Organizational Culture and Human Resources’ Training and Development – A study about the McDonald’s Hamburger University

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ABSTRACT

This study is a conceptual paper about the relationship between Organizational Culture and Human Resources’ Training and Development in McDonald’s. Based on information about this organization found in articles, web sites and other media content, and having in consideration the conceptions of some experts in Organizational Psychology, we tried to know this organization’s culture focusing on its shared values, taking also into consideration the influence of different countries’ national culture. We also explored the importance that McDonald’s gives to training and development, so that we could understand the dynamic between these two main themes. We could understand that it’s possible to find always the same restaurant in different parts of the world because of the mutual influence between Organizational Culture and Human Resource’s Training and Development that exists in this organization. The creation of the Hamburger University is a prime example of the power that the organizational culture has in McDonald’s training, and the last one is also recognized as a major factor for the full ownership and identification of their Human Resources with McDonald’s Culture. We could conclude that the Training given at Hamburger University is a way of developing this organization’s culture.

I. INTRODUCTION

McDonald’s is known worldwide as a leader in the fast food industry. There are over 30 000 restaurants in more than 120 countries and it is known that this enormous expansion has an important franchising system supporting it. It became an interesting subject for the authors to understand how the McDonald’s standardization could be so successfully extended to the most different parts of the world. The brand’s standardization that the franchisee receives is one of its advantages, but this is also a problem when the organization wants to expand globally. Reaching a balance is particularly challenging in far-away countries, that are culturally different. For this reason, it becomes relevant to understand how this particular franchise can be adapted to the new cultural environment without loosing its image and its familiar layout (Risner, 2001).

Organizational culture is a main subject in every organization’s life, as it constrains the human resources’ practices and these should take the first one into consideration, as a way of not being ineffective. On the other hand, the human resources’ practices can create, shape or make the organizational culture stronger (Nunes & Vala, 2007).

Having McDonalds as our Organizational focus, we tried to understand how the Organizational Culture is, the Human Resource’s Training and Development can be defined and what’s the relationship between them.

II. RESEARCH QUESTION

What is the relationship between McDonald’s Organizational Culture and Human Resources’ Training and Development, so that we can find a solid standardization of this organization in so many parts of the world?

III. METHOD

We collected an extensive information about the McDonald’s, found in scientific articles, web pages and other media content such as videos. Based also on theories about Organizational Culture and Human Resources’ Training and Development we gathered all the data together and we’ve developed a way of looking into the McDonald’s phenomena.

IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

We analyzed the information collected about McDonald’s having in mind the theoretical conceptions mentioned before.

1. Which are McDonald’s Organizational Values?

In what concerns to Organizational Culture, we found, that the work in McDonald’s is globally uniform and standardized and is also guided through some rules with the goal to keep 4 main values

Quality
Service
Cleanliness
Value

Values that were defined by Ray Kroc in the 50s and still define McDonald’s Organizational Culture today.

If I had a brick for every time I’ve repeated the phrase Quality, Service, Cleanliness and Value, I think it probably be able to bridge the Atlantic Ocean with them (Ray Kroc)

Importance of the founder’s philosophy in the Organizational Culture

2. How is Human Resources’ Training and Development at McDonald’s?

In what concerns to Human Resources’ Training and Development, we consider the Hamburger University as a prime example of what is done in McDonald’s in this organizational field.

Hamburger U. is the center of excellence that ensures that the standards of quality, service value and cleanliness are maintained here and around the world.

(Diana Thomas, H.U.)

The Hamburger University is a way to communicate and develop the organizational values that were defined years ago by Ray Kroc. The history of McDonald’s, his founder’s principles, are subjects that are upheld during the training sessions. Despite he has passed away, he still lives in Hamburger University.

V. CONCLUSIONS

McDonald’s success can be explained by the strong and mutual relationship that exists between Organizational Culture and Human Resources’ Training and Development. The power of the brand, the unique feelings and knowledge that we associate to this organization can be explained by this solid structure of Organizational Culture. McDonald’s is the same place for us over the years and in every country that we go. We believe that the Ray Kroc’s foundations and the four values that he defend so many times are one of the reasons that explain this success. The Training and Development work as an essential way to communicate this Culture through all the restaurants and worldwide.

VI. REFERENCES

Risner, M. (2001). Successful fast-food franchising in Brazil and the role of culture: four cases. A thesis presented to the graduate school of the university of Florida in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of master of arts, University of Florida;