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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

Student Family / Surname:	
Student Given / First name:	
Student Number	
UWTSD Institute	Institute of Management and Health

Proposed Research

Current Proposed Title (20 / 30 words):
The influence of trust matters in culture system of Huawei company upon the loyalty of ordinary employees
Background & Context (approx. 250 words)
VUCA is the short form of volatility, uncertainty, complexity and ambiguity (Millar, C. C., 2018). That is a model for describing the external context. 21st century is an era when turbulence has become a permanent status (Milla, Carla C. J.M. et al, 2018). There are several contributors to this turbulence, like globalisation, disruptive technological changes, the Trade War, Brexit, tensions around European integration or the rise of terrorism (Ansell and Trondal, 2018). In this post-industrial era, this new age is about an economy where knowledge is a core commodity and the rapid production of knowledge and innovation is critical to organisational survival (Uhl-Bien, M., et al, 2007, p.299). In addition, according to “Report on the Work of the Government” on March 5, 2021, the Premier said, in the ‘Major Targets and Tasks for the 14th Five-Year Plan Period’, China will continue to advance reform and opening up and further boost the vitality and momentum of development. In terms of “Long-Range Objectives through the Year 2035”, the Premier stressed, we should “make China a major magnet for global production factors and resources, thereby promoting positive interplay between domestic circulation and international circulation” (China Daily, 2021). Ministry of Industry and Information Technology issued, on 14th April, China's large manufacturing firms will have all introduced digitalization by 2035 (China Daily, 2021). In this situation of the world, against this global, historical and social background, China tries to be adaptive to take every challenge. And with this internal supportive platform, Huawei, as a prestigious private company, is an outstanding exemplar in terms of managing complexity when confronting external VUCA operating environments.

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In effect, choosing not to go to the public, Huawei seems to remain a mystery to the outside world (Takeuchi, 2021). On the one hand, a huge amount of people has no idea or has a wrong idea about it; on the other hand, it can be said one of the most famous organizations in the world. There's a collection of eight volumes of recording of interviews of Huawei from worldwide media (public but unpublished), including American Yahoo Finance, CNN, Canadian CTV and CBC, Sky News, BBC News, just name a few (TXRJY, 2019). A large group of scholar and professionals are specializing in this organization, including Tian Tao, the most famous senior consultant of this company who has written a series of books about Huawei; David De Cremer, a fellow at Cambridge Judge Business School; Yaozhong Wu, professor at National University of Singapore (NUS) Business School; Professor Peng Jianfeng of Renmin University of China, the drafters of the basic Law of Huawei, has been studying Huawei since 1996. He and Zhang Wangjun began to take employees of Huawei as the main research target in 2001(Peng and Palaoag, 2020). Besides, a group of experts, specializing in Chinese management, are working at Cambridge Centre for Chinese Management at Cambridge Judge Business School, including Peter Williamson, Christoph H. Loch, and Eden Yin (CCCM, 2021).

about
Aims and Objectives (approx.250 words)

In this section you will need to:

- Explain what you want to achieve through the research.
- Outline the aims of the research.

Huawei has more than 190,000 employees, including 50,000 younger generation employees (accounting approximately for 26.3%), most of whom are graduates from top universities at home and abroad (Tian, 2020). My research interest focus on the influence of 'grayness' philosophy in culture system of Huawei company upon the loyalty of ordinary employees (younger generation employees), trying to exploring relationship trust matters and employee loyalty. Trust matters, the democratic mechanism, include "the Voice Within", the website of Huawei, and *Huawei People*, the house journal. Even though there are a lot of academic papers discuss Huawei, no one focuses on its house journal (let alone its English version) where displays a huge number of ordinary employees' personal stories in Huawei. The democratic mechanism is used to meet employees' spiritual needs and enhance the cohesion of Huawei people under complex adaptive environment. This research targets exploring how well it works.

In effect, the matter of trust is the most important facets of 'grayness' philosophical management idea in the culture system of Huawei. According to Z theory, the success of all enterprises is inseparable from the close relationship to trust (Ouchi and Cuchi, 1981). Hence, the purpose of enterprise should emphasize people rather than blindly pursue performance goals; According to the model of gift-exchange economy, firm-worker interaction based on the gift exchange rather than pure market exchange can positively influence the norms of workers' effort (Akerlof, 1982, p.567). Thus, except for tangible well-fare, trust matters are also deemed as a part of gifts which can promote employees' satisfaction.

