

The Management of Multinational Employees

-- Take Mexican Labor Market as an Example

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Abstract

This report is mainly focus on analyzing the labor market environment and labor forces in Mexico to provide with the suggestion for MNEs in terms of training multinational employees to have a better working performance, higher productivity and loyalty, further more to enhance the organization's profit.

Keywords

Mexico, labor market, MNES, training, culture, multinational employees.

1. INTRODUCTION

The emerging market is defined as the characteristic of rapid economic growth, industrialization and modernization, at the same time with a growing population of middle class and a young population compared to the developed countries (Cavusgil, Knight, & Riesenberger, 2007). With the rapid growing economic and comparatively cheap labor forces, more and more multinational enterprises (MNEs) take the advantage of setting up foreign subsidiary or partnering with local business to lower the marginal cost and further penetrating the global market (Rugraff & Hansen, 2011). Despite the attractiveness, the MNEs also facing a high-risk business environment of culture difference, inadequate commercial infrastructure, un-matured labor and legal systems (Ernest & Young, 2007).

Mexico has set itself apart from other emerging countries in many aspects. In politics, it has a progressive and democratic government; in structure framework, it has carried out series of structural reforms; and in terms of economics, Mexico has a comparatively stable economical circumstance together with a border advantage that it is close to the world's largest economy (Dupuis & Génèreux, 2016).

This report is mainly focus on analyzing the labor market environment and labor forces in Mexico to provide with the suggestion for MNEs in terms of training multinational employees to have a better working performance, higher productivity and loyalty, further more to enhance the organization's profit.

2. LABOUR MARKET

Mexico is the second largest economy in Latin America with the GDP amounted to 1,295 million US dollars in 2015 (Mexico, 2016). In terms of the attractiveness of foreign investment, Mexico was ranked at 42nd globally in the 2015 Ease of Doing Business, and moves up to 38th in the 2016 (World Bank Group, 2016). According to the data of The World Bank 2014, Mexico has the total population of 125.4 million (Stiftung, 2016; Mexico, 2016) with 49.3 million (95.1%) employed (OECD, 2016). For the labor force competitiveness, Mexico has 55% youth population (Hickey & Associates, 2014) and fast growing middle class accounts for 62% of total

population (Rovira & Martínez, n. d.). Moreover, the unemployment rate in Mexico is relatively low in the emerging market with 4.9% unemployment rate (2.535 million) compared to Chile 6.4% and Turkey 9.9% (OECD, 2016). However, there are many existing labor problems that MNEs may encounter for their daily business operation.

First of all, the current Mexican labor market has a high degree of vertical segregation that appears to be a gender inequality (Orraca, Cabrera, & Iriarte, 2016). For the work participation rate, 62.1% of males participated in labor force, while female only accounts for 37.9% (OECD, 2015), which is not only due to the cultural aspect of machismo that men has dominated position both in social status and family control (Schneider, 2010), but also series of complex reasons of economic, educational, political and legal situation (Frias, 2007). Specifically, there is a gender wage gap between the female and male, and women only earn 60% of men's salaries (World Economic Forum, 2015). For example, in the manufacturing industry, compared to men's 13.74 pesos' hourly earning women are only paid with 9.69 pesos. Same for commerce area, women only earn 10.96 pesos per hour compared to men's hourly earnings of 13.34 pesos (Avendano, 2003).

In terms of the leadership structure, research shows that female still not yet overcome the barrier into the high paying occupations with only 21% Mexico female labor force in leadership positions (Hausmann, Tyson, & Zahidi, 2012). In addition, it is interesting to note that the tertiary-educated unemployment rate (4.6%) is higher than those with just secondary education degree (3.5%) (OECD, 2014). Hence, higher education level does not ensure the employment status. Under this employment situation, young Mexican tend to refuse to attend further education, with number of almost 65% of Mexican at 15-29 years old were not in education in 2012 (OECD, 2014). Therefore, the second problem in the Mexican labor market is that the Mexican company is hardly to find the qualified employees with high educational level and skills.

