The Catch for Chinese Sea Turtles: An empirical assessment of the employability of overseas versus nationally educated Chinese students

2nd BACHELOR'S PAPER

submitted at the IMC University of Applied Sciences Krems



Bachelor's Programme "Export-Oriented Management"

by

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Area of emphasis/focus/special field: Human Resource and Intercultural Management

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Submitted on: 19.05.2011

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

I thank my parents who brought me to the wonderful world, and give me unconditional support wherever I am. My appreciation also goes to the IMC Krems, at where I have received a well rounded international-oriented education. Many thanks to my classmate Lisa and my friends in China, who have given me great help to complete the case study. And I give my special thanks to my boyfriend Christoph and his lovely family, without whom I would never enjoy my stay in Austria. "天降大任于斯人也,必先苦其心志,劳其筋骨,饿其体肤,空乏其身,行指乱其 所为,所以动心恐性,曾益其所不能。"

孟子

ABSTRACT IN GERMAN

Dem neuesten "Global Education Digest 2010" Bericht der UNESCO zufolge ist China, mit 441,186 Auslandsstudenten, das größte Herkunftsland internationaler Studenten. Eine Vielzahl aktueller Studien analyisiert die Employability der zurückgekehrten Studenten sowie deren Bedeutung für China's Wirtschaft und Gesellschaft. Diese Studien werden von einer Makroperspektive durchgeführt und fokusieren auf die rückkehrenden Studenten als Kollektiv. Es wurde jedoch wenig empirische Forschung betrieben. welche den Wettbewerbsvorteil der zurückgekehrten Studenten in bestimmten profesionellen Funktionen im Vergleich zu lokal ausgebildeten chinesischen Arbeitsnehmern analysiert. Diese Arbeit bewertet daher die Employability der zurückgekehrten Studenten im Vergleich zu national ausgebildeten Universitätsabsolventen und zieht eine umfassende Schlussfolgerung.

Schlüsselwörter: Chinesische zurückgekehrte Studenten; Chinesische Absolventen; Employability; Anstellung; Wettbewerbsvorteil

ABSTRACT IN ENGLISH

According to the latest "Global Education Digest 2010" published by the UNESCO, with 441,186 overseas students, China is the largest outbound country for overseas education. Many studies have been done recently in regard to the employability of the returnees as well as their impact on China's economy and society. Those studies are conducted from a macro angle focusing on the returnees as a collective. Yet, there has been little empirical research which has zoomed in the investigation lens to focus on the competitive advantage of the returnees in certain professional fields in comparison with the locally educated Chinese employees. This Paper hence will assess the returnees' employability in comparison to that of the nationally educated graduates and draw a comprehensive conclusion.

Key words: Chinese Returnees; Chinese Graduates; Employability; Employment; Competitive Advantage

ABSTRACT IN CHINESE

联合国教科文组织最新公布的《2010 年全球教育摘要》显示,目前,世界主要国家 总共有 441186 名中国籍海外留学生,中国已成为世界上最大的海外教育输出国。 当今的许多调查研究侧重于海归的就业能力,以及他们对中国经济和社会的影响, 这些研究是从宏观的角度出发,以海归作为一个总体来进行考察的。然而,很少有 实证研究把调查镜头放大到某些专业领域,把海归的竞争与本土人才作一比较。因 此,本论文将评估海归的就业优势,并比较其与本土人才的就业竞争优势,以此归 纳总结出一个全方位的结论。

关键词:中国海归,中国毕业生,本土人才,就业,竞争优势

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ABBREVIATIONS

CSCSE	Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange
GDP	Gross domestic product
HR	Human resource
NBSC	National Bureau of Statistics of China
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization

1 INTRODUCTION

Since the economic reform in 1978, over the past three decades, with an average 10% annual GDP growth, China has achieved dramatic economic growth and overtook Japan becoming the world second largest economy (CIA, 2011). The economic development has not only improved the country's influence on the world economy, but also enriched its people, to name one phenomenon – studying abroad on one's own expense, which used to be something the Chinese could not dream of, now becomes affordable to a large amount of families.

During the 1990s, the Chinese government put a lot of effort into encouraging overseas educated Chinese to return to work in China: the strict pre-verification was eliminated, policies and procedures were polished and improved, institutions that help and support overseas students and returnees were established, governmental programmes such as the "Spring Sunshine Plan" and the "Recruitment Program of Global Experts" to encourage overseas students return back to China were carried out. (Yuan, 2008)

Nowadays, Chinese choose to obtain their education abroad for variable reasons, from avoiding highly competitive admission of the Chinese universities, to pursuing further or better education. Meanwhile, China's rising economy has attracted more and more overseas educated Chinese returning back to China to work. According to a recent research, by the end of 2010, there will be 500,000 returnees (Zhao, 2010).

The returnees are often called "sea turtles" in China, since the word "turtle" has the same pronunciation as that of "return". The first generation "sea turtles" were much appreciated with their rare overseas experience, knowledge and language ability, thus they could easily find a desirable job with a high salary level.

The number of returnees keeps increasing every year, but at the same time most of the returnees' employment expectations remain as high as they used to be, many "sea turtles" become "sea tangle" because in Chinese, "tangle" is the homophone of "to wait for". The government is facing another challenge to improve the employability of the increasing number of returnees as to the Chinese local graduates.

1.1 Objectives

The objectives of this thesis thus are:

- to **identify** and **compare** the current employment situation of the returnees and the nationally educated graduates.
- to **draw** a comprehensive conclusion from the combination of the secondary and primary research

1.2 Research Questions and Purpose

Many studies have been done recently in regard to the employability of the returnees as well as their impact on China's economy and society. Those studies are conducted from a macro angle focusing on the returnees as a collective. Yet, there has been little empirical research which has zoomed in the investigation lens to focus on the competitive advantage of the returnees in certain professional fields in comparison with the locally educated Chinese employees.

In order to empirically assess the employability of the Chinese returnees, this paper attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. Do Chinese returnees and locally educated Chinese face the same career possibilities on the whole when taking up their graduate job in China?

2. Are there professional fields which favour Chinese returnees over locally educated Chinese? If so, which fields?

3. Do Chinese returnees feel their overseas education was worth their efforts?

1.3 Structure

Chapter 2 shall give the reader a general overview of the development and trends of Chinese who study abroad and return back to China since 1978. It describes the history and the current situation, as well as a future perspective of the Chinese overseas students and returnees.

Chapter 3 shall present the current Chinese returnees employment situation.

Chapter 4 shall describe the current nationally educate Chinese graduates employment situation.

Chapter 5 shall present the results and findings of the case study with seven Chinese companies which represent different industries.

1.4 Research Methodology

The research target will be the returnees who have studied abroad on their own expense, in other words, exclusive of the ones who have been financially supported by government fund. This is mainly because of the nature of the government-sponsored students: by accepting the government grants, they are obligated to return back and serve at the government, governmental institutions and state-owned corporations. Hence, they do not have any employment concern. Moreover, the number of Chinese overseas students who are on their own expense counts more than 90% of the total number of Chinese overseas students (Wu, 2010).

The final conclusion of the paper is based on secondary research, and the quantitative as well as qualitative primary research – the case study – with selected seven Chinese companies, which is conducted by telephone interview and email exchange. The foreign companies in China will not be considered within the research scope.

1.5 Limitations

The conclusion of this paper will be drawn under the result of the secondary research and the case study. However, between the 1950s and the 1980s, the Chinese national statistics system was not as well developed as it is now, therefore, it is almost impossible to collect certain official data in those decades. For the case study, due to the fact that more than half of the returnees are employed at the foreign companies (Sina, EIC, 2010), the research target and result will be limited to the minority returnees who are employed at the Chinese companies.

2 DEVELOPMENT AND TRENDS OF CHINESE WHO STUDY ABROAD AND RETURN BACK TO CHINA SINCE 1978

The history of Chinese going abroad to study can be dated back to 1847, when a Chinese man named Rong Hong started his trip to the US. Rong became the first Chinese overseas student, and more importantly, he had pointed out a direction, which more and more Chinese have followed since then. (Yee, 2011)

From the late Qing Dynasty to the republican period, for a century, the country was going through its most turbulent time of the history, people were eager to go to those advanced countries with the hope to bring back their advanced technologies, politics, military techniques, policies, and laws. The US, Great Britain, France, Germany, and Japan had been the main destinations. (Yee, 2011)

2.1 From Government-Sponsored to Self-Financed

100 years later, a new chapter in the history was written when the People's Republic of China was the establishment in 1949, but a decade of warfare left the newborn country with dilapidated infrastructure and underdeveloped science and technology. The government decided to send scholars and students abroad to study advanced knowledge in order to help to develop the country. Those students were carefully selected by the Chinese government, their research and study areas as well were in favour of the need of the country's development. Their spending abroad was totally financed by the country. However, they were obligated to return back to serve the country after their studies. (Zhu, 2009)

The idea of government-sponsored overseas studies was since then established. However, during that period, Russia - the Soviet Union, which was considered as the Big Brother to China at that time, was the major destination, because of China's political stand. There were a small number of students also been sent to France and Great Britain, but the US and Japan were not among the destination list. (Zhu, 2009)

Before the Cultural Revolution took place in 1966, there were 11,000 Chinese scholars in total studying abroad on behalf of China. But this ten years' (1966-1976), (Lieberthal, 2011) catastrophe obstructed the steps of those who were eager to study abroad to serve the country.

Until 1978, when the Chinese government embarked on the policy for reform and opening-up, going abroad to study was brought up again and was especially encouraged by Deng Xiaoping. He pointed out at his visit to Tsinghua University in June 1978: (Zhu, 2009)

"...I agree to increase the number of students going abroad to study, especially to study science subjects. Not just only three or five (students), we will send thousands, tens of thousands. This will be and effective and efficient way to improve the level of our country's science education. Our current steps are too small, we must try by every possible means to catch up, and the road should thus become wider and wider..." (Fu, 2011)

Self-financed Chinese overseas students also appeared since then. However, the country had been closed too long for people to open their minds from one day to the other. There were not so many people, at the time, who understood the meaning and value of going abroad to study; on the contrary, some even could not accept the idea of sending students to those capitalism countries to study. The country's economy, on the other hand, was in a very poor situation after the ten years' Cultural Revolution, it was even not very easy for the country to support all the overseas students, not to mention for the common people to afford their living and education abroad.