High job satisfaction is a precondition and a strong determinant of employee loyalty and organizational commitment (Martensen and Gronholdt, 2001; Mak and Sockel, 2001), while to make knowledge workers being satisfied, namely, to bundle a huge number of intellectuals together is far from being easy for any managers. On the one hand, the

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knowledge workers are a group of "thinking animals", with strong desire for wealth, ambitions and great achievements, their expectation to their career development as well as satisfaction towards the organization is complex and various, which is hard to meet, control and balance. On the other hand, except for wealth and materials, the intellectuals care more about sense of freedom, happiness and independent (Chen, 2021, p.199), which calls for a specific organizational culture to be aligned with. Huawei's culture is characterized with the so-called consciousness of 'grayness' (Tian et al. 2016, p.221, p.237), implying being transparent (Chen, 2021, p.196), open, compromise and tolerant (Tian et al. 2016, p. 222), behind which it is the matters of trust, the key drivers, that endorse the idea of 'grayness'.

Proposed plan of work including timetable

Proposed plan of work

In this section you will need to complete a proposed plan of your work explaining the timeline for key elements of the thesis.

Planned Development (e.g. submission of form, completion of chapter, submission of thesis)	Target Date
Submission of research proposal	Sep. 2021
Literature review (drafts)	Feb. 2022
Literature review (final)	Aril. 2022
Methodology	Jul. 2022
Data collection	Dec. 2022
Data analysis	Aril. 2023
Discussion and Findings	Jun. 2023
conclusion	Aug. 2023
Footnotes, Appendices and references	Sep. 2023
Submission of dissertation	Sep. 2023

Proposed methodology (approx. 500 words):

In this section you will need to explain how you will achieve your aims and objectives:

- Explain your disciplinary orientation/ approach
- Describe the methods you will use to carry out your research: (eg library-based research, on-line research, fieldwork (interviews/ participant-observation), analysis of visual data, combinations of these)

Phenomenology will take a priority in my research practices. This research will involve a large amount of textual investigation, which can be categorized as unobtrusive research, thus, content analysis and thematic analysis are to be unavoidable.

The advantage of transcendental phenomenology upheld by Moustakas is systematic and structured, easily followed by less experienced researchers (Moerer-Urdahl and Creswell, 2004, p.23; Creswell, 2013, p.83). The data sources of my research derive from interviews, the social website, tweeter, house journals, and various visual representations of communication, such as documentary programs produced by BBC or by individual doc directors. Since my study is grounded in the content of house organ and social websites, the data collection will combine qualitative method with historical approach (Ventresca and Mohr, 2017; Yates,2014), which means oral interviews will triangulate with the archival

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materials (for example, public but not unpublished documents) and the research will be dominated by content analysis. Thus, phenomenology is the right choice of method that could be adopted to carry out a textual analysis (Giorgi, 1997).

One of the edges of content analysis is that it can be combined with other methods to achieve the purpose of triangulation (Jauch et al, 1980; Erdener and Dunn, 1990; Smith et al, 1992; Kabanoff, 1996). Another edge is its attribute of unobtrusive research, which can keep away from the 'Hawthorne effect' (Sheppard, p.319). Accordingly, the process of data collection will not be possibly hampered by researcher demand bias (Woodrum, 1984). More importantly, since access to top managers is a serious issue for me, being unobtrusive is quite suitable for management study when connecting to senior executives is troublesome (Morris, 1994). This can be said a double advantage for me as to turn the disadvantage of an outsider of the organization, lacking field observation to a chance of reducing the bias to the minimal level.

Since this is basically a qualitative research, it will focus on theoretical sampling rather than statistical sampling (Graebner and Eisenhardt, 2004; Miles and Huberman, 1994; Eisenhardt, 1989; Glaser and Strauss, 1973). This kind of sampling is straightforward, unusually revelatory and extremely exemplars (Eisenhardt and Graebner, 2007, p.27).

In terms of databases, the house journal (2004-2021) is a collection of ‘blood boiling’ personal stories and legends of employees, especially ordinary employees; the company's social website, regarded as its “Rome Square” or “transparent coat”, is a major innovation and experiment of Huawei’s democratic management mechanism; the leader interview series include worldwide media interviews toward Ren Zhengfei, the founder of Huawei, from 2019 to 2020; a latest book, Huawei interviews, written by the most famous senior consultant of this company, is engaged with both top managers, across 6 years from 2013 to 2019. Huawei People, the house journal, began from July 31st 2001 to today, which cannot be downloaded till issue 152, on August 31st 2004. Therefore, this part of data collection involves, so far,175 issues (up to this month) of house journals (*Huawei People*, 2004-2021) with more than one thousand articles to be coded from August, 2004 to July, 2021. The categories may be decided based on the research assumptions or may be adjusted and reset with new themes emerge in the iterate process.

Introductory bibliography:

In this section you should list a minimum of 30 titles that are relevant to your research.
You should include all works cited in this form.
The list should be alphabetical using the referencing system appropriate to your discipline.

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Student Signature

Signature or Print Name:		Date:

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: