

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF RESEARCH IN COMMERCE & MANAGEMENT

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RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION PRACTICES ACROSS CULTURES

RADHIKA MADAN
ASST. PROFESSOR
IILM COLLEGE
GURGAON

ABSTRACT

It is important to understand the various human resource practices that are taking place in different countries as these differ from one country to another. Every country has its own set of cultural values on the basis of which these human resource practices take place. The work culture of countries also differs from one another. The current research focuses on the differences in the recruitment and selection practices in organizations in selected countries. It also lays emphasis on the influence of culture in creating the difference in these practices in Japan, USA and India. For the accomplishment of the study, both primary and secondary research was undertaken. Many HR managers along with others provided relevant information which was part of the primary data. The main findings of the study indicate that the work culture of Japan and India are similar, whereas the work culture of USA is extremely different from the other two countries. Finally it has been concluded that culture plays an extremely important role to determine the HR practices and functions of organizations situated in different countries.

KEYWORDS

Culture, Cultural Influence, Human Resource Management, Recruitment, Selection.

HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT

HRM can be defined as that part of the management that specializes in the management of people in work organizations. It emphasizes that employees are the primary resource for gaining sustainable competitive advantage to meet both efficiency and equity objectives. People in work organizations endowed with a range of abilities, talents and attitudes influence productivity, quality and profitability. People set overall strategies and goals, design work systems, produce goods and services, monitor quality, allocate financial resources, and market the products and services. Individuals, therefore, become “human resources” by virtue of the roles they assume in the work organization. The activities HRM managers undertake vary from one workplace to another and might be affected by such factors such as the size and structure of the organization. Human resource activities are highly interrelated. HRM activities aim to achieve two sets of objectives – first, to improve employee performance and second, to enhance organizational effectiveness.

One of the reasons for the added importance of HRM all over the world today is due to globalization. There has been a rapid growth in the field of information technology. The service sector has gained tremendous importance and it is seen that the world has moved towards a “knowledge driven economy”. Over the last 20 years, the total value of import – export trade for United States has grown rapidly, crossing \$857 billion in 1990. Major multinationals corporations have more than half of their sales in foreign markets rather than their home country. US based Coca – Cola, Colgate – Palmolive, Nestle (Switzerland), Philips (Netherlands) are just a few companies. The figures of foreign direct investment have exceeded in Europe, Japan, Korea, China, India etc.

We are rapidly moving away from a world in which national economies were relatively self contained entities, isolated from each other by barriers to cross – border trade and investment, by distance, time zones and languages and by national differences in government regulations, culture and business systems. Distance is shrinking due to advances in transportation and telecommunications technology. There is no doubt that cross – national relations have become much more important in the world today. Indeed, international and regional collaboration have become indispensable as a manner to resolve domestic and cross border difficulties in various fields under the era of globalization. Globalization and developments in communication technologies have transformed organizations all over the world. The successful management of this cultural diversity hinges on how well organizations understand the manifestations of this diversity and its effects in the organizational and international business contexts.

INTERNATIONAL HRM

Morgan (1994) defines International HRM as the interplay among three dimensions – human resource functions, types of employees and countries of operation. The complexities of operating in different countries and employing different national categories of workers are the main factors that differentiate domestic and international HRM. International HRM is more complex than domestic HRM. Dowling (1994) identified following factors that differentiate international HRM from domestic HRM. They are, more functions and activities; broader perspective; more involvement in employees’ personal lives; changes in emphasis as the workforce mix of expatriates and locals varies; risk exposure and more external influences.

International HRM (IHRM) includes all the basic functions of HRM along with certain additional functions too. When an organization operates in different countries, employing citizens of different nationalities, there are greater complexities involved (Dowling, Schuler and Welch, 1994). A major part of IHRM is managing expatriates, employees who work outside their home countries. The company takes greater responsibility for expatriates than it does for domestic workers because it asks them to work outside their home countries. International human resource managers might help prepare expatriates to live in another country, find them housing, or arrange for the company to pay their taxes. When managing human resources, a global organization considers whether to take a consistent approach across countries, to handle each country as unique or something in between. The approach to IHRM often reflects an organization’s international corporate strategy, and their appreciation of various cultures and their influences on organizational processes. IHR managers participate in the international strategic planning process, but usually in a limited way (Bird and Beechler 1995; Briscoe 1995; Miller et al. 1986)

CULTURE

Culture refers to a set of important assumptions often understated, shared by members of a community, consisting their beliefs about the world and how it works (Rokeach, 1968). Culture can be explained as a set of shared values, beliefs, norms, expectations and assumptions that bind people with people, people with work and people with organization, people with society and provide people with a sense of identity, facilitate commitment, initiative, communication and provide basis for stability, control and direction.