Those who could afford going abroad on their own were required to go through a strict examination and verification with the country's Ministry of Public Security. There were very few people applied at that time, even in the pioneer city Shanghai, only 8 people in total applied in 1978. (He, 2008) The number of self-financed students compared to that of government-sponsored students was far smaller.

In June 1978, after the visit of American Science and Technology delegation in China, Dr. Frank Press, the former Science Advisor to President James Carter, invited Chinese delegation to negotiate the issues concerning admitting Chinese students to study in the US. (Fu, 2011)

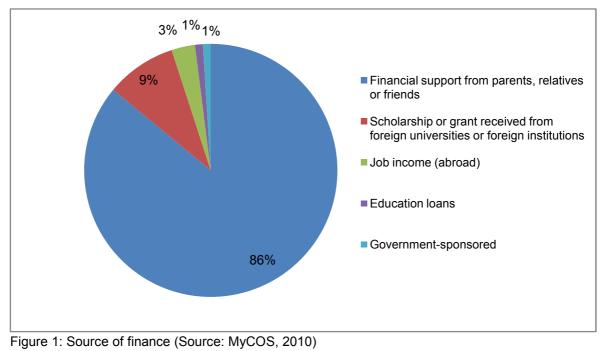
After the agreement signed with the US, the Chinese National Education Ministry had then successfully established agreement with the UK (1979), Egypt (1979), Canada(1979), the Netherlands (1979), Italy (1980), Japan (1981), Germany (1981), France (1981), Belgium (1981), and Australia (1986). (Fu, 2011)

From 1979 onwards, there were around 1000 self-financed students going abroad every year. 1981 the government pointed out that self-financed overseas

education is part of the government education job, and self-financed overseas students share the equal political rights as the government-sponsored overseas students. In 1985, the verification policy was finally eliminated, students going abroad to study under self-finance thus had started booming all over the country. Between 1980 and 1985, the number of self-financed overseas students increased to nearly 10,000. (He, 2008)

In 1989 the government established the Chinese Service Center for Scholarly Exchange (CSCSE) to provide one-stop service for the going-abroad and returning-back scholars. In 1992 the government carried out a "12 words" policy: "support students going abroad, encourage overseas returning back, free come free go". (Fu, 2011) This policy was also known as the first governmental reference of encouraging Chinese students to go abroad to study. It had as well reflected the government's positive and supportive attitude towards Chinese overseas students. In 1998, the government allowed the establishment of the intermediary service for self-financed overseas studies and had further eliminated other restrictions on application of self-financed overseas studies. (He, 2008)

With the polished policies and the improved system as well as the development of the country's economy, from 1992 to 1999 the number of Chinese students going abroad increased dramatically. In 1999 there were nearly 24,000 Chinese went abroad to study, of which self-financed overseas students counted 90%. (NBSC, 2007). In the last ten years, the proportion of self-sponsored overseas Chinese students is above 90% of the total overseas students every year. The number even reached to 95% in 2010.



2.2 From Science Subjects to Social Subjects

Between 1978 and 1992, the main part of Chinese overseas students was those of the government-sponsored students. (Zhu 2009) Their studies abroad were, under Deng Xiaoping's initiative, for the need of the country's science development, mainly science subjects, to name the three most popular ones: Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry. There used to be a popular saying in China at that time: "if you study Math, Physics, and Chemistry well, you will have no fear in the world." (Cui 2008)

However, as the development of Chinese society and economy under the big environment of economic internationalization and globalization, the Human Capital demand is no longer only in the field of science, knowledge diversity on the contrary is strongly appreciated. From 1999 onwards, the studies subjects were well spread. More and more overseas Chinese students chose to study other subjects other than science, Business Administration, Finance, Economics, International Trade, Law are some of very good examples.

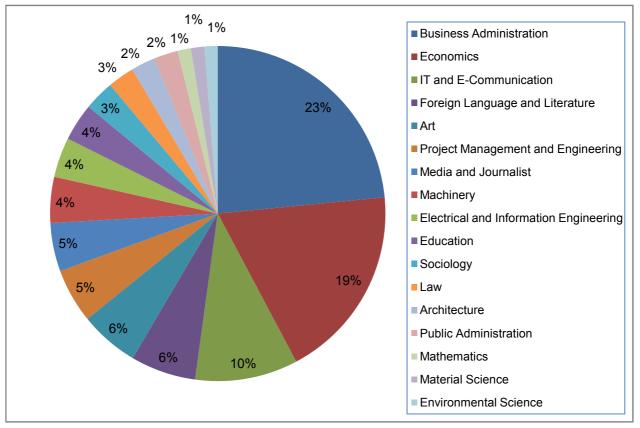


Figure 2: Study subjects 2009 (Source: MyCOS, 2010)

2.3 From Elite to Ordinary

During the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, the main stream Chinese overseas students were those government sponsored. The selection criteria of government sponsored students were very strict. Under the principle of "select strictly, rather less than worse", the candidates were carefully selected from the top students and scholars of the top universities and science research institutions, they were thus called elite. The degree programs they studies abroad ware mainly doctorial. They did not only return back with advanced knowledge and technology, but also with different ideas and internationalized views. Almost all of them became the key personnel of the country's science, culture, education field. (Cui 2008)

At that time, the life of overseas Chinese students was rather tough because of their poor financial situation, however, they studied incredibly hard with the belief of returning back to serve the country. Chao Yang, the CEO of Longyuan International Group, was one of the first government-sponsored Chinese overseas students to Canada in the 1970s. He still remembers now "I was so excited when I was announced to be selected as one of the first government-sponsored students after the Open Door policy in 1978, it felt like I was one in the million. It was said that ten thousands Chinese farmers could only afford one overseas student at that time, I made up my mind to study as much as I could and return back to serve the country." (Cui 2008)

From the 1990s onwards more and more students were going abroad for the Master Degree's studies. In recent years, a lot of Chinese choose to start their Bachelor Degrees' studies or even high school studies abroad. (Gao 2008) Nowadays, who can study abroad and what to study is no longer the government's decision, instead, it is every Chinese's right to extend their education and to improve their personal experience abroad. Due to the development of the country's economy, studying abroad is not an "elite's dream" any more.

2.4 Stay versus Return

The government-sponsored overseas students are obligated to return back to serve the country. They have to sign an agreement with the government in advance to promise not to stay abroad after their education. However, when graduated, every overseas student has the same decision to make: stay or return. In the 1990s, the return rate of government-sponsored overseas students was about 70%, which means 3 out of 10 people chose to stay abroad. In 1996, the

government established the China Scholarship Council to further regulate the returning policy. According to the regulation, overseas students who stay or do not return back on time have to pay back all the costs that the government has covered, and moreover, a 30% of penalty has to be paid as well. But the economic punishment could certainly not solve the real problem, because after all, those developed countries do have a better economy and living standard. Hence, stay or return is not only a decision which concerns punishment or reward, but also the students' value, loyalty and other personal reasons. (Ao 2010)

In the past 10 years the return rate of government-sponsored overseas students increased to 97%. (Ao 2010) The big improvement has fully proved that a country's better macroeconomic environment is surely the most important thing to ensure the returnees' belief of a better career perspective.

The government-sponsored students returned back to the key position of certain research fields which were pre-arranged by the country, those students are selected as the best in their research field at first place, their experience abroad is like a halo that make them stand out even more when they return back.

In order to attract more highly-qualified Chinese overseas scholars, in 1996 the government carried out the "Spring Sunshine Plan" which aimed to sponsor the qualified overseas Chinese scholars to return back to China to work temporarily for certain important governmental projects. In 2008, another program called "Recruitment Program of Global Experts" has been implemented. The target group of this program is not only Chinese, but also foreign nationals with strong expertise and outstanding education background and professional experience in the field of science, technology, and finance. (1000plan 2008)

Concerning the decision of stay or return, the self-financed students are rather flexible. The immigration policy of the host countries is the main influence on their decisions to stay. For example, many Chinese students went to Australia choosing to study Accounting was not because they were in favour of the subject, but because this subject entitled more points for immigration grading.

Nowadays more and more self-financed overseas Chinese students choose to return back to China after their studies. However, current employment situation is different from the 1990s when the number of self-financed students was much smaller and the demand of the human capitals equipped with international knowledge was relatively bigger. The requirement of job qualification increases

together with the number of returnees, as the country's "Recruitment Program of Global Experts" indicates, one can go abroad as an ordinary person, but it is always an advantage to be an elite when returns back.

Until 2000, there are approximately 223 thousands Chinese students studying overseas in total, but in 2009 and 2010 alone, there are more than 200 thousands Chinese students going abroad to study each year. The number of returnees at the same is increasing dramatically as well. At the beginning of the 2000s, there were about 12,243 overseas Chinese students returned back, but at the end of last year the number increased to 134,800, this is more than ten times of ten years ago. (NBSC, 2010)

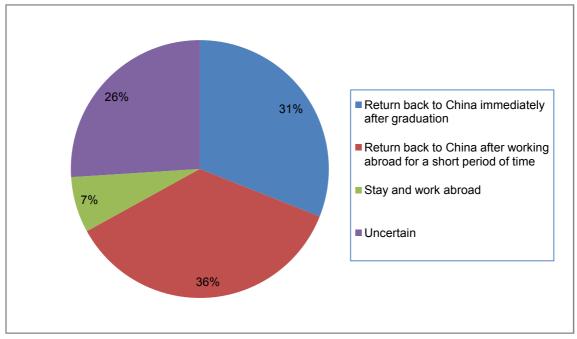


Figure 3: Intention to stay or return 2009 (Source: MyCOS, 2010)

The rising number however tells two sides of the story. For one thing, Chinese people benefit from the country's fast running economy engine, and the economy on the other hand does also need well-qualified personnel to develop and compete in the global environment. For another, since studying abroad is no long something that one cannot reach, parents are willing to invest their money in a better education abroad for their children. Going abroad is not an elite's dream any more, it becomes ordinary. Students going abroad with different reasons and plans, Master's or Bachelor's degree studies, even high school, become popular instead of Doctorial studies. But with the increasing number and an ordinary profile, the returnees are no longer shining under their "overseas" coat, they do not only have

to compete to those local educated people, but also other hundreds thousands returnees.

