

Are western management concepts flashcard



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Fleischmann Are western management concepts (like HARD) applicable worldwide? “ Every aspect of a firm’s castles Is determined by the competence, motivation and general effectiveness of Its human organization.

Of all the tasks of management, managing the human component Is the most important task because all else depends upon how well it is done.

“(Liker 1967). Although this quote has already over 40 years of age, the core statement has not changed in any way.

Still, managers have to focus on the people working in their companies, need to take differences among them into count and especially when it comes to managing in various countries, cultural, natural and unavoidable differences have to be taken into consideration (Hefted 1987).

Regarding the latter, management ideas or management concepts differ a lot. This is why those concepts, in particular Human Resource Development, have different definitions and approaches depending on what country you are looking at, on the focus of interest and on who is giving the definition.

Several attempts to define HARD have shown that there Is no general definition of the term (Hassled Abdullah 2009). For this reason, It can be kind of confusing and unclear to get an appropriate definition as many practitioners, academics and researches all have different opinions on what the term should include (Hassling Abdullah 2009). A very good overview of all the different approaches can be found in the literature of Weinberg (1998), which shows in a very understandable way how the term HARD was rewritten several times over the last decades to fit the newest ideas and the different underlying theses.

It starts with the definition of Endear (1970) who claims HARD to be “ a series of organized activities conducted within a specified time and designed to reduce behavioral change”. It was Craig (1976), six years after Endear, who said “ The HARD focus is on the central goal of developing human potential in every aspect of lifelong learning. “. McLain (1983) was one of the first who realized that HARD is more than “ Just” learning and training but also development itself so that it is necessary to “ enable individuals to perform current or future jobs” (McLain 1983).

During the 1970s and 1980s many other people who dedicated themselves to the studies of human resources gave several definitions for the term HARD. In 2001 McLean and McLean tried to offer a global definition of HARD after reviewing various definitions across the world: “ HARD is any process or activity that, either initially or over the longer-term, has the potential to develop adults’ work based knowledge, expertise, productivity, and satisfaction, whether for personal or group/team gain, or for the benefit of an organization, community, nation, or, ultimately the whole humanity’.

As you can see it is hardly possible to give an exact definition of the term HARD as it has developed over the last decades starting out with first being “ training”, then evolving onto “ training and development” (T), and finally becoming the present and commonly used term HARD (Hassling Abdullah 2009). As already mentioned in the beginning, the definition also or stakeholder interest, future challenges, present needs or different functions and occupations (Matthews, Mugginess, Surest 2004).

But there is one suggestion to define HARD at three main levels: on a general (macromolecule), national (micro-level) or international (global level) one (Hassling Abdullah 2009). This subdivision gives a first impression of the term HARD also being dependent on where your point of view is owing from and how HARD is seen among the different countries.

Counting all those approaches and perspectives together this is where the core question starts to begin. Are western management concepts like HARD applicable worldwide?

This is a question that has a lot of different sides that have to be taken into consideration when trying to answer it appropriately. Regarding the article “The Applicability of McGregor Theories in South East Asia” (Hefted 1987) there seems to be a clear tendency of how to reply to this issue. First of all, Hefted (1987) explains his idea of the four mentions that show the main and dominant value patterns that exist among 50 countries worldwide: 1 .

Landladies vs..

Collectivism, 2. Large vs.. Small power Distance, 3. Strong vs..

Weak Uncertainty Avoidance and 4. Masculinity vs.. Femininity. Each dimension is “ related to some very fundamental issues in human societies, but Issues to which societies can produce different answers”(Hefted 1987, p.

12). This sentence makes it already clear, that whatever is related and connected to those dimensions can be seen in a different way depending on what kind of society you are looking at.

In his studies he lays his focus on differences between the US, the Dutch and the South East Asian, particularly Indonesian, dimensions and to what extent the term HARD differs because of those dissimilarities. Hefted (1987) demonstrates very well that each of the mentioned countries differs a lot when it comes to the four dimensions. Whereas South East Asia is living in a world of Collectivism and has a large Power Distance, the US and the Netherlands are more individualistic and have small Power Distance.

Masculinity in the US is very high where in Indonesia there is good balance of Masculinity and Femininity (Hefted 1987). You see that there are existing dissimilarities among the dimensions and if we now take into account that the term HARD, according to Hefted (1987), is based on the US ways of thinking, it gets quite obvious that it can be difficult to implement the same definition of the term HARD in South East Asia as well. Hypotheses definition of HARD goes down to one typical US theory which is the Theory X-Y by McGregor (1960).

Because ideas of HARD in the USA have their roots in US humanistic theories, Hefted (1987) points out the error X-Y to show where the problems of HARD definition and the integration of it in different cultures are. McGregor theory (1960) says, that managers either hold one of the two opposing theories without the possibility to have a unification of both. But despite this fact, the theories are based on certain US assumptions which are common for the two of them: work is good and needs to happen because of God's will, people's potentialities should be maximally utilized and people in organizations behave as unattached individuals.