Research in the subject indicates that cultural differences in people’s attitudes, values and beliefs impact the way management situations are viewed. As a result of accelerating globalization, it is important to know how to manage culturally diverse, cross – cultural and geographically dispersed organizations. Even if globalization and multinational corporate structures eventually cause national cultures to become more alike, it is improbable that indistinguishable values will emerge across cultures to produce the same management techniques and organizational behavior.

Hall (1976) has distinguished between high and low context cultures. USA has become the best example of low – context culture and Japan an icon of high – context culture.

In some cases, it is seen that people who are asked to work outside their home countries, often known as expatriate managers, are not able to give their best performance. This happens due to cultural differences they face in the host country. Every country has different reasons for the failure of expatriates. Research done by Tung (1982), talks about the reasons for failure in Europe, Japan and US. Tung’s research also suggests that US based multinationals experienced a much higher expatriate failure rate than either European or Japanese multinationals. The following are the reasons for expatriate failure in the US multinationals in order of importance. These are – inability of spouse to adjust, manager’s inability to adjust, other family problems manager’s personal or emotional maturity

and inability to cope with larger overseas responsibilities. Managers of European firms gave only one reason consistently to explain expatriate failure: the inability of the manager's spouse to adjust to a new environment. For the Japanese firms, the reasons for failure in order of importance were – inability to cope with larger overseas responsibilities, difficulties with new environment, personal or emotional problems, lack of technical competence and inability of spouse to adjust. In Europe and US the most important reason is the inability of the spouse to adjust while in Japan, it is the inability to cope with larger overseas responsibilities. The failure of spouses to adjust to a foreign posting seems to be related to a number of factors. Often spouses find themselves in a foreign country without the familiar network of family and friends. Language differences make it difficult for them to make new friends.

This can be further explained with the “*Case of the Floundering Expatriate*” *Harvard Business Review*, (July – August 1995), in which a US manager who was a star performer in his country, failed to keep up with his performance when asked to work in Europe. This was because of the language problem that he faced at the work place, his family was not able to adjust in the host country and the European style of working was very different from his home country.

Hickson and Pugh (1995) regard the cross – cultural manager as someone who can cope with culture shock and for whom the learning experience in one culture helps with entry and effectiveness in another one. It is important to study the culture of a country, but along with that it is also essential to understand the meaning of work culture to further study the HR practices across the world. Work culture is defined as a set of specific learned work related norms based on shared values, beliefs, expectations and assumptions that influence and govern the work behavior in a society about what we do, why we do and how we do it and also provide us with a sense of identity with the job, colleagues and organization to facilitate commitment, initiative, communication, team work and value for the customer and also provide basis for stability, control and direction on the job. When studying the work culture of any country it is important to analyze the work culture based on the following characteristics or determinants – value or importance of work, value of worker, value of goal, value of performance and achievement, value of loyalty, value of professionalism, value of co – workers and working relationships that include trust and openness, value of expertise and experience, quality consciousness, value of time and discipline and finally the value of customer. These are the most important characteristics of work culture. For an international business with operations in different countries, of considerable importance is how a society's culture affects the values found in the work place. Management process and practices may need to vary according to culturally determined work related values. If the cultures of the United States and France result in different work – related values, an international business with operations in both countries should vary its management process and practices to take these differences into account.

Culture has a huge impact on various business issues. Every business has four main departments under which workers perform their respective functions. These departments are – marketing, production, finance and human resource. Culture plays an important role in all of these components. Every country has a different culture and therefore there way of conducting business would also differ greatly. For example, any product that is used worldwide would be marketed differently in every country depending upon their culture. The production features would remain the same but the way the whole process would be carried out would differ from country to country.

We would be emphasizing on the human resource aspect of businesses. Human resource management function varies on the basis of culture. The main functions of HRM are – selection and recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal and compensation. It is important to look at the studies that have been undertaken by researchers in order to justify that culture has an impact on all the HRM practices that are prevalent in companies.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

- To find out if there are any differences in the selection and recruitment practices in India, USA and Japan
- If yes, what are the differences
- To identify the reasons for these differences

METHODOLOGY

To objectively study the HRM practices in various countries; an exploratory research methodology will be used initially to formulate insights or hypotheses. Exploratory research provides an opportunity for considering different aspects of the problem under study. Thus it would mean formulating a problem, establishing priorities for further research and therefore clarifying topics. An inductive way of doing research seems to be justified as it would mean collecting rich and fresh insights.

