

Impact of Adult Learning in Cambodian Rice Market: Empirical Research based on Market Trade and Economics

Khim Socheat, Dr. Amiya Bhaumik, Prof.Dr. M.R. Tamjis, Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valliappan Raju

Received 14 September 2018 ▪ Revised 23 October 2018 ▪ Accepted 24 November 2018

Abstract: This paper explores the influence and impact of the practice of adult learning through coaching to rice market executives in Cambodia as described by respondents. The success of adult learning through coaching as a development program for leaders has been reviewed by the paper. Adult learning is one of the main methods of life-long learning. Performance improvement is required from every employee. One of the emerging practices to ensure performance improvement in the professional practice is adult learning through coaching. Its general goal is to be able to improve skills and knowledge of leaders that would ensure excellence in their field.

Keywords: Rice Market, Cambodia Commerce, Adult Learning.

INTRODUCTION

The cultivated area for rice in Cambodia is around 3.052 million hectares in 2016. It comprises of two main seasons-wet season and dry season. Wet season covers around 74% of the total cultivated land and dry season approximately 16% (MAFF 2017). Rice production has increased significantly during the last decade. The production volume has increased more than double from 2000 to 2016. The data shows that the estimated paddy production in 2016 increases to 9.9 million metric tons in 2016 compared to only 4 million metric ton in 2000 (MAFF, 2017). This leaves around 5.1-million-ton surplus of paddy and potential 3.2 million tons of milled rice for export

The practice has improved a lot with the continued understanding and recognition of the profession. An organization of executive coaches, International Coach Federation, has doubled its membership in a matter of two years, then as of 2004, it has approximately 7000 members consisting of nationals of 33 countries (Johnson, 2004). It has become very popular that the internet boasts of millions of pages for the topic "executive coaching" in Google alone. However, even with its popularity, executive coaching research in many aspects is still new. A lot of areas have not been explored regarding the practice. Johnson (2004) states that in 1999, business enterprises were not aware of executive coaching but were interested when they were informed of the practice.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Cambodia's formal rice export has increased noticeably during the last seven years. In 2010 Cambodia exported only 100,000 metric ton of milled rice, while in 2013 the volume increased to around 378,000 metric tons and transformed itself from a pure paddy trader to a milled rice exporter (Trade map, 2018). Volume of export has reached 542,144 metric tons in 2016 (see Table1 below). Share of Cambodia's rice export volume in global rice export increased gradually from 0.15% in 2010 to 1.33% in 2016. This market share made Cambodia ranked 12th largest rice export country in 2016 (Trademap 2017).

Because of this, heads of companies developed and implemented programs and initiatives like outsourcing, business process re-engineering (BPR), TQM, customer focusing, centralization, downsizing, team-based designs, and other various strategies in the organization and development of leadership among these leaders, which includes executive coaching (Verlander, 1999)

Khim Socheat, Doctoral Aspirant, Lincoln University College, Malaysia.

Dr. Amiya Bhaumik, Faculty Head, Lincoln University College, Malaysia.

Prof.Dr. M.R. Tamjis, Dean, Linton University College, Malaysia.

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Valliappan Raju, Doctoral Aspirant, Lincoln University College, Malaysia.

These initiatives have the aim of making these businesses better but bigger, and faster but cheaper. But with all the efforts of trying to achieve this aim, the leaders are faced with organizational change and initiatives to develop the employees. Due to this, leadership development is the central goal.

According to Verlander (1999), leadership development is a trigger for change in the organization. It is also the basis of human resource for fast growth and progress, and an implementing tool and tactic for competitiveness. Because of this, new strategies are needed to ensure growth and progress. One of these strategies to use is executive coaching.

PROBLEM STATEMENT

The rice market all over the world has become complicated. Cambodian leaders for this area of endeavor need more insights and training to lead the rice market into the desired success level that the kingdom has envisioned. These complications would require the leaders of the Cambodian rice market to increase their skills and knowledge and be trained to be better leaders in the international trade of rice that they are managing. There are times when these executive leaders need specific improvement in different areas such as public speaking, personality development, emotional intelligence, strategy formation and implementation, image building, corporate environment awareness, and any other critical knowledge or skill areas where sustainable performance is needed. To increase these skills and knowledge sets, they turn to trainers who can coach and train them to cope up with the demanding role that they are currently handling and may handle in the future. Rice market is a unique area to manage. The role of the manager is much more complicated than normal. Leadership in rice import and export face challenges that require a broad range of technical and business skills as well as social and emotional awareness that is characteristic of the role.

This study explores and describes the effect of adult learning through coaching to leaders of the rice market. It shows the impact to the corporate leaders of rice import and export through their own perspective.

Research Questions

The main question being answered by the study is:

1. What are the experiences of rice import and export managers with adult learning through coaching?
2. What are the specific progressive outcomes accomplished by rice import and export managers with the adult learning through the coaching process?
3. What are the most important aspects of the adult learning through coaching program for the progressive benefit of the rice import and export managers?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework used in the study was based on adult learning theory. Also, Adult learning through coaching is a rising learning and advancement process for the performance development of the executive and has an establishment in adult learning. It is a learning-focused advancement procedure. This structure bolsters the view that executive coaching research can possibly extend the conventional perspectives of learning hypothesis as it identifies with improvement in leadership. Executive coaching can be seen as an important and fruitful way to deal with adult learning that encourages through the learning process the achievement of the objectives of the executive coaching process. Executives recognized these outcomes as they discussed during interview the effect of the coaching procedure on their development and performance.

There are several important reasons why the study is conducted. The partnerships and cooperation among academics and business practitioners is important in the advancement of human resource development as well as the improvement of work performance of the human capital (Swanson & Holton, 1997).

Swanson and Holton (1997) stated that human resource development and improvement of human performance is one of the most studied topics in research. One of these researches is proving the impact of interventions in problems for both individual and corporate. Executive coaching is one of the forms of human resource interventions to enhance leadership performance.

This study is necessary to ensure the maturity of executive coaching as a profession. More research is needed to clarify issues on the worth of executive coaching, its success factors, its processes, measures,

and its interactions and initiatives (Sanson, Arnod-Thomas, & Guilway, 2002). Focused studies, such as in rice import and export, is also necessary so that the impact can be identified on specific applications.

LITERATURE REVIEW

According to the interview with some ACs of organic and SRP of contract farming, all members of the cooperatives have not joined the contract farming with millers/exporters yet because they do not still trust the contract. There is a change of consumer's behavior for rice consumption for higher health and safety standard. In China, consumers prefer health and safety food (Lu 2018). Consumers in Europe are also in favor of exotic varieties such as Basmati, Jasmine and organic rice. This demand shows a growth of 6% annually (CBI 2017). Both buyers and consumers in Europe have a growing concern about sustainability and social affect from their consumption. This pressures rice millers/exports to have a traceability system in place – one that is aligned with the standard requirement. Sustainable Rice Platform (SRP) which is co-convened by IRRI and UNEP in 2011 with involvement of 29 institutions from public and private sector stakeholders, research, financial institutions and NGOs, is now implementing with some exporters in Cambodia in the form of contract farming to supply to few large retailers in Europe such as Mars Food.

Another challenge is a labor reduction in agriculture sector. Labor in agriculture decreases from 80% in 1993 to 41% in 2018 (MAFF 2017). It is projected that the labor will continue to decrease from year to year and remain only 29% in 2030. Studies have been conducted such as that of Sztucinski (2001) who performed a phenomenological study to find out how extensive are the executives' understanding of the coaching they are receiving. Turner (2003) used grounded theory to gather the experiences of executive coaching from the practitioner and client perspective to develop a theoretical stream of executive coaching.

Pappas (2013) discussed Malcolm Shepherd Knowles (1913 – 1997) as an American educator who is well known for using the term Andragogy as synonymous to adult education. Malcolm Knowles said that, "andragogy is the art and science of adult learning", therefore, when referring to any form of adult learning, the term to be used should be andragogy (Pappas, 2013; Kearsley, 2010). His argument is that adults should learn in a different way from children because of the distinctness of the adult learning process when compared with that of children, of which is very traditional, pointing to pedagogy. Self-directed learning is his proponent and the teacher is just a facilitator. He said (Knowles, 1990, p.57), "Andragogy is a theory which is vastly in contrast with the traditional pedagogical model and it advocates both the self-directed learning concept and the teacher as facilitator of learning". Bonnici (2018) has identified seven benefits that and ragogy through executive coaching can give to rice market leaders. These are benefits are summarized on the table below:

Table 1: Seven adult learning through coaching benefits

No.	Benefits
1	Heightened self-awareness
2	Improved self-regulation
3	Higher levels of empathy
4	Boost in recognition at work
5	Increased levels of motivation
6	Better social skills
7	Improved leadership abilities

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This is a description of the methodology, which was chosen to conduct this study of executive coaching. The theoretical framework and the initial research question are discussed. The research design strategy to conduct the study is reviewed. This includes describing the type of strategy, sampling design, measures, data collection procedures, and data analysis procedures.

Case Study Research

Case study research is one of several ways of doing social science research. As a research strategy, the case study is used in many situations to contribute to the knowledge of individual, group, organizational, social, political, and related phenomena. The distinctive need for case studies arises out of the desire to understand complex social phenomena. The case study research method is defined as an empirical inquiry that investigates a contemporary phenomenon within its real-life context; when the boundaries

between phenomenon and context are not clearly evident and in which multiple sources of evidence are used (Yin,2003).

A comprehensive understanding of the case is arrived at through a process known as thick description. This involves an in-depth, complete, and literal description of the entity being evaluated, the circumstances under which it is used, the characteristics of the people involved in it, meaning of demographic and descriptive data such as cultural norms and mores, community values, ingrained attitudes, and motives.

Stake (1995) describes case study from the perspective of a researcher. "The researcher enters the scene with a sincere interest in learning how they function in their ordinary pursuits and milieu and with a willingness to put aside presumptions while we learn. The case is a specific functioning thing" (p. 2). He defines case study as:

Descriptive Case Study

This case study strategy of inquiry was most appropriate because it shed light on and helped to understand the impact and phenomena of executive coaching. Understanding a phenomenon is a key purpose of case study research.

Consistent with case study methodology, the case study of executive coaching was bounded by time and the researcher used multiple qualitative research data collection procedures. These multiple data collection procedures were oral interviews and the completion of a written questionnaire.

Simon and Francis (2001) describe theoretical framework as the potential explanation or potential relationship for a situation or problem in order to place a study in perspective among other studies. Another function of theory is to generate new ideas for research by suggesting specific relationships which need further study.

Yin (2003) further states the goal of theory in case study is to place the case study in the appropriate research literature so that lessons from the study will more likely advance knowledge and understanding of a given topic.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURES

Case studies can utilize a variety of data collection methods. Patton (2002) reports the use of multiple data collection methods and data sources as a way to corroborate evidence for the purpose of establishing the validity of qualitative research findings.

This is defined as triangulation. Triangulation strengthens a study by combining methods because studies that use only one method are more vulnerable to errors linked to that particular method and that having different types of data allows the researcher to validate and cross check findings.

Creswell (2003) reports that the interview is the primary tool for gathering data in qualitative research.

The primary data collection instrument for this study of executive coaching was an audio taped telephone interview with each executive. A second data collection instrument was a written questionnaire.

The questionnaire for this study of executive coaching was a structured set of eleven written questions to further assess the sample's beliefs and attitude about the impact of executive coaching. The questions in the questionnaire were not the same questions as those used during the telephone interview and it was completed at one point in time.

The questionnaire contained both open form questions, which permitted any response to the question and closed form questions in which a question permitted only pre-specified responses.

Five of the closed end questions had an open form option in order for the respondent to provide a written response.

DATA ANALYSIS

Data for analysis were gathered through face to face interview with the five leaders of rice market management. The responses were written down and as a back-up, the interview was recorded with the consent of the interviewee.

In analyzing the data, the researcher coded the data, patterns were found, themes were labeled and category systems were developed.

Participants	Summary Statement
A	<p>The Respondent expected a traditional tutorial session with the executive coach. He expected a rigid theoretical discussion or “psychological therapy” of sorts but he was wrong. It was a very personal, one on one conversation that made him more aware of his capabilities. There were also on-site observations in different aspects of the job. After each of the on-site observations, the coach would give his feedback and give a professional evaluation and recommendation. There are also simulated or practice dealings, communications, or operations. Again the coach will always give the feedback and recommend or suggest methods that when Respondent A used worked very well.</p> <p>Factors that affect the client and coach is time. There are so many instances when the session is on-going, duty would call suddenly so the session gets cut-off and postponed or delayed. It is not a surprise that sometimes sessions get shoved aside because of the role the Respondents have in rice market management.</p> <p>Most of the things that the participants need to change is his dealings with his subordinates that sometimes bordering to being unprofessional especially in times of stress. After the executive coaching sessions, his stress levels lowered and this also helped out with some of his health issues that he learned are due to stress.</p>
B	<p>Respondent B expected to gain improvement as a leader. When he was first assigned to head the rice market management unit in one state, he had a lot of misgivings and insecurities. He was expecting the program to change his personality into a more outgoing and more charismatic leader. However, he learned that it is not his personality that he needed to change but his attitude. Being shy, Respondent B would hesitate to bother anyone and expect them to do things on their own volition without commands from him. His coach pointed out that he should lose his inhibitions and fears of being judged. With several practice, he has improved his shyness and now able to engage in leading and guiding his subordinates without fear of being criticized.</p> <p>One factor that Respondent B realized is the communication issues between himself and his coach. He would sometimes hesitate to say things in fear of offending his coach. This is the same problem that the coach wanted him to find solution to.</p> <p>There are obvious changes and there will be more because the program is still on-going. But there are times when Respondent B feel there is no movement forward but the coach will always guide him out of that feeling.</p>
C	<p>The coaching program, according to Respondent C, is a success. The results after the program was beyond his expectations. In fact, he would propose a company policy that all leaders of the same level and higher than him should go through coaching for their management development program. He is also intending to participate in another coaching program but this time on financial management for his personal development.</p> <p>Respondent C thinks that one factor that affects the coaching process is the knowledge, competency and experience of the coach. It all boils down to what the coach knows, what his assessments are, what will happen, and what he brings into the coaching process.</p>
D	<p>The coaching program that Respondent D has attended has a positive effect on her personal and professional life. Being one of the few women leaders in a profession where it is dominated by men is not an easy task. But the program has made her see a different side to being a “woman in a man’s world” which has made her realize the advantages and grab the opportunity.</p> <p>For Respondent D, the factors that would affect the coaching program is the client’s commitment and availability. The executive coach is always available because it is his/her job but the client can renege on the scheduled session. Also the leaders would have a lot of responsibilities.</p> <p>There are a lot of changes in Respondent D after the program. One of which is the increased confidence on herself and her capability as a leader. Another one is a higher sense of empathy towards other people which earned her a closer relationship with her team members and subordinates.</p>
E	<p>Respondent E’s coach is experienced in management of difficult situations. There are so much that Respondent E can learn from his coach. Even if the coach is experienced and knowledgeable, Respondent E’s coach still takes the time to recognize his client’s own expertise and boost up his confidence. That is what he admires about him. He expects that more things will be learned from his coach that would help him in his job as a manager of rice market.</p> <p>Things that changed for Respondent E is his awareness of himself and his teammates have heightened</p>

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study, through a descriptive case study, was to explore and describe the impact of executive coaching on five executives in a large multinational telecommunications company. The study showed how the executive coaching experience impacted the executives from their perspectives.

The research question for this study of executive coaching was what is the impact of executive coaching from the perspective of the executive leader in a multinational telecommunications organization?" The research question framed three secondary questions about the impact of executive

coaching. These were: what has been your experience with the executive coaching process?; what outcomes have been achieved as a result of your participation in the executive coaching program?; and what do you consider the most important benefits of executive coaching?. This study has significance for the fields of human performance improvement and executive coaching. One of the most discussed topics in human performance improvement and human resource development is how to prove the impact of a human resource development intervention on individual and organizational problems (Swanson & Holton, 1997). This study provides information on the impact of coaching on individual and organizational performance and provides information useful for the organization, the executive, and the executive coach. This information assesses whether the goals and outcomes for the coaching program are achieved and whether or not the coaching process has served the executive. Developing data about the impact of executive coaching in a study such as the present study and developing a body of research is vital for the executive coaching profession to mature as a profession and will help to shape the future of executive coaching. The purpose of this study of executive coaching was to explore and describe the impact of executive coaching on a group of corporate leaders in a large multinational telecommunications company. This study is the first study of its kind to describe the impact of executive coaching as experienced and described by the participants. The research question for the present study was "what is the impact of executive coaching from the perspective of the executive leader in a multinational telecommunications organization?"

REFERENCES

- [1] Cummings, T. G., & Worley, C. G. (2009). *Organization Development and Change*. 9th Ed. Mason, OH: South-Western.
- [2] Macmillandictionary.com. (2018). executive (noun) definition and synonyms | Macmillan Dictionary.
- [3] Cashman, K. (2003). Transformational coaching. *Executive Excellence*, 20(11), 11-12.
- [4] Corporate therapy: having an executive coach is all the rage. Retrieved December 17, 2003, from http://www.economist.com/research/articlesBySubject/printer/Friendly.cfm?Stroy_ID=22
- [5] Creswell, J.W. (2003). *Research design qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (2ntied.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.
- [6] Daloisio, T., & Firestone, M. (1983). A case study in applying adult learning theory in developing managers. *Training and Development Journal*, 37 (2), 73-79.
- [7] Ennis, S. (2002). *Initiating executive coaching in your organization*. Executive coaching (pp. 157-184) Palo Alto, CA.: Davies Black.
- [8] Kerpan, S. (2002). Personal coaches go beyond the workplace. *Canadian HR Reporter*, 75(10), 8.
- [9] Knowles, M. (2003). *Andragogy*. Retrieved March 5, 2003, from <http://tip.psychology.org/Knowles.html>.
- [10] Kooncd. R. (1994). One on one. *Training and Development*. 48(2), 34-40.
- [11] LaBonte, T. J. (2001). *Building a new performance vision*. Alexandria, VA: ASTD.
- [12] Long, J. (2003). Harness the power of coaching. *Info-line*, 70(31), 1-16.
- [13] Masciarcelli, J. P. (1999). Less lonely at the top. *Management Review*, 55(4), 58-61.
- [14] Merriam, S. B., (2001). *The new update on adult learning*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.
- [15] Saumya Verma, Ashish Kumar Sharma, Neetu Sharma, Animesh Jain (2017) An Imperative Need for Green Pesticides: A Review. *International Journal of Pharmacy Research & Technology*, 7 (1), 12-17.
- [16] Niemes, J. (2002). Discovering the value of executive coaching as a business transformational tool. *Journal of Organizational Excellence*, 27(4), 61-69.
- [17] Rblhwcll, W. J., Hohne, C.K. & King, S. B. (2000). *Human performance improvement*.
- [18] Williams, K., Kiel, F., Doyle, M., & Sinagra, L. (2002). *Breaking the boundaries*. Executive coaching. Palo Alto, CA: Davies-Black.
- [19] Edraki, M., Haghshenas, M., Yektatalab, S., Dehghani, S.M., Haghpanah, S. "The effect of educational-psychological interventions on the resilience of the mothers of 1-to-3-year-old children with chronic liver disease leading to cirrhosis (2018)", *International Journal of Pharmaceutical Research*, 10 (2), pp. 222-226.
- [20] Wood, C.M. (2002). Want to be a star performer? Hire a coach. *CEP Magazine*, April, 2002, 90-93.
- [21] Yin, R. K. (2003). *Case study research designs and methods* (3rd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.