ABSTRACT

This paper is a case study of a family owned Thai business, Sitti Yont Group Co., Ltd. As is common in many family owned businesses and particularly in Asian businesses, the father and CEO/owner makes most of the decisions and the various family members have particular influence on the father. The non-family workers often do not feel empowered to make decisions and often appear to be unengaged in their work. That is the case in this company. Also, with traditional working style from old generation, the human resource management seemed to be dated and unsystematic. But it is not only the company growing beyond the human resources of the family, but it is also requiring greater expertise, which requires the greater engagement of its employees. The organizational development question is how can we increase the workers’ engagement?

Sustainable Leadership practices are considered to increase employee engagement and were considered a good way to develop this Thai business. An organizational development intervention was planned and carried out to increase the use of several sustainable leadership practices and thereby increase employee engagement. Appreciative coaching was the primary method of the intervention encouraging the development of the 5 leadership practices. And it appears to have worked. Employee engagement has improved as measured in the difference in pre and post survey and interview responses.

This research intends to apply the sustainable leadership strategy in developing employee engagement with the purpose of generating organization sustainability. The practical impact of this intervention is to smooth the change process in the chosen family business, as well as to create the organization sustainability, together with an improvement in the employee engagement. The contribution to organization development theory and practice is that OD practitioners could benefit from a result of the action research connected between leadership practices, culture awareness and employee engagement for Thai family business. Also, they can see numerous
difficulties that the chosen company in this research confronted and how to solve each problem by applying organizational development interventions. Lastly, the contribution of this study to the sustainable leadership practices is assess whether they can be usefully applied in the case of the family business in Thailand that is currently facing with numerous difficulties at present, mainly on human resource management by enhancing employee engagement. Other small and medium family businesses in Thailand could benefit by using the case of Sitti Yont Group Company Limited as a case study for their further ODI applied.