How cultures influence to organization development success in asian countries?

How cultures influence to Organization Development success in Asian countries? Organization Development (OD) is one of many American management techniques utilized in many part of the world. To setting this American origin techniques in different culture always has problem. Some of the biggest challenges for developing theories with cross-cultural relevance come in the area of organizational studies. Differences in behavior, work values, and culture have been studied by many researchers in many different countries.

Several frameworks have proven useful for understanding cultural differences. (E. g. Youker, Mclean and Hofstede) Specific OD interventions are then examined separately to determine their fit with the values of those countries. This paper will explore reasons or hypothesis that make OD not successful in Asian countries. Author will focus on cause of behavioral differentiation between origin culture of OD (America) and Asian culture (Thailand, Japan and China) some samples will use to describe how some company success but other fails.

Finally, some critical and suggestion will made with aimed at my opinion will help in understanding Asian culture and lead to effectiveness of organization development setting in Asia. Definitions of Organization Development and Culture Organization Development has been defined in many ways. Most of authors have been U. S. -based. Beckhard (1969) defines OD as an effort that is planned, organization-wide, managed from the top, and designed to increase organization effectiveness and health through planned intervention in the organization's process using behavioral science knowledge.

French and Bell defined OD as a long range effort to improve an organization's problem-solving and renewal process, particularly through a more effective and collaborative management of organizational culture with special emphasis on the culture of formal work teams with the assistance of a change agent, or catalyst, and the use of the theory and technology of applied behavioral science, including action research (1995, p. 14) For my opinion, OD look like a set of structured techniques, rather than a single type of intervention.

Researchers have developed competing typologies in an attempt to capture many dimensions of OD practices (French and Bell, 1995) For example, (Church Burke and Van Eydne 1994) identify six types of OD interventions (Long-term change, quality of work life, HRD planning, action research, skills training and group dynamics) and activities though a survey of current OD practitioners by use factor analysis to grouping the interventions. Although there is no widely accepted typology, the existing typologies classify OD interventions along two dimensions: 1.

The target level of change is defined in term of individual, group, and organizational levels. 2. The nature of change along a continuum of task-oriented and people-oriented activities. When culture or national borders are involved, it is to be considered for certain type of interventions (Harzing & Hofstede, 1996) Golembieski(1991) suggests that OD success is more likely if there is a close fit between OD design and national culture values.

First thing that we should learn when we going to start setting Organization Development practice in different country is the culture of that country because it the most influence to the organization culture of the company. Before we can deal with cross culture, we must first define and agree on what " Culture" is? Also there are many different definitions of culture used in management today. The American Heritage Dictionary defines culture as " The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community or population. Organizational culture define by Robins as " a system of shared meaning held by members that distinguishes the organization from other organizations. This is a set of characteristics that the organization values. " I have read the excellent summary of culture from the various definitions, Youker (2004) said that Culture is a pattern of beliefs and expectations shared by the organization member, these beliefs and expectations produce norms that shape the behavior of both individuals and groups within organization. Culture is usually long-term, strategic, and difficult to change.

It is rooted in beliefs and values. An organizational culture also represents the shared sense of the way we do things around here, a critical factor guiding day-to-day behavior and shaping a future course of action. From the several papers that I have read about attempt to adapt OD to use in Asian countries, I found that state-owned enterprise in China have successful in setting OD practice. This company reveals that they use OD and other western techniques in creating a shared vision, establishing a performance-

based human resource management system, and standardizing budgetary and cost control procedures.

The success of the company's change effort is largely attributed to leadership, standardization of management systems, commitment to learning and training, and partnership with an OD expert. (Jia Wang, 2010) McLean from university of Minnesota (2000) explored reasons for OD's failure in 7 Thailand companies he found that many OD practices did not work well in Thai organizations because of the culture, open communication in Thai culture is very difficult and participation is limited due to the respect given to hierarchy in Thai organizations.

