The Impact of National Culture on Team Work: The Case of Jamaica

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Why this topic?

- Relative consistency of above-average individual sporting success

- Relative consistency of below-average team sporting success

- Are we basically an individualistic society?

Culture

- What really is culture?

- The norms and values that shape/colour our everyday behaviour

- Culture has both assets and liabilities

- Are there similarities between national/collective culture and team culture?

Hofstede's Cultural Dimensions

Dimension	Explanation
Power/Distance	The extent to which people accept inequality in power. High: People accept inequality in power distribution Low: People expect equality in power
Individualism/ Collectivism	How personal needs and goals are prioritized vs. the needs and goals of the group/team
Masculinity/Femininity	Achievement, heroism, assertiveness, material success vs. value of relationships, cooperation, group decision making, quality of life.
Uncertainty Avoidance	How comfortable people are in changing the way they work or live, or how much they prefer the known systems
Long Term/Short Term Orientation	Planning for the future, perseverance vs. short time past , present oriented

Collection of Data

- Secondary data (literature)

- Interviews (coach, athletes, corporate)

Findings

- A number of football and netball teams in Australia and New Zealand try, as far as possible, to include players in decision-making

- Athletes' regular feedback is important and is almost "required"

- Hofstede's "Power/Distance" appears to be diminished. No findings for Jamaica yet

Findings

- Renowned track coach, Glen Mills, suggests Jamaicans are self-motivated and therefore has produced, at a point in time, the world's 3 fastest male sprinters

- He bemoans the fact, however, that putting together a relay team is challenging as, "…some individuals refuse to make sacrifices or adjustments…"

Findings

- In the local business environment, Jamaicans seek equity funding partners, but have difficulties relinquishing/sharing responsibilities and authority

- These findings support Hofstede's cultural dimension of "Individualism"

Findings

- Gender split at UWI, Mona is approximately 70:30 females vs males

- Gender split on Boards of Directors is approximately 33:67 females vs males in the public sector and 16:84 females vs males in the private sector

Findings

- Sponsorship for the all-male national football team far outweighs that for the all-female national netball team regardless of performance and international rankings

- These limited findings support Hofstede's cultural dimension of "Masculinity"

Findings

- The aspect of Jamaican culture that supports power/distance could support Hofstede's cultural dimension of "Uncertainty/Avoidance" generally speaking, in terms of consequences or repercussions relative to variation from methods, procedures, processes and expectations

Findings

- A number of our local corporate sponsors are not willing to sponsor sports teams throughout stages of team development as performance fluctuates

- This limited data seems to diminish Hofstede's cultural dimension of "Long Term Orientation"

Conclusions

- National culture provides norms and values for organizational and team cultures

- Jamaica does not seem to be strong in team work

Further Work

- Investigate Jamaican sports teams and organizational culture using Deal and Kennedy's Cultural Model (1982)

- Collect empirical data

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