



CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

The method of the study regarding factors which will affect expatriates' adjustment was carried out quantitatively, which meant that structured questionnaires were used. First of all, sampling was the key to the study, so the audience consisted of the employees who had experienced living as expatriates in China. The participants were all Taiwanese. While the study proceeded, they were all in China on assignment or they at least had experience of expatriation in China for more than six months. As for the different backgrounds of the participants, during analysis, the different backgrounds of the participants were analyzed statistically. According to the methodology of descriptive statistics, the results of the study were described clearly and correctly.

Procedure

All the information regarding expatriate training and adjustment was gathered before the study was conducted. Training theories and programs were applied to the study. The theory regarding the issue of "training programs affect the expatriates' adjustment" was in the literature review process. As determined by review of the literature, the concepts relevant to the topic were clear and most of the theories were applied. The consequences of the study were useful and practical to the real practice.

The sampling of participants was purposive sampling due to the study's target sample being expatriates. The researcher tried to look for those companies which have expatriates in China. Questionnaires contained structured questions. After all the

instruments were set, the questionnaires were sent to participants by e-mail. A link to the questionnaire was sent to participants. Appendix C shows the cover letter of the questionnaire sent by e-mail. If participants had any questions, they could ask the researcher anytime so that the participants would not misunderstand the questionnaires. After the questionnaires were answered by participants, the data were automatically saved into a database. They were then analyzed by statistical software.

The questions in questionnaires were strongly related to the research which was studied and analyzed. From the structured questions, the results were examined. Each completed questionnaire was confidential and was not shown to others due to participants' privacy concerns. Figure 3.1 is the procedure of the study.

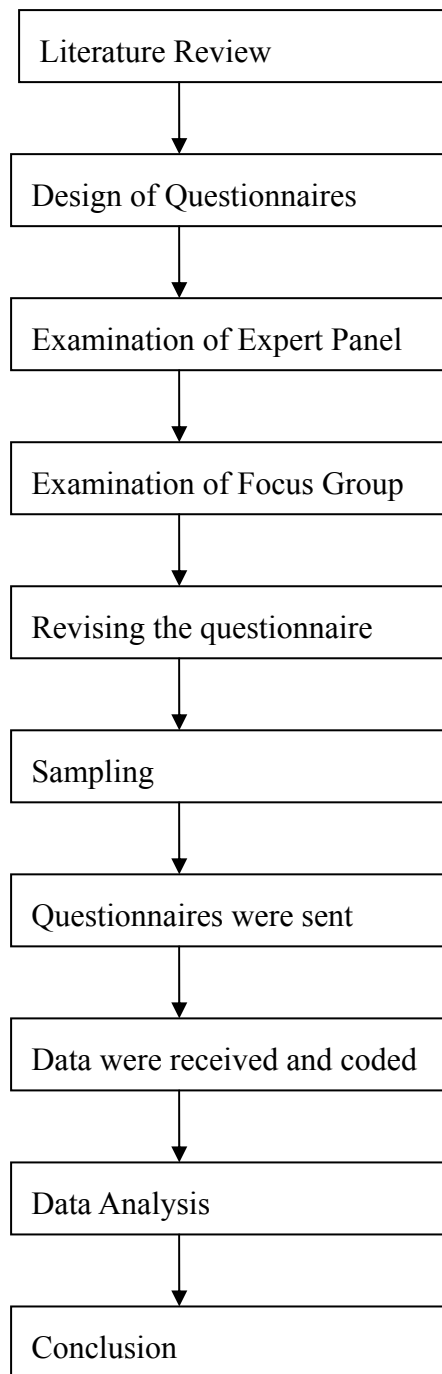


Figure 3.1. Procedure of Study

This study did not display the names or personal information of the respondents. Anonymity of respondents was maintained (Sackman, 1974). Due to the content of the questionnaires, the format was a paper structured formal questionnaire sent by mail or e-mail. The instructions were shown on the questionnaire (Sackman, 1974). If there were any questions, the respondents were asked to inform researchers directly so that there would not be any misunderstandings.

