

PG1 - MINI RESEARCH PROPOSAL

This form is to be completed by both the student and supervisory team within **THREE** months for full-time students and **SIX** months for part time students, after the commencement of the research degree or Part Two. Return the completed form to the **Academic Office** pgresearch@uwtsd.ac.uk.

Student Details

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Proposed Research

Current Proposed Title (20 / 30 words):
A mixed methods analysis of Organizational Resilience towards a Fujian opera troupe as the dynamic SME in the context of Chinese Rural folkways
Background & Context (approx. 250 words)
In turbulent environments, the organization development is impacted by the dynamic complex adaptive system (CAS) (Allen, al et, 2011; Uhl-Bien and Arena, 2018), hence, resilience is the capability of a system to overcome dilemmas, especially for SMEs (North and Varvakis, 2016; Wang, 2020). Organizational resilience (OR) came from demands of the interactive relationship between organizations and changeable business environment (Sutcliffe and Vogus, 2003; DesJardine, al et, 2019) to pursue business sustainability by adaptability in social and environmental practices (SEPs) (Ortiz-de-Mandojana and Bansal, 2016). Therefore, small enterprises are difficult to survive if they never consider strategic management related to OR (Carmeli and Markman, 2011; Linnenluecke, 2017). The Fujian opera troupe is one of the small and flexible Chinese opera organizations, performing mainly in the street or public halls of eastern Fujian villages (Soon, 2000). In the famous hometowns of overseas Chinese, this opera, as a rural play, existed not only in the context of rural folkways and religions but also in the international market of Southeast Asia region, USA, and so on (Soon, 2007; Cropsey, 2002) to continue specific ethics and customs from rural China (Oxford, 2017). Facing the changeable market demands and folk environment, the Fujian opera troupe, as the dynamic SME (North and Varvakis, 2016), needs to reshape itself to meet audiences'

preferences and **demand-side change** (Vinokurova, 2019; WANG, al et, 2020). Therefore, this small business must consider organizational resilience to overcome the challenge of survival and innovation (WANG, al et, 2020) by **dynamic capability** (Eisenhardt and Martin, 2000) in the knowledge era (Pavlou and El Sawy, 2011; UHL-BIEN, al et, 2007) due to the loss of social functions.

The Theoretical framework of resource-based view of the firm (RBV) highlights the strategies to maintain sustainable competitive advantage (Wernerfelt B. 1984; 1995). In the context of small businesses, the model of dynamic capability emphasis sensing, learning, integrating, and coordinating (Pavlou and El Sawy, 2011) to connect OR. Considering the characteristics of opera troupes, this research tends to conceptualize OR for the Fujian Opera troupe to develop adaptability and overcome tense (Uhl-Bien and Arena, 2018; UHL-BIEN and ARENA, 2017) in cultural aspects. In the cultural theory, the three dimensions of the Merriam model (Merriam, 1980), encompassing cognition, music sound, and behaviour, improved understanding of rural cultural transformation.

Aims and Objectives (approx.. 250 words)

Research aim:

This research aims to explore the organizational resilience of a dynamic and small enterprise **Fujian Opera Troupe** improves constructions of sensing capability, organizational learning (OL), integrating and coordinating abilities in the context of southeast Chinese rural folkways. The goals of research not only focus on organizational management but also cultural specificity.

Research objectives:

The objectives are as following to obtain the research aim:

- 1) To explore the **external threats** of this troupe, encompassing changeable market demands, generational cultural transfer (Banfield, 2015), customer satisfaction, the current model of management and business, evolution and reconstruction of opera, etc, discovering responses of organizations.
- 2) To discuss advantages and limitations of this **dynamic capabilities** influence on survival, changes, and innovation of **the Fujian Opera Troupe**.
- 3) To examine whether the external change in rural folkways and digital villages impacts customer preference shift (Wang, al et, 2020) and strategic flexibility (Claussen, al et, 2018).
- 4) To identify the appropriate OR for **Fujian Opera Troupe** in the complex adaptive system of **rural folkways**.

Research questions:

According to the aim and objectives above, the research questions are as follows:

Q1: What are the external threats of **Fujian Opera Troupe** in the changeable rural context?

Q2: What are the roles of sensing, learning, integrating, and coordinating capabilities for the OR of **the Fujian Opera Troupe** in the process of overcoming dynamics and uncertainty?

Q3: What are the significant impacts of the troupe facing external change on the OR of customer preference shift and strategic flexibility?

Q4: What is the appropriate OR for **the Fujian Opera Troupe** in the specific cultural context?