Both primary and secondary data collection tools would be used, where primary data would be collected through structured interviews, that is, with the help of questionnaires. Another way of collecting primary data is through Semi – Structured interviews. Collecting data through secondary source would mean gathering information using published data such as books, journals etc.

SAMPLE

Here a non – probability sample is most practical. The sampling technique used will be purposive / judgmental.

- The data would be collected from Indian and multi-national corporations originating from selected countries.
- Information would also be collected from the High Commissions and Embassies of these countries located in Delhi.
- Convenience sampling would also be undertaken, two companies from each country would be selected and two – three HR executives would be interviewed.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION

Recruitment is defined as searching for and obtaining potential job candidates in sufficient numbers and quality so that the organization can select the most appropriate people to fill its job needs. **Selection** is a process of gathering information for the purposes of evaluating and deciding who should be employed in particular jobs. A prominent issue in the international recruitment and selection is that of expatriate “failure”, which is defined as the premature return of an expatriate manager. The work of Tung and others suggest that expatriate failure is a general problem for many MNE's and would be a problem particularly for US MNE's.

Culture plays a very important role in selecting and recruiting candidates. Local culture always influences recruitment and selection practices, and in some countries, local laws require a specific approach. It is very important that the right candidate is chosen for the right job. Different cultures emphasize different attributes in the selection process depending on whether they use achievement or ascriptive criteria. For example – in United States, it is illegal to select on the basis of race, age, gender, religion etc. While in Japan, companies only look for fresh graduates from elite universities. The Japanese recruit for a general position within the company rather than a specific job. Artise (1995) suggests modifying the basic process of selection for cultural differences. For example – after a Korean applicant responds, the interviewer should allow for a three to four second silent gap to take place, focusing on the applicant and displaying a subtle smile to allow non – verbal reading of the other's intentions (Artise 1995, p. 92)

When recruiting internationally, companies need to understand how to access equivalent labor pools. The selection process varies from country to country based on certain parameters. Differences in education systems make it difficult to figure out who has the right profile. For example, the age of college graduates may differ due to length of study. College graduates in Germany may not reach the job market until 28 years of age, compared to 22 years old for their British and Japanese counterparts. Local talent may also have very different types of skills and abilities owing to different national values placed on education: the amount and the subject. In Italy, the title of *Dottore* does not necessarily reflect the same level of education as in Germany. British recruiters pay very little attention to the actual subjects studied. In the United States, job candidates might hide their doctoral degree for fear of being overqualified for the position.

A study based on scenarios with 300 managers in 25 firms from France, Germany, Italy, Spain and the UK found considerable differences in attitudes towards hiring practices within Europe. For example, the English, French and the Italians chose multilingual employees with a generalist background, while the Germans and Spanish preferred to hire local employees with a more technical background. (Segalla, M., Sauquet, A., Turati, C. 2001). In the Netherlands and Germany, having a vocational or technical education does not mean the same thing as it does in the United States. Foreign multinationals may also have difficulty in

accessing the most exclusive labor pools, as competition from local companies may be quite intense. Japanese companies aggressively outbid each other to try to secure graduates from the most prestigious institutions.

Citibank in Taiwan, having being frustrated in its attempts to hire talented locals, began to recruit more local women to become private bankers. (Adler, N.J. 1987)

Cultural differences do not just influence where companies need to recruit, but also how they have to go about it. For example, hiring in China may require going through government agencies, local labor bureaus and personal connections. In the United States such practices would be avoided. It is important to have a match between the person and the job description. Interviews conducted in 65 Chinese – Western joint ventures implemented in China regarding HRM practices, revealed selection and retention to be the major concern. Expatriates learned to play an active role in selection to make sure that the key selection criterion remained professional qualifications rather than just personal relationships. (Bjorkman, I., Lu, Yuan. 1999)

Looking for a job can also vary across cultures. One survey found that Greeks, Spanish and French were most likely to look for work through the Internet, while 43% of the Italians preferred to send resumes. One the other hand, only 15% Germans sent resumes. Responding to job advertisements was most popular in Spain but not in Italy. The British took the shortest time of 3 months to find new jobs, while the Spanish took the longest time of 6 months.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION IN JAPAN