Also the honor limits confrontation and presents barriers to the evaluation of OD interventions, to implement OD interventions could be cause for loss of face for some executives. These two example of success and unsuccessful of OD in Asian countries shows that culture are main influence that OD practitioner should be consider before setting OD practice. I think OD can be success in Asia but need to be adapted and clearly understand culture of that organization and give more respect to it. Even within the U. S. any OD interventions fail. Rothwell et al. (1995) outlined four key principles from the U. S. -based definition of OD that speak to OD's potential for success. First, OD effect change chiefly though not exclusively, through education. Second, top managers must support OD. Third, OD emphasizes employee participation in diagnosing problems, considering solution, selecting a solution, identifying change objectives, implementing planned change and evaluating results. And fourth, OD is long-range in perspective.

After this I will describe each of the principles for successful OD as listed above and compare them with what I known and learn about Asian culture. OD is about Change The U. S. -based definition of OD can be translated as trying to create forceful change in organizations. The Asian view of change may be barrier to implementing OD. The continuum of internal control of nature (human dominance over nature) versus external control of nature (human subjugation to nature), Asian culture would fall closer to external control relative to U. S. American culture.

Because of this view of nature, Asian feel that change will happen by itself and that human should not initiate change. In contrast, the U. S. American view of nature is one of internal control whereby humans control nature. Additional I found paper about " Eastern versus Western Philosophy" about living principals of people in Eastern and Western cultures can support this reasons: Be satisfied with whatever you have, and enjoy the same. When you come to know that you have everything, and you are not short of anything, then the whole world will be yours. – Lao Tzu (Chinese Philosopher)" If you want to succeed, you have to forge new paths and avoid borrowed ones. " – John RockfellerOn the other hand, Asian people is mainly Buddhism. They got the law of impermanence from Buddhist religion, result is that they will adapt to change with relatively little resistance. These two seemingly contradictory views may be reconciled by saying that slow change led by a respected and trusted leader will be more successful than radical change in Asian organizations.

OD should be supported by Top Manager Asian organization culture respect are given to hierarchy, this point increases the importance top-down implementation when conducting OD interventions. This culture supports this principle of U. S. -based OD. Hofstede's research (1991) shows that Asian countries are ranks high in power distance relatives to the U. S. Power distance refer to "…the extent to which the less powerful members of institutions and organizations within a country expect and accept that power is distributed unequally.

Therefore, top managers should have the power to drive the change to their organizations and also pick the right consultants to run the change process. Using foreign consultants poses a risk to top managers because there is high potential for a loss of face for them. " Face is lost when the individual, either through his action or people who related to him, fail to meet the requirements that he placed by virtue of the social position he occupy" (Ho, as cited in Hofstede, 1991, p. 61) Because the strong power distance, top managers are expected to know everything that going on in organization.

If top managers need a foreign consultant to tell them the answers this may cause the manager not to meet the essential requirements based on his/her position. The most important thing that led OD practitioners was unsuccessful in Asia because employees couldn't accept the possibility that foreign consultants could understand their corporate culture well enough to effect change in it. Example of involvement and empowerment in high power distance countries from one career ex-patriot Citibank executive told this story about taking a new job in Riyadh to help revitalize a Saudi-Pakistani

joint venture bank. Each day, when I went in, everyone who was working in the area outside my office would stand up and salute. The first day I was honored, but it soon became annoying. One day, I left something in my car and had to go back out to get it, and then come back in. Each time they stood up and saluted! Up, down, up, down—how were we supposed to get anything done? When I told them not to stand up and salute when I came in, they obeyed, but I had hurt their feelings. They saw this as conveying respect, not subservience, and were a bit insulted that their attempt to honor me had been rebuffed.

It took me some time to recover. My admonition that we were '' all working together as a team'' was confusing to them—I was moving too far too fast. Only then did I understand the true challenge that I faced. ''(as cited in Denison D. , 2004) This example has shown the problem cause by differentiation in culture it can led this company unsuccessful in the future but I suggest that if the consultants lead a discussion of the company's culture and how it could align the culture to achieve it vision.

