

Identifying the Challenges of Cambodian Rice Market: Descriptive Research based on Market Trade and Economics

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Abstract: This research paper attempts to provide solution to challenges faced in rice market in Cambodia. Executives of the Cambodian Rice Market are very open for adult learning in order for them to improve their performance in the business. 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. As a new profession, executive coaching has a lot of potentials in different areas of endeavor.

Keywords: Adult Learning, Rice Market, Cambodia Commerce, Executive Learning.

INTRODUCTION

In the Kingdom of Cambodia, rice is the most important crop. It is the staple food and the dominating crop in agriculture which contributes to around 26% of the GDP (MAFF 2017). It is estimated that rice production, processing and market employ around 3 million of the 15 million population. Paddy production occupies around 75% of the cultivated land and rice contributes around 15% of the total agricultural value added (IFC 2015).

The definition and distinction of the executive profession as different from others, was done in a summit in 2002 in the International Executive Coaching Summit which is held yearly for that particular purpose. In the summit, the participants share best practices in coaching, identify issues, dilemmas, and challenges in the practice of executive coaching and their clients, and the future directions of executive coaching profession (Sanson, Arnod-Thomas & Guilday, 2003). In these summits, more research is needed to improve and justify executive coaching effectiveness.

Because it is a new profession, it is expected that its progression is faster than research studies on it. However, in order for it to develop into a more established profession, more rigorous studies and credible research must be done. The growth of executive coaching, accordingly, is proof in itself that it is effective. However, more thorough analysis of executive coaching is needed (Sanson, Arnod-Thomas & Guilday, 2003). As such, it is also very important to analyse executive coaching in specific application such as rice import and export because the focus is more specific and straightforward, therefore, data gathering is lesser ubiquitous.

BACKGROUND OF THE STUDY

Cambodian rice sector has gradually transformed the production quality and processing standard, which is accepted by international buyers. The transformation of the rice sector is driven by a number of factors including: 1) a more strategic, coordinated and export focus approach to the industry's development; 2) Improved and modernized milling capacity; 3) A domestic policy that opens door to access the international market; and 4) Generalized Preferential System (GSP) advantage to export to EU without tariff, (Cambodia CTIS 2014-2018).

In the 1980s, business environments are very complex, uncertain, and challenging because of industry consolidation, start of globalization, implementation of information systems and the anxiety of

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performance expectations in an uncertain global economy with pressure from strict analysts at the time of information explosion (Verlander, 1999).

The factors that drive present and future success of an organization include leadership development, strategy implementation, and key contributor development attraction and retention. Among these factors, leadership development is the most significant in the organization because the leader's role and performance are on their peak, there is better communication, lesser disorder, and constant organizational learning is expected in the company leading to better corporate performance. In these strategic areas, executive coaching is a key resource to get the expected outcome (Smith & Sandstrom, 1999).

PROBLEM STATEMENT

Critical areas that need to be focused on in rice import and export are: cost development, risk management, and supplier relationship questions. Managers also need mentoring in building the world class procurement and supply chain organizations because of the trend of globalization at present. In such case, there is a need to build business confidence and follow the strategic development approach. There is a need to focus on intensive theoretical knowledge & practical tools from procurement practitioner, challenges & dilemmas of procurement and rice market, and planning and practicing negotiations. These areas can be developed through executive coaching aside from improvement in career and leadership for procurement and supply chain professionals. This way, the study can be made a basis for the researchers to develop procedures and more effective strategies for executive coaches to assist rice import and export leadership development in an improved way.

Research Questions

The main question being answered by the study is:

1. What are the most imperative aspects of the adult learning through coaching program for the advanced benefit of the rice import and export managers?
2. What are the skills of rice import and export managers with adult learning through coaching?
3. What are the explicit advanced aftermaths accomplished by rice import and export managers with the adult learning through the coaching process?

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The best method for giving rewarding and complex points of interest of a significant event is the descriptive case study. and was the technique used to in considering impact of executive coaching. The final documentation will showcase the details of each case considered in the study. The interpretations established eleven (11) themes with two (2) subthemes that were utilized to portray and clarify the executive coaching process and the effect of the coaching procedure on executives according to their perspectives.

Although the executive coaching is comparatively new in the business world as a strategy for the development of leadership for effective individual performance, it is steadily emerging as a prominent function because more organizations are utilizing this program with very good benefits realized. The exploration of the impact of executive coaching on leadership development on the leader's own perspective gives an essential contribution to the development of the human capital and specifically to the executive coaching profession by providing initial basis for further studies and development of strategies. The leaders' perspectives and points of view are invaluable in the decision making processes in the strategic planning areas of an organization. This study will also provide new information into the ever expanding knowledge base on executive coaching profession that are valuable to a coaching practitioner. For the organization, the information can be a basis for strategy planning on staff and leadership development. For the individual coaching practitioner, it may help to improve on their coaching skills.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The Royal Government of Cambodia issued a sub-decree on contract farming in 2011 to facilitate farmers and private companies. However, the farming agreement seems inactive as it is quite new in Cambodia. Until 2014, there are few millers/exporters started to implement their contract farming with agriculture cooperatives (ACs) in Preah Vihear province for organic rice and the implementation of contract farming for SRP has just started in 2017. As of this writing, there are limited published researches on adult learning through coaching even when organizations are employing coaches in their human resource development process. Although the number of organizations using executive coaching

has exponentially increased because of the benefits it provides, there have been just a few studies that describe the processes, standards and impacts it has on the executive. However, there are authors dedicated to this topic such as Hodgetts (2002) who stated that with the correct reasons and with capable practitioners, the profession of executive coaching can effect significant and sustainable benefits for the leader thus benefiting also the organization. In 1980, Knowles made 4 assumptions about the characteristics of adult learners (andragogy) that are different from the assumptions about child learners (pedagogy). In 1984, Knowles added the 5th assumption. Knowles suggested 4 principles in 1984 that are applied to adult learning:

1. Adults need to be involved in the planning and evaluation of their instruction.
2. Experience (including mistakes) provides the basis for the learning activities.
3. Adults are most interested in learning subjects that have immediate relevance and impact to their job or personal life.
4. Adult learning is problem-centered rather than content-oriented (Kearsley, 2010)

Bonnici (2018) asserted that executive coaches and their client work together in step-by-step manner. The andragogic relationship would bring about an increased depth of empathy, an enhanced self-management, and a greater self-understanding. Basic skills associated with emotional intelligence are developed through this coaching program. The following are further explanations about the benefits tabulated in the above table. Self-awareness is one target of executive coaching. One of the catalysts by which growth occurs is self-awareness, so it is a good reason to target this. Knowing one's self, knowing what certain situations, certain people, thoughts or ideas would trigger emotions within one would broaden a person's emotional intelligence. Emotional intelligence would lead people to regulate and manage their feelings resulting to better and deeper relationship with the self and as a result, with other people.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Gall, Gall, and Borg (2002) characterize qualitative research as a dominant methodology to discover meanings and interpretations by studying cases intensively in natural settings and by subjecting the resulting data to analytic induction. They further explain that one of the main characteristics of qualitative research is its focus on the intensive study of specific instances that are cases of a phenomenon. For this reason, qualitative research is sometimes called case study research.

CASE STUDY RESEARCH

Soy (1996) describes case study methodology as a research method, which is best, used to discover themes and relationships and is a method which is most able to describe real life, contemporary, and human situations. As a result, the case study results can relate directly to the common reader's everyday experience and facilitate an understanding of complex real-life. For the most part, the cases of interest in education and social service are people and programs. Each one is similar to other persons and programs in many ways and unique in many ways. We are interested in them for both their uniqueness and commonality. We seek to understand them. We would like to hear their stories. (p. 1)

Descriptive Case Study

Researchers use multiple methods and approaches to conduct case studies. They generally do case studies for one of three purposes: to produce detailed descriptions of a phenomenon, to develop explanations of it, or to evaluate the phenomenon. Yin (2003) suggests that a more appropriate view of research would be pluralistic. Each type of research strategy could be used for all three purposes: exploratory, descriptive, and explanatory. Schell (1992) reports that descriptive case studies may be exploratory if relatively little research has been done in the area.

Data Collection Procedures

Swanson and Holton (1997) support the practice of research triangulation because they also report that multiple data collection methods are often used to confirm or corroborate findings, get overlooked information, supplement data already collected, and offset the shortcomings of any given method. This study of executive coaching used data and methods triangulation. Gall, Gall and Borg (2002) report that questionnaires are used to collect data about phenomena that is not directly observable such as inner experiences, opinions, values, and interests. Questionnaires are documents, which ask the same questions of all individuals in the sample and where respondents record a written response to each questionnaire item. Creswell (2003) reports questionnaire design provides a quantitative or numeric description of

trends, attitudes, or opinions of a sample. The format for the closed ended questions for the questionnaire was a continuum which asked for extent of agreement from strongly agrees, agree, disagree and strongly disagree responses to statements about the impact of executive coaching. Assigned points were four for strongly agree to one for a strongly disagree (See Appendix B for the questionnaire). This was the chosen format for the closed ended questions because the organization used this type of display for gathering feedback information from coaching participants about their coach and their coaching experiences. The approach to follow the format currently used by the organization also took into consideration the question of the questionnaire validity. Much of the criteria in the questionnaire are criteria that are currently being measured by the organization. The questionnaire designed for the study was reviewed and approved by the coaching coordinator before it was administered.