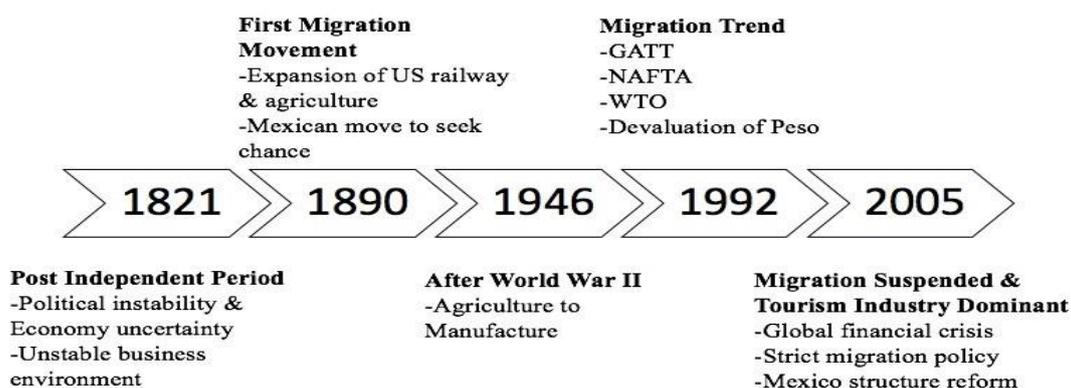
Another issue of Mexico labor market is that there is great number of informal labor force in the market. According to Antón, Hernández, & Levy (2011), the workers are defined to be formal when they are covered by Contributory Social Insurance Model (CSI), and to be informal when they are covered by Non-Contributory Social Insurance Model (NCSI). Briefly, this model based on an idea of benefiting the workers via an earmarked tax that perceived as share the organizational profits. However, in respect to the profit chasing nature of the organizations, they may try their every effort to avoid tax. Moreover, related to Mexico historical weak capacity to tax, it is understandable that the reason of high informal rate is due to company's profit maximization. Therefore, it is potentially difficult for government to effectively manage its labor market, and eventually it results in less productivity (Reinhold & Thom, 2013). In order to tackle the problem, the Mexican government has launched a new tax policy for micro and small enterprises which aims to promote formalization of the workforce by gradually reduced tax over ten years period of time until the company are incorporated in the general regime. However, nearly 60% of Mexican labor forces are still in the informal sector (OECD, 2014).

Moreover, there is nearly 30.9 percent of Mexican migrants (307,783) return from United States back to Mexican labor market to re-become the new labor force (Campos-Vazquez & Lara, 2012). According to Eboraka (2014), this group of return migrants has received valuable experience and training in United States that may regard as potential workers. At the same time, they are very likely to bring back with human and cultural capital (Waddell & Fontenla, 2015) to have a higher training ability and employability, which can benefit the organization to have experienced staffs and enhance the team spirits (Ratha, 2003; Faini, 2005).

3. LABOUR MARKET HISTORY

After Mexico gained independence from Spain in 1821, Mexico experienced a post-independence period with political instability and economic uncertainty, which made Mexico, suffered for an unstable business environment (Ponzio, 2005). Until the end of the nineteenth century, the expansion of railway and agriculture in the United States stimulated the first migration movements from Mexico to the United States to seek chance (Cabral, Mollick, & Faria, 2010). In 1910, domestic labor force started accelerating to immigrate to the United States because of the local violence generated by the sweptwing revolution (Rodríguez & Peralta, 2015). After the Second World War, Mexican industry has grown by leaps and bounds, with large expansion of domestic labor market and labor force population. Meanwhile, the development of urbanization accelerated the adjustment of interior labor market structure and invoked more employees participate in manufacturing industry instead of agriculture (Rocha & Latapí, 2008). In 1985, Mexico started to open the economy to trade and experienced to trade liberalization. Since 1986, it has been a member county of General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT). Later in mid-1990s, the Mexican labor market has been experienced to both economic and social transformation, thanks to the approval of North American Free Agreement (NAFTA), the involvement of European Union, the accession of World Trade Organization (WTO), and the devaluation of Mexico peso. As a result, a growing number of labor force migrate to the United States, and a small sector to Canada (Cabral, Molick, & Faria, 2010).