The work culture of Japan can be understood according to Geert Hofstede's (1980) research, Japan is in the cluster of countries that values the group more than the individual. Hofstede's research indicates that the Japanese tend to avoid uncertainty and seek comfort in familiar situations and groups. Apart from this, Japan ranked first on the masculinity scale among the 40 countries, indicating its people are aggressive in the pursuit of worldly success and material possessions. Several studies have shown that the Japanese tend to place a high value on personal relationships, and they prefer to develop trust, or interpersonal attraction, before making business transactions (Abramson, Lane, Nagai & Takagi, 1993; Graham, Kim, Lin & Robinson, 1988; Sullivan & Peterson, 1982). The Japanese place a premium on long – term relationships between customers and suppliers, and they prefer to do business with minimum explanation and maximum cooperation (Harris & Moran, 1990). Large Japanese companies hire a group of new employees each year. These employees, blue – collar recruits from high schools and managers from universities form a cohort in the company for 15 years. Many even live together in the company dormitory. Workers rotate among departments to learn overall company operations. This increases loyalty to the organization (Dillon, L.S. 1990).

In Japanese companies, even the processes in line functions are categorized by team work. As a matter of principle, the performance of the group takes precedence over the performance of the individual. All important decisions will also be taken in the group, in a bottom – up approach. In Japan, promotions are much less frequent. An employee will be promoted every six to ten years. In addition to the capacity of an employee, his presence at work, his personality and also his age and his seniority will be taken as criteria for promotion. Personal development in Japan means permanently expanding the qualifications of the employees through job rotation and further internal training i.e. horizontal development. Usually employees enter a company at the age of about 22 and will only leave when they reach retirement age.

Many researchers have studied the *recruitment and selection practices in Japan*. It is affirmed (Warner, 1992) that the Japanese system grades human potential through merit – based higher education, so that the best people go to the best organizations. In Japan, all new employees are perceived as interchangeable and are almost considered as non – entities since there is no difference between one individual and another. Most Japanese companies are more concerned with recruiting people who have the right attitude to learn than selecting those with the best existing skills for the job (Lorrinan and Kenjo, 1994). The selection process varies greatly from company to company but have three common denominators. They are – interviewing, personal skills and teamwork and interpersonal skills.

The Japanese six recruitment premises firmly include –

- 1) Equal ability
- 2) Equal suitability for a position
- 3) Requirement of a university degree for promotion
- 4) Potential and scholastic ability indicated the level of difficulty for specific university admission
- 5) Attitude is more important than the field of study
- 6) Need to learn about business concepts

Large Japanese companies usually recruit at junior levels while senior positions are filled by internal promotion. Even though traditional life time employment is declining (Keys, Denton, & Miller, 1994), Japanese companies still place a great deal of emphasize on recruitment and selection because it is assumed that the employees will be with the company for a long time.

A *Business Week* article stated that the soft economy in Japan has dampened the recruiting of college graduates. Although Japanese firms still are offering generous pay packages to recruits, they are trimming expenses by reducing the number of new hires. Difficulties in recruiting Japanese talent have been a major factor limiting growth for foreign companies in Japan. Japanese employers can put tremendous pressures on employees who they suspect are thinking of leaving. The multinational recruiter must be prepared to spend a great deal of time with prospective Japanese executive recruits. These recruits will want to gather large amounts of information about the parent company before making a decision. This tendency is consistent with Hofstede's high uncertainty avoidance.

In Japan the focus is on team work, harmony, equal and fair treatment. Personnel selection in Japan does not focus on the specific qualifications of the applicants, but rather on personal qualities such as team work ability, commitment and loyalty. Japanese companies have adjusted to the fact that the new staff do not have any specific professional experience and that the company has to teach them everything that they need to know in order to fulfill the task with which they are entrusted. Japanese companies will not search for specialists for specific jobs, but for generalist capable of adjusting to changing requirements.

CULTURAL INFLUENCE

The culture of Japan permits life – long employment, the aim behind this system is to mould young employees for a life time career with the firm, developing their skills and abilities to create a stable and dedicated work force. but from the legal aspect, neither the company nor the employers are bound to each other. There is a lot of trust among the Japanese employers therefore for the regular employees there is no written contract according to which they have to work. There job is secured till their retirement age. The most important quality that the Japanese managers look for in administrative or junior executive staff members is good attitude.

