

**DIFFERENT MOTIVATION FACTORS OF THAI AND CHINESE  
EMPLOYEES FROM DIFFERENT CULTURE PERSPECTIVES  
(A CASE STUDY OF A HOME APPLIANCES MANUFACTURER  
IN THAILAND)**



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**A THEMATIC PAPER SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL  
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Thematic paper  
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**DIFFERENT MOTIVATION FACTORS OF THAI AND CHINESE  
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**ABSTRACT**

In this study, the different motivation factors of Thai and Chinese employees are examined from different cultural perspectives by investigating in M company, a home appliance manufacturer which is a multinational company that has Chinese employees as top management. The challenges in workplace of both cultures and the effective ways of Thai and Chinese working together are identified. Qualitative research is adopted to find out the differences by conducting in-depth semi-structured interviews with 3 Chinese employees and 7 Thai employees who work closely with Chinese employees in the company. According to findings, it can be concluded that Thai employees are motivated by mental support, while Chinese employees are motivated by attractive rate of pay and career advancement. Thus, effective ways to motivate Thai employees are establishing relationship and provide mental support, and to motivate Chinese, the high salary is needed.

Additionally, recommendations are provided for to Chinese and Thai employees and the company to develop understanding in culture differences for both Thai and Chinese employees to help them work together more effectively.

**KEY WORDS:** Thai employees/ Chinese employees/ Motivation factors/ Effective ways to motivate employees

41 pages

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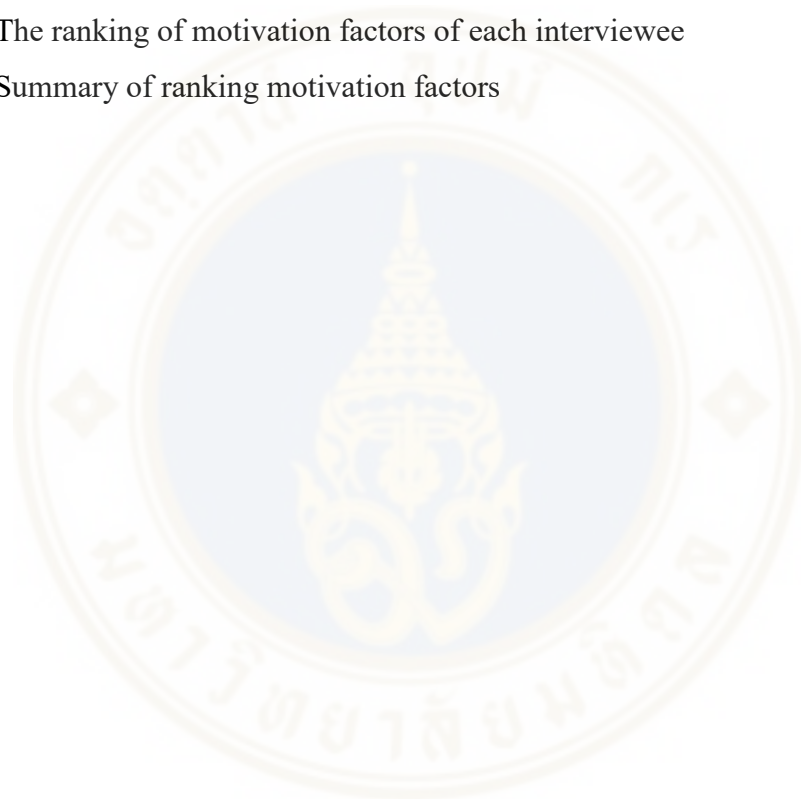
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## **CHAPTER I**

### **INTRODUCTION**

In 1999, Chinese government initiated the Going Global policy, the policy encouraging Chinese investors to invest abroad and aim to boost China's economy to become a big player in the global market. Nowadays, due to Chinese economic growth in the past decade, Chinese investors seek to expand their business in other countries, and Thailand is one of their targets. In 2013, Thai government also use several attractive strategies, providing business privilege, to appeal Chinese and other national investors. Direct investment from Chinese investor has been increasing this past 10 years. Until 2022, Chinese investors become the largest share of applications for Board of Investment (BOI) incentives (Krungsri, 2023). Some Chinese company may not enter and invest in Thailand directly, but through the acquisition of another company that have operate in Thailand already.

As a result of Chinese business expansion, it is common that the company will assign their personal to work in Thailand to manage, control and ensure that the business invested in Thailand moving toward the direction and the goals set by the company. Therefore, Chinese usually brings their corporate culture along with the expatriates they sent and try to change corporate culture the company in Thailand. Since some Chinese expatriates are assigned to work in Thailand in management position and never work abroad before, they might not know how Thai people doing things differently from the Chinese. They might face some challenges in both managing tasks and people in abroad since it has different context and different group of people that grow up in the different cultures. Thus, working abroad in management positions is highly required cross-cultural management skills. In order to manage people from different cultures efficiently, the expatriate needs to understand the other culture well and know key motivation factors that can motivate and engage employees to work productively, which leads to better employee performance. This will reflect on the performance of the company.

In cross-cultural workplace, since people come from different cultures, they normally perceive the same things in different ways. This study aims to focus on exploring the different motivation factors between Thai and Chinese employees by investigating in M company, an international home appliance manufacturer in Thailand, that has been taken over by a Chinese home appliance manufacturer. This study will focus on Thai office workers of the company since they are more likely to work closely with Chinese management team and Chinese managers. The research questions that will be investigated are as follows:

1. What are the different motivation factors between Thai and Chinese?
2. What are the main challenges of Chinese to motivate Thai employees?
3. What are the main challenges of Thai working with Chinese managers?
4. What are the effective way of motivating Chinese and Thai to work together in a workplace?

This topic is selected because it came from the author's experience working in a Chinese company and seeing a problem when people from different culture working together without understanding Thai culture and the nature of Thai people. By encouraging both Thai and Chinese employees to understand the other's culture is helping solve this problem. It helps each person to understand how others motivated to work and will enhance companies' performance.

This study will collect information about Thai and Chinese work motivation factors and Thai and Chinese corporate culture from the previous research including work motivation factors of both cultures. And the interviews will be conducted with the Thai and Chinese office workers from M company. Lastly, the finding from the interview will be analyzed and concluded.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

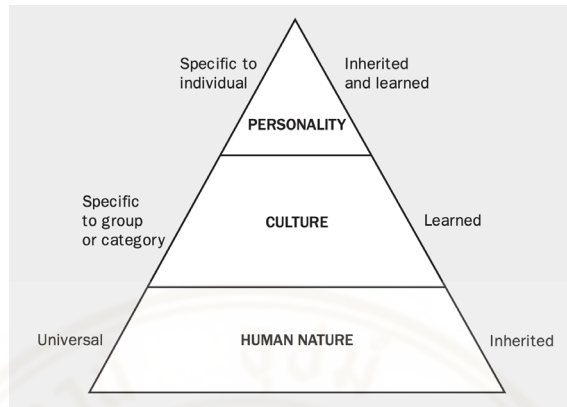
This chapter will provide insight information about literature review related to this research topic. The cultural definition and cross-cultural dimension will be discussed to understand what culture is and how Chinese culture is different from Thai culture. Following by previous study that mentioned about Thai and Chinese culture in workplace and the work motivation factors that drive Thai and Chinese employees will be focus on.

#### **2.1 The concept of culture**

“Culture is distinctly human means of adapting to circumstance and transmitting this coping skill and knowledge to subsequent generations. Culture gives a sense of who they are, of belonging, of how they should behave, and what they should be doing.” (Neil Remington Ambramson, Robert T. Moran, P.14) Campbell, Josephine, 2020 mentioned that culture is how a group of people interacts, eats, dresses, practices, and treats others, which they will have shared ideas that create a group identity through how they socialize among the group. This can be said that each national group usually share the same value and a same way of doing things, so they respond differently the way they are in the same situation.

