

【Presentation】 Meeting place : C1 (11:50~)

## A Study on International Retailing Knowledge Transfer : Focusing on the HRM practices of the Subsidiary in Foreign Market

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The purpose of this study is to clarify how retailing knowledge is transferred to subsidiaries in foreign market and to explain why it can manage to be transferred.

Retail internationalization studies have already pointed out that successful knowledge transfer is important for subsidiaries to achieve competitive advantage in foreign markets. Although the number of international retailing knowledge transfer studies is far less than that of studies in manufacturing industries, previous studies have contributed to our understanding of the phenomenon. These include (1) studies trying to clarify what is retailing knowledge that to be transferred; (2) studies putting efforts to identify the factors that promote or hinder international retailing knowledge transfer from environmental perspectives, organizational perspectives, and the perspective of knowledge attributes; (3) studies relating to transferring methods, as well as directions, and (4) studies attempting to construct international retailing knowledge transfer models.

However, few studies have elucidated how and why retailing knowledge is manage to be transferred to local employees, who are the most essential knowledge receivers. Therefore, this study focuses on the human resource management (HRM) practices, especially training and development practices of the subsidiary in order to answer the research question.

We conduct a qualitative longitudinal case study on a Japanese international retailer in Chinese local market. The empirical materials are gathered through interviews and non-participant observations in fieldwork from 2014 to 2017, alongside secondary materials. Interviewees have been working at the Japanese international retailer since it was established, which enable us to access to information of its HRM practices in prior years.

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There are two contributions of this study. Firstly, we found that retailing knowledge is transferred to local employees through several phases, which is closely related to the value that the subsidiary aims to offer to its local customers. Specifically, when the subsidiary attempts to provide new value to its local customers as the needs and the wants of local customers change, it requires local employees new retailing knowledge in order to provide those new value. Therefore, during the different phases, new HRM practices are introduced. As a result, retailing knowledge coming from home country is further transferred to subsidiary. Secondly, we identified the reason that why retailing knowledge is manage to be transferred to local employees. That is, the HRM practices are well adapted to enhance the motivation of learning of local employees.

This study clarified how retailing knowledge is transferred to subsidiaries in foreign market and explained why it can manage to be transferred through exploring the training and development practices of a Japanese international retailer in Chinese local market. However, training and development is only a part of HRM practices. There is a need to find out the relation between international retailing knowledge transfer and other HRM practices in the future.