DATA ANALYSIS

Participants	Summary Statement
A	<p>Benefits that Respondent A acquired are improved understanding of himself, his subordinates and the community that his unit is responsible for. He also got the benefit of learning new technologies that are useful to his profession. The most important benefit for Respondent A is coming into terms with himself, knowing what makes him tick, his strengths and weaknesses, and how to make his weaknesses an advantage or transformed to strength.</p> <p>Respondent A was also surprised to enjoy the program with the coach. He has not expected to like the coaching program but he did and it is all because of the coach. He felt that the experience has made him realize that in every situation, a second look or a second chance can make one realize that something is worthwhile when at first it doesn't seem so. Respondent A gets easily frustrated with others and has a hair-trigger temper. The program has a very good exercise that has taught him to be more patient and be more in control of his emotions and temper. The program has also taught him to be flexible with ideas and not just follow a narrow tunnel of idea.</p> <p>Several people have benefited and will benefit in this program aside from the participant. His subordinates will benefit from a better, improved leader, his superiors will benefit from an improved worker, and the whole unit will also improve from the new knowledge and skills acquired. A better team has been born of the andragogical program that he has participated in.</p>
B	<p>The nature of Respondent B's work environment is fast-paced and full of crises since the time he took over the leadership of the unit. But the program has equipped him with new behaviors and skills even just at the start of the program. The coach has made him feel that someone has his back whenever he feels inadequate and insecure in his position through constant advice and the regular and extra sessions. This has made him trust his coach very much with vital leadership activities. He was able to assert his position and stopped being afraid and apprehensive about what he has to do. The most important benefit he has so far gotten from the training is increased confidence in himself.</p> <p>Aside from himself Respondent B considered his subordinates equally benefited from the andragogical experience. They have more confidence and belief in him as a leader and now seek him out for help, unlike before the program when his team would ask other units' leaders for advice and help. Now Respondent B's subordinates are empowered and are starting to trust him.</p>
C	<p>Respondent C outlined the benefits he has acquired from the andragogy program. First, he has identified his strengths and weaknesses and what he is going to do about it. From these strengths and weaknesses, he was able to develop goals. He has gotten honest feedback that will lead to leadership improvement that he will never get from any of his subordinates. He was able to improve his relationship with subordinates and also with his family. The coach also helped him with balancing his work-life situation so that they are able to make his life a win-win situation.</p> <p>The best benefit for Respondent C is that he was able to identify what he is really good at and able to capitalize on that in his job. Meanwhile he also was able to know what he isn't good at and improve on it. And most of all, things that he doesn't need are deprioritized so he can focus on what is needed in his job.</p> <p>The people who benefited from the andragogy experience are himself, his team members and subordinates, his family and friends, and also his superiors who are expecting improved skills from him to ease their own burden. His family and friends were beneficiaries of his training program because a healthy and happy family and friends will make him happy and his work will improve as a result of this.</p>
D	<p>The benefits for Respondent D is the self-awareness that she developed, improvement of her people skills, and understanding gender issues in leadership. The most important of all these is her self-awareness and the increase in her confidence as a "woman in a man's world". She has more drive now to lead her team.</p> <p>Respondent C considered herself and her team as the greatest beneficiaries of the training. Together, she and her team now take time to explore how they are able to dealing with situations. She has learned to listen to her members and get very good opinions which resulted to more participation and confidence among her team. She has learned to trust them and appreciate their talents and specialties. In turn, her members trust her and learn from her as she also learn from them.</p>
E	<p>So far, Respondent E has been working on understanding himself, what makes him tick and what makes him happy. He is discovering his interests which during the start of his career, has been shoved aside to learn skills and knowledge that he considered helpful in building up his career. For now, he is still anticipating other benefits and do not really know what is the best yet. Currently, the coach is observing his day to day interaction with his team and yet to get the feedback. He is also working on communications skills and benchmarking.</p> <p>At the moment, Respondent E is the beneficiary of the andragogy training through coaching. Now, he has a goal and he intends to satisfy that goal with the help of his coach.</p>

Each of the participants were considered a single case. So each participant will be analyzed as a single case. From the transcribed responses, a summary statement for each case is developed. Each section of the interview for every participant has a summary statement. These summary statements will be cross analyzed and compiled to generate a second data source which will be compared with the base theory and extract the answer from these.

The participants are given back their summaries to read and verify to ensure the accuracy and completeness of the analysis. During this practice, two of the participants requested to modify some of their statements and replaced with clearer statements to avoid misunderstanding.

CONCLUSION

The need for executive coaching has grown in response to the changing and complex business environments which organizations face. In preparing executives to meet these business challenges, executive coaching has emerged as a successful leadership development intervention. Morgan, Harkins, and Goldsmith (2005) report that companies with stronger leadership practices out perform their industry peers in long-term measures of both financial growth and financial return. One practice or intervention which specifically separated the top companies from the others is the use of executive coaching.

Meeting this need, executive coaching as a profession is recognized as one of the fastest growing. It is a new and emerging field in human performance improvement. Yet with the popularity of executive coaching on the rise, the study of executive coaching is just beginning. In order to fill a gap in the existing research into executive coaching, this study was conducted. It provided a thick description of the impact of executive coaching on the executive leader from the perspective of the executive leader. This present study is the first study of its kind to describe the impact of executive coaching as experienced and described by the participants.

Two problems influenced the design of the present study. These issues were: executive coaching is a new profession and the practice of executive coaching has accelerated ahead of rigorous study into it. The study of executive coaching is just beginning and the need for academic research to substantiate the effectiveness of the process is vital to the continuing development and credibility of the executive coaching profession.

There is little published academic research study which describes the experience of executive coaching and what impact executive coaching has on the executives from their perspectives. A goal for the present study was to fill a gap in the current literature on the impact of executive coaching.

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