Hofstede (1984) mentioned in that human’s behaviors are not random, but they are predictable since people partly hold mental collective program that distinguish the people in the group from others. The figure 1 displays 3 level of mind programing. The bottom of the pyramid is the universal level, which is inherited, and all the humankinds have in common. The second level is culture, which was mentioned early that is a collective part. Everyone cultivate this program since we are young, learning the fundamental of life from the group. The highest level is individual, which differentiate one from another. It can be said that even individual people are different,

however, they will contain the collective value they share with their group. This mental program is intangible that can only be observed from same behaviors of the people that interact with similar events (Hofstede, 1984).



**Figure 2.1 Three level of mental programming (Hofstede, Minkov, 1991)**

## 2.2 Cultural dimension

There are many researchers and study mentioned about different theories of cultural dimension. However, Hofstede's cultural dimension is the most widely used framework. It is an approach that helps to understand the differences between national cultures. Through the Hofstede's research and survey, the evidence of similarities and differences among the culture pattern of countries were found, which can be categorized into 4 dimensions, Power distance, Individualism vs Collectivism, Masculinity vs Feminine and Uncertainty avoidance. In 1991, Hofstede included the fifth dimension, Long-term vs Short-term orientation in the original 4 cultural dimensions. The fifth dimension was found by Michael Bond via conducting the Chinese Value Survey (CVS). Hofstede considered that this dimension is correlated and important to the economic growth for every country. Hofstede conducts the scoring to identify high or low level of each dimension.

### 2.2.1 Power distance

Power distance is unequal power distribution of the members in society, organization, family, schools, etc. There are people who are more powerful in the group, which the less powerful members accept inequality of the power distribution (Hofstede,

Minkov, 1991). The high score in power distance the more inequality in power distribution.

### **2.2.2 Individualism vs Collectivism**

Geert Hofstede (1991) mentioned that individualism exists in a society that the interests of the individual prevail over the interests of the group, societies and they learn to think from “I” perspective. On the other hand, collectivist society is a society that the interest of the group is more important than the interest of the individual, which emphasize on the power of the group. The children in this society learn to think of themselves as a part of a “we” group. It can be said that individualism is the degree of interdependence a society maintains among its members (Hofstede Insight). The higher score in this dimension means the more individualistic of the culture is. Therefore, the culture with less score will be more collectivist.

### **2.2.3 Masculinity vs Feminine**

The masculine society is a society that people focus on more career advancement, earning, recognition, challenges. Men in the society are ambitious, assertive, and care about material success. In contrast, feminine society care more about the quality of life and relationship (Hofstede, Minkov, 1991). The higher score in this dimension represents the more masculinity in the society.

### **2.2.4 Uncertainty avoidance**

Feelings of uncertainty may also be partly shared with other members of one’s society. feelings of uncertainty are acquired and learned. Those feeling and the ways of coping with them belong to the cultural heritage of societies. The people in a society with low uncertainty avoidance are more willing to take risks and prefer fewer rules. Conversely, in the uncertainty- avoiding cultures shun ambiguous situations (Hofstede, Minkov, 1991,221).

### **2.2.5 Long-term vs Short-term orientation**

This dimension is about “how every society has to maintain some links with its own past while dealing with the challenges of the present and future.” The country

with low score prefers to honor its history, culture and norm, but the high score country in this dimension aim to focus on long-term perspective and future education development. (Hofstede Insight)

## 2.3 The differences between Thai and Chinese culture



**Figure 2.2 The comparison of Thai and Chinese culture (Hofstede)**

According to the graph, refer to Hofstede's cultural framework, it shows the differences of Thai and Chinese cultures on each dimension. On the power distance dimension, Thailand got 64 scores, which relatively high, however, Chinese culture processes 16 scores higher than Thai culture. This means that in Chinese culture can accept a higher unequal power distribution when compares to Thai culture. Juniors or subordinates tend to accept the wider inequality gap in China to show respect to his/her seniors or superior. Next dimension is individualism, both cultures have the exact same score, 20 scores, on this dimension, which are relatively low. Both cultures are collective. When it comes to a decision making, they try to blend in with the group's direction. Following by masculinity dimension, Chinese culture has 1 time score higher than Thailand, which demonstrate that Chinese is focus more on end results and have the "Live to work" attitude while Thai culture obtains "Work to live" attitude. The fourth dimension is uncertainty avoidance. Thailand got intermediate 64 scores and tends to have a higher level of uncertainty avoidance which means people may not feel uncomfortable to take risk or deal with uncertainty and unexpected events. In Chinese

culture people are taught to be adaptable and entrepreneurial (Hofstede Insight). Lastly, long term orientation dimension, China's score has significantly high, 87, while Thailand reached 32 from Hofstede's research. It can be said that China has a very pragmatic culture while Thailand prefers to exhibit great respect for traditions, a relatively small propensity to save for the future (Hofstede Insight).

## **2.4 Cultural influences and organizational cultures**

Since each country has its own culture and values, which will reflect on daily behavior including in the ways doing things in workplace. Chu (1997) mentioned culture applies to organizations as well as to nation both profession and generations (as cited in Kit Fai Punm, 2000, P.326). Kit Fai Punm described that "the differences in these values have important implication for individual and organization operating across culture borders." (Kit Fai Punm, 2000, P.326) "Culture impacts behavior, morale and productivity at work, and includes values and patterns that influences company attitudes and actions" (Ambramson, Moran, 2018, 14)

### **2.4.1 Chinese corporate culture**

From above literature, it can be concluded that culture has impacts on behaviors at workplace and corporate culture. Chinese culture is influenced by Confucianism, and so does the enterprise culture. Kit Fai Pun (2000) identified 3 characteristics of Chinese corporate culture. Relationship building as the first characteristic of Chinese corporate culture, which emphasize on "Guanxi" (关系), establishing connection to enable bilateral transaction. Moreover, it emphasizes on the importance of leaders and followers and centralize authority, which showing sensitivity to hierarchy and group interests also override individual concerns and self-actualization. The second characteristic is morality and organizational citizenship behavior, which is to do something more than the job requires. This concept is from Confucianism, which is to become righteous person, repaying and increasing the value of the favor taken. The last one is human ethic and nature. In a Chinese ancient concept, it claims that human nature is good and human nature is also bad, which it conveys the idea that "human nature can be molded, and human behavior is changeable" (Bond, 1991, as cited in Kit



Fai Punm, 2000, P.331). In Chinese culture they believe that people can be trained with proper concept to become a flawless guy. This also mean that they accept to change. Another finding from Kit Fai Punm and his research partners that support this characteristic is that when he compares Chinese management style with Anglo US style, Chinese managers try to adapt themselves to the specific situation while western managers prefer to control the context of the environment. At the same time, Chinese culture contains high collectivism because they focus on to sustain harmony.

Chinese culture on management practices is formalize and bureaucratic and they value only gives a direction but not details. In addition, it barely encourages employee empowerment and promote self-management practices. (Kit Fai Punm, 2000, P.333)

#### **2.4.2 Thai corporate culture**

As aforementioned the nation culture has impact on organizational culture. According to previous research, Thai corporate culture has different and similar points from Chinese culture. Chaisilwattana and Punnakitikashem (2017) argue that Thai culture is relationship-oriented and collective, and also emphasize working as a team where they can contribute for the company success. Moreover, Thai people are uncomfortable with ambiguity. Thai corporate culture may have high level of power distance. Choosawat (2011) mentioned that there is always “respect”. In Thai culture is “In Thai society implies obedience besides other rules of etiquette, such as not arguing with a superior, or not giving unasked-for advice.” (Choosawat, 2011, P.29).