The recruitment process in Japan as told by one of the employees is as follows. Graduates are recruited every year at about the same time. First, announcements are made in early summers indicating the number and different types of jobs available. Following steps including candidate's applications, personal contacts, written exams, interviews and medical checks, final decisions on acceptance are made in the fall and successful candidates are notified. Accepted candidates are required to submit a written promise to begin work from April following graduation. Companies issue their acceptance as early as possible in order to avoid losing good candidates to other companies. Graduation from one of the leading universities or higher schools is taken as a guarantee for the applicant's overall acceptability. Japanese companies give the acceptance letter to the employees on the 1st of April as this day is considered to be auspicious according to them.

In India, Maruti Udyog is one of the leading Japanese companies. Its success lies in the unique system of Japanese management practices. The philosophy and practices of the Japanese work culture became an intrinsic part of the Maruti organizational environment. In this company, emphasis is laid on egalitarian approach, trust and openness, teamwork, they also believe in the "we feeling" as against "us" and "them" discipline, commitment, common objective and mutual decision making. According to the culture of the Japanese, a lot of emphasis is laid on groups and workers are considered to be the key to increased productivity. Japanese believe in creating a family like atmosphere within the company. They are very close – knit are feel more comfortable to work in teams rather than performing individually.

When conducting business in Japan relationships and loyalty to the group is critical for success. While hiring employees, there are many rounds of interviews that take place in which the employers ask the same questions over and over again to check the consistency of the employee and to actually know his/her mind. The first round of interview is taken by the lower staff member of the HR department. Then a senior manager would take another interview followed by an interview by the head of the department. Employees put the company first and not themselves. They are supposed to work for long hours, which may be 18 – 20 hours in a day. They also believe in dress to impress. Those who dress according to their status or position impress the Japanese. During interviews, it is very important to be in the most appropriate dress code. Punctuality and honesty are other two characteristics that are very important in the recruitment and selection process. Japanese avoid using large hand gestures, unusual facial expressions and any dramatic movements during interviews.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION IN INDIA

Indians tend to work with lifelong friends and colleagues and minimize risk – taking behavior. India also falls with those countries characterized by large power distances and a collectivist or group orientation. India clusters with the countries emphasizing individualism, an intermediate position that may reflect the nation's movement toward national and economic development. India has a high score on masculinity, which is consistent with the emphasis on male domination.

Indians place a great deal of importance on relationships. The building of long lasting relationships is tantamount for business success in India. Indians will also go to great lengths to save face and avoid embarrassment. Human resources or "the soft side of management" are the critical factor for the success of Indian economies in their globalization efforts. In India, workers do not believe in planning. They do not plan their tasks before hand. They are very fluid in their approach towards work. Indians are very flexible as far as work is concerned. They do not restrict themselves with time. The work culture of India is very different from that of other countries. Indians unlike others are dependent on one another. They do not have any faith in themselves neither do they trust others easily. They are also not in a habit of working in teams as there is no cooperation between the members of the organization. Indians are known for their stretchable concept of time. There is no punctuality in them. All their chores are delayed and they have a very laid back attitude towards work. Indians lay emphasis on personal relations than professional relations. According to them their personal life is more important than their professional life. They also expect a lot from their subordinates. They feel that their subordinates would be loyal to them unquestionably. They are not firm in their decisions and neither are they sincere about the work that they perform. Indians are work shirkers; they try to avoid work as much as possible. They also lack self – discipline and commitment towards work and others. In Indian companies, there is a lot of regional cultural diversity that is found. People from all parts of the countries, having varied cultures come and work together in the same company. Hence this diversity is found.

The *recruitment and selection practice in India* is as follows. The Indian labor market is characterized by an apparent abundance of labor. The inadequacies of the education system results in the general and growing problem of non – availability of suitably trained work force. With too many people chasing limited number of jobs, there are social and political pressures tampering and influencing selection decisions.

There are two sources of carrying out recruitment in India. These are the internal sources and the external sources. The internal source means recruiting those people who are already on the pay – roll of the organization and those who served the organization in the past. There is merit in looking for internal sources since they provide opportunities for better deployment and utilization of existing human resources through planned placements and transfers or to motivate people through planned promotions and career development where vacancies exist in higher grades. On the other hand, Indians also recruit through external sources. Here organizations may look for people outside the organization. Entry level jobs are usually filled by new entrants from outside.