Year	Number of Students Studying Abroad	Self-Financed	Number of Returned Overseas Students
1978	860	n/a	248
1979	1,777	n/a	231
1980	2,124	n/a	162
1981	2,922	n/a	1,143
1982	2,326	n/a	2,116
1983	2,633	n/a	2,303
1984	3,073	n/a	2,290
1985	4,888	n/a	1,424
1986	4,676	n/a	1,388
1987	4,703	n/a	1,605
1988	3,786	n/a	3,000
1989	3,329	n/a	1,753
1990	2,950	n/a	1,593
1991	2,900	n/a	2,069
1992	6,540	n/a	3,611
1993	10,742	n/a	5,128
1994	19,071	n/a	4,230
1995	20,381	n/a	5,750
1996	20,905	n/a	6,570
1997	22,410	n/a	7,130
1998	17,622	n/a	7,379
1999	23,749	21,374	7,748
2000	38,989	32,293	9,121
2001	83,973	76,052	12,243
2002	125,179	117,000	17,945
2003	117,307	109,200	20,152
2004	114,682	104,260	24,726
2005	118,515	106,500	34,987
2006	134,000	120,690	42,000
2007	144,000	128,700	44,500
2008	179,800	163,610	69,300
2009	229,300	210,000	108,300
2010	284,700	264,711	134,800

Figure 4: Number of Chinese overseas students and returnees (Source: NBSC, 2010)

3 CURRENT RETURNEES EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

The number of the Chinese overseas students increases every year, whereas the number of the returnees increases with the same speed. There are 134.8 thousands overseas Chinese returned back in 2010 after successfully completed their studies abroad.(NBSC, 2010) Do these returnees also succeed in finding a job and become successful in their career? This part of the Paper will try to assess the returnees' current employment situation.

The following result of Chapter 3.1 to 3.7 is based on a research conducted by Sina Education Channel and EIC International Education Research Institution. There were 6784 Chinese returnees voluntarily participated in the research between June and September in 2010, the result is without sampling or screening. (Sina, EIC, 2010)

3.1 Returnees' Profile

30% of the returnees returned from the US and Australia, returnees from other countries such as the UK, Canada, and other European countries count about 10%. More than 90% returnees at least hold a Bachelor's degree, among which 33.33% have a Bachelor's degree, and 55.56% have a Master's degree.

There are 50.8% returnees studied Business or other Economics related subjects. Returnees studied Engineering or Technology subjects count about 26.23%, and Literature and Education subjects 13.12%.

3.2 Career Plan

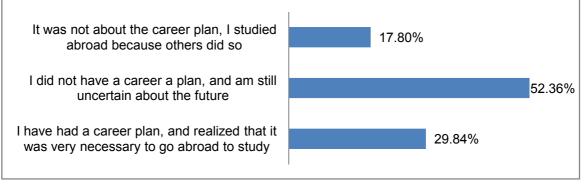


Figure 5: Career plan (Source: Sina, EIC, 2010)

Do overseas Chinese students have had a clear career plan before they went abroad? The result turns out to be very worrying. Only 29.84% of the respondents have had a clear career plan and considered that studying abroad is very necessary to achieve this plan. 52.36% respondents didn't have a career plan before going abroad, and they also feel their future is uncertain. There are also 17.80% respondents decided to study abroad just simply because many people they know went abroad to study, they didn't consider the career plan at all.

3.3 How long does it take to find a job

77.41% returnees can find a job within 3 months, 80% of these returnees can find a job within 2 months. 29.03% returnees haven't changed the job since returning back to China, and 40.32% have changed their job once.

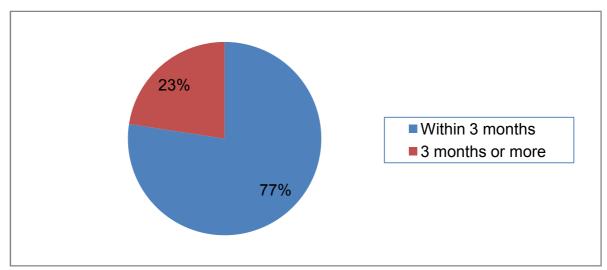


Figure 6 Time that takes to find a job (Source: Sina, EIC, 2010)

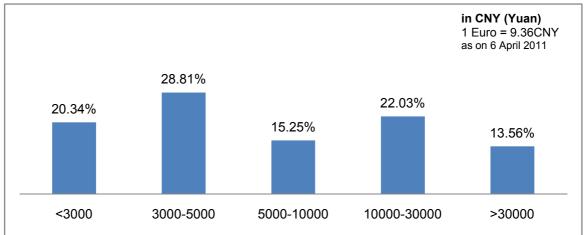
3.4 Salary Level

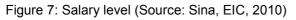
The average annual salary in China is 32736 Yuan in 2009 (NBSC 2010), it is about 2728 Yuan per month. Approximately 50% of the returnees earn less than 5000 Yuan per month. The most common salary range is between 3000 and 5000 Yuan, about 28.81% of returnees falling into this category, followed by those who earn 10000 to 30000 Yuan every month, which counts 22.03%.

However, the proportion of low level salary has also brought one's attention, 20.34% returnees do have a salary level of less than 3000 Yuan. According to the research, 60.32% of returnees had no working experience before going abroad. Their salary expectation is thus very reasonable. Hence most of them have 3000 to 5000 Yuan salary at the beginning of their career, which means, take the

number of returnees in 2010 as an example, approximately 172 thousands returnees out of 287.4 thousands have to start their career from point zero.

For those returnees, who had working experience either abroad or in China, their salary level is naturally higher. A professional experience plus an outstanding academic track enable considerable amount of returnees earn more than 10000 Yuan per month. And some of them even have a very high salary level with more than 30000 Yuan. However, this part of returnees counts only 13.56%.



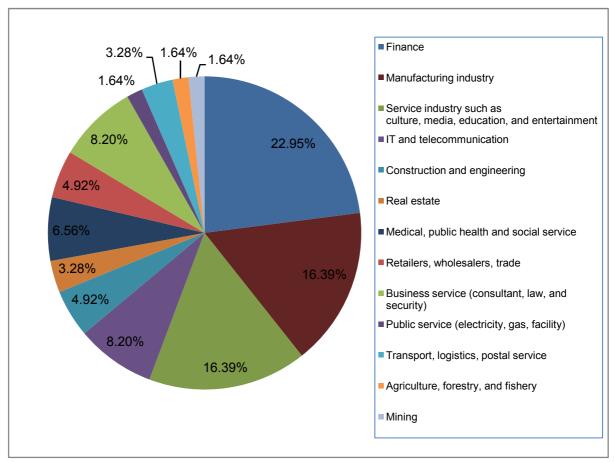


Most of the returnees have a rational understanding of the salary level they have. Meanwhile, 83.2% returnees believe that the reason for those returnees who are unemployed is mainly from themselves, for instance, their studies do not meet the demand of current labour market, or their salary expectation is too high for the employers, and so on.

Returnee used to be an identity that everyone admired of. When this glamour starts to fade away because of the increasing number, an overseas education background does not necessarily mean a promising career and a high salary any more. One should consider his or her own situation and ability, and most importantly, plan in advance. It is also important to choose a study program that is suitable for oneself, and take any opportunity to practice the theoretical knowledge with an internship or a part-time job. As the statistic shows, a returnee with working experience abroad will be much more competitive.

3.5 Industrial Sectors

According to the research, the current returnees' career distribution is much diversified, unlike 20 years ago, when the main purpose of studying abroad is to



return back to help to develop the country's science and technology sector with the advance knowledge that the returnees had learnt abroad.

Finance sector, which attracts 22.95% of returnees, ranked as the number one professional field that returnees choose to work for, followed by manufacture sector and service industry such as media, education, and entertainment which employs 16.39% returnees each. IT and telecommunication as well as business service such as consultant, law firm, and security company share the same proportion – 8.20% - returnees.

When it comes to the relationship between the career types and studies subjects, more than 86% returnees think that their career is more or less related to what they have studied abroad. Only 13.11% of returnees believe that these two factors do not necessarily have to be related in reality.

It is not very difficult to discover that students who had a clear career goal and study plan before going abroad turned out to have a better chance and more

Figure 8: Returnees' career industrial sectors (Source: Sina, EIC, 2010)

advantages when they return back to look for a job. They are able to choose a favorable job on their own initiative.

3.6 Organization Types

Different organization types can be defined by the company's ownership. A Chinese state-owned company is a company whose assets all belong to the Chinese government. A Chinese collectively-owned company refers to the ownership of the assets belong to a collective group of working people. The profit distribution is according to the individual contribution. A Chinese collectively-owned company or a rural collectively-owned company. A Chinese private-owned company is established by a natural person or natural person's investment holding.

A Sino-Foreign Joint Venture is a foreign company, enterprise and other economic organization or individual with a Chinese company, enterprise or other economic organization jointly invest in China. The joint parties invest and operate together, according to the proportion of their total investment to share the risk and responsibility as well as the profit and loss. The foreign party's investment proportion shall be no less than 25% of the total capital.