### **2.5 Thai and Chinese work motivation**

#### **2.5.1 Thai employee motivation**

According to the previous study (Suprasith, Gennaro, 2018) surveying Thai office worker in Bangkok, Thai people are directly motivated by Recognition, Relationship with peers, Work security and Remuneration which they will increase Thai employees’ job satisfaction or contribute to intentions to leave. On the other hand, some factors like Achievement, Work Itself, Growth, Company policy, Relationship with supervisor, and Work conditions do not contribute much on their intentions to leave

their job. In contrast, Huang (2016) surveyed 513 Thai employees working in Chinese multinational culture corporation located in Thai-Chinese Rayong Industrial Zone. In the study mentions that the motivation factors that received high scores from Thai employees working in a factory are salary and welfares, following by relationship with colleagues, career growth, work environment, and lastly the work itself (Huang, 2016). In this study includes the answers from production line workers, so it is different from the study from Suprasith, Gennaro (2018). However, Huang (2016) argues that position and type of work could influence people to have different motivation factors. For example, management team or specialists are motivated by career success while safety and pays would be the main motivation factors of workers.

### **2.5.2 Chinese employee motivation**

Fisher, Cynthia D. and Yuan Xue Ya (1998) mentioned on their study that is about the job motivation of Chinese and American employees. Chinese employees all agree that the good wages are the most important job attribute. The second factors for those under age 30 focus on promotion and growth in their career while those older prefer to have more work security. "Chinese sample comes out clearly highest on material concerns, and equally and moderately low on social and intrinsic factors (Fisher, Cynthia D. and Yuan Xue Ya, 1998)." There is a study about what motivates employees in China found that money played an important role during the period of transition in China and good pay was a main factor for Chinese employees in job choosing and hard work. However, it was a short-term motivation factor. Chinese managers think that close supervision will bring high productivity, but result was opposite (XiaoYing Lai, Jing Zeng, 2014).

## **2.6 Conclusion**

To summarize the literature review of culture and work motivation differences between Thai and Chinese employees, it begins with each nation has unique characteristics shared value and way of doing things. These differences lead to differences in Thai and Chinese corporate culture that have influences from its national

culture. As a consequence of these, both Thai and Chinese employees are motivated by different work motivation factors, which can be summarized as the table shown below.

**Table 2.1 Summary of Thai and Chinese culture characteristics and motivation factors**

Nation	Culture characteristics	Work motivation factors
Thai	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Feminine: Relationship-oriented</li> <li>• Collective: Feel comfortable when being a part of the group</li> <li>• Medium Uncertainty avoidance: Refer rules</li> <li>• Long term and short-term orientation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emphasize recognition and relationship with colleagues</li> <li>• Have collective and shared ideas</li> <li>• Stability</li> <li>• Remuneration (money)</li> </ul>
Chinese	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Power distance: High</li> <li>• Masculine: Live to Work</li> <li>• Lower Uncertainty avoidance: Feel more comfortable with changes and facing risks</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• High material concerns (High pay), and low intrinsic motivation</li> <li>• Older age employees: Prefer work security</li> <li>• Young age employees: Focus on growth</li> </ul>

## **CHAPTER III**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Primary data and collection method**

By analyzing the previous studies and the literature in chapter 2, it helps to reflect the information related to the different work motivation factors of Thai and Chinese employees that influence by the national cultures that are also a root of the differences in Thai and Chinese corporate culture. The qualitative research approach will be applied in this thematic paper to identify the different motivation factors of Thai and Chinese employees. In order to answer the research questions, in-depth interviews technique is adopted to collect the data because it helps to create credibility and to understand motivation and experience the feelings and attitudes that have toward their nation culture and the others.

#### **3.2 Interview method**

The primary data in this study will be collected through the interview method to collect in-depth information from interactive conversation with the interviewees. Further interview method will be illustrated below.

##### **3.2.1 Sample selection**

This research includes 10 selected samples from M company, a home appliances manufacturer. These interviewees are Chinese and Thai managers and Thai employees that have direct experience or closely working with Chinese management team. 2 of the selected sample are Chinese and 8 of them are Thai, which consist of 5 Managers and 5 followers.

**Table 3.1 Interviewee list**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Position</b>	<b>Nationality</b>	<b>Experience (Year)</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Gender</b>
A	Manager	Chinese	4	30	Male
B	Manager	Chinese	3	33	Male
C	Manager	Thai	11	45	Male
D	Manager	Thai	16	45	Male
E	Manager	Thai	5	32	Female
F	Employee	Chinese	3	40	Female
G	Employee	Thai	5	43	Male
H	Employee	Thai	2	25	Female
I	Employee	Thai	2	28	Female
J	Employee	Thai	1	30	Female

### 3.2.2 Open-ended questions (Interview questions)

In order to collect the information and find out what are the work motivation factors of Thai and Chinese employees and what are the differences, the open-ended question will be used in the interview to give freedom to the interviewees to answer from their own experience and in detail. The table below is the list of open-ended questions that are created to find out work motivation of employees from different cultures as demonstrated in table 3.2:

**Table 3.2 List of open-ended questions**

<b>Factors to investigate</b>	<b>Open-ended questions</b>
Different cultural aspect	<p><u>For Chinese managers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What is your impression working with Thai colleagues?</li> <li>● Can you share your experience working with Thai employees?</li> <li>● What do you think are the characteristic of Thai culture and Thai people in Thai company?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Do you talk or treat Thai employees the same way as you treat other Chinese colleagues? Why and why not?</li> <li>● Do you have to adjust yourself to fit in or adapt yourself to work with Thai employees?</li> <li>● What do you think is a big different between Chinese and Thai corporate culture in your company?</li> <li>● What is the biggest between in Chinese and Thai subsidiary company culture?</li> </ul> <p><u>For Thai employees</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What is your impression working with Chinese managers?</li> <li>● Can you share your experience working with Chinese colleagues in the company?</li> <li>● From your experience, what do you think are the characteristics of Chinese colleagues?</li> <li>● Do you feel comfortable to argues or share your opinions with your Chinese manager? Why or why not?</li> <li>● Do you feel different whether working with Thai or Chinese managers? Why or why not?</li> <li>● How your Chinese manager manage team members?</li> <li>● How your Chinese manager ask you to do some tasks?</li> </ul>
Main challenges	<p><u>For Chinese managers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What challenges do you face when working with Thai employees?</li> <li>● How do you respond with those challenges?</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How these challenges block you to achieve what you want or to motivate Thai employees work for you?</li> </ul> <p><u>For Thai employees</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Can you share your challenges working with Chinese managers?</li> <li>● What made you feel challenging? Was it a challenge that motivate you to work? Why or why not?</li> </ul>
Effective way of motivating Thai and Chinese employees	<p><u>For Chinese managers</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How do you motivate Thai colleagues? Was it effective? Why and why not?</li> <li>● What do you think is the effective way to motivate Thai employees? Why?</li> <li>● How your leader in China motivates you to work? Was it effective? Why and why not?</li> </ul> <p><u>For Thai employees</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● How your Chinese manager motivate you to work?</li> <li>● How would you like to be treated or motivated to work?</li> </ul>
Motivation factors	<p><u>For both Thai and Chinese</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● What are factors that make you come to work every day? What do you enjoy most about your job? Why is it?</li> <li>● How would you like to rank these motivation factors? Which of this motivation factor is important for you? <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Career advancement</li> <li>- Personal growth</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Recognition</li> <li>- Responsibility</li> <li>- Achievement</li> <li>- Company policies – e.g. choose their own working time</li> <li>- Good work environment - Nice</li> <li>- Relationship with colleagues</li> <li>- Quality of supervision</li> <li>- Rate of pay</li> <li>- Job security</li> <li>● Why do you think this factor is the least importance to you?</li> <li>● From your understanding and experience, what are different work motivation factors of Thai and Chinese employees in this company?</li> </ul>
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### 3.2.3 Develop probing technique

To enhance the efficiency of the interview and the validity of data, the probing technique is adopted, which helps create a comfortable interview and seek more useful answers from the interviewees. The interview will start with an open-ended question. Once the interviewees provide answer, the probing technique will be used to ask for more detail and how they feel to gain more understanding about the situations they faced and the reason why they think that way.