However, when everyone widely accepted that a growing amount of Mexico labor force prefer to work in the United States, it is interesting to note that the outbreak of global financial and economic crisis and stricter immigration limitations of the United States reduced the popularity of Mexico labor force emigrated to the United States (Jimenez, 2000). For example, many potential migrants have decided to delay or not to seek jobs in the United States, and the majority of Mexico employees who work in the United States before, determined to return back to Mexico (Wise & Covarrubias, 2008).



Since the financial liberalization, the economy structure tended to be decentralization and the government encouraged increasing employment growth (Álvarez-Galván, 2012). In 2005, the government established the Mexican Observatory of the Labor Market to supervise the labor market. In addition, the Fair Labor Association protects employees' rights and collective bargaining in Mexico (OECD, 2009). Through time, Mexican labor market had transformed from agriculture oriented to manufacture oriented, now to service sectors, mainly focusing on tourism industry (Urbach Hacker Young International Limited, 2016). And it has a long history of origin, transit, destination, and return of migrants, primarily from the United States (Radel, Schmook, Mcevoy, Mendez, & Petrzela, 2012).

4. MEXICO LABOUR LAW

In Mexico, the labor law mainly based on Federal Labor Law (FLL) on 1970 (Schiaffino, 2013). Through the FLL, the Mexican government aims to achieve the objective to keep the social justice, equality, freedom and dignity in the workplace (L&E Global, 2015).

First of all, in order to guarantee the workplace equality, the government regulates that company should offer equal pay, regardless of sex or nationality. To protect the right of employees, the FLL limits the weekly working hours from 42 to 48 hours, with at least one day off work per week (L&E Global, 2015). Besides, the FLL ensures the minimum wage at 73.04 peso per day (Trading Economics, 2016), and the company has to pay at double average hourly wage when employees are required to work overtime (Posthuma, Dworkin, Torres, & Bustillos, 2001). Interestingly, the FLL aims to protect the local labor forces with the regulation to limit the foreign employees' percentage only up to a maximum of 10%, and strictly limitation on technical position unless only for a temporary period with know-how delivered (Ernest & Young, 2015). Moreover, if an employee files a claim of unfair dismissal to the court, they can get the compensating wage from the termination day to the date which company follows the court's resolution (Sander & Almanza, 2013).

In 2012, there was a labor law reform with the revision of the Federal Labor Law (FLL) (Rueda, 2013) with new rules against discrimination, and new protection for company (Sander & Almanza, 2013). Firstly, new regulations are designed to eliminate gender barriers to provide more flexibility to the working mothers and shorter working hours to nursing mothers. Besides, male workers can apply paid paternity leave for about five working days (Sander & Almanza, 2013). Secondly, the new legislation is not only ensuring the rights of employees, but also the companies. Specifically, it defined the accurate maximum limitation to compensating wage of 12 months salary, instead of unlimited compensating wage. This was owing to the facts that there were cases of small and medium corporations went into bankruptcy after paying the unlimited compensating pay because of the delays in court decisions (Sander & Almanza, 2013).

Nevertheless, the Mexico also enacted the Social Insurance Law to pay a further attention to all employees' rights (Antón, Hernández, & Levy, 2011). The model of Social Insurance (SI), which include Contributory Social Insurance (CSI) and non-contributory social insurance (NCSI) (Antón & Leal, 2013). Contributed by firms, government subsidies and enrolled formal workers, CSI provides more robust insurance, health, disability, and work-risk insurance, day care services, retirement pensions, housing taxes and state labor tax against risk for formal employees (Antón, Hernández, & Levy, 2011; Dion, 2008) On the other side, NCSI covers basic insurance, health, day care, retirement pension and housing, which are financed from government subsidies and informal workers, to ensure informal workers' rights. It is worth to notice that for the Social Insurance Model in Mexico, individual contributes different percentage between CSI and NCSI. It is regulated by the law that 20% of the formal wage and 7% informal wage must be contributed to the CSI and NCSI tax in respectively (Antón, Hernández, & Levy, 2011; Antón & Leal, 2013).