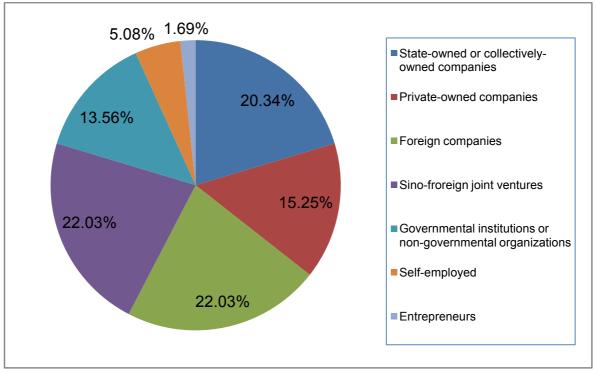
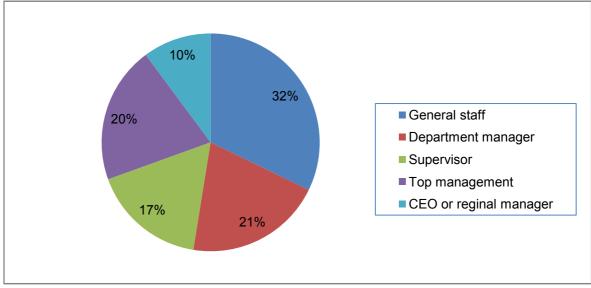


Figure 9: Returnees' company type (Source: Sina, EIC, 2010)

Returnees are employed in almost every type of companies. However, foreign companies and Chinese-foreign joint ventures are the returnees' popular career destinations. As demonstrated in the graph, 22.03% returnees work at foreign companies that located in China, and the same proportion of returnees are employed at Chinese-foreign joint-venture companies. Together they count almost half of the returnees. State-owned or collectively-owned companies rank as the number three employers, which employ 20.34% returnees. The private-owned companies are followed by, which attract 15.25% returnees working for them. There are about 13.56% returnees working in the government and governmental institutions or non-governmental organizations. 5.08% returnees are self-employed and 1.69% are entrepreneurs.



3.7 Job Position

Figure 10: Returnees' job position (Source: Sina, EIC, 2010)

32.20% of returnees work as general staffs. 20.34% returnees are department managers. The number of returnees working as supervisors count to 16.95%, and 10.17% returnees work at the top positions as CEOs or regional managers.

4 CURRENT NATIONALLY EDUCATED CHINESE GRADUATES EMPLOYMENT SITUATION

The number of Chinese graduates reached to 5,743,000 in 2009. The Chinese Prime Minister Wen Jiabao highlighted in the Report on the Work of the Government in March 2010: "We will do everything in our power to increase employment. This is the top priority in our work of ensuring and improving people's wellbeing." (Wen 2009) Can the fast economic growth promise the huge number of graduates a job they want? This part of the Paper will assess the current employment situation of the nationally educated Chinese graduates.

The following result is based on the Chinese College Graduates' Employment Annual Report 2010, which was conducted by MyCOS with 220,000 Chinese nationally educated graduates in 2009. (MyCOS, 2010)

4.1 Nationally Educated Chinese Graduates' Profile

The "graduates" in this part of the Paper refer to the students who have completed their Bachelor's degree (four years) or College Diploma (three years) studies in 2009 in a China.

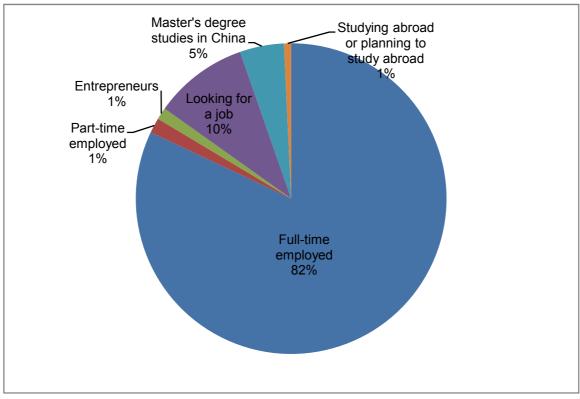
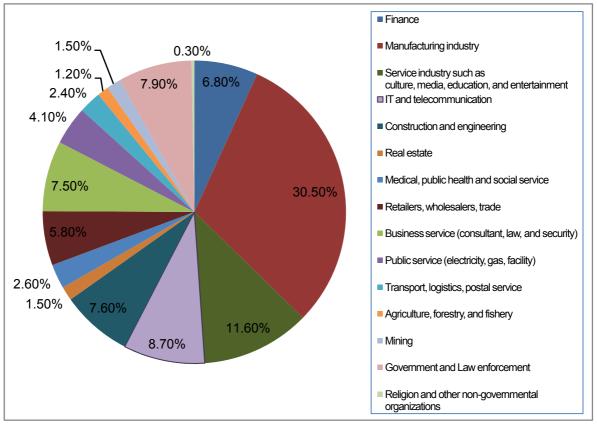


Figure 11: National graduates' profile (Source: MyCOS, 2010)

As demonstrated in the graph, 78.5% graduates are full-time employed, 1.5% graduates have a part-time job, and 1.2% are entrepreneurs. There are 9.4% graduates still looking for a job, and 4.4% are currently doing the Master's degree studies in China. And 0.7% Graduates are studying abroad or are planning to do so.



4.2 Industrial Sectors

Figure 12 National graduates' career industrial sectors (Source: MyCOS, 2010)

Compare to returnees' career choices, the nationally educated graduates have relatively more varieties, and their career distributions are rather scattered. Financial sector is not the number one employer for the nationally educated graduates, and it generates only 6.80% of the graduates. The manufacturing industry instead, gathering 30.50% of the graduates, becomes the number one career type that the nationally educated graduates choose to work for. As same popular as it is to the returnees, the service industry such as education, entertainment, culture and media are the second ranking career types that followed by, which together employ 11.60% graduates. IT and telecommunication field is also a big employer, which attracts 8.70% graduates.

One sector that does not appear in the returnees' career choices is the government and law enforcement, there are 7.90% nationally educated graduates working there. Construction and engineering is also very attractive to the nationally educated graduates, about 7.60% of them work for this sector. There are 7.50% graduates working in the business service sector such as consulting and law firms. 5.80% graduates are employed at retailers, wholesalers or trading companies. In the public service sector such as electricity, gas and facility management providers, there are 4.10% graduates. The rest of the nationally educated Chinese graduates are working in the transport, logistics and postal service sector -2.40%, agriculture, forestry, and fishery sector 1.20%, mining industry 1.50%, and there are also 0.3% graduates working in the religion or other non-governmental organizations.

4.3 Organization Types

The Chinese higher education system includes regular universities, adult universities, advanced colleges and senior secondary school. (King 2004) The types of the companies that the nationally educated graduates work at differ from the types of education system the graduates are from.

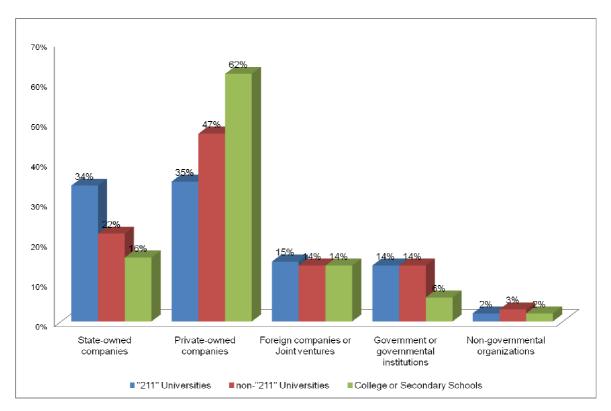
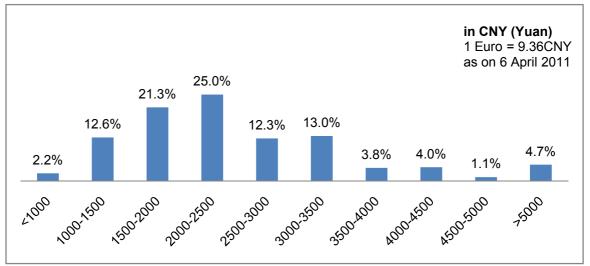


Figure 13: National graduates' company types (Source: MyCOS, 2010)

The "211" universities refer to the 121 Chinese universities which are supported by the country's 211 Project. The 211 Project was initiated in 1993 by the Ministry of Education of the People's Republic of China, and aimed to cultivate a high-level national education and research system for the national economic and social development strategies. (MyCOS 2010) The 121 "211" universities are considered as the top universities in China.

Nationally educated graduates have a particularly good employability at state and private owned companies, regardless what type of the universities they are from. These two types of company all together employ 69% graduates from "211" universities, 69% graduates from non-"211" universities, and 78% graduates from other colleges or secondary schools. There are about 15% of "211" graduates, 14% of non-"211" and college or secondary school graduates employed at foreign companies or joint ventures, this proportion is relatively smaller compare to that of the returnees. However, nationally educated graduates do have a small advantage when it comes to the government or governmental institutions: about 14% "211" and non-"211" graduates employed at the government or governmental institutions.



4.4 Salary Level

Figure 14: National graduates' salary level (Source: MyCOS, 2010)

The average annual salary in China is 32736 Yuan in 2009 (NBSC 2010), it is about 2728 Yuan per month. However, there are about 61.1% nationally educated graduates earn less than 2500 Yuan per month, which means more than half of the national graduates have a below national average's salary level. The most common salary range is between 2000 and 2500 Yuan, 25% national graduates

fall into this category. With 21.3% graduates, the salary level of 1500 to 2000 Yuan followed close behind. There are 12.3% graduates earning between 2500 and 3000 Yuan per month, and 21.9% earning between 3000 and 5000 Yuan per month. Moreover, 4.7% national graduates have a relatively higher salary level with more than 5000 Yuan per month.

5 CASE STUDY

In order to assess the employability of overseas versus nationally educated Chinese in reality, a case study has been conducted via email exchange and telephone interview. The target groups are Chinese companies, in other words, excluding those foreign companies that are located in China.

This part of the Bachelor Paper will present the results that the author has received from six different Chinese companies, which cover different industries and business areas, as well as different ownerships structures. As is often the nature of a **state-owned** company, the outcomes of the case study from the two state-owned companies' HR's approach are **not very satisfactory**, however, it surely counts as part of the findings which inspires the author to draw a complete conclusion.

