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**Betriebswirtschaftslehre mit Schwerpunkt
Internationales Management**

UNIVERSITÄT
PASSAU

Wirtschaftswissenschaftliche Fakultät

Ausschreibung der Abschlussarbeiten
am Lehrstuhl für Internationales Management

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Thema 1

Tight and loose cultures: hampering or supporting expatriate adjustment?
(Das Thema kann nach Absprache auch in deutscher Sprache bearbeitet werden.)

The success of international assignments is of critical importance for companies due to the high costs associated with them. Prior research has produced substantial insights revealing central antecedents of expatriate performance and has revealed that successful expatriate adjustment is a strong predictor of expatriate performance. Literature puts emphasis, among others, on environmental factors, like the national culture of both the home and host country, which are found to facilitate or hamper expatriate adjustment. In recent years, critical voices regarding the investigation and conceptualization of culture have increased, calling for new approaches in cross-cultural research. In this regard, more recent cultural research is dealing with the concept of cultural tightness/looseness, which is referring to the strength of social norms and the degree of sanctioning within societies.

In a comprehensive literature review, this thesis should analyze the concept and insights associated with cultural tightness/looseness and link it to the field of expatriate management, while illustrating additional avenues for future research.

Literature:

Baum, M., and Isidor, R., 2017. The Influence of the Cultural Context on Expatriate Adjustment. In: B. Bader, T. Schuster, A.K. Bader, eds. 2017. *Expatriate Management*. UK: Palgrave Macmillan. pp. 165-190.

Gelfand, M. J., Nishii, L. H., & Raver, J. L., 2006. On the nature and importance of cultural tightness-looseness. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, *91*(6), 1225-1244.

Gelfand, M. J., Raver, J. L., Nishii, L., Leslie, L. M., Lun, J., Lim, B. C., ... & Aycan, Z., 2011. Differences between tight and loose cultures: A 33-nation study. *science*, *332*(6033), 1100-1104.

Shenkar, O., 2012. Beyond cultural distance: Switching to a friction lens in the study of cultural differences. *Journal of International Business Studies*, *43*(1), 12-17.

Tung, R. L., and Verbeke, A., 2010. Beyond Hofstede and GLOBE: Improving the quality of cross-cultural research. *Journal of International Business Studies,* 41(8), 1259-1274.

Thema 2

Losing Realistic Job Information? An Review of the Downsides of Recruitment Process Outsourcing
(Das Thema kann nach Absprache auch in deutscher Sprache bearbeitet werden.)

Attracting and retaining high potential employees is crucial for every organization to operate successfully. Designing and executing a recruitment process that is suitable for both the organization and a respective target group, imposes numerous challenges on the departments involved in recruiting. As the requirements for diverse competencies within the recruitment process are constantly increasing, many companies decide to outsource parts of, or even the entire recruitment process to external providers. By doing so, companies intend to save resources to allocate them differently and to leave recruiting to supposed experts. Despite various positive aspects of recruitment process outsourcing (RPO), recent research has associated negative outcomes with the practice of RPO. In this regard, the aspect of losing realistic job information in the course of outsourcing the recruitment process may have several negative outcomes for the individual as well as for the organization.

In a comprehensive literature review, this thesis should analyze existing insights on recruitment process outsourcing, and especially focusing on the aspect of the possibility of losing realistic job information through the outsourcing process, while illustrating avenues for future research.

Literature:

Claus Wehner, M., Giardini, A., and Kabst, R., 2012. Graduates' reactions to recruitment process outsourcing: A scenario-based study. Human Resource Management, 51(4), 601-623.

Cooke, F. L., Shen, J., and McBride, A., 2005. Outsourcing HR as a competitive strategy? A literature review and an assessment of implications. Human resource management, 44(4), 413-432.

Ordanini, A., and Silvestri, G., 2008. Recruitment and selection services: Efficiency and competitive reasons in the outsourcing of HR practices. The International Journal of Human Resource Management, 19(2), 372-391.

Phillips, J. M., 1998. Effects of realistic job previews on multiple organizational outcomes: A meta-analysis. *Academy of Management journal*, *41*(6), 673-690.

Thema 3

Team Harmony vs. Team Conflict – When different personalities clash
(Das Thema kann nach Absprache auch in deutscher Sprache bearbeitet werden.)

In today's working environment work groups play a vital role. Therefore it is not surprising, that the research focus shifted from the performance of individuals to the performance of teams. In the past years factors influencing team performance have been extensively analyzed in a wide range of research projects. Team members' personalities were identified as a key predictor for team processes and outcomes. Dissimilarities in personality can lead to increased conflict potential but also to increased creativity, both of which influence the performance of the team. Thus the question arises under what circumstances different personalities improve team performance in spite of the increased conflict potential. In a comprehensive literature review, this thesis should analyze the existing relationship between team member personality and team performance as well as existing moderating effects, while illustrating additional avenues for future research.

Literature:

Barrick, M. R., Stewart, G. L., Neubert, M. J., & Mount, M. K., 1998. Relating member ability and personality to work-team processes and team effectiveness. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 83, 377–391.

Fisher, D. M., Bell, S. T., Dierdorff, E. C., & Belohlav, J. A. (2012). Facet personality and surface-level diversity as team mental model antecedents: Implications for implicit coordination. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 97, 825–841.

Barry, B., & Stewart, G. L., 1997. Composition, process, and performance in self-managed groups: The role of personality. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 82, 62–78.
De Dreu, C. K. W., & Vianen, A.E.M., 2001. Personality in teams: Its relationship to social cohesion, task cohesion, and team performance. *European Journal of Work and Organizational Psychology*, 10, 97-120.

Thema 4

Why do we look a gift horse in the mouth? – The effect of the perceived intent behind HR practices on employees

A company's most valuable resource is their employees' knowledge, skills and social relationships, i.e. human capital. Today's changing work environment (international assignments, multicultural teams, job uncertainties) can put employees under a lot of stress. At the same time, the growing competition between employers in the so called "war for talents" can encourage employees to leave their company, taking their firm specific human capital with them. Therefore, employers implement a variety of HR practices in order to positively influence employee motivation and to reduce turnover intentions. According to attribution theory however, it depends on the employees' attributions, i.e. the intent employees ascribe to the implemented HR practices, whether they have the intended effect. For example, if employees attribute the implementation of certain practices externally to union or law compliances the practice may have no effect at all. Attributions to exploitation or cost reduction attributions may even positively relate to turnover intentions. In a comprehensive literature review, this thesis should analyze the existing relationships between attributions and HR practices, while illustrating additional avenues for future research.

Literature:

Nishii, L. H., Lepak, D. P., & Schneider, B. (2008). Employee attributions of the "why" of HR practices: Their effects on employee attitudes and behaviors, and customer satisfaction. *Personnel Psychology*, 61(3), 503–545.

Shantz, A., Arevshatian, L., Alfes, K., & Bailey, C. (2016). The effect of HRM attributions on emotional exhaustion and the mediating roles of job involvement and work overload. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 26(2), 172–191.

Bacon, N., & Blyton, P., 2005. Worker responses to teamworking: exploring employee attributions of managerial motives. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 16(2), 238–255.