5. MAJOR CULTURAL CHARACTERISTICS

Respect to the globalized business context, many researches has shown that the enormous failures of overseas business are result from the misunderstood and inability to match cross culture way to conduct business (Tung, 1988; Ferraro, 2002). Therefore, the adoption of specific diversity training is imperative. In terms of Hofstede's culture dimension, unlike most industrialized modern culture, the Mexican context is distinctively family oriented and strongly traditional focused collectivist societies (Howell et al., 2007). Specifically, in traditional hierarchy family structure, the Mexican individual is highly dependent on the support of its authority figure who makes the major decision, and in groups, Mexican individual has a greater

focus on group goals instead of personal achievement. As a result, throughout Mexican corporation a father like behavior always expected by Mexican employees who need a clear indication of their superior and a sense of protection under the corporation (Kras, 1989), more importantly, the level of employee loyalty highly depend on the devotion to their executives (Wilhelm, 1994).

Moreover, Mexico is high on power distance. Within the organization, the higher-level manager has the absolute power that fellow members are expected to tell with what to do, instead of giving the own ideas. Uncertainty avoidance relates to a society deal with the fact that the future is uncertain (Gordon, 2010). The extent to which the members of a culture feel threatened by unknown situations, and then have created beliefs that intend to avoid these is reflected on uncertainty avoidance (Howell et al., 2007). Mexico has a very high score on avoiding uncertainty (Wilhelm, 1994; Teegen & Doh, 2002), which may due to lacking of support from public institution and trust of their leaders within the organization (Teegen & Doh, 2002). Thus, security is a significant aspect of individual motivation, Mexican prefer the stable working environment, clear career path and to have a strong family tie (Gordon, 2010).

In addition, the need of Machiso, represent a masculism culture that emphasize on power, goal-orientation and self-confidence (Wilhelm, 1994). Also, according to Wilhelm (1994) and Moran et al. (2014), the masculine culture has been defined by Hofstede (1980) as an emphasis on performance achievement. Therefore, the primary motivational contributor is driven by rewards and grant for performance (Dartey-Baah, 2013). Moreover, in this masculine culture males are expected to be the authority figures within family, organization and social relationship. As a result, it showed the gender imbalance in Mexican culture (Zhang, Gowan, & Treviño, 2014).

| HOFSTEDÉ'S CULTURAL DIMENSION | COLLECTIVISM | MASCULISM | POWER DISTANCE | UNCERTAINTY AVOIDANCE |
|--|---------------------|------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Score | 70 | 69 | 81 | 82 |

As the limitation of Hofstede's culture dimension, many scholars also suggested that the analysis of culture should also form from other perspectives. Based on the characteristic of Mexican culture value, there are three aspects of concept to be selected to discuss, which are on job attitude, time conception and interpersonal relationship (Wilhelm, 1994). In terms of the attitude towards the job, most Mexican have less motivation on their work, they believe the pleasure with family is more valuable (Wilhelm, 1994). Therefore, the work related performance is expected to be better if individual involve more on job (Heydenfeldt, 2000; Wilhelm, 1994).

For the relationship among individuals, Mexican emphasize on interpersonal relationships and the way to measure time and planning. As Howell et al. (2007) pointed out that Mexican have a strong belief that a close relationship with others can be a strategy to achieve personal goals, the cultivation of harmony relationship always maintained and it based on respect and courtesy, especially the need for presenting correct sensitivity to dignity and worth of the individual is necessary. Due to this orientation, the advantage is that the interpersonal conflict is avoided across workplace since the common value congruence. However, the negative feedbacks of the superior in the organization are always considered as attack and violation of dignity (Sargent & Matthews, 1998). When it comes to time and planning facets, it is interestingly to see that there is no sense of urgency in Mexican context and punctuality is always ignored (Wilhelm, 1994). Due to the high flexible time concept, the plan always managed

on short term compared to the long-term deadline and planning in working situation, few expected plans and achievements are totally accomplished (Erllich, 1993). Thus, it directly affects corporation productivity and eventually harms its profits. Hence, as the business conduct cannot exist without the consideration of culture, the success of MNEs always determined by how they handle culture issues among its multinational employees. Therefore, a well understanding of culture difference needs to be prioritized in Mexico.