5.1 The Questionnaires

The original language of the questionnaire and the answers is Chinese, and can be found in the Appendix attached to the end of the paper. However the English translation of the questionnaire is as follows:

QUANTITATIVE:

1. The number of returnee employees in total, and the number of locally educated employees in total

2. The distribution of returnee employees versus locally educated employees in terms of department (management, marketing, financing, HR, R&D, etc), and

QUALITATIVE:

To HR and/or general department manager:

1. Why do you hire this returnee for this position over the locally educated people at first place?

2. What are they main difference between tasks that are assigned to the returnees and those of to the locally educated employees?

3. Are you satisfied with the returnees' work? Have they met your expectation?

4. What competitive advantage do you think they have?

To returnees:

1. Why do you choose this company and this position?

2. What competitive advantage do you think you have in this particular professional field?

3. What competitive advantage do you think the locally educated employees have in this particular professional field?

4. Are you satisfied with your career perspective?

To nationally educated employees:

- 1. What competitive advantage do you think you have in this particular professional field?
- 2. What competitive advantage do you think the returnees have in this particular professional field?
- **3.** Are you satisfied with your career perspective?

5.2 The Cases:

5.2.1 Case 1 – IFE Elevator 快意电梯有限公司

IFE Elevator is a Chinese private-owned company. It is located in Donguan, China. The company was established and approved by the Ministry of Construction of China in 1988. They specialize in design, manufacture, installation, maintenance and modernization of elevators and escalators. IFE's network of domestic sales and service covers all of the Chinese major cities. Recently, the company also makes all effort to expand on overseas markets, and has established sales networks in Hong Kong, Macao, Singapore, Australian, Malaysia, Indonesia, Philippines, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Venezuela, Mexico, Bangladesh and Nigeria.

HR's approach

IFE Elevator has 778 employees, and most of them are engineers or technical workers. There is, however, only one employee with overseas background – a returnee, who is employed at the International Sales Department. There are 13 other employees who are nationally educated working at the same department.

To develop the overseas business is why IFE Elevator hired the returnee in the first place. The returnee's tasks are different from those of the nationally educated employees, that is, the returnee is mainly responsible for develop and expand overseas market, and furthermore, he is also in charge of meeting and negotiating with the foreign clients.

IFE Elevator is satisfied with the jobs that the returnee has done, and they also think that he has met their expectation. Compare to those nationally educated employees, the company points out that, the returnee's foreign language ability and advanced international theoretical knowledge are the competitive advantages. And for the disadvantage, the company simply says none.

Returnee employee's approach

Returnee N holds a Master's degree, he studied in the US, and returned back in 2008. N works at the International Sales Department of IFE. His insights into foreign markets as well as his foreign personnel network are not only his competitive advantages compare to the nationally educated employees, but are also highly appreciated by the company. However, he thinks that the nationally educated employees are very hard-working as well, and they are in general very modest. N is satisfied with his career perspective at the IFE.

Nationally educated employee's approach

Employee A has a college degree in English Language. She believes that her competitive advantage is her professional English language which enables her to communicate with foreign clients and to do better in her job to develop the overseas market for the company. A thinks that returnees' strong bilingual skills and their westernized way of thinking as well as the more advanced theoretical knowledge are their competitive advantages.

Employee B studied Mechanical Design, Manufacturing and Automation, and graduated with a Bachelor degree. Because of his profession characteristic, B is satisfied with his career perspective at IFE, and he thinks that his competitive advantage is his particular knowledge in mechanic which gives him the ability to solve the tasks easily regardless of the different technical standards in different areas. B sees returnees' overseas background is exactly what they have as a competitive advantage. He states that returnees have good foreign linguistic communication skills, and they also have a different way of thinking and acting,

moreover, B points out that returnees have abundant foreign market information and information channels.

Employee E graduated from a technical secondary school, works as a technician at the Technology Department of IFE. His job requires him to allocate different materials according to different projects, and to provide technical reports to instruct the production. E modestly states that he doesn't have a lot of competitive advantages in his professional field, however, his computer skills in Excel and VBA has improved the efficiency and correctness of data computing. E thinks that if a returnee enters his job position, he or she can most probably bring in a few newly advanced methodologies, and provide some ideas of how to solve technical problems, otherwise, there will not be a big difference.

Referring to his career perspective, E explains that from a worker to a technician, it took a while. He has been working at a lot of different job positions: worker, team leader, plant statistician, plant supervisor, production planner, purchaser, salesman, and currently as a project technician that leads three other employees responsible for the technical configuration of the company's all projects.

5.2.2 Case 2 - Engineering and Consulting Subsidiary of Beijing Gas Group 北京燃气集团有限责任公司工程咨询分公司

Beijing Gas Group was established in September 1999, and is a state-owned company. Group has established 19 functional departments at its headquarters. Furthermore, the Group also owns eight subsidiaries, eight professional organizations, one branch company, and 13 major holding companies and joint stock companies. The Engineering and Consulting Subsidiary was established in April 2000, and is one of the eight Beijing Gas Group's subsidiaries. It is responsible for the gas engineering and project management.

HR's approach

The company has 12 functional departments and 133 employees, among which, 101 employees have professional and technical titles, which counts 77% of the total employees. There are currently two returnees working for the company, one at the Human Resource Department, and the other at the Planning Department. The returnees entered in the company via personal recommendations, in other words, they did not go through the open recruiting procedures.

A big state-owned company like Beijing Gas Group prefers to recruit nationally educated graduates over the returnees. For one reason, a state-owned company should support national education and assist the government to increase the employment rate of the nationally educated graduates. For another reason, returnees' salary expectation is normally higher than that of the nationally educated graduates, but most of the job positions don't have such a salary level. Last but not least it takes rather longer time to be promoted in a state-owned company, and most returnees only want to use the working experience at a stateowned company to hop to a better job.

Returnee employee's approach

Returnee W studied Human Resource Management abroad, and is employed in the Human Resource Department. W thinks that at current job position he has no competitive advantage at all. His job position is arranged by the manager, and he has to complete all kinds of tasks that have been distributed to him. All in all, he feels that he cannot act on his own initiative, and has no right to decide for himself.

W thinks that the nationally educated employees have three main advantages compare to the returnees: firstly, the local connections and network. There are countless outstanding and talented nationally educated people, and furthermore, because they have studied in China, it is always easier for them to build up personnel connections and network during their studies in the country compare to those studied abroad. In China, if you have the right connections and network (as it is called in Chinese "Guanxi") everything will work out easily. Secondly, the local culture: another big advantage of nationally educated employees is that they don't have differences and conflicts in personnel history, cultural integration, and language. But under the influence of globalization, local Chinese are getting more and more adaptable to different cultures. Thirdly, the local ability: without doubts, nationally educated employees grew up in the local environment, they hence have a better understanding of local markets and regulations.

When it comes to the satisfaction of the current career perspective, returnee W is uncertain, because he doesn't know what the manager will point him to do next, he is not sure whether he will still be responsible in what he is doing right now, or will be assigned to another job, or will just simply be given more tasks. W thinks that he will be satisfied only when there are new challenges and tasks coming up in the field of Human Resources Management. If the company let him continue repeating what he is doing currently, he will consider changing a job.

Nationally educated employee's approach

Nationally educated employee C holds a Bachelor degree in International Economics and Trade. She works at the Budget Department. C believes that as a nationally educated employee, she is more adaptable in the working environment. Moreover, she has all the local connections and network, which are very important in a state-owned company. She thinks that the only advantage her returnee colleagues have is their foreign language ability, which unfortunately is rarely useful in a state-owned company like hers. C is relatively satisfied with her career perspective, but she also points out that the working experience, working years, and the right personnel connections are the keys to get promoted in a state-owned company.

5.2.3 Case 3 - Changchun Bombardier Railway Vehicles Co. Ltd. (CBRC) 长春长客-庞巴迪轨道车辆有限公司

Changchun Bombardier Railway Vehicles Co. Ltd. (CBRC), is a Chinese Sinoforeign joint venture company. The two Parent companies are the CNR Changchun Railway Vehicles Co., Ltd. (CNR CRC) and the Bombardier Inc.. In 1997 CNR CRC established a joint venture with ABB Daimler-Benz Transportation (ADTranz) named Changchun AdTranz Railway Vehicles, but as ADTranz was purchased by Bombardier in 2001, the company's name was changed to Changchun Bombardier Railway Vehicles since then. CBRC headquarters in Changchun, China, they develop, manufacture and assemble Movia metro cars and Rapid Transit Vehicle cars.

HR Approach

CBRC has 500 employees, six of which are returnees, they all work at different departments. The company employs the returnees mostly because of the requirement of certain job positions, and another reason is that CBRC is no longer a state-owned company but a joint venture, therefore the corporate culture is rather international oriented. The tasks that assigned to the returnees and the nationally educated employees differ from the targets of the deliveries, in other words, returnees' tasks are always related to the international projects, and the nationally educated employees' are rather national. The company is satisfied with the returnees' work in general, and finds they are all very hard-working. Doubtlessly, all six returnees have met the company's expectation. However,

compare to those nationally educated employees, the company points out that the returnees are lack of endurance.

Returnee employee's approach

Returnee S studied Engineering in Singapore and returned back with a Bachelor's degree. He currently works at the Technology Department of CBRC, and is responsible for project management.

S explains that CBRC is a big company with an international profile, and is one of the Chinese leading companies in the industry of railway vehicles. The company has a healthy organizational structure and a modern managerial system. Furthermore, the international projects that the company has give employees possibility to work beyond the border, and as a returnee, to maintain his network abroad.

S thinks that nationally educated employees have a deep understanding of the Chinese traditional way of conduct, and hence it is easier for them to communicate with other Chinese costumers or partners. The bigger personnel network that the nationally educated employees have within the country enables them to complete their jobs in a shorter period of time. These are the advantages that the nationally employees have, however, all in all S believes that it is not such a big difference.

When it comes to the satisfaction of his career perspective, returnee S shows a negative answer. He explains that Chinese joint venture like CBRC has its limit in terms of business scope, it is thus lack of promotional space for the employees. Moreover, the foreign investors try to lower the costs, which leads to a lower salary level compare to that of overseas. Lastly, S also thinks that working at CBRC is not very competitive for him, little competition also means little motivation.

