INFLUENCE OF NATIONAL CULTURE ON DESIGNING EMPLOYEE TRAINING ACTIVITIES

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Abstract

The present study sheds light on the ways national culture influences the process of designing employee training activities. The research was carried out in organizations operating in four different countries: Canada, Germany, Morocco and Singapore. The countries were selected according to Hofstede's (2003) classification and are representative of his four organizational models. To guide the present research, four of Hofstede's cultural dimensions, namely those of power distance, uncertainty avoidance, individualism/collectivism and masculinity/femininity constitue the explanatory variables. On the other hand, the design of employee training programs, as the dependent variable, was browken down into three elements: 1) Who: organizational actors involved in the training design stage; 2) How: formalization of the training design stage ; and 3) What: outcomes of the training design stage, namely training objectives, content, methods, evaluation and transfer. The results of the current study show evidence of the influence of one cultural diemnsion, namely power distance on the ways employee training activties are designed in the countries under study. The present study contributes to the advancement of knowledge in the area of designing employee training and to the improvement of training programs provided internationally. Influences of national culture on management practices related to the design of employee training activities have been systematically identified in four culturally diverse countries. In terms of limitations, nationacl culture has been considered through Hofstede (1980, 2001) model and its main four cultural dimensions while other important cultural aspects may have been overlooked.

Keywords: designing employee training ; national culture; culture and training