation, sharing and implementation of HR capabilities in MNEs (Mäkelä, Björkman, Ehrnrooth, Smale, Sumelius, 2013; Morris, & Snell, 2011), many additional questions remain unanswered. For example, the tension between standardization vs. localization continues to be debated (Rosenzweig, 2006). Recent research has started to suggest that cultural variation exists in how phenomena of person-environment fit are interpreted and played out at work (Lee & Antonakis, 2014; Lee & Ramaswami, 2013). Such variation may have serious implications for the design and implementation of HR policies and practices in a global workplace. In fact, the challenges of talent management for MNEs

go beyond managing global elites and also concern developing effective HR policies and systems to make the best use of human resources on a global basis (Reiche, 2007). Hence, a key question for scholars to investigate is how MNEs establish a consistent HR system that is aligned with their global strategy while taking into account the variations of societal and institutional imperatives so as to ensure fit at multi-local levels. In sum, this special issue invites submissions that address issues of global work within MNEs, in either conceptual or empirical ways, so as to advance IB theory and research regarding HRM and talent management.

### **Topics for the Special Issue**

Because these questions are often multilevel in nature, the suggested themes of our call cover country, industry, firm, team, and individual levels of analysis. We particularly welcome studies that apply wider theoretical lenses and multilevel approaches in order to better capture the complexity of global work in MNEs. Specifically, this special issue seeks to promote and shape the future direction for research addressing questions at the intersection of the following themes: (1) global work in MNEs – what structures, systems, and policies and practices do MNEs need to facilitate global work? (2) strategic HRM in MNEs – how does the system design and implementation fit an MNE's global strategy?, and (3) global talent management in MNEs – how do we define, conceptualize, and identify global talent, and how do we manage it within multiple MNE contexts? Original empirical research, theory development, and meta-analytic reviews are all suitable for potential inclusion in the special issue. We are particularly interested in submissions that integrate across the three themes outlined above. Below is an illustrative list of topics that are consistent with the scope of the special issue, but other topics may be appropriate as well:

#### 1. Global Work and the MNE:

- What are the challenges for HRM given the growing fragmentation of forms of global work (e.g., corporate expatriation, self-initiated expatriation, business travel, virtual collaboration)?
- How does global work affect the debate between global standardization vs. local adaptation of HR policies and practices, e.g. to which extent is a global compensation system needed, etc.
- What are the key competencies for individuals to perform global work effectively? What are the corresponding HR practices to identify and develop them?
- How to deal with the geographic dispersion (extent of coordination across borders needed) and multiculturalism/multilinguism (extent of coordination among people from diverse cultures and native languages needed) of global work?

#### 2. Strategic HRM in the MNE:

- How do institutional, cultural, and other contextual influences affect the development, implementation, and effectiveness of high performance work systems and practices in MNEs?
- How should human resources be managed on a global scale (when to move jobs; where to move people; where to leverage local talent versus sourcing talent globally)?
- How does centralization/localization strategy affect performance? How does global staffing strategy affect performance? What is the best staffing strategy for starting new multinational facilities (Taking over existing vs. turning around ongoing operations)?

3. Global Talent Management and the MNE:

- To what extent do MNEs evaluate global talent issues (e.g., integrating national cultures; relative competencies across locations; availability of talent) in making cross-border acquisition decisions? To what extent do these factors affect cross-border acquisition success?
- To what extent does the make-up of the top management team (in terms of national origin and experiences) affect MNE success and cross-border acquisition strategies/decisions?
- What are strategic issues in forming and managing multinational teams?

**Submissions**

Please submit papers through the journal's online submission system. To do so, please visit <http://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/jom>, create your user account (if you have not done so already), and for "Manuscript Type" choose the corresponding Special Issue. You will be able to submit your paper for this Special Issue between the 1st and the 30th of September 2016.

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