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Human resource management practices in international sebat educational schools

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Abstract

There is a very important role in human resource management practices in educational institutions. In this study, human resource management practices of International SEBAT Educational Schools (ISES) which is one of the important educational institutions in Turkey and Kyrgyzstan, will be examined. The purpose of this study was to investigate the practices of human resource management in the International Sebat Education Institutions. The research was carried out in International Sebat Education Institutions in Kyrgyzstan, with the managers by the use of in- depth interview method. In addition, information was obtained from the primary sources. In the first years of the organizations, said to be having the dominant ethnocentric policies. To do this, adequate technical and managerial knowledge of managers and teachers from Turkey had to be chosen. In the following years, Bishkek, Osh and Issyk-Kol schools administrators will be preferred in Kyrgyzstan. For this reason, polycentric policies began to be implemented. International SEBAT Educational Schools (ISES) periodically organizes seminars and meetings and teaching the Kyrgyz, English and Russian for the Turkish teachers and administrators. Successful teachers and students are rewarded with gifts and appreciation. If they are under the overall achievement levels, their lack of performance is being resolved by the consultations of the managers. In a globalized world, International Sebat Education Institutions are working efficiently, regardless of language, religion and ethnic discrimination. International Sebat Education Institutions are still investing in human resources in spite of the some deficiencies and were observed to have implemented successful policies.

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1. Introduction:

The resulting impact of globalization on companies is international companies, at the result of demonstration of international orientation in their activities. International companies which are growing in numbers, are becoming an increasingly decisive force in the world economy, requires differences in human resource management practices in their bodies. Especially, operating in many countries and having employees from different countries, required to show a method of global approach in order to successfully accomplish the management of human resources in international companies.

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In the first part of this study, international human resource management and its functions have been analyzed, in the second part, by specifying the history, policies, mission and vision of International Sebati Educational Institutions operating in the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, are considered the human resources management practices of Sebati Educational Institutions.

2. The functions of human resources management in international companies

Human resource functions in international companies carried out eight essential activities: recruitment, training and development, performance appraisal, employee attitudes and motivation, compensation management, career management, employee and employer relations. International companies must have qualified staff to ensure success in their own countries and abroad. The success of today's large companies depends on choosing the appropriate employees for the company, run the selected employee to appropriate place, and provide their individual and organizational needs (Özalp, 2001). It is observed that international companies use four different applied methods to provide human resources. These are: ethnocentrism, polycentrism, geocentrism and regiocentrism. Assignment of administration of international companies to their subsidiaries and their home organizations from home country is ethnocentrism. As choosing the host country and third-country sources, the following issues should be considered: Test method, long-term and including their wives interviews, adaptation to cultural change, being healthy aspects of mental and physical, age, experience and education, administrator candidates' willingness to be appointed to foreign country, the ability of learning a foreign language quickly, wives and other family factors, leadership skills, communication skills, diplomatic skills, having sufficient technical knowledge and skills and managerial skills (Sherman and others, 1996).

The Factors to be Successful at Work Environment: Firstly, the selection of personnel in international company, should identify the main skills required for the job. After this, company must determine the required skills and abilities of a manager to work in a foreign place and carry out the task effectively. These include the features such as: the manager's ability to adapt to cultural change, ability to speak the local language, all the physical and emotional health, self-reliance and independence, degree of independence and experience, and education level. Obviously, the local personnel can cater these needs better than the home and third country personnel (Griffin and Putsay, 1999). Tests are used to select staff from abroad. However, the most preferred method is interviews. Managers are selected by evaluating the interview with performance level, the reference of top managers and employees of the same level. The manager's family can also be called to the meeting (Yüksel, 1999). The success factors of external assignment in international companies are listed as personal harmony, harmony with the others, the detection capability, cultural difficulties (Hill, 2003).

Education about the cultural, religious, social, legal, language and career subjects can be useful for managers which are on duty abroad (Sherman and the others, 1996:706). If the home country citizen-managers, try to take decisions according to their own cultural dimensions and implement them, they would not be able to increase the efficiency of employees and provide compliance of them (Fanburn and Tchy, 1984:408). Business awards and incentives which are used for the motivation of employees may differ from country to country. Because of the incentives which are used to motivate employees in any country, provide obtaining successful results in that country, but same results can not be taken when the same incentives used for another country citizens. Although financial returns and advancement at career are fundamental motivating elements for the home country -citizen managers, (Welch, 2003) meeting the expectations of the home country -citizen managers is the other elements as well (Ünal, 2008).