| BEYOND HOFSTEDE'S THEORY | TIME CONSUMPTION | PLANNING | INTERPERSONAL RELATIONSHIP | ATTITUDES TOWARD WORK |
|--------------------------------|---------------------|------------|-------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Characteristics | Unpunctuality | Short-term | Harmony | Evil |

6. TRAINING

Based on the previous analysis of Mexico labor market, it can be concluded with four main issues: gender inequality, low skill and low educated labor force, informality, and large number of return migrants. As a subsidiary in Mexico, the MNEs will involve both the expatriate from headquarters (PCNs) and also the local Mexican workers (HCNs). In addition, besides the above existing problems, the expatriate (PCNs) may experience the cultural difference in Mexico and also the local Mexican worker will suffer a cross culture-working environment within the MNEs.

Training is an effective way to change the employee behaviors and attitudes in a given period of time with planned efforts, from which employee can also gain job-related competencies, knowledge, skills and behaviors (Noe, 2013; Chew, 2004). Therefore, in order to address the raising problems in Mexico labor market, a customized systematic approach is suggested to fulfill within the whole training process through total five phases: analysis, design, develop, implementation and evaluation (Ticevic & Weichselbraun, 2014). Through the whole training systematic approach, the MNEs in Mexico can clearly understand and improve the Mexican in an efficient and logic way (Dhawan, n.d.).

6.1. Analysis

The first step in systematic approach to training (SAT) is analysis. In this phase, it is primary to recognize the necessarily and objectives for training, and then determine trainers and trainees (United States Marine Corps, 2004). In order to solve to the existing problems, employees are expected to improve cultural understanding, time concept, professional knowledge and other job related skills, change attitude, and enhance team spirits to increase productivity and loyalty. Additionally, the training programs are taught by outside experts to train technological and language skills, by leaders to train vocational skills, and by migrants returned from the USA to mitigate the cultural barriers. Meanwhile, as the trainee, expatriates are expected to learn Mexican culture, and locals are expected to understand head quarter's country culture and on-job skills (United States Marine Corps, 2004).

6.2. Design

In the second phase of systematic approach, the design should decide four training programs, which are cross-cultural training, leadership training, and knowledge and skills training program.

Cross-cultural training is the key for success of MNEs in the international business context (Zakaria, 2000). Through the well-designed cross-cultural training program, corporation can create a better working environment by mitigating the cultural barriers (Brandl & Neyer, 2009). First of all, before the training started, it is critical to define a correct training way that matched with the local culture to enhance the training effectiveness and save the training cost (Stuart,

1992). Based on the culture aspect, “Teacher-centered” approach and “Hands-on” approach are used for Mexican (high on uncertainty avoidance, collectivism, power distance) and expatriate from headquarter (high on individualism, and low on uncertainty avoidance) in respectively. Moreover, the training should be carried on a standardized, structured and didactic way (e.g., lecturing, viewing videos) to reduce ambiguity and uncertainty during the conduction (Burke, Chan-Serafin, Salvador, Smith, & Sarpy, 2008). In terms of the training content, it is suggested to involve the expatriates from headquarter to understand the Mexican culture, at the same time to train the local Mexican to have a better understanding of foreign culture.

According to International Labor Force (2010), the organization can have better productivity if their employees are equipped with higher level of knowledge and skills. Mexico has a relatively large percent of low skill and low education level of labor force (OECD, 2014), which is mentioned above to become one of the major reasons of the labor market informality. Therefore, the MNEs are suggested to hire the outside professional trainers to increase the vocational skills and communicational skills of their employees, at the same time, involve the job leaders, expatriate from headquarter in the training process to save overall training cost.