Proposed plan of work including timetable

Proposed plan of work

Planned Development (e.g. submission of form, completion of chapter, submission of thesis)	Target Date
Submission of the proposal form	July 2021
Literature review, first draft	Nov 2021
Literature review, final version	Jan 2022
Methodology chapter	April 2022
Data collection chapter	July 2022
Data analysis chapter	Oct. 2022
Write up Findings and Discussion	Jan 2023
Completion of conclusion	March 2023
Check and review	April 2023
Submission of thesis	May 2023

Proposed methodology (approx. 500 words):

Research philosophy:

This research uses **mixed methods** (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2017; Saunders, 2016), impacted by the philosophical underpinnings of **Pragmatism** (Cassell and Cunliffe, 2018), to integrate two types of data and research design (Creswell, 2018).

- 1) **Ontologically**, the business model of a Fujian Opera Troupe not only refers to self-organization (Weick, 1995) but also connects to dynamic systems from external and internal worlds, so the reality is continuous and changeable in the future (Menand, 2001), which tends to the subjective point.
- 2) **Epistemologically**, this research focuses on the emergence of the Chinese folk music industry, discussing stability and transformation to reconstruct organizational behaviours and capabilities (Garud, et al, 2015).

- 3) **Axiologically**, the exploration of OR captures pluralistic value inflow market demands. As a pragmatist, mixed methods are appropriate to investigate regular and radical changes (Cassell and Cunliffe, 2018) according to research questions. Meantime, the researcher can use multiple approaches in future research.

Research methodology:

This research will conduct the mixed methods evaluation design (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2017). The multiple approaches will be used to survey adaptability, transformation and innovation of a dynamic and small organization **Fujian Opera Troupe**, which address research demands of OR in the cultural context (Hitchcock et al., 2005). The core design plans to adapt from the **Participatory Culture-Specific Intervention Model** (PCSIM; Nastasi, 2004) to conduct the theory to adaptation process (Nastasi, 2007). In order to facilitate reasonable convergence of methods, the qualitative methods will be the dominant method due to the dynamic and cultural characteristics of the research target. However, quantitative method is also inevitable to examine the possible relationships based on the data from qualitative exploration (Cassell and Cunliffe, 2018). Therefore, the phases in future research will encompass sequential exploratory (QUAL→quan), sequential explanatory (quan→QUAL), and convergence (QUAL-quan) (Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, 2004) to construct the processes of formulation, development and evaluation (Nastasi, 2007).

Justification for the choices:

This research plans to choose **the Fujian Opera Troupe** in Lianjiang town, Fuzhou city, Fujian province of China because I have previous experience of fieldwork there. But the other two troupes will be investigated preliminarily to discover the representative troupe in this industry. The Fujian Opera Troupe is a very typical business organization with small and discrete characteristics (Nakamaki, al et, 2019). Interestingly, parts of troupes exist well (Wei, 2018) although the loss of folkways and fans. Therefore, the advantage and weakness of OR from these troupes is a valuable field to consider modern dynamic SMEs in Chinese musical industry

Data collection:

Firstly, in **the sequential exploratory part** (QUAL→quan), data collection will begin with ethnography (Atkinson, 2007), especially ethnomusicology (Rice, 2013; 2017), encompassing multiple approaches of participant observation (DeWalt and DeWalt, 2011), interview (Barz and

Cooley, 2008), fieldwork (Pole and Hillyard, 2016), etc. In the quantitative data part, the questionnaire will be designed after prefield work to improve efficiency and accuracy of questions (Glaser and Strauss, 2006). The contents of data will **formulate and change** by organizational capabilities in the context of rural folkways.

Secondly, in **the sequential explanatory part** (quan→QUAL), quantitative data collection will begin with the choice of participants based on the results of the questionnaire. According to comparison methods (Glaser and Strauss, 2006), the leader in that theatre is an important one to be interviewed in-depth, and the others will be selected in the previous process. Qualitative methods, such as thick description (Geertz, 1993), will be used to **develop** the phenomenon interpretation and examine the validity of different phases (Morse and Richards, 2002).

Finally, **the convergence part** (QUAL-quan) will supplement and complete the data collection of the OR in the Fujian Opera Troupe to **evaluate** the organizational adaptability in the complex cultural context.

Ethical considerations:

There is no doubt that respect for privacy for every participant and group is really important, especially in the data collection (Kalu and Bwalya, 2017). It will be inevitable to describe knowledge in subjective points, thus I will try to be a collector, rather than an arbiter (Seeger, 1986).

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Student Signature

Signature or Print Name:	Zhenying Yang	Date: 19 th July, 2021
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Supervisory Team

Has the student proposed a viable research project that is appropriate for this programme that should be supported by the Institute?	
Supported: ☐	Not Supported: ☐

Authorisation

Director of Studies	Signature or Print Name:	Date:
Institute Manager of Research Degrees	Signature or Print Name:	Date: