

3. METHODOLOGY

Methodology is crucial in academic research because it provides a structured approach to inquiry, ensuring that the research process is systematic, transparent, and replicable. It enables researchers to clearly define their research questions, select appropriate methods for data collection and analysis, and justify their choices, which in turn enhances the validity and reliability of their findings. In the field of IB / IM / CM, the importance of methodology is heightened due to the complexity and diversity inherent in studying management practices across different cultural, economic, and institutional contexts. Researchers must carefully consider cross-cultural differences, varying regulatory environments, and the global versus local dynamics that influence management practices. This often requires a mixed-methods approach, combining qualitative methods like case studies and ethnographies, which offer deep contextual insights, with quantitative methods like surveys and statistical analysis, which provide broader generalizability. Additionally, management research must address issues of comparability across different countries, ensuring that constructs and measures are culturally sensitive and applicable across diverse contexts. This specificity demands rigorous methodological rigor to avoid biases and ensure that the research findings are meaningful and relevant across the various settings being studied. Therefore, a well-designed methodology in management research not only strengthens the study's academic rigor but also enhances its practical relevance in a globalized business environment. In the following sections, we will review some of the most commonly used methods when it comes to studying IB / IM / CM.

3.1. Attitude survey (Balazs Vaszkun)

3.1.1. Introduction to Attitude Surveys

An attitude survey is a widely used research method designed to collect quantitative data on individuals' attitudes, beliefs, feelings, and opinions towards particular subjects, events, or entities. Attitudes are psychological constructs that represent an individual's degree of like or dislike for something and are formed through experiences, cultural influences, and personal values. Attitude surveys typically employ structured questionnaires that include items measured on Likert scales, semantic differentials, or

other types of scales that allow respondents to express their level of agreement, disagreement, or feelings towards specific statements or questions (Rajecki, 1990).

The importance of attitude surveys lies in their ability to quantify subjective opinions and attitudes, making it possible to perform statistical analyses that can uncover patterns, correlations, and differences among various groups. This method is particularly useful for researchers who aim to explore how different segments of a population feel about a given issue or to track changes in attitudes over time. In social sciences and business research, attitude surveys are essential tools for understanding consumer behaviour, employee satisfaction, cultural differences, and many other management-related (especially IM-/CM-related) phenomena (Williams, 1998; Zeira & Harari, 1979). Lincoln (1989) even emphasized the use and importance of attitude surveys for comparing management practices in the US and Japan.

Attitude surveys are valued for their ability to generate large amounts of data relatively quickly and cost-effectively. Additionally, when properly designed and administered, these surveys can produce data that is both reliable and valid, allowing researchers to draw meaningful conclusions and make informed decisions. However, the effectiveness of an attitude survey depends heavily on the quality of the survey design, the sampling method, and the way the data is collected and analysed (Leonardi et al., 2014).

3.1.2. Methodology of Attitude Surveys

Based on academic experiences, attitude surveys should include a design, a sampling, a data collection, and an analysis phases (Leonardi et al., 2014).

Survey Design

The first step in conducting an attitude survey is designing the questionnaire. This involves defining the research objectives, identifying the target population, and constructing the survey items. The survey items should be directly related to the attitudes being measured and should be clear, concise, and unbiased. Questions are typically phrased as statements, and respondents are asked to indicate their level of agreement or disagreement using a scale, such as a five-point Likert scale (Taherdoost, 2019).

Survey items should be carefully constructed to avoid leading questions, which can bias the responses. Additionally, the survey should be pre-tested with a small sample to identify any potential issues with the wording, structure, or response options. The pre-test allows the researcher to refine the survey before it is administered to the full sample.

Sampling

Sampling is a critical aspect of the attitude survey methodology. The sample must be representative of the population from which it is drawn to ensure that the results are generalisable. Various sampling methods can be used, including random sampling, stratified sampling, and convenience sampling, depending on the research objectives and available resources (Hinrichs, 1975; Verheyen, 1988).

In IB / IM / CM research, where cultural and geographical diversity is a key consideration, stratified sampling is often used to ensure that subgroups (e.g., different countries, industries, or organisational levels) are adequately represented. This is particularly important when comparing attitudes across different cultural contexts, as it allows for a more accurate understanding of how cultural factors influence attitudes.

Data Collection

Data collection can be conducted through various modes, including online surveys, telephone interviews, face-to-face interviews, and mail surveys. Each mode has its advantages and disadvantages. For example, online surveys are cost-effective and can reach a large audience quickly, but they may suffer from lower response rates or sample bias if internet access is not evenly distributed across the target population. Face-to-face interviews, while more time-consuming and expensive, allow for deeper engagement with respondents and can help mitigate issues related to misinterpretation of questions (Heath et al., 2009; Knapp & Mujtaba, 2010; Verheyen, 1988).

In the context of IB / CM / IM, the choice of data collection method may be influenced by factors such as language barriers, cultural norms regarding communication, and the logistical challenges of reaching respondents in different countries. Researchers must carefully consider these factors to ensure that the data collected is accurate and reflective of the respondents' true attitudes.

Data Analysis

Once the data has been collected, it must be analysed to extract meaningful insights. The analysis typically involves descriptive statistics to summarise the data (e.g., mean, median, standard deviation) and inferential statistics to test hypotheses or identify relationships between variables (e.g., correlation, regression analysis). In some cases, advanced techniques such as factor analysis or multi-dimensional scaling may be used to identify underlying dimensions of attitudes or to validate the survey instrument (Heeringa et al., 2017; Vaszkun, 2012; Yu et al., 2005).

In IB / IM / CM research, data analysis may also involve cross-cultural comparisons to examine how attitudes differ across countries or regions. This requires careful consideration of cultural differences that may influence the interpretation of survey items or the meaning of responses. Researchers must ensure that the survey instrument is culturally equivalent across different contexts, often necessitating the use of techniques such as back-translation and pilot testing in multiple languages.

3.1.3. Applications of Attitude Surveys in International Management

Attitude surveys are widely used in the field of international and comparative management to explore a variety of topics, including cultural differences, employee attitudes towards multinational corporations (MNCs), global leadership, and the impact of globalisation on managerial practices. Below are some specific use cases that illustrate the importance and utility of attitude surveys in international management research.

One of the most significant applications of attitude surveys in international management is in the study of cross-cultural management. Researchers use attitude surveys to understand how cultural differences influence management practices, leadership styles, communication patterns, and employee behaviour in different countries (Hofstede, 2001). For example, attitude surveys can be used to measure cultural dimensions such as individualism versus collectivism, power distance, and uncertainty avoidance, which are central to understanding how culture impacts organisational behaviour.

In a classic study, Hofstede (1980) conducted attitude surveys across IBM subsidiaries in different countries to identify key cultural dimensions that influence workplace behaviour. The results of these surveys revealed significant differences in attitudes

towards authority, risk, and group dynamics, which have since become foundational concepts in cross-cultural management research.

Similarly, the GLOBE (Global Leadership and Organisational Behaviour Effectiveness) project used attitude surveys to explore cultural dimensions and their impact on leadership effectiveness in different countries (Bakacsi et al., 2002; Brodbeck et al., 2000; House, 2014). The GLOBE study involved surveying thousands of managers across 62 societies to identify cultural variables that affect leadership and organisational practices. The findings have provided valuable insights for multinational companies seeking to develop effective leadership strategies that are sensitive to cultural differences.

Expatriate management is another area of international management where attitude surveys play a crucial role. Expatriates—employees who are sent to work in a foreign country—face unique challenges, including cultural adaptation, social integration, and work-related stress. Attitude surveys are used to assess expatriates' attitudes towards these challenges and to identify factors that contribute to successful expatriation.

For instance, attitude surveys can measure expatriates' cultural adaptability, which refers to their ability to adjust to the host country's culture and work environment (Danisman, 2014; Leung et al., 2001; Wang, 2008). Surveys can also assess expatriates' job satisfaction, commitment to the organisation, and perceptions of organisational support, all of which are critical factors influencing expatriate performance and retention.

Research has shown that positive attitudes towards the host culture, strong organisational support, and effective cross-cultural training are associated with higher levels of expatriate success (Jung & Takeuchi, 2014; Takeuchi, 2010). By using attitude surveys to gather data on these variables, organisations can develop targeted interventions to improve expatriate outcomes, such as tailored training programs, mentoring, and support networks.

Employee engagement and job satisfaction are key concerns for multinational corporations (MNCs) that operate across diverse cultural and geographical contexts. Attitude surveys are commonly used to measure these constructs, providing insights into how employees feel about their work, their leaders, and the organisation as a whole. Understanding these attitudes is essential for MNCs that need to maintain high levels of employee motivation and productivity across different regions.

Attitude surveys can reveal how factors such as leadership style, organisational culture, compensation, and work-life balance affect employee engagement and job satisfaction in different countries (Hofstede, 2001; Lok & Crawford, 2004). For example, employees in collectivist cultures may place a higher value on teamwork and group harmony, while those in individualist cultures may prioritise personal achievement and recognition. By identifying these cultural preferences through attitude surveys, MNCs can tailor their HR practices to better meet the needs and expectations of their global workforce.

Moreover, attitude surveys can help MNCs identify potential sources of conflict or dissatisfaction that may arise from cultural differences. For instance, a survey might reveal that employees in one country feel undervalued or alienated due to a perceived lack of cultural sensitivity in corporate policies or communication practices. Armed with this information, MNCs can take corrective action, such as revising policies, offering cultural training, or implementing more inclusive communication strategies (Kim et al., 2009).

Globalisation has brought about significant changes in the way organisations operate, leading to the adoption of new business models, organisational structures, and management practices. Attitude surveys are useful tools for understanding how employees perceive these changes and how their attitudes may affect the success of organisational change initiatives.

Attitude surveys can measure employees' openness to change, their perceptions of the benefits and risks associated with globalisation, and their level of trust in management during times of transition (Chawla & Kevin Kelloway, 2004; DeWall et al., 2006). This information is critical for organisations that need to manage change effectively, particularly in a global context where change may be perceived differently across cultures.

Research has shown that employees' attitudes towards change are influenced by factors such as organisational culture, leadership communication, and the perceived fairness of the change process. By using attitude surveys to assess these factors, organisations can develop strategies to manage resistance to change, build employee buy-in, and ensure that change initiatives are implemented smoothly across different regions.

3.1.4. Challenges and Considerations in Using Attitude Surveys in International Management

While attitude surveys are valuable tools in international management research, they also present several challenges that researchers must address to ensure the validity and reliability of their findings.

Cross-Cultural Comparability

One of the primary challenges in using attitude surveys across different countries is ensuring cross-cultural comparability. Cultural differences can affect how respondents interpret survey items, how they respond to different types of scales, and what social desirability biases may influence their answers. For example, respondents from high-context cultures may interpret survey questions differently than those from low-context cultures, leading to potential misunderstandings or misinterpretations (King et al., 2004).

To address these challenges, researchers must take several steps to ensure that their surveys are culturally equivalent. This often involves translating the survey into different languages and using techniques such as back-translation to verify that the meaning of the items is preserved across languages. Additionally, researchers may need to adapt the survey format or question wording to better align with cultural norms and communication styles in different countries.

Another approach to enhancing cross-cultural comparability is to use culturally neutral items that are less likely to be interpreted differently across cultures. However, this approach may limit the depth and specificity of the questions, so researchers must carefully balance the need for cultural sensitivity with the need for detailed and accurate data.

Response Biases

Response biases, such as social desirability bias, acquiescence bias, and extreme response bias, can significantly impact the accuracy of attitude survey data. These biases occur when respondents answer questions in a way that they perceive to be socially acceptable, when they consistently agree or disagree with statements regardless of their true feelings, or when they tend to select extreme response options (Gove & Geerken, 1977; Grover & Vriens, 2006).

In international management research, response biases can be particularly problematic because cultural factors may exacerbate these tendencies. For example, in some cultures such as Japan, there is a strong emphasis on maintaining social harmony and avoiding conflict, which may lead respondents to provide socially desirable answers rather than honest ones or simply a low number of answers (Hui & Triandis, 1989; Rindfuss et al., 2015). Similarly, in cultures with a high level of uncertainty avoidance, respondents may be more likely to choose neutral or middle-of-the-scale responses to avoid making definitive judgments.

To mitigate these biases, researchers can use various techniques, such as including reverse-coded items to detect acquiescence bias, using indirect questioning techniques to reduce social desirability bias, and providing clear instructions to respondents on how to interpret and respond to the survey items. Additionally, statistical methods such as factor analysis can help identify and control for response biases during the data analysis phase.

Ethical Considerations

Conducting attitude surveys in an international context also raises important ethical considerations. Researchers must ensure that their surveys are designed and administered in a way that respects the cultural values, norms, and privacy of respondents in different countries. This includes obtaining informed consent, ensuring confidentiality, and being sensitive to cultural differences in how survey questions are perceived.

In some cases, questions that are considered appropriate in one culture may be seen as intrusive or offensive in another. Researchers must be aware of these potential issues and take steps to adapt their surveys accordingly. This may involve consulting with local experts, conducting pilot tests in the target culture, and being flexible in modifying the survey design based on feedback from respondents (Treviño et al., 1998; Weng et al., 2011).

Additionally, researchers must consider the potential impact of their findings on the populations they study. In IB / IM / CM research, the results of attitude surveys can influence organisational policies, management practices, and even public perceptions of certain cultural groups. Researchers have a responsibility to ensure that their findings are presented accurately and ethically, avoiding stereotypes or generalisations that could perpetuate cultural biases.