The methods for recruiting also differ from country to country. In India, there are four methods that have been adopted. These are direct method, indirect method, internal method and third – party method. Internal method is a practice of filling vacancies from within through transfers and promotions. All transfer decisions are usually taken by management. In the case of promotions, information about the vacancies is communicated through internal advertisement or circulation and applications are invited from eligible candidates who wish to be considered for the positions. The second method is the direct method. These include campus interviews and keeping a live register of job seekers. Usually under this method, information about jobs and profile of persons available for jobs is exchanged and preliminary screening is done. The third method is the indirect method. These include advertisement in print media, radio, television, trade, professional and technical journals etc. This method is appropriate where there is ample supply of talent which is geographically spread out and when the purpose of the organization is to reach out to a larger target group. The last method is the third – party method. This includes head – hunting services, consultancy firms, professional societies and temporary help agencies are among the newer sources of third – party help in recruitment which also uses computerized data bases.

In India, people are also recruited through web sites. All major companies have their own web sites where people give their application forms and as per the requirement of the company are called for interviews. Apart from this there are special sites that are only for the purpose of recruitment. These sites carry advertisements of all companies for all posts. The applicant searches for his/ her type of job and sends their resume. An example of these Indian sites is www.Naukri.com, www.jobsahead.com, www.monsterjobs.com.

There are also a number of placement centers or recruiting agencies that provide employment opportunities for the unemployed. Print media also helps in getting a job. Newspapers are the best way of advertising for a job vacancy as it attracts maximum viewers. The next best way of advertisement in India is through magazines that are published by the Government of India. These magazines carry news on government jobs.

After recruitment, the next step is selection. As per the Indian companies, the criteria of selection needs to be critical to the job. On a general basis, educational qualifications, technical skills and achievements are used as the basis for selection. A recent survey of the criteria for selection in managerial recruitment in 50 companies (Verma and Rajadhyaksha, 1986) notes that integrity, loyalty, initiative/ drive/ resourcefulness and intelligence/ mental alertness are the key attributes influencing the selection of managerial employees. The selection process begins with the job specification. The selection process covers the period from the job specification and initial contact with the applicant to his final acceptance or rejection. The successive stages in the selection process are referred to as hurdles that the applicants should cross. Not all selection processes, however, include all these stages. The complexity of the selection process usually increases with the increase in the skill level and job level of the position for which selection is being made.

Selection is very important as the demand for jobs is very high but the supply is very low. This means that qualified people for particular jobs are not easily available. Once applications are taken into consideration, written tests are taken. These written tests, in some cases are outsourced. At times biodata's that the company collects are also taken from an outside source. Many rounds of interviews take place. Not only this, group discussions also take place where the employers can compare applicants. Not much emphasis is laid on testing in India. Especially personality tests are not that important. But some multinationals in India, like GE do follow the assessment center method. Interviews in India are not structured. There are no defined objectives, neither are there any set questions that the interviewer would ask. Though there are many interviewers who take interviews, still they are not prepared for such interviews. The selection criteria, many a times is not clear. The whole selection process that is carried out in India is seemingly objective but actually very sensitive in nature. The major drawback in the Indian selection process is that external influences, biases and prejudices operate to a high degree especially in public owned companies but less so in private owned organizations.

The most important or essential criteria for selecting any employee is loyalty. Loyalty of an employee is valued a great deal and is rated very high. India also faces the problem of gender biases. Men are given all the important key positions in companies, while women are often discouraged to work. This also happens because of the Indian culture. In India, girls themselves do not want to take up marketing jobs or jobs that involve a lot of traveling. Hence the Indian culture creates this bias, which people are still following. Although trends have changed, but still people abide by the culture where they stay. Most of the Indian companies are not consistent in their selection procedures. Unless the organization is large, or it is a large multinational, the selection process is not systematic.

CULTURAL INFLUENCE

There are five levels of recruitment in India. These are – unskilled workers, skilled workers/ supervisors, engineers/ personnel or financial officers, middle/ top level managers and general managers/ vice – president/ director operations. The method of recruiting employees for every level is different keeping in mind the culture of India. Indian companies do not recruit the unskilled workers at all. The mindset of the managers is such that they feel; these people would be a liability

for the company. The employers feel more comfortable in continuing work with the old staff rather than recruiting the unskilled workers, as they are difficult to manage. There is change in the trend these days. Now Indians want to modernize themselves because of globalization gaining popularity. If in case the company feels the need to recruit them, they are recruited for a short period on a casual basis and that also through a contract. If the performance level of these workers is high or the head of the department is personally influenced then only these workers are promoted to other levels.

The skilled workers are all technically trained. These are mostly students with a technical background who are called trainees. These people work for one year and if the company feels the need to keep them, the company absorbs them. This is an effective method of recruiting competent, effective and technical people. The only disadvantage in this type of recruitment is that if the demands of the employees are not met then they get into various union activities. Hence it is important to satisfy the demands of these workers.