The situation is somewhat more complicated in international companies which may interact with different cultures. For example, the valuation of criteria such as different cultures and personal communication skills, sensitivity to international norms and values, understanding the differences in customer relations and adaptation to a foreign environment easily will affect the valuation of the international company's performance (Bayraktaroğlu, 2003). One of the most important problems related to individuals which undertake a foreign task is quite difficult of the valuation of their performance. Top managers in the home country and in the host country have mostly a different understanding about employees' performance and they may be in different expectations about the requirements of a good performance. Most of the time, local managers are insufficient to accurately metering, valuation of abroad experiences, and their contributions to the organization. Geographical distance creates serious

communication problems between the staff which undertake a foreign task and home country managers (Sherman and others, 1996:708). Local conditions and cultural differences must be analysed carefully in the performance evaluation of host country and third-country citizens (Blacks and Gregersen, 1992).

The most complex function of the human resources functions of international companies is pricing. Pricing policies of home country and the host country are different. Two subjects are getting important in payment applications of any international companies. First one is the harmonization of different economic conditions of countries and different national payment applications. The other issue is, how the manager on duty outside the country will be charged (Hill, 2003). The difficulty of transnational comparative wage determination arises usually due to the reasons of differences of purchasing power, the presence of non-wage subsidies, state-provided services, and different lifestyles. For these reasons, companies try to establish and to implement payment systems that are easy to implement, fair and can be understood by everyone (Yüksel, 2000:259-262).

3. Human resources management practices in International Sebati Education Institutions (ISES)

The history, mission, vision, values and human sources managements of the International Sebati Education Institutions that is functioning in Kyrgyzstan Republic, the light of explanations above, are being analysed in this part.

The History: The International Sebati Education Institution was founded by the Kyrgyzstan Republic's Ministry of Education and ISES Education Institution according to a treaty among them. Without having any commercial purpose, ISES carries on its function by considering Kyrgyzstan Republic's laws, constitution, the International Child Rights Agreement and Kyrgyzstan Republic's Ministry of Justice's mission. Also, Education activities are being carried according to 'XXI. Century Staff' and 'Cetkinchek' State Programs declared by the president of Kyrgyzstan Republic. Today, International Sebati Education Institution is formed from fourteen International High Schools, International Atatürk-Alatoo University, International Silk Road School, 'Secom' Language and Computer Center and the dormitories in Osh and Bishkek cities.

Mission: ISES provides amenities in the world standarts in the field of education to the Kyrgyz Youth. *Vision:* To educate them as humans who protect and improve their national, moral, humanitarian, and cultural values, love their families and country and try to make it almighty, know their duties and responsibilities to human rights and Kyrgyzstan Republic and make them their life-styles.

Values: ISES specified its fundemantal values as quality, modernity, reliability, originality, teamwork, leadership, and success.

Policy: ISES's policy is to provide the students benefit from the educational services completely to reach their target success. Quality is the basic responsibility for each one working in the institution. This responsibility is carried out in a supportive and stimulating learning environment which stimulate innovation in organizations, which employees are provided opportunities to improve and renewal themselves. For the continuous improvement of quality, it is given great importance to research original designs and best practices, and offer service of teachers, students and parents as soon as possible. ISES, by setting the quality objectives on the basis of school-wide and units, updates them by re-examining in the frame of the "*continuous improvement*" philosophy every year

Organizational Structure and General Management Approach: in USEK's institutions, it is observed that instead of vertical management structures, there are matrix management structures. Both in the ISES's top management and management in the institutions, the decision of managers are important as well as the decisions of heads of the branch meeting. Considering international human resource practices in ISES, as an international educational institution, the following assessments can be made: Since ISES's foundation, there has been a quantitative and qualitative increase in the number of teachers. The Human Resource practices in ISES foundation has switched from time-varying and growing. ISES that has determined its fundamental values as quality, modernity, reliability, originality, teamwork, leadership, and success, does not discriminate according to the culture and geography of the teachers. ISES, at the same time, gives maximum importance to the values and attitudes of teachers. Human resources in ISES consist of top management, school principals, teachers and the other employees who make catering, cleaning, security and other personnel services.

Staffing Policies: ISES employed ethnocentric policies in its early years (1992-1994). This is because, in the initial development period, to minimize the risks in the phase of establishment, ISES had to choose managers and

teachers, who have sufficient technical and managerial knowledge, from Turkey. In this way, ISES had been able to compose its education systems more easily in its new institutions, and able to provide quality-control and coordination. As a result of ISES's implemented ethnocentric policies at the first step to the Kyrgyz Republic, some problems were encountered such as: the use of Kyrgyz and Russian languages which are spoken in Kyrgyz Republic, the adaptation of managers and teachers to socio-economic structure of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan. After the ISES's initial foundation, by choosing Kyrgyz headmasters for the school management in the central cities of Bishkek, Osh and Issyk-Kol, ISES had began to implement polycentric policies partly. The difficulties in understanding of formal procedures brought by the Ministry of National Education of the Republic of Kyrgyzstan, in application and documentation of them have been effective in application of this polycentric implementation of policies. ISES had brought its local Kyrgyz managers and school headmasters to Turkey within the short period of time and these staff had made excursions to public and private educational institutions in Turkey in the legal framework permissions. These school excursions had been provided the opportunity to analyse the best sides of Turkish Education System and Kyrgyz Education System. In addition, local Turkish and Russian speaking secretaries and interpreters had been assigned in ISES's institutions to help staff from Turkey and to help their problems such as health care, passport and other official procedures. ISES, provided they have sufficient expertise and less costly, implements also geocentric policies by adding middle managers, teachers and academics from third countries as Kazakhstan, India, the Philippines, Russia to its staff in Bishkek Silk Road International School and International Ataturk Alatoo Univeristy. This type of third-country personnel's costs maybe a bit more expensive than the local Kyrgyz staff but may be less expensive than the Turkish staff. ISES provides 50% of the personnel in teacher staff and school managements from local human sources, sometimes from its successful graduates who were graduated from Education and Business Administration Faculties of universities in the world.