Design of Questionnaires

This study was carried out quantitatively. Structured questions were adopted. Regarding the content of questionnaires, based on review of the literature, there were three parts of questionnaires.

The first part contains questions about various training programs attended by employees who were going to have foreign assignments. The respondents were asked about training programs so that the information about cultural training, language training and practical training could be gathered. This questionnaire basically combined and was revised the questions from the studies of Lan (2002), G. M. Chen (2003), and Hsieh (2004).

The second part regards expatriates' adjustment. By asking questions about adjustment, the study examined it. Adjustment was categorized into three categories: the adjustment to work, the adjustment to interactions with host nationals and the adjustment to the general non-work environment. This questionnaire basically combined and revised the questions from the studies of Black (1988), Lee (2000), Lan (2002), Huang (2002), and W. Y. Chen (2003).

The third part of this questionnaire regards personal backgrounds. The questions were written to ask respondents' different backgrounds, such as age, gender, education

level, and marital status etc. This part was used to discern for descriptive statistics regarding the general status of respondents.

On the questionnaires, participants were notified that all the information was confidential so that they would be willing to express their real opinions. The questionnaires were sent to participants by e-mail. After the questionnaires were received by the researcher, all the answers to the questions of the questionnaires were coded onto statistic software SPSS Windows version 12.0. The information was analyzed by an appropriate statistical method so that the results were correct and without bias.

Appendix A. is the original questionnaire. It was presented to the expert panel and was revised in accordance with the panel's suggestions. Appendix B. is the revised questionnaire. It is the official one used in the study.

Examination of Expert Panel and Focus Group

The questionnaires were sent to the expert panel for correctness and revision. After being corrected by the experts, the validity of questionnaires was higher. Consequently, the questionnaire has expert validity.

For this study, the researcher asked four professors for their opinions representing the academic field and three more HR managers for opinions from the business industry. The four professors specialize in human resources management. Therefore, they provided suggestions from an academic standpoint. The three HR managers all had business experience. Thanks to their opinions, the research had more perspectives on practical situations in business. Appendix D. presents the names of those on the expert panel. After the process of examining the questionnaire, some questions were revised so that the respondents would understand the questionnaire

more.

Due to making the structured questions more understandable for respondents, the researcher formed a focus group for the revision of the questionnaire again. The researcher asked another four expatriates, who are all currently in mainland China and are all expatriates from Taiwan. Based upon their opinions, some questions were again revised in order to make the questions practical and meaningful to participants of the study. Appendix D. shows the names of those in the focus group.

Sample of the Study

Due to the topic of this study, purposive sampling was used. Two major companies were the target sample for the study. Due to the issue of confidentiality, their names could not be shown in the study. One company has been designated “A company” and the other, “B company”. Both A company and B company are in traditional industry. Their scales are similar to each other. They both are listed companies. They both have expatriates in similar places in China.

The reason to choose these two companies was that the study intended to be a survey study. However, it was hard to look for companies which have many expatriates in China due to Taiwan’s situation. In Taiwan, most companies have only a few expatriates working in China. Even for bigger companies, they do not have a large number of expatriates. Thus, the researcher thought of combining two companies, which are similar in all aspects. The researcher tried to examine the relationship between perceptions of training and adjustment from these two companies.

Due to sizes and other similarities of these two companies, there were other reasons for the researcher to do the study on these two. In Taiwan, most companies do

not offer formal training programs for expatriation in China. These two companies offered more information for expatriation in China compared to other companies. Most importantly of all, due to the researcher's situation, these two companies offered more replies in the study than other possible test subjects, and they were easier for the researcher to track.

Since the target group of this study was Taiwanese expatriates in China, all expatriates were in China for expatriation assignment while the study proceeded. Expatriates of the two companies received the questionnaire by e-mail. The link to web-based questionnaires was e-mailed to the target population. Respondents completed the questionnaire on the website by clicking the link.