The engineers/ personnel or financial officers are recruited through campus recruitment or they are also called fresh recruits. Depending upon the nature of the job, people of that particular college are recruited. These recruits are provided with on – the job training and the probation period is for two years. This category of workers either leave the organization themselves or are asked by the company to leave. Selection is either through interviews, group discussions or through project reports.

For middle level/ top-level managers it is the interviews that select the candidates. If recruitment takes place from within the organization, then observations and performance appraisals help in promotion. The major drawback of taking employees from outside is that there is no surety of them performing as per the standards of the company.

Finally, the category of general managers are again those who are promoted from the middle/ top-level managers. For the last 5 – 10 years all major, well-known companies have started taking people from outside. Earlier people who were aged and had a lot of experience in their field were taken into consideration, but now preference is given to youngsters who have the zeal to perform. Age and experience is no longer important.

RECRUITMENT AND SELECTION IN THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA

In Hofstede's (1980) 40 – nation study of cultural values, the United States ranked first on individualism. The United States also clustered with those countries that accepted and even relished a high degree of uncertainty and risk in everyday life and that manifested a high degree of masculinity or aggressive and materialistic orientation to life. Americans also demonstrated a preference for informality, low power distance between individuals and groups, and weak hierarchical authority. The notion of specializing to compete is the principle ideal that Americans adhere to, practice, safeguard, and promote worldwide. From this perspective, Americans when asked what they do, immediately describe their occupation or profession, unlike the Japanese, who tend to respond with the name of the company in which they work.

The United States, once a "melting pot" of diverse cultures, is now being characterized as a "salad bowl" (Heuberger et al., 1999), where distinct subgroups or subcultures exist, with each subculture possessing its own value set. Research has shown that basic US cultural values include individualism, self – reliance, equality of opportunity, competitiveness, hard work, materialism, informality, directness, timeliness and a belief that change is good (Hofstede, 1983; Daniels and Radebaugh, 1995; Griffin and Pustay, 1996; Harris and Moran, 1996).

Americans live on a different time schedule. They come to work early and also leave their respective work place early. America as we all know is a very arrogant country. The women of America are also very aggressive. Women are more accepted in the work place in the United States. These women have the capability to succeed. Along with this they have a lot of energy and determination. In the United States, people always tell others the positive thing about the work they have done first and then only they will talk about the negative aspect. Americans are given a lot of independence and freedom to express their viewpoint without being interrupted. Americans generally go down in efficiency during summers. According to their policies, time is money and it should not be wasted. Americans place a lot of importance on the value of work.

For many Americans, time on the job is money. This often is reflected in the way they try to get as much done in as little time as possible. Americans also like to have things spelled out so that they know what is expected of them and by when their tasks are to be accomplished.

The evaluation and promotion of the personnel in American companies is very fast. Individuals who are not promoted rapidly often seek employment elsewhere. Americans want to be instantly rewarded for the work that they perform and if this does not happen they change their job.

The **recruitment and selection practices of USA** are as follows. USA is recognized as an industrialized nation with mature market economies and systems (Business Week, 1994) and predominantly white populations. For the US firms, walk – in – applicants, advertising and public employment agencies were the most frequently used sources for blue – collar recruitment, with the use of private employment agencies and campus interviews being the most limited. For the recruitment of white collar workers, US firms indicated that the campus interview was the most widely used tool, with public and private employment agencies and apprenticeship / intern programs being the least likely to be used. US uses more college campus recruiting. This may be related to the uncertainty of the quality of university applicants related to the expense involved with such recruiting efforts. US uses less valid and more risky selection tools, such as personality traits. Firms utilize newspapers (73%) and walk-ins (61%) the most but do utilize radio and employment agencies. Also, newspapers and walk-ins were rated more effective than other recruiting sources. The most utilized selection sources were interviews (93%), reference checks (85%), and application blanks (84%). Interviews, reference checks and drug tests were rated as the most effective selection procedures.

Americans have an elaborate recruitment process. Resumes are scanned for promising candidates, including those students who did not sign up for interviews. Top executives of companies give talks at colleges. Companies establish strong relationships with college placement offices and faculty. Students are recruited for various functions such as finance, manufacturing, marketing, research and sales. Big companies hire students from all major universities in general and from the big business schools such as Harvard, Wharton, Stanford and Northwestern in particular. Written tests are conducted to evaluate an applicant's aptitude for leadership and problem solving. Some companies have some important internal tests; the scores of these tests determine the applicant's selection and also measures the applicant's interpretative and reasoning skills. Candidates past experience and accomplishments are examined for leadership, problem solving capabilities, initiative, follow – through and ability to work with others.