3.1.5. Conclusion

Attitude surveys are a powerful tool in the field of IB / IM / CM, offering valuable insights into the beliefs, opinions, and feelings of individuals across different cultural and geographical contexts. These surveys play a crucial role in cross-cultural management research, expatriate management, employee engagement, organisational change, and globalisation. By quantifying subjective attitudes, researchers can uncover patterns and correlations that inform management practices and decision-making in multinational corporations.

However, the use of attitude surveys in international or comparative management also presents significant challenges, particularly in ensuring cross-cultural comparability, addressing response biases, and upholding ethical standards. Researchers must be diligent in designing, administering, and analysing their surveys to ensure that the data collected is accurate, reliable, and culturally sensitive.

In an increasingly globalised business environment, the ability to understand and manage the attitudes of a diverse workforce is more important than ever. Attitude surveys provide a critical means of achieving this understanding, helping organisations navigate the complexities of international management and fostering more effective and inclusive business practices.

References

- Bakacsi, G., Sándor, T., András, K., & Viktor, I. (2002). Eastern european cluster: Tradition and transition. *Journal of World Business*, 37(1), 69–80. [https://doi.org/10.1016/S1090-9516\(01\)00075-X](https://doi.org/10.1016/S1090-9516(01)00075-X)
- Brodbeck, F. C., Frese, M., Akerblom, S., Audia, G., Bakacsi, G., Bendova, H., Bodega, D., Bodur, M., Booth, S., Brenk, K., Castel, P., Den Hartog, D., Donnelly-Cox, G., Gratchev, M. V., Holmberg, I., Jarmuz, S., Jesuino, J. C., Jorbenadse, R., Kabasakal, H. E., ... Wunderer, R. (2000). Cultural variation of leadership prototypes across 22 European countries. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*, 73(1), 1–29. <https://doi.org/10.1348/096317900166859>
- Chawla, A., & Kevin Kelloway, E. (2004). Predicting openness and commitment to change. *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*, 25(6), 485–498. <https://doi.org/10.1108/01437730410556734>

- Danisman, S. A. (2014). Change of attitude toward culture: Pre- and post-expatriation experiences of managers. *Korean Social Science Journal*, 41(2), 79–95. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s40483-014-0017-2>
- DeWall, C. N., Visser, P. S., & Levitan, L. C. (2006). Openness to Attitude Change as a Function of Temporal Perspective. *Personality and Social Psychology Bulletin*, 32(8), 1010–1023. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0146167206288009>
- Gove, W. R., & Geerken, M. R. (1977). Response Bias in Surveys of Mental Health: An Empirical Investigation. *American Journal of Sociology*, 82(6), 1289–1317. <https://doi.org/10.1086/226466>
- Grover, R., & Vriens, M. (Eds.). (2006). *The handbook of marketing research: Uses, misuses, and future advances*. Sage Publications.
- Heath, A., Martin, J., & Spreckelsen, T. (2009). Cross-national Comparability of Survey Attitude Measures. *International Journal of Public Opinion Research*, 21(3), 293–315. <https://doi.org/10.1093/ijpor/edp034>
- Heeringa, S. G., West, B. T., & Berglund, P. A. (2017). *Applied Survey Data Analysis*. Chapman and Hall/CRC. <https://doi.org/10.1201/9781315153278>
- Hinrichs, J. R. (1975). Effects of sampling, follow-up letters, and commitment to participation on mail attitude survey response. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 60(2), 249–251. <https://doi.org/10.1037/h0076490>
- Hofstede, G. (1980). Motivation, leadership, and organization: Do American theories apply abroad? *Organizational Dynamics*, 9(1), 42–63. [https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-2616\(80\)90013-3](https://doi.org/10.1016/0090-2616(80)90013-3)
- Hofstede, G. (2001). *Culture's consequences: Comparing values, behaviors, institutions, and organizations across nations* (2. ed. [Nachdr.]). Sage.
- House, R. J. (with Global Leadership and Organizational Behavior Effectiveness Research Program). (2014). *Strategic leadership across cultures: The GLOBE study of CEO leadership behavior and effectiveness in 24 countries*. SAGE Publications, Inc.
- Hui, C. H., & Triandis, H. C. (1989). Effects of Culture and Response Format on Extreme Response Style. *Journal of Cross-Cultural Psychology*, 20(3), 296–309. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0022022189203004>
- Jung, Y., & Takeuchi, N. (2014). Relationships among leader–member exchange, person–organization fit and work attitudes in Japanese and Korean organizations: Testing a

