



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES
AS PERCEIVED BY SUPPORT STAFF IN
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA**

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OF
TRAINING PROGRAMMES
AS PERCEIVED BY SUPPORT STAFF
IN
UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA**

By

TAN SAI TIAN

**Project Paper Submitted in partial fulfillment of the Fulfillment of the
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ABSTRACT

Abstract of project paper submitted to Faculty of Educational Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Science in Human Resource Development.

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING PROGRAMMES AS PERCEIVED BY SUPPORT STAFF IN UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA

By

TAN SAI TIAN

OCTOBER 1998

Chairperson : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aminah Ahmad

Faculty : Faculty of Educational Studies

The research project has been designed with the primary aim of establishing the effectiveness of the training programmes as perceived by employees who have undergone training. More specifically, it seeks to evaluate the effectiveness of training programme for the support staff in UUM.

This study examines the extent of effectiveness of the training programmes with respect to reaction, learning and behaviour outcomes. The survey investigates whether the



effectiveness level vary according to trainee's personal characteristics (age, educational level, working experience and number of years of service at current job).

A study sample of hundred and thirty six (136) was drawn from the support staff (administration) of Universiti Utara Malaysia. A hundred and six (106) support staff responded to the survey. Data were collected using self-administrated questionnaires personally distributed by the researcher. Completed questionnaires were picked up three weeks from the date the questionnaires were distributed.

The results of the study show that the training programmes administrated by the organisation are perceived to be effective achieving up to the third level based on Kirkpatrick's Evaluation Model. Employees who attended the training programmes perceived that they have achieved higher levels of reaction and behaviour but moderate level of learning. The results also disclosed that age, working experience and length of service in the current job had no bearing on the level of training effectiveness and also on the overall training effectiveness with the exception of educational level which had a significant influence on effectiveness of training at the "reaction" level.

ABSTRAK

Abstrak kertas projek yang dikemukakan kepada Fakulti Pengajian Pendidikan, Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi sebahagian daripada keperluan bagi Ijazah Sarjana Sains (Pembangunan Sumber Manusia).

KEBERKESANAN PROGRAM LATIHAN MENGIKUT PERSEPSI KAKITANGAN SOKONGAN UNIVERSITI UTARA MALAYSIA

By

TAN SAI TIAN

OCTOBER 1998

Chairperson : Assoc. Prof. Dr. Aminah Ahmad

Fakulti : Fakulti Pengajian Pendidikan

Projek kajian ini adalah suatu usaha untuk mengenalpasti persepsi pekerja yang telah didedahkan kepada program latihan dalam perkhidmatan terhadap keberkesanan program-program latihan tersebut. Secara khususnya, kajian ini cuba menentukan keberkesanan program latihan yang telah dihadiri oleh kakitangan kumpulan sokongan di Universiti Utara Malaysia.

Penyelidikan ini bertujuan untuk menguji sejauh manakah keberkesanan program latihan berdasarkan reaksi, perubahan pengetahuan dan perubahan tingkah laku. Kajian ini juga



bertujuan untuk melihat sama ada tahap keberkesanan program latihan adalah berbeza mengikut ciri-ciri peribadi pelatih (umur, tahap pendidikan, pengalaman kerja dan jangkamasa perkhidmatan).

Tinjauan soal-selidik ini telah dijalankan ke atas seratus tiga puluh enam (136) kakitangan sokongan (pentadbiran) dari Universiti Utara Malaysia. Seramai seratus enam (106) responden dari kumpulan staf sokongan telah membalas soal-selidik yang diedarkan. Data kajian diperolehi dengan menggunakan borang soal-selidik yang diedarkan oleh penyelidik. Borang soal-selidik yang lengkap dikumpul selepas tiga minggu dari tarikh pendedaran.

Hasil kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa berasaskan persepsi responden, program-program latihan yang dianjurkan oleh organisasi tersebut telah berjaya mencapai keberkesanan tahap ketiga berdasarkan Model Penilaian Kirkpatrick.