These assumptions cannot be applied in any South East Asian culture or society because their assumptions are quite different: work is necessary but not a goal itself, people should find their place in peace and harmony and they behave as Indonesian culture and it shows very well that, if you are coming from an American point of view where HARD is based on theories like the X-Y Theory of McGregor (1960), it is almost impossible to adapt those kinds of concepts in South East Asia (Hefted 1987). If we push these assumptions a little more forward you can get a clear answer to the core question of the headline.

But before answering, it is necessary to agree on what is meant by the word “western”. If we take the article of Hefted (1987) as a background, western means American.

As you will see later in the text, the American way of thinking is kind of decisive when it comes to defining the term HARD and the influence it has. So, are western management concepts like HARD applicable worldwide? The simple answer is no. The world with its different countries has so many diverse cultures to offer that there is hardly any chance to have a concept coming from the west to be adapted elsewhere.

McLean and McLean (2001) contribute to this statement as they show that among the various countries there are several approaches to the term HARD that deviate a lot from each other. People are different and as HARD has a great focus on humans, the term is influenced by the context in which it is studied and practiced (McLean and McLean 2001). It is not new to us that

people are shaped throughout friends, family and the values among society (Cunningham 2005).

It is only logical, if HARD focuses on the people, it varies from country to country because everyone has been affected by a different culture. UT the term HARD is influenced by other factors as well. The economy of a state and also the government with the legislation have a big effect on how HARD is defined (McLean and McLean 2001). Clearly, economies and the government are working in quite different ways and what is common to one country does not necessarily have to be suitable for another one. The title of the article of McLean and McLean (2001) is another quite good example of the sheer impossibility to have western concepts adapted worldwide: “ If we can’t define HARD in one country, how can we define it in an international context? Those mentioned arguments are building the basis to say it is just inevitable to reply to the question, if western concepts are applicable worldwide, Ninth a plain no. The previous facts lead directly to the question of problems among HER practitioners.

As already mentioned, McLean and McLean (2001) pointed out that there are diverse approaches of how to define the term HARD in the different countries worldwide. To make it a little easier, let us have closer look on Germany, as representative for a western concept, and Japans’ definition as a representative for the world.

It says, that in Germany “ There is no field defined as HARD. Personnel specialists in Management schools do some research.

Focus lays on T” whereas for Japan they say: “.. Languidly development, career development and organization development are the three major components of HARD. (McLean and McLean 2001).

By those two simple definitions it is quite obvious that HER practitioners face severe problems. First of all, Japanese HER practitioners need to deal with the fact, that there is no such emphasis on the three development forms in Germany like in Japan.

And on the other side, they also have to consider that T for Germans is a lot more important than it is to Japan. So if a German management concept should be adopted in Japan they have to find a way how to combine the two differentiating approaches. Terms of getting to know the German culture better, and to decrease the focus on the here development forms by leading it to a more general way. But this is easily said and still does not mean they adapt the German concept completely.

And as Hefted (1987) says, there are a lot of cultural differences that need to be taken into account, that also represent the problems faced by HER practitioners: different customs, religion, working hours, social life, role of women, all points related to the 4 dimensions of Hefted (1987). And as he points out, if there are too many differences among them it is just impossible to implement a concept from another neutron (Hefted 1987) because HER practitioners might not be able to take over a completely new culture.

And also the recruiting process would be difficult to handle because you will need to look for people who are willing to give up parts or even culture as whole to adapt another former unknown one. Of course there are ways to <https://assignbuster.com/are-western-management-concepts-flashcard/>

introduce new kinds of thinking, like “ bringing together the existing wide range of activities and perspectives within a framework of knowledge and learning”(Kampuchea 1997). But this will only be possible to a certain level and does not mean another management concept is fully adapted.

Besides that, HER practitioners have to deal Ninth fact that there are so many different ways to define HARD anyway. No matter if they want to adapt another concept or not, definitions vary a lot and when it comes to recruiting on an international basis, they need to be prepared to train the ‘ incoming” what their approach to a certain management concept is. And there are people like Lane and Handler (2001) who doubt that “ this realization is currently being translated into solid HER practice”.

Yes, the definitions and approaches to the term HARD are influenced by US (western) ways of thinking which might be explained y the fact that many international students are taught in America and spread those ideas all over the world and the “ American Way of Life” has become very popular to all of us (McLean and McLean 2001). “ Much of the English-language scholarly literature in HARD is sponsored by US and I-J professional organizations”(McLean and McLean 2001), which could be another explanation for the term HARD to be influenced by the US.

But summing up all of the previously mentioned arguments, it is still no complete applicability of HARD. It is just an adoption of some parts which again leads too plain no as a reply to the headline question. The diverse definitions of HARD based on cultural differences, various approaches and diverse focuses of interest are the main indicators for the applicability to be

a huge problem. At the same time the attempt to adapt other management concepts apart from the ones familiar in the country yields difficulties among HER practitioners that can only be solved to some extent.