### 3.2.4 Conduct the interview

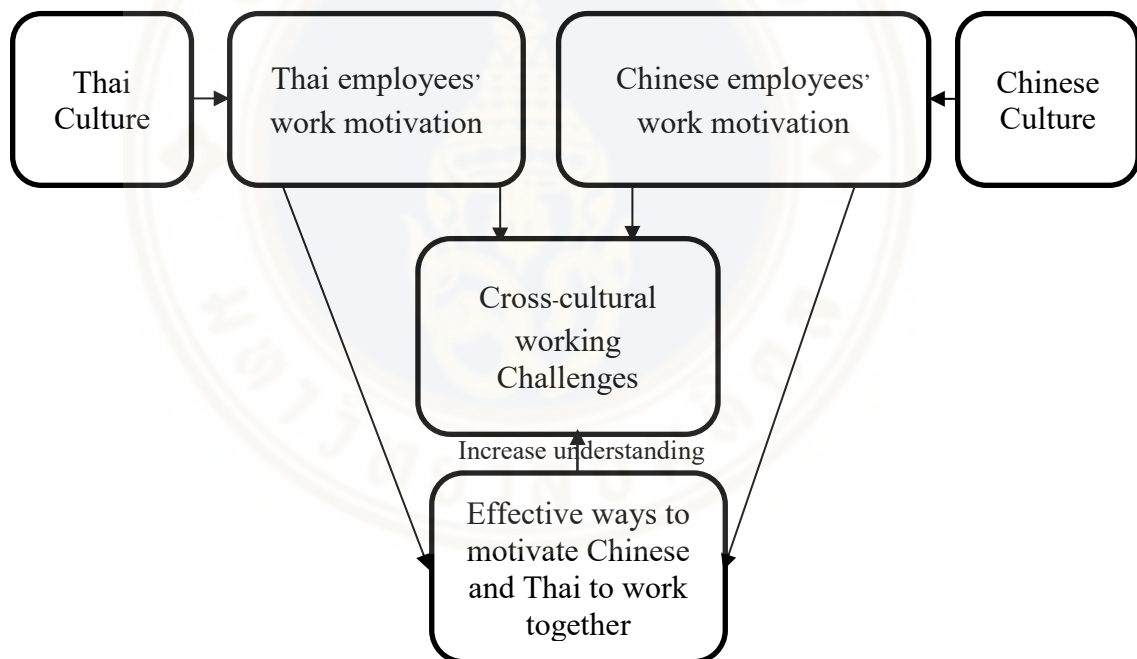
Interactive conversation is the most effective way of conducting the interview and semi-constructed interview will be used with the probing technique as well. The interview will be conducted at M company by face-to-face communication in a meeting room. This will enable to observe interviewees' behavior, tone of voice with their facial expression and other non-verbal language. Reflective note taking and voice recording are also used to record observed data because it allows to get back for further in-depth analyzing that might not remember during the interview. Each interview is



conducted approximately 15-20 minutes including introducing the interview and probing on each question. Moreover, conclusion part will include the analysis and summary of the information from the literature review and primary data.

### 3.3 Research framework

This research framework will combine the data collected from semi-constructed interviews and the information from the literature review. In order to find out what are the different motivation factors between Thai and Chinese cultures and the main challenges of Thai and Chinese working together including what are effective way to motivate them to work together. The relationship of finding research question is shown in the research framework in figure 3.1



**Figure 3.1 Research framework**

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

After the in-depth interviews were conducted, the analysis of the collected data from the samples will be summarized. The findings will be categorized in 4 main issues: different cultural aspects, main challenges, effective ways of motivating Thai and Chinese and Thai employee's motivation factors.

#### **4.1 Chinese – Thai cultural differences**

The first part of the interview questions is to find out the culture differences between Thai and Chinese cultures by asking the interviewees to share their experience of working with Thai or Chinese in M company. The interviews identified the following Chinese characteristics:

##### **4.1.1 Top-down management**

Through the interviews, it is significantly seen that the company has Top-down management style. About 3 out of 7 of Thai interviewees share their experience about the characteristics of their Chinese colleagues in the company that they barely listen to Thai employees' opinions when they first started to join M company in Thailand. Ms. E and Ms. H mentioned that most of the Chinese colleagues joining as top management in the company. As a leader, they usually command their subordinates to finish specific task at specific time. For example, Ms. H shared her experience when her Chinese leader asked her to do a work: "I want a signage for promoting our company, and it needs to be done by this evening". She described further that her leader strictly specifies how this signage should look like and give her a deadline by not asking her any words if she can get it done. Ms. E stated that most new coming Chinese colleagues usually directly order Thai employees do to what they want without concerning any factors because it is an order from them to their subordinate. So, this is

the employees work to do it right away. It is clearly seen that in Chinese culture possesses high level of inequality between a leader and subordinates and the tasks, what the subordinates need to do, are usually determined by senior leaders in the company. In addition, Mr. D also said that most of decision-making power is belong to Chinese managers in the company. During the interview, Ms. F also shared her experience about how the Chinese colleagues from headquarter work: “if the leader of the Chinese colleagues gave them a target or a goal, they will move quickly toward the goal, and everything will be done in a goal-oriented manners”, which this a reason to support why they also treat Thai employees in that way.

Thai culture also has top-down approach because Thai employees seem to respect their leaders, however, a leader will play a different role compared to Chinese culture. Thai employees want support, guidance and protection in return not only to order or command them to do some tasks. Mr. A said that after he lived in Thailand for a while and learned how to work with Thai employees, he adjusted the way to communicate with them. He used to tell them only what task he needed to be done and when he wanted, but that did not work. So, he gave them instructions and a plan what tasks need to be done along the way through to achieve this task. Mr.B also mentioned I need to create a template or instructions almost every time when I ask Thai employees to do work for me. The interview result of the two Chinese interviewees, it has been mentioned in the same way that Thai employees need more of support and guidance in their work. Additionally, Mr. D mentioned “I think that Thai employees need support when they face difficulties. As a manager, I need to support and help them to solve the problems and to protect them from a bigger problem”.

The interview result of Thai interviewees also supports what the Chinese manager said above. The Thai interviewees said that after their Chinese manager learned how to adapt themselves to fit Thai culture, they tend to use more asking not commanding them to do somethings. Ms. H mentioned in her department, many Thais gave feedback to the Chinese manager that how the order might be over strict for Thai people. Since then, their Chinese manager adapted themselves and tried to listen to Thai employees’ opinions, while also try to use different words when asking Thai to do some certain tasks. Ms. H said that “Lately, my boss still asks me to do a sign, but she allows me to create my own work and ask me first if I can finish it today or not”. She stated

that she feels more comfortable by being asked not ordered to do the task, moreover she claimed that other Thais in her team also feel less stress and motivated to work as well. Therefore, Thai employees feel uncomfortable with those orders that their Chinese managers asked them to do and how they use the language.

As a result of the interview, Thai employees feel more comfortable when they can make decisions or contribute to the task. So, Thai culture has a smaller inequality gap comparing to Chinese perspective. Therefore, this is consistent with the analysis of Hofstede, the Power Distance dimension. In Chinese culture, people are able to accept substantially wide inequality gap in M company. They are willing to do what has been asked by their leader directly and superiors have rights to do so. Conversely, in Thai culture, power distribution between superiors and juniors can be balanced.

#### **4.1.2 Achievement orientation**

All Thai managers and employees said that the Chinese managers in the company highly emphasize on the KPI targets that they are in charge to achieve, which usually will be set at high level and hard to achieve. Ms. E mentioned that “Every Chinese manager was assigned here for a few years only and they come here with the KPI targets they need to achieve before going back to headquarter in China”. The previous example from Ms. E, it does not strengthen only the higher power of superior in Chinese culture but also the achievement orientation, working toward the goals set by their superiors. To illustrate, Mr. D, a manager from Manufacturing department, argued that “There was one project that Thai employees in our team tried very hard to achieve the target and what they could achieve at that time have a significant improvement from the earlier period and almost reaching the target. The team was happy with the result on what they made efforts”. However, once their Chinese superior came then said, “This is not reaching the target at all”. From this example, it is obviously seen that Chinese managers cared only whether could achieve the target or not. This example demonstrates high level of masculinity in Chinese culture. Mr. C, a Thai manager, also supported this by mentioning that “Chinese culture mainly focus on results, they do not really care how you have gone through, but you have to achieve the goal you set for no matter what.”