- cross-cultural moderating effect. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 25(1), 23–46. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585192.2013.778163>
- Kim, T., Rosen, B., & Lee, D. (2009). South Korean managerial reactions to voicing discontent: The effects of employee attitude and employee communication styles. *Journal of Organizational Behavior*, 30(7), 1001–1018. <https://doi.org/10.1002/job.612>
- King, G., Murray, C. J. L., Salomon, J. A., & Tandon, A. (2004). Enhancing the Validity and Cross-Cultural Comparability of Measurement in Survey Research. *American Political Science Review*, 98(1), 191–207. <https://doi.org/10.1017/S000305540400108X>
- Knapp, P. R., & Mujtaba, B. G. (2010). Designing, administering, and utilizing an employee attitude survey. *Journal of Behavioral Studies in Business*, 2(1).
- Leonardi, P. M., Treem, J. W., Barley, W. C., & Miller, V. D. (2014). Attitude surveys. In V. D. Miller & M. E. Gordon (Eds.), *Meeting the Challenge of Human Resource Management* (pp. 155–166). Routledge.
- Leung, K., Wang, Z., & Smith, P. B. (2001). Job attitudes and organizational justice in joint venture hotels in China: The role of expatriate managers. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12(6), 926–945. <https://doi.org/10.1080/09585190122823>
- Lincoln, J. R. (1989). Employee Work Attitudes and Management Practice in the U.S. and Japan: Evidence from a Large Comparative Survey. *California Management Review*, 32(1), 89–106. <https://doi.org/10.2307/41166736>
- Lok, P., & Crawford, J. (2004). The effect of organisational culture and leadership style on job satisfaction and organisational commitment: A cross-national comparison. *Journal of Management Development*, 23(4), 321–338. <https://doi.org/10.1108/02621710410529785>
- Rajecki, D. W. (1990). *Attitudes*. Sinauer Associates.
- Rindfuss, R. R., Choe, M. K., Tsuya, N. O., Bumpass, L. L., & Tamaki, E. (2015). Do low survey response rates bias results? Evidence from Japan. *Demographic Research*, 32, 797–828. <https://doi.org/10.4054/DemRes.2015.32.26>
- Taherdoost, H. (2019). *What Is the Best Response Scale for Survey and Questionnaire Design; Review of Different Lengths of Rating Scale / Attitude Scale / Likert Scale* (SSRN Scholarly Paper 3588604). <https://papers.ssrn.com/abstract=3588604>

- Takeuchi, R. (2010). A Critical Review of Expatriate Adjustment Research Through a Multiple Stakeholder View: Progress, Emerging Trends, and Prospects. *Journal of Management*, 36(4), 1040–1064. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0149206309349308>
- Treviño, L. K., Butterfield, K. D., & McCabe, D. L. (1998). The Ethical Context in Organizations: Influences on Employee Attitudes and Behaviors. *Business Ethics Quarterly*, 8(3), 447–476. <https://doi.org/10.2307/3857431>
- Vaszkun, B. (2012). *One Hundred Years of Management: American Paradigms and the Japanese Management 'Reloaded' (Dissertation)*. http://phd.lib.uni-corvinus.hu/701/1/Vaszkun_Balazs_den.pdf
- Verheyen, L. G. (1988). How to develop an employee attitude survey. *Training & Development Journal*, 42(8), 72–77.
- Wang, I.-M. (2008). The relations between expatriate management and the mentality and adjustment of expatriates. *Social Behavior and Personality: An International Journal*, 36(7), 865–882. <https://doi.org/10.2224/sbp.2008.36.7.865>
- Weng, L., Joynt, G. M., Lee, A., Du, B., Leung, P., Peng, J., Gomersall, C. D., Hu, X., & Yap, H. Y. (2011). Attitudes towards ethical problems in critical care medicine: The Chinese perspective. *Intensive Care Medicine*, 37(4), 655–664. <https://doi.org/10.1007/s00134-010-2124-x>
- Williams, A. (1998). Organisational learning and the role of attitude surveys. *Human Resource Management Journal*, 8(4), 51.
- Yu, P. L. H., Lam, K. F., & Lo, S. M. (2005). Factor Analysis for Ranked Data with Application to a Job Selection Attitude Survey. *Journal of the Royal Statistical Society Series A: Statistics in Society*, 168(3), 583–597. <https://doi.org/10.1111/j.1467-985X.2005.00363.x>
- Zeira, Y., & Harari, E. (1979). Overcoming the Resistance of MNCs to Attitude Surveys of Host-Country Organizations. *Management International Review*, 19(3), 49–58.