Coding

Regarding the coding of each question, all the questions, including questions for backgrounds of respondents and questions for training and adjustment status, were assigned a code in order to make the results clear.

Because all the data were collected from web-based questionnaires, data could not be wrong. All the respondents answered the web-based questionnaires and all the data were saved in a data base.

Table 3.1 is the code book for questions in Part III (personal background). It shows each item, variable and code.

Table 3.1. Code book for questions in Part III in questionnaire (personal background)

<u>Item</u>	<u>Variable</u>	<u>Code</u>
Part III, Q1	Age	1: 40 years old and younger 2: 41 years old and older
Part III, Q2	Gender	1: Female 2: Male
Part III, Q3	Marriage Status	1: Married 2: Not married
Part III, Q4	Education Level	1: Graduated from vocational training school and below 2: Bachelor's degree and above
Part III, Q5	Industry	1: Manufacturing
Part III, Q6	Department	1: Human Resources 2: Manufacturing 3: Others 4: R&D 5: Finance 6: Marketing
Part III, Q7	Employee Status	1: Employee or First line supervisors; 2: Middle-class or Upper-class managers
Part III, Q8	Working years	1: Less than 10 years 2: More than 10 years
Part III, Q9	Working years in China	1: Less than 2 years 2: More than 2 years
Part III, Q10	If have studied abroad	1: Yes 2: No
Part III, Q11	If have worked abroad	1: Yes; 2: No

Table 3.2 is the code book for part I- questions for perceptions of cultural, language and practical training- of the questionnaire. On this table, there are items, variables and codes. Regarding the code part, they are: 1- Very disagree; 2- Disagree;

3- Neutral Opinion; 4- Agree; 5- Very Agree.

Table 3.2. Code book for questions in Part I of the questionnaire

<u>Dimension</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Variable</u>	<u>Code</u>
Cultural training	Part I, Q1	c1	1: Very disagree
	Part I, Q2	c2	2: Disagree
	Part I, Q3	c3	3: Neutral Opinion
	Part I, Q4	c4	4: Agree
	Part I, Q5	c5	5: Very Agree
	Part I, Q6	c6	
Language training	Part I, Q7	l1	
	Part I, Q8	l2	
	Part I, Q9	l3	
	Part I, Q10	l4	
	Part I, Q11	l5	
	Part I, Q12	l6	
Practical training	Part I, Q13	p1	
	Part I, Q14	p2	
	Part I, Q15	p3	
	Part I, Q16	p4	
	Part I, Q17	p5	
	Part I, Q18	p6	
	Part I, Q19	p7	
	Part I, Q20	p8	
	Part I, Q21	p9	
	Part I, Q22	p10	

Table 3.3 is the code book for part II of the questionnaire. These are regarding questions on expatriates' adjustment to their new situation. Regarding numbers 8, 20, 21 and 22, they are reverse questions. Thus, there is an "r" in front of the variable in order to distinguish from other questions. Regarding the code part, they are: 1- Very disagree; 2- Disagree; 3- Neutral Opinion; 4- Agree; 5- Very Agree.

Table 3.3. Code book for questions in Part II of the questionnaire

<u>Dimension</u>	<u>Item</u>	<u>Variable</u>	<u>Code</u>
Work adjustment	Part II, Q1	wa1	1: Very disagree
	Part II, Q2	wa2	2: Disagree
	Part II, Q3	wa3	3: Neutral Opinion
	Part II, Q4	wa4	4: Agree
	Part II, Q5	wa5	5: Very Agree
	Part II, Q6	wa6	
	Part II, Q7	wa7	
	Part II, Q8	rwa8	
Interaction adjustment	Part II, Q9	ia1	
	Part II, Q10	ia2	
	Part II, Q11	ia3	
	Part II, Q12	ia4	
	Part II, Q13	ia5	
	Part II, Q14	ia6	
General living adjustment	Part II, Q15	ga1	
	Part II, Q16	ga2	
	Part II, Q17	ga3	
	Part II, Q18	ga4	
	Part II, Q19	ga5	
	Part II, Q20	rga6	
	Part II, Q21	rga7	
	Part II, Q22	rga8	
	Part II, Q23	ga9	
	Part II, Q24	ga10	

Table 3.4 is the code book for the variables which were added up by each response. The lower the number of code, the lower the agreement from respondents. The higher the number of code, the higher the agreement from respondents. The number ranges from 5~45 due to different dimensions.

Table 3.4. Code book for added-up scores from Part I (training) and Part II (adjustments)

	Dimension	Item	Variable	Code
Part I	Cultural training	c1+c2+c3+c4+ c5	c	5~ 25
	Language training	l1+l2+l3+l4+ l5	l	5~ 25
	Practical training	p1+p2+p3+p4+p5+p6+p7+p8+p9	p	9~ 45
Part II	Work adjustment	wa1+wa2+wa3+wa4+wa5+wa6+wa7 +rwa8	wa	8~ 40
	Interaction adjustment	ia1+ia2+ia3+ia4+ia5+ia6	ia	6~ 30
	General living adjustment	ga1+ga3+ga5+rga6+rga7+rga8	ga	6~ 30

Analysis

This study adopted Likert's five point scale in order to examine respondents' various adjustments to different situations. Respondents' scores were automatically coded into a database and the data were analyzed. A SPSS 12.0 Windows version was used to run all the data statistically. Descriptive statistics were used so that the general situation of the respondents was known. The statistical method for the study utilized correlations and multiple linear regression in order to see the relationship between perceptions on training programs and expatriates' adjustment.

Statistical methods for the study were as shown below:

1. Reliability Analysis:

In order to ensure the consistency of the questionnaire, Cronbach's α shows the reliability of each dimension of the questionnaire.

2. Descriptive Statistics:

To determine the backgrounds of respondents, descriptive statistics are necessary, so that the frequency and percentage of each background of respondents will be understood. Also, from the mean of each question of the questionnaire, we can understand the situation of each dimension.

3. Pearson Correlation:

In order to know more details of the relationship between perceptions on different training programs and different expatriates' adjustments, Pearson Correlation was used to examine the relationship between each factor.

4. Independent sample t test:

Respondents from different backgrounds were divided into two groups. Independent sample t test was used to determine the differences between groups.

5. One-way ANOVA:

Respondents from different backgrounds were divided into several groups. One-way ANOVA was used to determine the differences between groups.

Time Line

The first step of the research was the literature review. After this, the questionnaires were developed. To design questionnaires took about one month in combination with previous studies. There was experts' examination for the questionnaires to increase their validity and reliability of questionnaires. It took about one month to send and retrieve the questionnaires. To estimate the time for retrieving completed questionnaires from respondents was difficult due to the fact that respondents were all in China. The researcher asked them to answer the questionnaires without too much delay by e-mail. Time for coding and analyzing data

took about one and a half months. After the analysis stage, writing of the thesis proceeded. It took about one and a half months. Figure 3.2 shows the time line of the study.

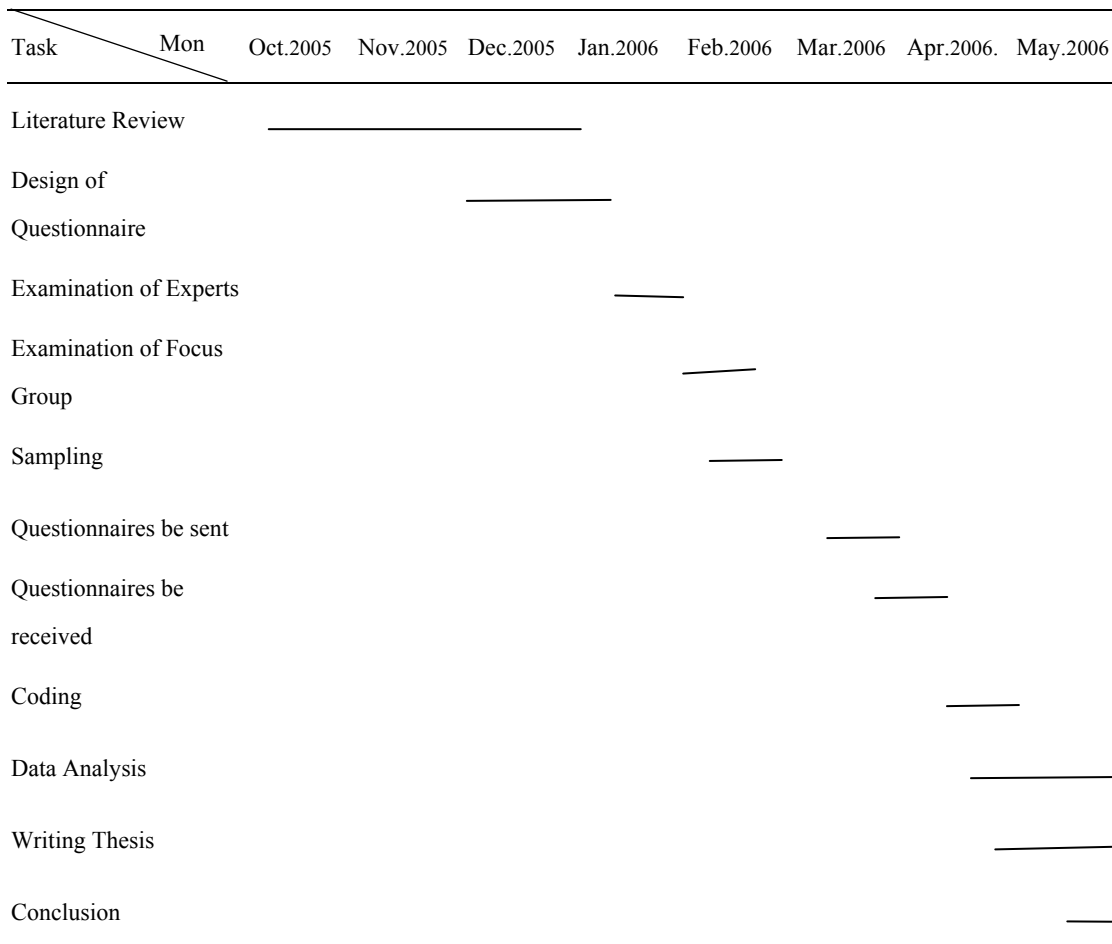


Figure 3.2. Gantt Chart of Time Line

The researcher utilized a pilot study to the research in order to make a questionnaire with higher reliability and validity. However, the response rate was low. Therefore, the researcher carried out the examination of a focus group in order to make the questionnaire more valid. The focus group included four employees who are all currently in China as expatriates. Therefore, they could offer advice on practical issues in China. After their examination of the questionnaire, some questions were revised.

After the draft was revised, the researcher started the research survey. First, the questionnaire was sent to A company in the middle of March. The researcher sent the e-mail to 38 expatriates in A company. After two weeks, the next company was sent the questionnaires. It was about in the end of March. The web-based questionnaire was sent to 35 expatriates in B company. Both the companies' response rates were about 40%. For A company, there were 16 people responded, including 1 invalid response. For B company, there were 15 people responded, and all of them were valid. In general, the valid response rate for both A and B company was up to 41%. After the data were coded, the data were analyzed by SPSS12.0 Windows version.

Throughout the study, some procedures were delayed due to inevitable events. After phone calls and e-mails, most of participants responded. It took time to contact most the companies and participants. After receiving the data, the researcher started to analyze the results. The conclusions were made according the statistical results.