Moreover, the answer from Mr. A, a Chinese manager, assured the interview result from Thai employees. Starting with how he talks and assign work to his Chinese subordinates, he said that he will mention only what he wants and when. And when asking about the significant difference between the corporate culture in headquarter and M company in Thailand, he told that working at headquarter focus on the end result only while Thai people concern more on the process of achieving the goals. Another interesting point from Mr. A is that he said that he would enjoy if other colleagues did not perform well but he did and when the progress or the profits of the project far better than the target he will feel a sense of achievement.

On the other hands, Thai culture may not focus a lot on the success but focus on the process of what they are going through and how they feel about it. Ms. H shared her opinion when her Chinese manager asked her “Do you think would it be possible to get the work done by today?” that “For Thais, this question, asking their opinion is very important, not to force them to finish within today”. She mentioned this showing understanding of the manager that have to the subordinate as well, which these could affect the whole department. Therefore, the quality of work life, support and caring from the superior are also important. Additionally, both Chinese interviewees mentioned about the same thing about Thai employees not taking the KPI as a goal in work. Mr. B said, “Thai employees may lack a sense of purpose.” In contrast, they care more about whether they like the current work conditions or what they do or not. Mr. A mentioned “Some Thais might not want to work with Chinese managers because they will give a lot of pressure to work and achieve result faster.”

According to interview result, it showed high masculinity in Chinese culture. It demonstrates that Chinese people substantially emphasize on competition and their achievement of being the best while Thais value on their satisfaction of the current situation and aiming work to live.

#### **4.1.3 Aggressive communication style**

According to the observation from the interview results, from previous topic helps to see that what Thai and Chinese employees value. Chinese employees value when superiors order them to do somethings only because the superiors are in the higher-level positions, and they will focus on the end result. On the other hands, Thai employees

value how a task is assigned so an order alone without any explanation of why we need to do this and what are the purpose. Thai people prefer to know what the background, reason and consequence of the task is. So, they need more elaboration on the tasks.

As aforementioned Chinese employees feel comfortable with mentioning only what and when need to be done. However, for Thai employees, the elaboration is needed. Ms. E said “Current Chinese employees in the company understand and know more about Thai culture and know how to approach or work with them. Because when they just came to Thailand, they force everyone to get the task done without explaining any reason why it needs to be done as soon as possible. But working with Thai employees you need to tell them an objective, goal, reason, the current situation, and the timeline”. It is not only Chinese managers need to explain to them, but Thai employees also like to share reasons why they do it in that way. Mr. D said that “I need to elaborate more why did he decided differently from Chinese manager and convince them”.

Mr. B, a Chinese manager, also said that “I need to explain to Thai employees more and more to make them understand and to listen to my opinions”. He said further this help them to communicate with Thai people more easily. Even though this might be similar to previous topics, but it focuses on different point and showing the differences of Thai and Chinese culture.

To communicate in Chinese culture, people get used to say what they want directly while Thai employees concern a lot on establishing kind and warm work process by providing explanation and reason support.

#### **4.1.4 Low risk avoidance**

All Thai and Chinese interviewees mentioned about the situations that Thai employees concern about risks more than Chinese employees. Thai employees avoid the risks on their work by being very prudent in very detail in their work, so it is the reason why Thai employees spending more time to finish a task comparing to Chinese employees. Both Mr. A and Mr. B state that the work style of Thai employees in M company might be influenced by Japanese culture, since it had been controlled by Japanese for more than 25 years. Mr. B shared the situations he faced when he conducted assembly line efficiency improvement project with Thai colleagues. He said that “They spent two weeks to analyze every work position on the assembly line to see how they

can help the worker to move faster, and they still working on it.”. He also shared “If I were them, I will adjust the speed directly and observe only bottleneck then analyze this part only.” This instance from Mr. B shows a big different on how Thai and Chinese work on the same issue. Thai employees tried to minimize the risks and unprecedented events by being prudent while the Chinese manager let the unexpected events and risks to happen and will find a solution to solve them later. They do not worry much about what will happen with the same unclear situation.

Ms. F, a Chinese who work as a Chinese Japanese translator, share her observation that “Chinese managers from the headquarter will not prepare or plan ahead in detail before starting a project, so when they implement the project seem to spend more time to deal with unexpected events than usual.” This evidence also supports what Mr. B said about being not anxious when he let the unknow situation to happen.

Through the interviews, the difference of risk and uncertainty avoidance between Thai and Chinese culture is identified, which Thai culture possesses higher uncertainty avoidance comparing to Chinese culture.

#### **4.1.5 Low resistance to changes**

All interviewees mentioned that there are a lot of things change after Chinese join the company since 2018. Chinese employees have lower resistance to the change compared to Thai employees. Thai employees prefer stability and small changes.

Mr. A mentioned that “China has gone through many changes and development recent years, so Chinese people adapt to the situation more easily than Thai people.” This statement supports the reason why Chinese culture is different from Thai culture and have low resistance to change since their country always changes all the time. Therefore, they do not feel stress when it comes to changes. And he mentioned further that why he thinks that Thai employees might have high resistance to changes. Once he asked Thai employees to conduct a task, they are not familiar with. The Thai employees chose to be quiet and not do anything rather than show adaptability to change they face.

Ms. E said that “Thai employees care stability a lot, and the stability for Thai employees is to change as little as possible. Then, they will feel secure that they can control the situation”. Furthermore, 4 out of 7 of Thai employees mentioned that they

prefer strict rules or clear company policy. For example, Ms. H said that she prefers the company that have fixed working hours because it makes the company easily control. And Mr. G said that he wants the company to specify clearly when the pay will be raised on each year.

It is clearly seen that Thai culture prefer stability while Chinese people are ready for the change that could occurs. This correlated with the previous topic, which make them care less about the risk that could happen in the future.

## **4.2 Main challenges of Thai and Chinese working together**

After the culture differences are identified, those differences lead to challenges when they work together. In this part, the key challenges of the Thai employees working with Chinese employees and the challenges of Chinese employees working with Thai will be identified.

### **4.2.1 Challenges of working with Chinese employees**

Thai employees in M company have always been facing challenges of working with Chinese managers since Chinese came to the company. There are two main challenges for Thai employees.

#### **4.2.1.1 High target**

Every Thai manager mentioned that the most challenging thing of working with the Chinese managers in the company is that need to reach the overset targets. As a manager, they also need to bear the responsibility of reaching the KPI of each year as well. They said that they need to work harder finding ways to achieve the target and solve the problem that more serious than in the past with the time pressure of Chinese working style as well. Mr. C, a manufacturing manager, said that “The most challenging thing for me is a high KPI in each year require to be improved 20-30% in average. However, to be honest, if we look back 2 or 3 years ago, we might not think that we could come this far”. Moreover, Mr. D and Ms. E, a Sourcing manager and HR manager, also mentioned in the same way. During the interview observing their body languages, even though they said that it is too challenging sometimes, but they also found a sense of achievement after they can see how far they came. To support the above



statement, Mr. B, a Chinese manager, shared that “When the target was set too high, Thai and Japanese employees disagreed and resisted to accept.” Overall, from what all the managers said this challenge shows more positive consequences than negative sides.