Education and Development: ISES provides the staff its necessary language education in order to use of English and local spoken languages such as Kyrgyz and Russian languages. It is observed that communication and social relations with students' parents and Kyrgyz public in the local languages is more efficient in Kyrgyzstan. ISES informs its managers and its teachers from Turkey and from the other third countries by giving seminars about the culture, riches of civilization, customs and traditions of Kyrgyzstan, Manas and the seven advices of Manas that takes important place in Kyrgyz culture. It has been observed that these seminar studies are effective in the process of the foreign staff's cultural adaptation. ISES provides saving of the quality by supporting with periodic seminars and branch meetings to its teachers and managers. ISES supports both the staff's personel study programs and their academic career programs in its institutions. ISES management can carry out flexible study hours for the staff by talking with this kind of staff.

Teachers' Motivation: Because building the cooperation among the staff is a state of art, serious competition in the working environment of teachers is not observed in ISES's institutions. Following success performances of other state and private educational institutions (eg, the success at science and sports Olympiads in both national and international areas, degrees of success at university entrance exam), it is observed that the continuous improvement (Kaizen) is adopted as a basic principle. The most motivating factor of educational staff in ISES's institutions is parents' positive feedbacks. ISES's customers are current and future students' parents. Respect plays important role in the ISES's organizational culture. At the same time, to be remembered by your friend is a valuable sense in ISES's organizational atmosphere. It is a real story in ISES that one of the top managers knows the names of old and new teachers, names of their cities, names of their universities graduated from and their graduation dates. Although five or ten years passed, when coming across with him, he does not forget all information of the staff. Money is not important value for teachers' motivation in ISES. Maybe salary is one of the top reasons of host country teachers work preferences. Giving importance to their cultural values is more effective for the teachers' motivation in ISES. The high level of teachers' desire to achieve success can be observed as well.

Performance Evaluation: The quality is the goal for ISES and also it is a worth that is always wanted to be saved. Both students and branch teachers and each school are criticized by standart evaluations that are carried out at the end of every education quarter term. The results in the quarter turn are evaluated by top management and each branch group chairman. Successful teachers and students are rewarded with gifts and appreciation. Students and teachers who are under the overall achievement are negotiated by the school headmasters and can be tried to find out the reasons of their performance deficiency and solve them. Combining quarterly performance assessments, annual

critics are made and by this way, the successful students, teachers and school headmasters of the year are determined.

Compensation Management: Pricing policy in ISES is comprised by taking account the base rate of payment of the host country, the teachers' life standarts in their home countries and their weekly working hours.

4. Result

The complexity of the work and activities of international education have been increasing. Because the international schools operate in many countries, these schools have been exposed to more risk. However, because of the social, political, socio-cultural factors in the local country, the necessity of the introduction of different approaches have appeared. The presence of successful practices in human resources can be observed with some of the deficiencies in ISES that invests both on human and education. The most important sources of international schools, which carry them into the future, are the present-day teachers and managers. Considering the socio-economic situation of the last few years in the host country, it is observed that ISES keep its existing studies and its successful performance. It is an undeniable fact that ISES owes this to its successful human resources management.

As a result, the school manager should determine the vision, mission and objectives of his/her educational institution's and give effort to turn them into action; should adopt democratic management and should prove that with his management practices; should respect the beliefs, cultural and traditional values of the staff; should determine the target mass; should believe that being different is an important advantage every time; should adopt the philosophy of Total Quality in his/her studies; should know new educational methods and techniques; should train the staff about developing their technological tools use ability, foreign language, etc.; should keep at the forefront the advice instead of fear, the award instead of punishment in management practices; should give importance to "collective mind" of teachers in studies of school meetings, should reward successful staff, should provide the best working conditions for the staff, should have the motivating incentive policy for students; should organize club activities (art, sports, music, etc.) to improve students' personal skills; should plan traditional activities in order to strengthen togetherness of teacher - student - the family and finally should be constantly open to innovations as Hz. Rumi said: *'We always say the new things. Who would be bored from us?'*

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