Nationally educated employee's approach

Nationally educated employee X graduated from an ordinary university in China with a Bachelor's degree. He also works at the Technology Department, and his job is engineering design. He thinks his competitive advantage is that he has a very modest attitude and is very diligent. Moreover, he is currently very satisfied with his career perspective, he believes that he can learn a lot from his job, take initiative at work, and improve his design skills in the real projects.

X emphasizes that in CBRC – a Chinese joint venture company, the competitive advantage those returnees have is very clear. For example, returnee S was

recruited by Bombardier straight after he graduated in Singapore. Then Bombardier assigned him to its joint venture – CBRC as a vice project supervisor. To sum up, X says, in his professional field, if a returnee's job is consistent with his or her studies, he or she will have a higher start point than the nationally educated employees. Besides, a moderate attitude is surely important too.

5.2.4 Case 4 - Topsun Group Lanzhou Subsidiary 东盛集团兰州分公司

Topsun Group was established in 1987, and it is a private-owned company headquarters in Xi'an, China. The company produces medicine and medical products, and is one of the most influential companies in the medical industry in China. Topsun Group owns two medical production bases, two post-doctoral research centers, four major holding companies and joint stock companies, and associates with more than 30 medical corporations.

HR's approach

There are 46 employees at Topsun Lanzhou Subsidiary, two of those are returnees. One returnee is the general manager of the company, and the other is employed at the Marketing and Sales Department, which has 22 nationally educated employees. The company hired the returnees for their advanced managerial methodology and distinctive marketing and sales model. Topsun Lanzhou also points out that compare to the nationally educated employees, the returnees have a very different way of thinking, they tend to look at things from a broader point of view, and resolve one task with the consideration of the whole event. The company is satisfied with the returnees' work at present, however, the company also believes that both the company and the returnees still need a while to understand each other better in order to work together better.

Returnee employee's approach

Returnee H studied Business Administration in Australia. She currently works at the Marketing and Sales Department. Topsun is a giant Chinese medical corporation in China, her overseas education background was appreciated by the manager of the Group's Lanzhou Subsidiary, who also happens to be a returnee, and she hence decided to work for the company after returning back from Australia. H thinks that her overseas experience and education have provided her a different way of solving tasks. Her advanced marketing knowledge and ability of thinking outside of the scope are her biggest competitive advantages. However, H admits that the nationally educated employees know the local market and consumers better, which is their advantage. H is satisfied with her career perspective in general.

Nationally educated employee's approach

Nationally educated employee D started working at the Marketing and Sales Department of Topsun Lanzhou when he finished his Bachelor's degree studies in 2009. He believes that a better understanding of the local market and the quick respond to the changing market information are his competitive advantages. Speak of the returnees, D thinks that they have seen more and have more experiences, nevertheless, the nationally educated employees are normally much closer to the market because of their well-established network. Overall, D is satisfied with his career perspective, and believes that he will have a better future.

5.2.5 Case 5 Sinopec Shanghai Gaoqiao Petrochemical Corporation (SGPC) 高桥石化

Sinopec Shanghai Gaoqiao Petrochemical Corporation (SGPC) was established in December 1981, and is a subsidiary of the giant state-owned corporation China Petroleum & Petrochemical Corporation (Sinopec).

SGPC is located Shanghai, it has 75 production plants and produces gasoline, fuel, base stock for lube oil, paraffin wax, synthetic rubber, commodity organic chemicals, synthetic plastics, and fine chemicals. In addition, the company owns an engineering company, an employee training centre, a post-doctoral research center, a clinic and a hotel.

SGPC has an active part in foreign cooperation and communication. The company has established joint ventures with BASF Germany, Caltex USA, Ciba-Geigy Switzerland, SK Korea, Mitsui Chemicals and Akyl Phenol Japan.

HR's approach

There are 9363 employees at SGPC, 2411 are at managerial positions, 1390 operational personnel, and 1021 professional technicians.

Returnee's approach

Returnee L studied Mechanics at University of Rouen in France after he graduated from University of Shanghai for Science and Technology, where he studied Processing Units and Control Engineering. L claims that his studies abroad do not really help a lot at his current job, his studies in China instead are what really useful. Therefore, he does not think that his overseas background has brought any competitive advantage for his job performance. L thinks that the nationally educated graduates are very low-profile, they are more easily accepted by others, and he thinks that these characters could be considered as the competitive advantages of the nationally educated graduates. Over all L is satisfied with his career perspective at the SGPC.

Nationally educated employee's approach

Nationally educated G believes that his professional knowledge is his competitive advantage. He thinks that what he is doing now at his job is what he has learnt from school, and he can keep on practicing the theoretical knowledge in real work. When mentioning his returnee colleagues, G thinks that their foreign language ability is their competitive advantage. All in all G is also very satisfied with his career perspective.

5.2.6 Case 6 - Hunter International Tourism and Multiple Events (HITME) 旗 猎国旅和多元传媒

Hunter International Tourism and Multiple Events (HITME) was established in 1994 as the first Chinese professional international tourism and events plan company. HITME is located in Shanghai, China, and has its representatives in Beijing, Guangzhou, Chengdu and Wenzhou.

HR's approach

HITME has 45 employees, 11 of them are returnees. In HITME returnees are considered as the backbone of the company, they are employed at every department and act as the team leaders or decision makers. Nationally educated employees on the other hand are assigned normally at those conmen job positions. As a Chinese international tourism and event management company, HITME explains that the returnees' overseas background help the company save great amount of training costs, and moreover, returnees' working ability and motivation in international tourism field are generally better than those of the nationally educated employees. There is no major difference between the tasks that assigned to the returnees and that of to the nationally educated employees, however, returnees quite often can be promoted in shorter period of time.

HITME is very satisfied with the returnees' work, and emphasizes that they can always complete the tasks better and even more than the company would expect,

and the same aged nationally educated employees usually cannot achieve this. Therefore, the company thinks that returnees have a lot of competitive advantages, to sum up: they are very enthusiastic, they have strong working ability, great communication foreign language skills, and they can always provide constructive suggestions for the company. Nonetheless, HITME also points out that the returnees are very ambitious, sometimes they can be very aggressive and easily job hop to other companies.

Returnee employee's approach

Returnee F holds a Bachelor degree. She met the president of the company in a random occasion, and has been invited to work for HITME thereafter. She thinks that as a returnee, her competitive advantage is her good foreign language ability and communication skills. However, F also points out that the nationally educated employees know the local market better, and they especially have a better understanding of the character of the Chinese consumers. F is in general satisfied with her career perspective at HITME, however, she believes it is still far from what she wants to achieve in her life.

Nationally educated employee's approach

Employee M graduated from a Chinese university with a Bachelor's degree. He has been working in the tourism industry for many years, and hence has a very deep understanding of the local and international market. When mention about the returnees, M thinks that their English language ability is very good, furthermore, they are very hard working and always work overtime, which has made the boss like them even more.

M is not very satisfied with his career perspective though, he believes that with his professional experience and achievements, he should have a better expectation.

5.2.7 Case 7 - Winners Law Firm 金诺律师事务所

Winners Law Firm was established in April 1995 in Tianjin, China. The Firm specializes in commercial and business legal services, and is one of the biggest full-service law firms in Tianjin. The Firm has a Research and Development Centre that engages in the academic research and legal training. It also maintains close cooperative relationships with many other law firms and other professional service providers in different countries all around the world. The Firm is a member of

Lawyers Associated Worldwide (LAW), and offers legal services not only in Chinese, but also in English, Japanese, and Korean.

HR's approach

There are currently more than 50 employees in Winners Law Firm, among which four are returnees. One returnee works at the Financial Service Department, where the rest of seven employees are nationally educated. One returnee is employed at the Harbour Logistics Department, and there are six nationally educated employees working there. The rest two returnees work at the Foreign Investment Department, and there they have five nationally educated colleagues.

Winners Law Firm hires the returnees for their foreign language ability, because the company has considering number of foreign clients, and it is convenient for them to have an attorney who speaks their language. Hence returnees are generally assigned with international cases, whereas the nationally educated employees focus on the local cases. Winners emphasizes that the Firm appreciates returnees' foreign language skill, and it is also their competitive advantage compare to the nationally educated employees. The Firm so far has not found any weakness the returnees have, and is very satisfied with the work they have done.

Returnee employee's approach

Returnee P works at the Foreign Investment Department, he holds a Master degree in International Business Law. He works for Winners because he thinks it is the best Law Firm in the city, and decides, his job is in line with his studies. P thinks that to be able to practice his overseas studies in international business law is his competitive advantage. P states that the competitive advantage the nationally educated have is to stick to what they are good at and have their own specialities. Concerning his career perspective, returnee P thinks that it is satisfactory in general.

Nationally educated employee's approach

Employee J studied Law at a famous Chinese university and graduated with a Master degree. She also works at the Foreign Investment Department. J thinks that having her own specialty practice areas is her competitive advantage. She explains that the returnees' advantage is that they have more international practice

experience, which is very important for winning a case. J is satisfied with her career perspective in general.

5.3 Summary

This case study has been conducted with seven Chinese companies, among which, two companies are state-owned and one company is a Sino-foreign joint venture, one law firm, and the rest of them are private-owned companies. The seven companies also represent different industry sectors: manufacturing, engineering, energy, tourism and events, and law practices.

5.3.1 Job Differentiation

Generally speaking, returnees' jobs are related to the foreign markets, foreign projects and foreign clients, where they could apply their foreign language skill, foreign market knowledge, and foreign personnel connection. Nationally educated employees on the contrary are assigned to the jobs with national focus, because they are closer to the local markets and consumer culture.

However, the situation in the two state-owned companies is a bit different. There, returnees and nationally educated employees are treated with no difference. In both case 2 and case 5, the returnees could neither take their overseas experience as the competitive advantage, nor apply their overseas studies to their job.