#### 4.2.1.2 Result-orientation

All Thai employees agreed that the Chinese managers always focus on the target and achievement. By targeting the result alone, it sometimes blocks them to see other perspectives. Ms. J, a Thai Chinese interpreter, stated that “It is very challenging to make Chinese managers understand what Thai employees trying to say about the constraints we have now because they solely focus on how much they can cut cost, which is their KPI target, if they do this way. It is not that easy do; however, they still force to do it.” Ms. J showed her concern about this challenge through her tone of voice since she wanted Chinese manager to rethink and understand the current condition as well. She said that she needs to ask an expertise in the company to explain to the Chinese managers, which make them to listen to understand more.

### 4.2.2 Challenges of working with Thai employees

#### 4.2.2.1 Ignore target

Both Chinese managers agreed that the most challenging things of working with Thai people in the company is that Thai employees do not care KPI target of the company. Mr. A shared that “When I just joined here, beside Chinese colleagues, no one care about KPI target. This was the most challenging part because everyone works together but has different target in work”. Mr. B also mentioned in the same way. To root back the reason why Thai employees not focusing on the target, Mr. D mentioned that “Before Chinese employee came, we also have KPI target, but they were not the high and we did not take it as a serious issue.”

#### 4.2.2.2 Different role of a leader

In Chinese culture and how the Chinese working at headquarter, a leader usually responsible for order a task and subordinates need to find the way to get it done. However, in Thai culture it might not be the same as mentioned earlier in Top-down management topic that Thai employees in M company need support and guidance from their superior. Mr. B, a Chinese manager, found it challenging when he did not understand why after giving some tasks to Thai employees, he needed to provide them

some outline and template as well. But he got used it later and adapt himself and understand how to work with Thai employees more effectively.

### **4.3 Effective ways of motivating Thai and Chinese employees**

After the challenges are clear, the interviewees were asked about how they were motivated to work, how they want to be motivated and how they motivate other employees at work. The findings below are the result of the interviews that demonstrate effective ways to motivate Thai and Chinese to work more efficiently.

#### **4.3.1 To motivate Thai employees**

According to the interview results, the factors that motivate Thai employees can be separated into 3 main groups, a chance of contributing to the work, establishing relationships and suitability of pay.

##### **4.3.1.1 Establishing relationship**

5 interviewees shared that to get to know each employee and establish relationships with them is one of the effective ways to create work motivation for Thai employees. Ms. H said that “My Chinese manager knows everyone in our department, and she takes care us by giving a small snack, having small talks, which make us feel close to her and she knows how to motivate each of us. For example, she knows that I love to learn new things, so she always asks me to do something new and challenging”. Ms. F supported what Ms. H said, when she was asking about the effective ways to motivate people. She mentions “The most effective way to motivate employees is when a leader gets to know each of their subordinates, what they like and don’t like and what are their needs”.

Furthermore, Mr. A and Mr. B, Chinese managers, also agreed that establishing relationships is a key of working with Thai employees. Mr. A shared that he tries to create nice and lively atmosphere for his team and does not claim himself as a big boss and others are small staff. He sometimes out eating with them as well. In addition, Mr. B said that “I think working with Thai employees, we need to win them by virtue and kindness. Building relationships with them is more effective than giving them more pay. Thai people are just same as Chinese people. If we have good

relationship with them, they are willing to tell you what are good and what are not, but if you are not close with them, they will not tell you all”. As same as what Ms. E said “The key point of Thai employees is that if they feel comfortable with or to do somethings, they will be willing to do it for you right away. So, main point is not money. And if you know this you don’t have to force them to do anything”.

It can be concluded that Thai employees can be motivated through relationships building and the superiors can get to know and motivate them better through it.

#### 4.3.1.2 A chance of contributing to the work

4 out of 10 interviewees mentioned the motivation factors that fell into this group. The interview results demonstrate that Thai employees feel motivated when they get a chance to share their ideas and those ideas are adopted to implement in the work. Ms. H mentioned this issue more than two times. She said that “To allow the employees share ideas and make decisions by themselves will highly create positive work motivation.”. She stated further that this is what her Chinese superior was trying to do, and it creates positive energy in her team.

Moreover, when asking Ms. I about the effective way to motivate Thai employees, she said that “Chinese colleagues needs to be more open minded and respect their ideas and may adopt some of the ideas to work”. Ms. E agreed and said that “The more information sharing in the team, the more they understand the situations and participate, they will work more efficiently”. From this information, it is seen that Thai employees enjoys when they can do contributions to their work while from Chinese managers still do not know how important it is to let Thai employees shows their abilities.

#### 4.3.1.3 Suitability of rate of pay

Most of the interviewees said that for the Thai employee’s rate of pay is important and it is the thing that they will consider in the first place, but it is not the most important thing. Mr. A stated that “Money is the reason why most of the people working for”. Mr.C said “Normally, what we need to consider is that is the rate of pay suitable for what we are doing”. Additionally, Ms. H said “Money is like a foundation, so I will not mention about it that much, as long as it works for you at this rate. However, additional pay comes with a successful project as well and those money

can motivate Thai employees in short term. Mr. A said that “To motivate Thai employees to work more efficiently and focus on targets, we will give them reward or additional pay if they can achieve the target. But those works only for a short-term”.

Therefore, from the interview, money can be a critical factor whether Thai employees will work here or not but there are other factors that they will concern more on top of those pay.

This interview result is consistent with Herzberg’s 2 Factor Theory. Money is one of the hygiene factors and it helps to minimize job dissatisfaction. Because the interviewees said that the pay need to be suitable to what they are doing, which is a basic that every job should provide. In contrast, money can be used to increase satisfaction of the job only short period of time.

#### **4.3.2 To motivate Chinese employees**

According to the interview results, the effective ways of motivating Chinese employees are attractive rate of pay and to get targets assigned.

##### **4.3.2.1 Attractive rate of pay**

Ms. F, a Chinese working as a Chinese Japanese interpreter, said that she works here because the attractive pay. “For me, my work is not challenging at all. And the work itself cannot motivate me. However, I still work here because rate of pay that can use for daily and for self-development”. For Chinese employees who are assigned to work here from headquarter as Ms. E said earlier, they will get daily allowance, additionally, they can receive 10-20% of cost they can reduced per project for the company as well.

##### **4.3.2.2 To achieve targets**

When Chinese employees get targets assigned from their superior, they will move quickly to achieve whatever tasks assigned to them as the quote from Ms. F shown in the top-down management topic. Mr. A mentioned himself that “It is true that our Chinese superior always motivate us to work or to achieve targets by blaming us that we are not doing it enough on our job. So, we have to work harder to achieve those targets”.

#### 4.4 Thai and Chinese employee's motivation factors

Once the effective way of motivating Thai and Chinese employees are pointed out in the previous part, the motivation factors of Thai and Chinese employ will be summarized in this part. In the last part of the interviews, the interviewees were asked about what motivate them to work in M company right now. When they were asked what are the factor that motivate them to come to work every day, 7 of the interviewees, 4 Thais and all of the Chinese interviewees, agreed that is money. 2 of Thai employees mentioned that it was the responsibilities that make them to come to work every day and 1 interviewee still find the answer for herself.

Moreover, all the interviewees were asked to rank the motivation factors that are important for them with number 1 to 11, which 1 is the most important and 11 is a least important one. The ranking results of each interviewee are shown in the table below.