Keputusan yang diperolehi menunjukkan bahawa berasaskan persepsi responden setelah mengikuti program latihan mereka telah mencapai tahap yang tinggi bagi tahap reaksi dan tingkah laku, manakala sederhana pada tahap pengetahuan. Kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa faktor umur, pengalaman kerja dan jangkamasa perkhidmatan tidak mempunyai kesan ke atas tahap keberkesanan latihan dan keberkesanan latihan secara keseluruhan, kecuali tahap pendidikan yang menunjukkan kesan signifikan ke atas keberkesanan latihan pada tahap reaksi.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

Training is considered as the means to create the competency needed to achieve an organization's performance objectives. Training must be an integral part of each manager's strategic plan.

Peter (1987) lists training as one of the key areas to be emphasized if an organization is to survive in our changing world. He states, "The innovation prescriptions were clear - everyone must innovate. Everyone must be prepared (1) to contribute ideas and (2) to work together with less supervision. And only constant training will provide the basis for constant adaptation." (Peter, 1987; p.324). A vital training programme provides, updates and enhances the skills that make administrative staff successful in the current workplace.

In 1988, the United States spent about 210 billion dollars for both formal and informal training programmes, but according to Cynthia A (1989), this amount could be less if the training programmes are well planned. To be flexible and responsive to changes in the fast moving information technology environment, training is essential.



Effectiveness as a criterion for evaluation, implies the attainment of the training programme objectives. Specifically, this study investigates the effectiveness of training programmes with respect to reaction, learning and behaviour outcomes. This study evaluates the effectiveness of training for support staff in Universiti Utara Malaysia. The evaluation study is guided by Kirkpatrick's model (1959; 1977; 1996) for evaluating training.

1.1 Background of the Study

Universiti Utara Malaysia (UUM), has a Training Unit that carries the mission to enhance the effectiveness of employees in their current jobs and to prepare them for future responsibilities in line with their career development. It aims to provide the latest innovations in management style, skills and techniques.

According to Kirkpatrick (1994), evaluation of training programmes provide important information regarding the following questions:

- * What kind of a contribution did it make to the organization?
- * Whether the particular training programmes should be repeated or continued?
- * How can it be improved?

Emphasis on human resource development also calls upon the management to accurately assess the training and development requirements of personnel. Management strategies must give due attention and adequate resource allocation to training, upgrading and retraining of skills and expertise within companies (Rahman, 1992).

1.2 Statement of the problem

The introduction of the Human Resource Development Act (1993), to enforce the industry-based financial levy earmarked for funding human resource development initiatives, is a proof of commitment by the government of Malaysia in taking a serious view regarding the training problem. A review of literature reveals that several studies have been undertaken regarding training evaluations. However, very few empirical studies have been done on the effectiveness of training programmes in organisations in Malaysia.

1.2.1. Research Questions:

The following are research questions, which will be addressed in this research:

- a) To what extent is the training programme effective based on the perception of support staff?
- b) Does the level of effectiveness of training vary according to personal characteristics along age, educational level, working experience and length of service in current job?

1.3 Research Hypotheses

This research study attempts to investigate the level of effectiveness of training will be significantly related to participants personal characteristics along age, educational level, working experience and length of service in current job.

1.4 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of training programme for the support staff in UUM. Since effectiveness is the criterion for evaluation, the study attempts to:

- * Determine the extent of training programme effectiveness with respect to reaction, learning and behaviour outcomes.
- * Determine whether the level of effectiveness of training vary according to employee personal characteristics.

1.5 Significance of the Study

This study will help to contribute knowledge about training evaluation and measurement methods. This study is significant to Human Resource Department professionals who plan, design and develop training programmes for their employees and would be a feedback on their training programmes.

Kirkpatrick's Four-level Model technique for evaluating training programmes is used as the theoretical basis of this study. The findings from this study should be able to increase awareness of the role of managers in providing effective training. The output of the study should be able to assess and improve their respective present training programmes and it may provide direction to generate new framework and hypotheses for further research on relevant topic.

1.6 Assumptions

- a. With the potential for an increase in the number of development projects in UUM, training activities are expected to increase.
- b. It was assumed that the investigator's and UUM professional relationships with the respondents would not affect responses to the questionnaire.
- c. It was assumed that there would be no extreme differences among the roles of the respondents .