5.3.2 Returnee's Competitive Advantages

In the case study, the most mentioned advantage of the returnees is their foreign language ability. Clearly, the biggest benefit of studying and living abroad is the advanced foreign language skills. Returnees' bilingual ability is appreciated by most of the companies (apart from the two state-owned companies). Meanwhile, some returnees' personnel connection in the foreign market is also a big asset to the employer, particularly when the company's business is on the way to overseas expansion. With no doubt, returnees are the experts of the foreign markets and cultures, they are able to provide the companies with their insight of the target foreign market. Some companies have also mentioned that compare to the nationally educated employees, the returnees in general are very hard working, and their working ability is in general better than that of the nationally educated employee.

5.3.3 Returnee's Disadvantages

If knowing the foreign markets is a big competitive advantage of the returnees, then a lack of first-hand local market knowledge is their biggest disadvantage compared to the nationally educated employees. China is developing rapidly, after several years' stay abroad, the Chinese local market is no longer the one that the returnees familiar to when they left the country. In addition to the influence of foreign culture and habit, most returnees have lost their contact with the national culture and manners.

From some employers' point of view, returnees are too ambitious and sometimes they can also be very aggressive. Moreover, returnees tend to change their job more frequently than other employees, which certainly brings concerns and insecure feelings to the employers.

5.3.4 Nationally Educated Graduate's Competitive Advantages

Through the case study, it is not very difficult to find out that the national educated employees also have a lot of competitive advantages. First of all, nationally educated employees are closer to the local markets and customers, and they have a well-established local network and personnel connection, which is considered as a very important tool in every aspect in China. Hence, this is not only a competitive advantage but also an asset. Furthermore, compare to returnees, nationally educated employees are very low-profile, humble and modest, therefore they are more easily accepted by others.

5.3.5 Career Satisfaction

Apart from the two state-owned companies, from whom the author could not access the answer of the question concerning if they are satisfied with the returnee's job or not. The rest five companies are all satisfied with the returnees' job in general. One company, the Hunter International Tourism and Multiple Events, even states that the returnees' working ability is better than that of the nationally educated employees.

From the employees' point of view, two out of seven returnees in the case study are not satisfied with their career perspective. One returnee is from the sateowned company – the Engineering and Consulting Subsidiary of Beijing Gas Group, he is uncertain about his career perspective because in the company he is treated the same as the other nationally educated employees, and he cannot take initiative in his job. The other returnee is from Changchun Bombardier Railway Vehicles. Lack of promotion space, lack of challenge, and low payment are the main reasons of his dissatisfaction.

The result from the nationally educated employees turns out better, this might be because of their modesty and humbleness. However, there is one employee who is from the Hunter International Tourism and Multiple Events, the company which is in big favour of the returnees, shows a bit negative to his career perspective, because, he believe that with his experience he should be promoted.

6 CONCLUSION

Curiosity is one of the Chinese national characteristics. This national characteristic encourages generations of Chinese starting their adventures abroad. Education as part of the adventures has made the country understand the power of knowledge. Since the 1978 economic reform, going abroad to study has been considered as part of the national education and science development strategy. In the past three decades, the idea behind studying abroad has switched from the national development necessity to the civil right of further education. The development of the country's economy has enabled more and more Chinese people to afford their overseas dream becoming true.

The increasing number does not only appear at the outgoing side. Being as the fastest developing economy, China does not only attract the attention from the world, but also from its overseas students. Increasing number of Chinese overseas students and scholars decide to return back to the motherland to pursue their career and personal development. At the very begging, returnees with their shining "overseas" outfit immediately became the most wanted Human Capital. However, nowadays the large proportion does make the situation a bit different.

Returnees do not only have to compete with other returnees, as the improvement of national education, they also have to compete with the large amount of the nationally educated graduates. After assessing the current employment situation – both the returnees and the nationally educated graduates, together with the case study, the answers to the research questions start to appear clearly:

The returnees and locally educated Chinese do face the same career possibilities when taking up their graduate job in China. However, the situation differs from the different company types.

The international companies – foreign companies in China, Chinese companies with internal business or projects, and Sino-Foreign joint ventures are definitely the playgrounds for returnees. There, returnees can take full advantage of their overseas experience: their foreign language skills, their unique understanding of foreign cultures and markets, and furthermore, their foreign personnel connections. The employers on the other hand also appreciate their insights, and differentiate them from the nationally educated employees when assigning tasks, moreover, some employers do point out that returnees have better chance to get promoted.

Professional fields which require foreign language skills with the combination of professional knowledge, for example law practices, and foreign projects management, foreign markets development and sales are particularly in favour of the returnees.

Giant state-owned companies on the contrary are not such good destinations for returnees, but more suitable for nationally educated graduates. First of all, being state-owned, those companies tend to recruit nationally educated graduates over the returnees to assist the country to improve the employability of national graduates. Secondly, returnees and the nationally educated employees are treated the same in state-owned companies, hence they lose their competitive advantage as been educated abroad. Last but not least, giant state-owned companies are quite often very hierarchic, it is very difficult to be promoted without having the right personnel connections, but nationally educated employees are more adapted to how things works, and have or have more personnel connections as been locally educated.

Therefore the nationally educated graduates are not necessarily less good. In general, they know the local markets and regulations better than the returnees do, together with the important personnel network, nationally educated employees can achieve as much in national jobs as the returnees can in international jobs. All in all, one should have his or her own speciality or competitive advantage which others cannot take place of easily.

Regardless returnees or nationally educated graduates, a good career plan and practical experience can definitely boost the employability. Companies prefer to employ people with experience and personnel connections from the previous job. Especially for returnees, the foreign language skills can be beaten by the other nationally educated graduates, but the overseas working experience and personnel connections are something absolutely unique.

A majority of the returnees believe that their overseas education is an asset for their career, particularly those who have international related jobs. And because of international, the returnees' average salary is higher than that of the nationally educated graduates. However, compare to the national graduates, most returnees are too ambitious and sometimes even aggressive. Considering Chinese traditional culture, at the end of the day maybe it is not a bad thing to learn from the national graduates, lay low, and be humble.

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APPENDIX: CASE STUDY QUESTIONNAIRES

	问题 海归雇员人数? 总员工人数? 海归员工所在部门 其部门本土员工人数? 为何会雇佣这些海归? 每归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同? 称满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗? 和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点? 你的学历,为什么会选择这家公司,你的职位?	请回答 1 778 国际业务部 13 业务发展需要 主要负责市场开发及国外客户接待 满意 先进的理论与语言优势。没有什么弱点
	总员工人数? 海归员工所在部门 其部门本土员工人数? 为何会雇佣这些海归? 每归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同? 你满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗? 和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	778 国际业务部 13 业务发展需要 主要负责市场开发及国外客户接待 满意 先进的理论与语言优势。没有什么弱点
	海归员工所在部门 其部门本土员工人数? 为何会雇佣这些海归? 每归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同? 你满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗? 和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	国际业务部 13 业务发展需要 主要负责市场开发及国外客户接待 满意 先进的理论与语言优势。没有什么弱点
	其部门本土员工人数? 为何会雇佣这些海归? 每归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同? 你满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗? 和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	13 业务发展需要 主要负责市场开发及国外客户接待 满意 先进的理论与语言优势。没有什么弱点
	为何会雇佣这些海归? 每归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同? 你满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗? 和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	业务发展需要 主要负责市场开发及国外客户接待 满意 先进的理论与语言优势。没有什么弱点
	每归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同? 你满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗? 和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	主要负责市场开发及国外客户接待 满意 先进的理论与语言优势。没有什么弱点
	尔满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗? 和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	满意 先进的理论与语言优势。没有什么弱点
	和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	先进的理论与语言优势。没有什么弱点
т n	你的学历,为什么会选择这家公司,你的职位?	
	你的手房,另下云云透洋这家云间,你的坏应。	美国,商科本科,家乡,国际市场
ΞN —	你觉得你在这个职位的竞争优势是?	了解国际市场,语言
	你觉得本土员工在同职位上的竞争优势是?	
	你对你的职位发展满意吗?	满意.很适合我的专业和发展
	小村协时状位及於祸意马;	满意,很是古我的寻亚和汉族
び て A の	的学历,你觉得你在你的职位的竞争优势是什么?	本人学历为大学专科,专业应用英语。良好的英语能力,可以更好的开拓公司国际市场
	你觉得海归在同样的职位的竞争优势是什么?	海归人士超强的双语优势及西方人的处事思维和更先进的专业知府
	你对你的职位发展满意吗?	目前还算满意
	的学历,你觉得你在你的职位的竞争优势是什么?	本人学历为大学本科,专业为机械设计制造及其自动化。由于专业的特殊性,本人的优势主要体现在对机械方面的基础知识,面对不同区域的技术标准,能够更加轻松的应付。
⊥в	你觉得海归在同样的职位的竞争优势是什么?	海归人士的海外背景就是其竞争优势,良好的语言沟通能力,特殊的思维方式的处事方 式,更加丰富的海外市场信息及信息获取渠道
	你对你的职位发展满意吗?	目前还算满意。
衒	x的学历,你觉得你在你的职位的竞争优势是什么?	我的学历只有中专,是在技术部做电梯配置的,需要根据每个项目的不同要求配置不同的技术材料并形成技术文件指导生产。在我这个职位上竞争没有太大的优势,刚好在这个公司在这个工作上可以用上我的EXCEL函数和VBA编程技能,为公司将本岗位的工作由原来传统的人工处理转换到由电脑参数化处理以提高效率和正确性,用EXCEL编程处理使效率提高了3倍,正确性由人工的7-8%和出错率下降到1- 2%,因为电脑并不能完成所有的工作特别是非标准技术配置时,所以无法根除出错率。
Σ.E	你觉得海归在同样的职位的竞争优势是什么?	如果真有海归进入到我们这样一个岗位,可能可以带来一些新的方法上的指引,提出一些更好的解决思路,除此没有太大的优势。
	你对你的职位发展满意吗?	我的职业发展还算可以吧,从工人一路到技术,时间 上有点长,但至少一个制造型企业从内部管理的角度来讲我认为自己没有什么处理不来 的,对制造型企业的内部运作非常熟悉,工人、班组长、车间统计、车间主管、生产计 划员、采购员、营销业务员我都做过,现在的位置是项目工程师,下面有三个人一起负 责全公司所有项目的技术配置。
		你对你的职位发展满意吗?