American companies expect that the applicants should carry with them their curriculum vitae. Recruitment is either internal or external. Internal recruitment in American companies means, when the applicant calls up the HR manager and gives a reference of an already working employee in that same company. This HR manager then takes the biodata of the applicant over the phone and fixes an appointment. On the other hand, external recruitment means when applicants are recruited through newspaper advertisements. In this case they go in for walk – in interviews where they are interviewed. Interviews are taken by the members of the HR departments. In most of these companies there are approximately five rounds of interviews that take place, in which different people take interviews. Depending upon the job, written tests take place. If not required then only a verbal interview is sufficient to recruit the applicants. It is important that the qualification has to match with the companies profile or requirement. In most of the American companies, people are recruited for full – time jobs where educational qualification is essential and in some cases work experience also counts.

CULTURAL INFLUENCE

The culture of US is laying emphasis on the older generation. The US workforce is progressively getting older. The percentage of employees under the age of thirty-five is declining, while the percentage in the thirty – five to fifty – four age group is increasing. This development is as a result of many factors including the baby – boom generation, which accounts for the increasing number of workers in their forties, and the declining birth rate among the post – baby – boom generation, which helps explain the decline in the percentage of workers in their teens and twenties. A second contributing factor to an aging workforce is the nation's improved health and medical care, which is helping people live longer, more productive lives. Still another factor is the removal of mandatory retirement rules, allowing people who are capable of doing their jobs to continue working well into their sixties and beyond. American organizations generally cannot discriminate on the basis of age. Organizations in US, in recent years have made it clear that there is no such thing as lifetime employment. The era of downsizing has affected both older and younger employees of America.

Women have been entering the work force in record numbers over the last four decades. By the turn of the century, women will make up almost half the work force. This diversity development can change the policies and day – to – day practices of organizations. The educational level of the US work force has been rising, while new entrants and existing employees have on an average more education, the other end of the spectrum, those with little or no education or basic knowledge is also increasing. In the work place, illiteracy and employees lack of basic knowledge can be devastating for organizations trying to move ahead. Those with high school educations will find that these skills will carry them only so far and additional training and education are needed. Some companies screen all its entry-level applicants with tests that focus only on work related skills. The culture of US is such that the firms are not hesitant to use pencil and paper testing because this helps identify problems that might otherwise not be caught. Similarly, keeping in mind the culture in the American companies some organizations hire only at the entry level and uses testing in combination with other selection tools. Part of the process consists of pencil and paper cognitive testing, but all of it is directed towards finding out if the person possesses the key skills for doing the job.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

After studying the recruitment and selection practices in select countries, which are, Japan, USA and India, we conclude that all these three countries are different from each other on the basis of cultural dimensions. Culture of these countries therefore shape the way the practices are undertaken. It is important to remember that there are a number of differences between the Asian and the Western workforces. While workers in the West prefer to work independently, Asian workers in general, seek a sense of belonging and take more pride in their organization than in their individual jobs. In order to get maximum output from an Asian employee, remembering his/her name or birthday may mean almost as much as money. There are also a variety of differences among the different countries in Asia. Companies in Asia are now "rightsizing" and employers are becoming more selective about hiring and also more aware of the need to keep the employees happy.

It is observed that the Western culture is very different from the Eastern culture. India and Japan follow a similar culture whereas USA shows a great difference in its HR practices. Japanese do not hold the Western style of management responsible for their success because their success lies in their own way of conducting business. On the other hand, Americans are following the Japanese style personnel management.

Hence, there is a great difference in the HR practices across countries which prove that culture plays a very important role and every country has their own style of conducting business.

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ABOUT THE JOURNAL

In this age of Commerce, Economics, Computer, I.T. & Management and cut throat competition, a group of intellectuals felt the need to have some platform, where young and budding managers and academicians could express their views and discuss the problems among their peers. This journal was conceived with this noble intention in view. This journal has been introduced to give an opportunity for expressing refined and innovative ideas in this field. It is our humble endeavour to provide a springboard to the upcoming specialists and give a chance to know about the latest in the sphere of research and knowledge. We have taken a small step and we hope that with the active co-operation of like-minded scholars, we shall be able to serve the society with our humble efforts.

Our Other Journals