1.7 Limitation of the study

This study is limited to some restrictions. The following are limitations, which may influence the findings of this study:

- a. The sample only consists of employees in UUM. Data collected from other organization might differ due to the working climate. Therefore, generalization to other administrative institutions may be limited.
- b. This study is oriented to administrative support staff in UUM. Therefore the findings might not hold true for other technical categories of employees or other categories of employees.
- c. Effectiveness of training was not measured through one particular type of training programme. The samples consisted of respondents who have attended different types of training programmes.
- d. The measurement tool was limited to only 'self perception' questionnaires. Others form of data such as the evaluation by peers, instructors or superiors were not sought for comparison due to time constraint.
- e. The retrieval rate of the questionnaires was 77.94%.

1.8 Definition of terms

a. Training Strategies:

Instructional processes used to create a learning situation. These are normally grouped into four types: i.e. formal training, on-the-job training, action training and non-formal training.

b. Training Process:

A process which begins with assessing the need, developing the programme, implementing it and finally evaluating it.

c. Training Effectiveness:

The extent to which the training programme has achieved the predetermined objectives towards qualitative and quantitative performance.

d. Training Evaluation:

According to Hamblin (1974), evaluation of training is "any attempt to obtain information (feedback) on the effects of a training programme and to assess the value of training in the light of the information".

e. Support Staff:

Support staff, refers to assistant administrative officers, data processor operators, clerks, typists and dispatches in UUM.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

2.0 Introduction

Human resource is the most critical limiting factor in developing the competitive edge. Considering that all decisions, functions and efforts in an organisation's life are the result of people, it could be said that people determine everything in an organisation's success. One of the key actions required for developing human resource into a competitive edge is that the employee should have the knowledge and skills to successfully perform the job. Training can help the organisation equip each employee with the knowledge and skills to successfully perform the job.

Training takes innumerable forms, sometimes it occurs in a formal, structured classroom setup. Sometimes it is in the form of spontaneous interaction such as when a group of managers with common interest, experience and meet to exchange ideas. On-the-job training is another common form of training which includes such methods as mentoring, job rotation and counterpart training. Training is not a uniform process to which a single formula applies. Its function and form vary enormously from one situation to another.

This chapter reviews the literature on training and evaluation, training mission, objectives and corporate strategy of an organisation, model of training evaluation,

training effectiveness and future prospects. The conceptual framework is also presented in this chapter.

2.1 Training and Evaluation

Training is more job/organisation specific and is aimed at improving job performance. It focuses more on immediate organisational needs and the immediate application of new skills and attitudes.

Training in developing countries has three major objectives: (1) to improve the performance of the organisation, (2) to ensure the organisation is able to function and meet the demands of a changing environment (Hanadle 1982, Hannah 1981), and (3) to provide trained personnel to meet demands of nationalisation. There is a growing emphasis on training in developing countries and public companies, Sanwal (1988), Paul (1983), World Bank (1983).

According to Goldstein and Gilliam (1990), training is “learning events that are planned in a systematic fashion and are focussed on the work environment”. From this point of view, the training process is defined as “the systematic acquisition of skills, rules, concepts or attitudes that result in improved performance in the work environment”.

Hamblin (1974) defined training as “any activity which deliberately attempts to improve a person’s skill in a job”. Flippo (1976) worded training as “the act of increasing the knowledge and skills of an employee for doing a particular job”.

He stressed that training is important to increase productivity, heighten morale, reduce supervision, reduce accidents, increase organisational stability and flexibility.

A study conducted by Abu Daud Silong (1986) on the training profession Peninsular Malaysia, with a special focus on the professionalizing characteristics concluded that generally the trainers perceived that tasks such as designing training programmes, determining and organizing content for training and establishing training objectives were important. On the other hand, the trainers perceived the task of developing seminars, conferences or workshops as least important.

To show the importance of training, Koehorst and Verhoeven (1986a, 1986b, 1986c) who did a study on the effectiveness of training in Netherlands listed twenty indicators of the benefits of training as follows:

- Higher turnover/profit
- Improved quality of service
- Increased safety
- Better company image
- More efficient use of means of production
- Higher overall level of staff education
- High number of internal transfers
- More efficiency/productivity
- Equal opportunity to staff