As mentioned above, respect to the culture hinders within Mexican context, Scholar (Howell et al., 2003) has proposed the leadership training can be a useful way to mitigate the barriers of cultural drawbacks in Mexico. To be specifically, according to Stephens and Greer (1995), respect to its collectivist culture features, the current autocratic leadership style has provided employees with a clear vision of organizational instruction towards the job task. Therefore, it is suggested to utilize this cultural characteristic together with leadership style to further training the leaders to have more strategic decisions. At the same time, the organization should also train the fellow employees to have more motivation to express its own ideas. Moreover, a father-like behavior can be seen as a paternalistic leadership approach in Mexican organization, which required a supportive leader behavior to meet their fellows’ needs (Howell et al., 2007). Therefore, it is believed that by increasing the loyalty of leaders, the overall satisfaction and loyalty of employees can be improved.

In addition, the return migrants are highly valued during the leadership-training program, since they have higher ability with developed skills and knowledge (Pîrvu & Axinte, 2012). As the G20 members, Mexico is promised to better integrating women in the labor force and decrease the gender gap in labor force participation rates by 25 percent by 2025 (OECD, 2014). Women as the decision maker have been defined with no difference in terms of gender in effective leadership management (Eagly, Karau, & Makhijani, 1995). Conversely, diversity in-group can enhance strategic decision through more in-depth discussion, more alternative solutions to the problem and more evaluation of different options (Williams & O’Reilly, 1998). Therefore, it is believed that with women in the management team can diverse viewpoint and provokes lively in group discussions (Letendre, 2004), and further more to influence the managerial decision with different values (Bilimoria & Huse, 1997; Huse & Solberg, 2006). Therefore, the MNEs are suggested to improve women’s identity in the organizational structure by involving women in the decision making level and further providing a clear career path to them to diverse the group structure therefore to further changing the gender inequality status.

6.3. Development & Implementation

In the development phase, according to previous analysis and design, the MNEs can use several training materials to support the MNEs training programs to be efficient and vivid (United States Marine Corps, 2004). Through various training materials such as program schedule, course materials such as trainee handouts, case study, media, recordings and other training aids, the trainers can express their training contents and plan clearly while the trainees could reach the program objectives (Dhawan, n.d.).

During whole period of implementation phase, classrooms, lecture conduction, course administration will be provided by the MNEs. In addition, specific training courses are scientifically designed to MNEs training schedule, which will be set up in weekdays or business hours once a week as Mexican prefer spending more leisure time with family (Wilhelm, 1994). Generally, the systematic training approach is suggested to run on the consistent and long-term basis. From January to April, the main focus is on the cross-cultural training programs. Leadership training program will be carried out from April to December, which aims to enhance the leader ability and enhance the women’s role in the leadership position. Besides, the knowledge and skills training programs is designed to run for the whole year, since it is vital to improve the overall organizational productivity therefore to increase overall profit.

6.4. Evaluation

Evaluation is the last phase of training process, which create a chance for organization to modify the training details, therefore to ensure the training process to work correctly and supports three other phases to operate efficiently. In this phase, the organization is suggested to collect the immediate feedbacks from trainees and trainers of each training phases and determine the areas need to be improved.



7. CONCLUSION

To sum up, according to the research findings, there are five issues that Mexico currently confront, which are gender inequality, low education and low skill level, informality, return migration and cultural difference. All these addressed issues are believed to become a barrier for MNEs to further developing with multinational employees and international organization goals. Therefore, a systematic training approach is build up based on the profound understanding of the Mexican business environment in terms of labor market, history, laws and culture features to help the MNEs to overcome the drawbacks and enhance its human resources management.

Specifically, the systematic training approach has been divided into five main steps, which starts from a situational analysis, a specific program design, a program based development, a consistent scheduled implementation to an integrated evaluation. Eventually, it is believed with the training function suggestions, MNEs can generate value congruence within organization and reduce unnecessary expenditure, finally exceed their competitors to achieve the triumph.

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