**Table 4.1 The ranking of motivation factors of each interviewee**

No.	Motivation factors	Mr. A	Mr. B	Mr. C	Mr. D	Ms. E	Ms. F	Mr. G	Ms. H	Ms. I	Ms. J
1	Career advancement	1	4	7	9	11	7	3	7	3	5
2	Personal growth	2	7	8	7	10	6	2	1	11	8
3	Recognition	6	6	10	11	4	3	9	9	5	7
4	Responsibility	5	2	6	8	3	2	8	2	6	3
5	Achievement	4	5	2	2	5	11	7	8	7	6
6	Company policies	7	10	11	10	2	8	5	11	8	10
7	Good work environment	9	11	9	6	7	4	6	10	10	11
8	Relationship with colleagues	11	9	5	5	6	5	11	4	9	9
9	Quality of supervision	10	3	4	4	1	9	10	5	4	4
10	Rate of pay	3	1	3	3	8	1	1	3	2	2
11	Job security	8	8	1	1	9	10	4	6	1	1

**Table 4.2 Summary of ranking motivation factors**

No.	Motivation factors	Total sum of each factor	Ranking
1	Rate of pay	27	1
2	Responsibility	45	2
3	Job security	49	3
4	Quality of supervision	54	4
5	Achievement	57	5
6	Career advancement	57	6
7	Personal growth	62	7
8	Recognition	70	8
9	Relationship with colleagues	74	9
10	Company policies	82	10
11	Good work environment	83	11

From this ranking result, it is seen that they are not consistent for each person. It is found that position, age range, personal needs and personal background have high impacts on they ranked their motivation factors, which similar to Huang (2016) mentioned in the literature review that position and difference type of work influence people to be motivated by different motivation factors. For example, Mr. C and Mr. D both are Thai managers, how they ranked nearly the same since they have the same age and work in the same position but different departments, so they need to face almost the same conditions. Therefore, this might be the reason why they ranked almost the same.

In addition, from the Table 4.2, it demonstrates the factors that highly rank overall with the lowest total sum. Rate of pay received the lowest score, which means every interviewee take it as a key motivation factor for them to motivate them to come to work, following responsibility and job security, ranking number 2 and 3, respectively. Good work environment received the highest score, which is the factor that most of the interviewees concern less. The reason that they concern less about this factor is because the company is a manufacturer, so every employee work in the factory, which might not always have a good work condition. Mr. G mentioned that he does not care about work condition, but the more important thing is what facilities the company provide to facilitate their employees to work under those conditions.

#### **4.4.1 Common work motivation factors of Thai and Chinese employees**

There is one motivation factor that Thai and Chinese employees have in common, which is rate of pay.

##### **4.4.1.1 Rate of pay**

From the interview and ranking results, it is found that rate of pay is a main work motivation factor of both cultures. According to the ranking result, rate of pay is listed on top 3 of the ranking list of 9 out of 10 interviewees.

Even though both Thai and Chinese employees are motivated by rate of pay, during the interview they mentioned that they actually are motivated by money in different ways. Ms. E and Mr. D mentioned that Thai employees care their monthly salary more than the additional pay. They focus more on whether the work they do, and the salary are suitable and does it sufficient to spend in each month. In contrast, Chinese employees focus more on the additional pay that they will get from achieving a project. Ms. E said, “If we can achieve the target of many projects, we will receive the additional pay or reward and actually we can get a lot more than just get the salary alone in a whole year”.

#### **4.4.2 Thai employee’s motivation factors**

##### **4.4.2.1 Mental health and task support**

Besides rate of pay, about 6 interviewees said that the most important motivation factor for Thai employees in M company is to support them as the example from Mr. D that mentioned about how Thai employees need to be supported, which make them feel comfortable to work and share their stress and better work environment for them.

##### **4.4.2.2 Job security**

It can be observed that Thai employees concern about job security more than Chinese employees. There are 4 of Thai employees ranked job security as the first motivation factor that they concern, but all the Chinese employees ranked this factor with high number, which lower importance to them. It is seen that Chinese employees concern less about stability of the work.

#### **4.4.3 Chinese employee's motivation factors**

6 out of 7 Thai interviewees stated that Chinese employees seem to be motivated by achievement and all the targets all the time since they are very result-oriented people. Mr. D said, "Chinese employees always want to see only the results".

However, when the Chinese interviewees answered what are the work motivation factors for them, they said that it is career advancement and rate of pay. It can be seen that these two factors are the factors behind what Thai employees see from the result-oriented mindset of the Chinese employees in the company. It is seen that the way that Chinese employees emphasize on money. So, they have a lot of material concerns which consistent with the aforementioned literature.



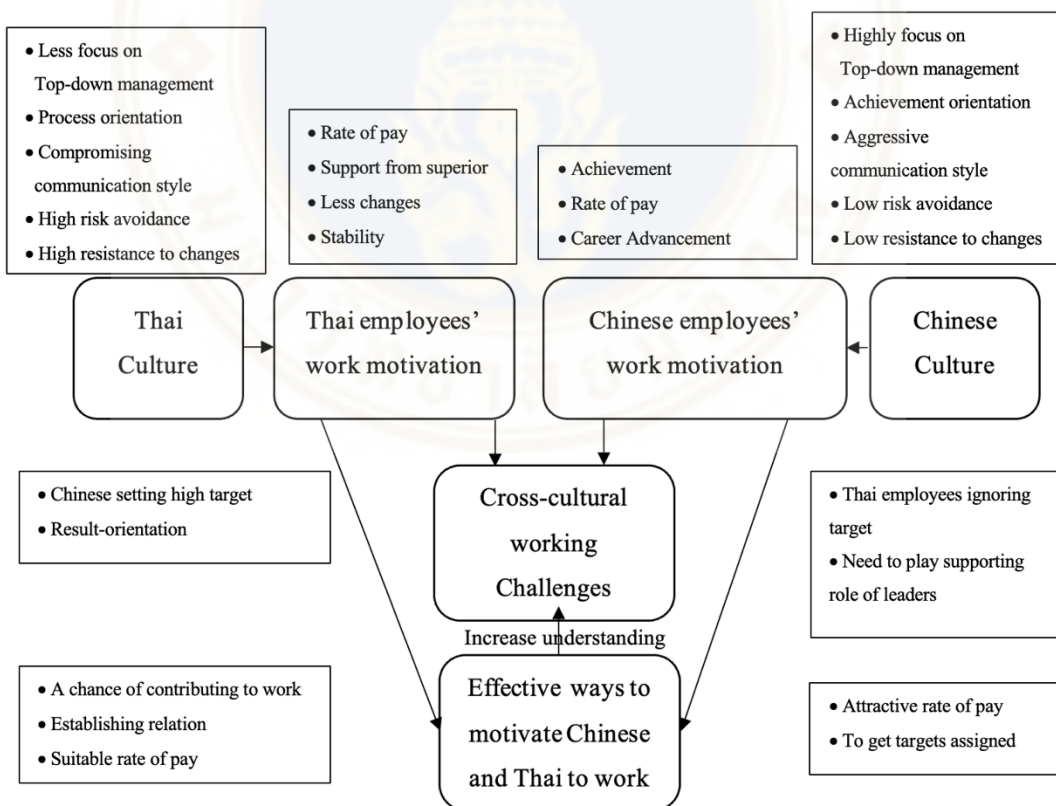


## CHAPTER V

### CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### 5.1 Conclusions

In this paper, from the research questions, the differences motivation factors of Thai and Chinese employees, main challenges of Chinese and Thai when working together and the effective way of motivating Chinese and Thai to work together in the workplace by conducting interviews from 10 respondents. 7 of them are Thai who working closely with Chinese employees and 3 of them are Chinese. It can be concluded that since there are the culture differences between Thai and Chinese, they are motivated to work in different way and value different things. The results are summarized on the research framework below.



**Figure 5.1 Differences of Thai and Chinese employee motivation factor in M company and effective way to motivate Thai and Chinese to work together**

In term of comparing between the results of the qualitative research and the literature review, it can be said that most of the findings are consistent. From the cultural differences point of view, the qualitative research found that Chinese employees tends to get used to with aggressive communication style and more straight forward comparing to Thai culture by directly pointing out what they want and when it need to be done. Conversely, to communicate with Thai people, the explanation or elaboration is needed to create clarity in communication. Another point is that Chinese employees has lower resistance to changes comparing with Thai employees, who prefer stability in life. The differences between the two cultures lead to challenges when they work together. The research found that since Chinese employees focus on achieving targets, Thai employees find it is challenging when they need to work with them to achieve the high targets, which encourage Thai to go over their limitation and create positive outcome. At the same time, it could give a negative impact to some Thai because they do not get used to it. On other hand, Chinese employees found it is challenging when Thai employees ignoring KPI targets. Moreover, they found that role of a leader in Thailand is different from Chinese culture, which need to be more caring and supporting subordinate to get through difficulties not only just order them to do somethings.