The emphasis is not tell that current culture being good or bad, but just not aligned with the vision and also should try to join them, don't fight them. This will help limits the possibility for loss of face for management team and earn trust from employees. OD Emphasizes Employee ParticipationAgain, The strong power distance culture, Employees are expected to be told what to do. OD is implemented using a U. S. model that includes a high degree of employee participation, Asian culture may create barriers to the success of the implementation.

Not only might employees feel uncomfortable being asked to participate, they may not even know how. These may make OD not work because it is essential to have employee participation for it to work, and Asian culture creates barrier to letting that happen. To bring lower level employees to participate, the President's staff members should use a transformative style of leadership, relying on personal relationships and appealing to their employees' heart, as opposed to taking a very transactional and rational approach.

This will effective because Asian people believe that relationships are valued and lead to be trustful to involve in the implement. OD is Long-Range in Perspective OD is a long-term process, Asian countries have different time orientation in itself such as Japan—The Japanese culture has a very strong future, long-term orientation. In contrast countries in South-East Asia like Thailand do not typically plan for the long-term. Because OD is a long-term process, many line managers will find it difficult to attribute changes to specific OD interventions in Thailand (McLean L. 2000). From my view of being Thai people, not only lack of long-term orientation will lead to unsuccessful in OD either that other culture organizations if they have no consistency, well coordinated and well integrated they will not be successful in this area. Behavior is rooted in set of core values, the leaders and followers are skilled at reaching agreement even when there are diverse points of view. This type of consistency is a powerful source if stability and internal integration that results from a common mindset and high degree of conformity.

Summary This paper has reviewed some definitions of Organization Development (OD) and Culture (also an Organization culture), reported review of researches that show the results of success and unsuccessful of setting Organization Development (OD) in Asian countries, the successful in China and the failure in Thailand and highlighted the perceived failure of OD, hypothesized reasons for this failure base on behavioral culture between Asia and America through the four key principles from the U.

S. -based definition of OD that describe to OD's potential for success and also proven some suggestions from author's opinion to make successful OD practice in Asian country. At this point, author can answer the questions on the topic " How cultures are influence to Organization Development unsuccessful in Asian countries? ". I think culture is the most important factors that must be study and understand before setting OD in the country that have different culture from America.

Like many contemporary models of leadership and organizational effectiveness, this model focuses on the contradictions that occur as organizations try to achieve internal integration and external adaptation. On the other hand, organizations that are well-integrated and over-controlled usually have a hard time adapting to their environment. Organizations with a top-down vision often find it difficult to focus on the empowerment and the bottom-up dynamics needed to implement that vision. At the same time, organizations with strong participation often have difficulty establishing direction.

Effective organizations are those that are able to resolve these contradictions without relying on simple trade-off. After I have read the Domestic vs. International setting of OD, this article is telling about effort to applied planned change in many part of the world but found unsuccessful in Asian countries. I'm Asian people and have heard about OD practice in my country and would like to known the reasons of the failure and try to find the results because I think this idea will be useful for me in the future, that I may adapt to work with it in Thailand.

Also make me deeply understanding about Organization Development and clearly in some point that I'm not understood about OD in the first place. References 1. Beckhard, R. , Organization development: Strategies and models. Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1969 2. Denison D. , Haaland S. , & Goelzer P. , Is Asia Different From the Rest of the World? Organizational Dynamics, Vol. 33, No. 1, 2004, pp. 98–109 3. French, W. L. , & Bell, C. H. , Jr. Organization development: Behavioral science interventions for organization improvement (5th ed. . Englewood Cliffs, NJ, 1995 4. Golembiewski, R. T. Ironies in Organizational Development. New Brunswick, NJ: Transaction Books. , 1991 5. Hofstede, G. , Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind. Berkshire, England: McGraw-Hill International (UK) Limited, 1997 6. Handy, C. Understanding Organizations, Oxford University Press, 1993, Page 180 7. Jia Wang, Applying western organization development in China: lessons from a case of success, Journal of European Industrial Training, 2010, Vol. 4 Issue 1, p54-69 8. McLean L. , Organization Development in Thailand, university of Minnesota, 2000, page. 1-6 9. Robbins S. Organizational

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