	北京市燃气集团有限责任公司工程咨询分公司人力资源问卷调查(关于海归员工与本土员工的工作优势对比)			
序号	对象	问题	请回答	
1	-	海归雇员人数?	2	
2		总员工人数?	133	
3] [海归员工所在部门	人力资源部和计划部	
4	人力资源	其部门本土员工人数?		
5	八刀页际	为何会雇佣这些海归?	因为我们这个单位是国有企业有些特殊的原因所以没有特定非要海归	
6		海归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同?	所以剩下的问题就不好回答了	
7		你满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗?	/// 公利 自由问题如何 只有 1	
8		和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?		
9		你的学历,为什么会选择这家公司,你的职位?	人力资源管理,关系	
10		你觉得你在这个职位的竞争优势是?	我觉得毫无竞争优势吧。领导给你安排在什么岗位,交代给你任何工作,你必须完成,根本没有自主选择的权利可言。	
11	海归员工 w	你觉得本土员工在同职位上的竞争优势是?	 本土人脉。本土人才数不胜数,尤其在中国,只要你有关系,那么一切都会很顺理成章。 本土文化。本土人才的最大优势还有就是历史、文化背景的融合以及语言,不会有任何文化差异及冲突的产生,但其实在目前国际化发展趋势的影响下,国人还是比较适应不同文化的来袭吧。 本土能力。其实这一点不言而喻,还是关乎文化背景,只有在本土文化熏陶下成长起来的人才才能更加懂得如何应对及迎合本土行情 	
12		你对你的职位发展满意吗?	目前不敢肯定,因为不知道领导如何安排我的岗位放向,是继续负责目前的工作, 还是会轮岗,还是会增加更多的工作给我,如果能让我把人力资源的工作轮流做一 遍,我还是很满意的,但如果只是不停的重复目前的工作我可能会考虑换工作。	
	,	历始兴工 历兴组织大历始和传教文女华华县八方。		
13		你的学历,你觉得你在你的职位的竞争优势是什么?	本科,预算部,更容易适应现有的工作环境,而其人脉都在工作的城市	
14	本土员工C	你觉得海归在同样的职位的竞争优势是什么?	语言优势	
15		你对你的职位发展满意吗?	比较满意	

序号	对象	问题	请回答
1		海归雇员人数?	6
2	-	总员工人数?	500
3		海归员工所在部门	各个部门
4		其部门本土员工人数?	20 average
5	人力资源	为何会雇佣这些海归?	工作需要,企业性质
6	1	海归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同?	面对的工作接口对象不同
7		你满足海归的工作吗? 他们达到你的期望预期吗?	可以,符合
8		和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	优势:认真;弱点:耐力差
	1		
9		你的学历,为什么会选择这家公司,你的职位?	新加坡本科。国际大公司,行业领袖之一,公司组织结构完整,现代管理系统。跨国合作项目,工作不局限与本土,能够保持国外的关系网。
10	海归员工 S	你觉得你在这个职位的竞争优势是?	熟知国内外管理系统及思维理念,沟通便捷,能很好的合作。没有语言障碍。 。对技术有全面了解,以及国外项目的经验。
11		你觉得本土员工在同职位上的竞争优势是?	深知国内的人情世故,更易于国内的沟通,较大的关系网易于快速的在国内 完成各项任务。比较起来,优势不大。
12		你对你的职位发展满意吗?	不满意。外资在国内公司规模有限,缺少发展上升空间。外资尽量降低成本 ,待遇不比海外。缺少竞争,缺少动力。
13		你的学历,你觉得你在你的职位的竞争优势是什么?	小弟学历本科,而且是国内较普通大学。 老实说我在这个职位上唯一的优势就是勤奋和心态好(大不了就回家考研) 。
14	本土员工 x	你觉得海归在同样的职位的竞争优势是什么?	相对于我们单位来说,海龟的优势还是很明显的。我们部门一个同事,85年 生人,新加坡工业大学(好像记不清了)毕业。毕业后直接进了庞巴迪总部 ,现在从总部下派到分公司,也就是我们公司,目前搞项目,相当于半个主 管级别。总结来说就是如果海龟专业对口,心态平和,起点会比国内同学高 点,当然这只是对于我们这个行业来说。
15		你对你的职位发展满意吗?	目前来看还算满意,这个职位可以学到很多东西,而且自己独当一面,可以 在实际设计中练手。

Yiru Jiang

		兰州东盛集团人力资源问卷调查(关于海归员	【工与本土员工的工作优势对比)	
序号	对象	问题	请回答	
1		海归雇员人数?	2	
2		总员工人数?	46	
3		海归员工所在部门	营销部1人,经理1人	
4		其部门本土员工人数?	22	
5	人力资源	为何会雇佣这些海归?	先进的管理理念的独特的营销模式	
6		海归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同?	海归和本土员工在思维模式有着交大的区别,对整个事件的把控型 较强。	
7	1	你满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗?	目前比较满意,还处在一个磨合期。	
8		和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	优势:管理能力和管理方式。弱点:对局部本土市场的情况不是太 了解	
9		你的学历,为什么会选择这家公司,你的职位?	商科,澳大利亚,家在兰州,和老板认识	
10	 海归员工 H	你觉得你在这个职位的竞争优势是?	国外的经验,对国外市场的了解,先进的营销模式	
11		你觉得本土员工在同职位上的竞争优势是?	对本土市场和消费者很了解	
12		你对你的职位发展满意吗?	还行	
13		你的学历,你觉得你在你的职位的竞争优势是什么?	本科。了解市场第一动态信息。	
14	本土员工 D	你觉得海归在同样的职位的竞争优势是什么?	海归啊,比我们见得世面多些么,但在实际应用中我们和市场走的 更近。	
15	1	你对你的职位发展满意吗?	比较满意	

		高桥石化人力资源问卷调查(关于海归员	员工与本土员工的工作优势对比)
序号	对象	问题	请回答
1		海归雇员人数?	
2]	总员工人数?	9363
3		海归员工所在部门	
4	人力资源	其部门本土员工人数?	
5		为何会雇佣这些海归?	
6	1	海归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同?	
7	1	你满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗?	
8		和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	
9		你的学历,为什么会选择这家公司,你的职位?	学历本科,上海理工大学,过程装备与控制工程 工学学士;法国鲁昂大学力学
10	海归员工L	你觉得你在这个职位的竞争优势是?	国外的学历对我目前的工作帮助不大,现在的工作主要用到国内本 科专业知识
11	1	你觉得本土员工在同职位上的竞争优势是?	本土人才的竞争优势是姿态底,更易被人接受。
12		你对你的职位发展满意吗?	满意。
13		你的学历,你觉得你在你的职位的竞争优势是什么?	专业对口,学有所用。
14	本 土员工 G	你觉得海归在同样的职位的竞争优势是什么?	外语相对强一些。
15		你对你的职位发展满意吗?	满意。

	旗 猎国旅和多 元传媒人力资源问卷调查(关于海归员工与本土员工的工作优势对比)				
序号	对象	问题	请回答		
1	-	海归雇员人数?	11		
2		总员工人数?	45		
3		海归员工所在部门	各个部门都有。		
4		其部门本土员工人数?	以海归员工为骨干,本土员工相结合的方式		
5	行政总经理	为何会雇佣这些海归?	作为一个做国际旅游和传媒的公司,拥有海外的工作或生活经验的员工能 为公司节省很大的培训开支,而且海归人士的工作能力、工作积极性都相 对较高。		
6		海归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同?	没有不同,只是海归员工能在很短的时间内升职。		
7		你满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗?	很满意,他们总能超越公司的预期完成很多同年龄同层次完成不了的问题。		
8		和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	优势很多,总结而言:工作能力强,积极性高,沟通能力与理解能力很强, ,语言优势,能提很多有建设性的意见。弱点:工作野心大,过于强势, 容易跳槽。		
9		你的学历,为什么会选择这家公司,你的职位?	学士学位。与老总偶遇,邀请过来工作的。		
10	海归员工F	你觉得你在这个职位的竞争优势是?	主要还是沟通能力上吧。		
11	母归风工「	你觉得本土员工在同职位上的竞争优势是?	他们可能对市场以及行业更为了解,尤其是对中国人的性格更清楚。		
12		你对你的职位发展满意吗?	还算满意吧!但离自己的人生目标还很远。		
13		你的学历,你觉得你在你的职位的竞争优势是什么?	本科,我在这行业工作很多年了,对国内国际市场都很了解。		
14	本土员工 M		他们的英语很好,沟通上没问题。工作很积极,经常加班,老板喜欢。		
15		你对你的职位发展满意吗?	不太满意,我觉得以我的资历可以有更高的期望。		

		金诺律师事务所人力资源问卷调查(关于海归	日员工与本土员工的工作优势对比)	
序号	对象	问题	请回答	
1		海归雇员人数?	4	
2		总员工人数?	50+	
3		海归员工所在部门	金融部1;港口物流部1;外资业务部2	
4		其部门本土员工人数?	金融部7;港口物流部6;外资业务部5。	
5	律师	为何会雇佣这些海归?	英文优势、方便服务部分国外客户	
6		海归的工作内容与本土员工的工作内容有何不同?	语言	
7		你满足海归的工作吗?他们达到你的期望预期吗?	满意。达到了。	
8		和本土员工相比,海归有什么优势和弱点?	优势:语言;弱点:暂时没发现	
9		你的学历,为什么会选择这家公司,你的职位?	硕士。外资业务部。本市最好的律师事务所、与我专业对口。	
10	┣ 海归员工 P	你觉得你在这个职位的竞争优势是?	专业	
11]毋归贝⊥P	你觉得本土员工在同职位上的竞争优势是?	发挥自己的特长、有自己的业务特色。	
12]	你对你的职位发展满意吗?	一般	
13		你的学历,你觉得你在你的职位的竞争优势是什么?	硕士。有自己的业务特色。	
14	本土员工」	你觉得海归在同样的职位的竞争优势是什么?	经验	
15]	你对你的职位发展满意吗?	一般。	