Hence, the effective ways to motivate to motivate Thai and Chinese come from understanding the other party's culture and trying to adapt. The most effective ways to motivate Thai employees are to establish relationship with them, to give them a chance to contribute to their work, and suitable rate of pay. These are partially consistent with the literature from (Chaisilwattana and Punnakitikashem, 2017) about Thai people work motivation. Chinese are always motivated by attractive rate of pay since they get allowance when they stay abroad and reward, which is why they try so hard to achieve targets, which is one of the factors that motivate Chinese employees to work.

From the interviews and ranking results, it can be concluded in term of different motivation factors of Thai and Chinese people in this company that the employees may have different or familiar motivation factors depending on their work, position, age range and personal background as well. If they have the similar conditions, they tend to have the same motivation factors. If they have different conditions, they will have different point of view and motivated by other factors. The qualitative research

found out that both Thai and Chinese are motivated by rate of pay while Thai employees care more about monthly salary, Chinese employees focus more on additional rewards. However, the differences are Thai employees need mental support and healthy relationship with others in workplace while Chinese employees always aim to achieve targets that is motivated by attractive rate of pay and their career advancement.

As a result of the research, it is also influenced by the characteristics of the company. Chinese employees in M company came for headquarter, which is a Chinese private enterprise. It has highly competitive working environment and very focus on work efficiency and cost reduction. So, they always work in fast pace. In addition, this paper investigated only Thai employees who work in M company, which is in suburban area. Normally, working environment in suburban area is less competitive than in an urban area, so the employees prefer an easy-going work environment and stability.

## **5.2 Recommendations**

In order to help Thai and Chinese employees effectively work together, the company is recommended to develop training sessions and team building activities for both Thai and Chinese to understand the differences between these two cultures to understand each other more and to create effective communication in the company.

### **5.2.1 Activities to develop Chinese employees**

Recommendations to the company for Chinese can be divided for 2 group of Chinese employees, Chinese employees who prepare coming to Thailand and who are already in M company.

#### **5.2.1.1 Preparation training for new Chinese employees**

The training for the Chinese employees will be mentioned first since they are people need to motivate Thai employees to work toward the KPI targets and the company. Chinese managers in the company are changed every 2 or 3 years. Once they get used to Thai culture they need to go back to China and new members come without any understanding in Thai culture and Thai people, which they need time to adjust to work together again. So, it should start with a training for Chinese who will come to work in Thailand. Before they come to Thailand, the headquarter can provide

them a training that help them to understand culture differences better. In order to conduct an effective culture differences training for Chinese employees, the company is recommended as follow.

Explaining to them why this training is important, it is because they cannot achieve all the KPI target alone without Thai employees who are key resources of M company. To motivate Thai employees to work with them, understanding culture differences is crucial step that they need to take since different cultures are motivated by different factors. Then, we will help them to understand how this works by letting them to brainstorm how the Thai culture look like from their perspective. For example, Thai employees are calm and easy-going, and they prefer compromising communication style. Since they know Thai people have these characteristics, we can stimulate them to think how they will smoothly communicate and motivate Thai people to work with them. Then, they should be asked to identify Chinese culture as well and reflect what they normally do to let them see the culture differences.

To conclude, the training for Chinese employees who will come to Thailand should provide a clear purpose of why they need to attend and how it helps them to achieve their KPI targets since the Chinese employees are highly motivated by achievement. Additionally, the clear objectives of the training, understanding the culture differences, need to be identified to ensure outcomes. This will help them to be more openminded and adapt to Thai culture more easily.

Another advantage of this training, it is better if they are trained from China because the level of high-power distance in China is stronger than Thai culture so they will take this as one of their goals as well. Being able to work with Thai people more smoothly will be their advantages, which emphasize the important of human resources as well as other achievement and goals.

#### 5. 2. 1. 2 Preparation training for Chinese employees in M company

The previous training is to adjust the Chinese employee mindset. They cannot expect Thai employees to do as same as Chinese employees do because cultural differences exist. Next, the company may educate them that the culture or how we do things will also reflect in workplace as well. The company can provide a training

for Chinese employees in the early period after they come to Thailand, or the current Chinese employees still struggle working with Thai employees. The training aim to provide guidelines how to motivate Thai employees in the company to work with them. The company can follow the recommendation to Chinese employees as the following.

- Lower the gap between a leader and a subordinate when assigning a task, and asking Thai employees whether they can finish it by the expected deadline instead of forcing them to do
  - Clarify importance of the task assigned to Thai employees to create autonomy and let them prioritize their own tasks
  - Follow up on urgent tasks with them frequently with an intention to support
  - Act as a consultant when difficulties occur and try to provide guidance, not commanding to do something
  - Sincerely support Thai employees when they need help
  - Respect Thai employee opinions: if it is a good idea, praise it and add on it for further suggestions. However, if it does not work, do not directly criticize, elaborate more why their opinion might not work and what could be risks.
  - When the task has no progress, it is important to ask them the reason behind and what you can do to support them because Thai employees may pay a lot attention on small details
  - When arguing with Thai people, be patient and try to be mindful and try not to show aggressive emotion
  - When Thai employees seem to work with slow pace, reminding yourself that it is about the culture that shapes them to be like that. What Chinese managers can do is suggest them how to manage tasks and time in more efficient way and tell them to set a small target and praise them when they achieve it
  - Having a small talk with Thai employees, and asking how they feel with their work and lives
  - Thank them for their hard work even though the result does not reach the target, but nearly achieve

The recommendation above will help Chinese employees to become closer with Thai employees and gain their trust by giving them sincere support.

### **5.2.2 Recommendations for Thai employees when working with Chinese employees**

Thai employees have been working with Chinese manager since 2018, and always try to adapt themselves to the fast pace of Chinese culture. It can be said that most of the Thai employees have known Chinese working style. However, they might not understand deeply why Chinese employees always focus on achievement and what shaped them in that way. The company also has to provide training for Thai management team and the employees that work closely with Chinese managers and make them understand culture differences. However, for Thai employees, the company can engage them at the beginning of the training by showing the challenges that Thai employees face in common to connect with them. For example, showing them, when the Chinese manager command them to do some tasks, and they need to finish it today with an aggressive tone of voice, then ask them how they responded to this situation. Following by introducing them the source of the actions, the culture differences can be explained and give them recommendations on how to respond with those situations. The recommendations are shown as below.

- If the new task that Chinese manager assign to you cannot be done within the time they want, let them know why you cannot do it and why you need to get it done at that period.
- Do not keep it to yourself alone if the tasks are overload or facing some difficulties
- Do not be shy to ask Chinese managers for more information when they assign tasks because they get used to say only what they want and when they want it. So, if the clarification is needed, they are willing to answer.
- Talk to Chinese managers directly if there is any difficulty, and let them learn how a role of leader in Thai culture looks like and to show them that you have intention to achieve the targets

These will be more effective if the company talk with all Thai managers first and suggest them to act as a role model for their subordinates, then everyone will learn these are good way to respond then they will follow their managers.

### **5.2.3 Activities for both Thai and Chinese employees**

Besides training activities, the company is recommended to organize team building or open-discuss sessions for both Thai and Chinese employees. For example, playing the game “I like you because...” to encourage them to find strengths of others and to change the perspective on how Thai look at Chinese and Chinese look at Thai.

## **5.3 Limitations and suggestions for future research**

The limitation of this research are 2 main points. The first limitation is a small sample size, which the paper investigates from only 10 employees in the company and has limited number of Chinese employees. The second limitation is that this paper focus on one company only, so the finding and recommendations cannot be generalized to other companies. As a result of the limitations, the results might be different if the research was conducted in the other types of business or in the different areas or industries.

Therefore, to widen research scope to different industries or locations while also formulating a standard guideline for Thai and Chinese to effectively work together can be consider for future research.

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