Comparative Human Resource Management

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Flash Exercise
three questions

• Who is living or has lived in a foreign country?

• Who can speak two or more languages (to at least “get by” level)?

• Who has non-academic work experience?
Outline (perhaps...)

1. Crossroads – taking the wrong road?
2. The wider picture: Comparative HRM
3. Explanations (culture and institutions)
4. Globalisation/convergence
5. Implications/discussion
1a. Crossroads

The seminal texts (1984)
Where we went
Why that is the wrong road
Context – and national context
Comparative HRM
1b. Fombrun et al 1984

1. Crossroads – taking the wrong road?
The Harvard Approach

**Stakeholder Interests**
- Shareholders
- Management
- Employee groups
- Government
- Community
- Unions

**Situational Factors**
- Workforce characteristics
- Business strategy and conditions
- Management philosophy
- Labor market
- Unions
- Task technology
- Laws and societal values

**HRM Policy Choices**
- Employee influence
- Human resource flow
- Reward systems
- Work systems

**HR Outcomes**
- Commitment
- Competence
- Congruence
- Cost effectiveness

**Long-term Consequences**
- Individual well-being
- Organizational effectiveness
- Societal well-being

Source: Beer et al. (1984), Figure 2-1, p.16, Map of the HRM Territory.
1d. The focus of research: (S)HRM

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Source: Beer et al. (1984), Figure 2-1, p.16, Map of the HRM Territory.
1e. The multi-stakeholder perspective

- Shareholders, Management, Employee groups, Unions, Government, Community,

- Long-term consequences:
  - Individual well-being
  - Organisational effectiveness
  - Societal well-being

- National differences
2a. Situational Factors: context

- Work force characteristics
- Business strategy and conditions
- Management philosophy
- Labor market
- Unions
- Task technology
- Laws and societal values
2a. Comparative (country level) HRM: part of the context ...

Different countries, different...

- HRM policies and practices
- Definitions of HRM
- Definitions of ‘good’ HRM
- Stakeholders
- Explanations
- Outcomes

2. The wider picture: Comparative HRM
3a. Cultural vs Institutional explanations

- the Cultural explanation
- the Institutional explanation
- the meaning of words
3b. Cultural vs Institutional explanations of differences

- The Cultural explanation
  - The meaning of culture
  - Measuring culture
  - Dimensions
  - Impact on HRM

- the Institutional explanation

- the meaning of words
3c. Cultural vs Institutional explanations of differences

- the Cultural explanation
- the Institutional explanation
  - neo-institutionalism;
  - legal systems;
  - political systems;
  - regulationist
  - Comparative Capitalisms;
- the meaning of words
3d. Varieties of Capitalism

- Liberal Market Economies (LME)
- Co-ordinated Market Economies (CME)

Hall and Soskice, 2001

Comparative Capitalisms

- Nordic economies (SDE)
- Mediterranean economies (MME)
- CEE Transitional Economies (EME)

Whitley, 1999; Amable, 2003;

3. Explanations (culture and institutions)
3e. Comparative Capitalisms

• and what about:
  – Communist/Capitalist states?
  – Other transition states?
  – Arab states?
  – African states?
  – Latin American states?

Jackson and Deeg 2006
3f. Findings...

- Recruitment and selection (no market economy link)
- Financial participation (LME/CME difference; complex links)
- Individual voice (comparative capitalisms differences)
- Collective voice (comparative capitalisms differences)
- Working time flexibility (LME/CME difference)
- Training (comparative capitalisms differences)
- Downsizing (no market economy link)
- HRM department (comparative capitalisms differences)
- Trust (complex)
- CSR (LME/CME difference)
- HRM and performance (LME/CME differences)
- and...

3. Explanations (culture and institutions)
4a. Convergence and Divergence

- Convergent pressures:
  - Globalisation
  - EU, NAFTA, ASEAN

- Kinds of convergence

- Divergent pressures

4b. Convergence: trends

4. Globalisation/ convergence
4c. Final Convergence

4. Globalisation/ convergence
3d. Findings on Trends

• convergence (increases in)
  – strategic potential of HRM department;
  – centralisation of HRM away from line;
  – HRM professionalisation;
  – employee resourcing;
  – Individualisation of employee relations;
  – increased information to employees;
  – contingent compensation systems.

• no convergence
  – staff ratio;
  – employee development
4f. Findings on Final Convergence

- No final convergence of HRM configuration
- No final convergence of HRM practices
5. So, what does all this mean?

- Similar trends do not mean countries are getting more alike in the way they manage their HRM.
- Implications for practice:
  - HRM practices linked to high performance in one country might be useless or detrimental in another;
  - there is no “one-size-fits-all”;
  - principles not systems and procedures.
- Implications for THEORY - ?
- Implications for FUTURE RESEARCH - ?
If you have been...

Thank you for listening
International Human Resource Management

Handbook of Research on Comparative Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management and the Institutional Perspective
Example Publications (i)

Books:


Example Publications (ii)

Chapters:


Example Publications (iii)

Articles:


Example Publications (iv)


