



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**TEAMWORKING AS PRACTISED BY
PERSONNEL IN THE SARAWAK
STATE CIVIL SERVICE**

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BIBIANA MARIA PEK**

FPP 1999 13

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**BIBI KASMAWATI ABDULLAH @
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**Project Paper Submitted in Partial Fulfillment of the
Requirements for the Degree of Master of Science (Human
Resource Development) in the Faculty of Educational Studies,
Universiti Putra Malaysia**

APRIL 1999



ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Much thought had been put into the decision to do a distance learning program such as this and it was with much courage that I decided to take up the offer from INTAN Malaysia to do this program with UPM. I must say I did not know what it would actually take to be in a distance learning program. After two years, I have this to say: it takes a lot of sacrifice, self discipline, commitment, and the necessary support and understanding from individuals and institutions. It was not easy when the family and the demands of work too needed equal attention.

For this, I would like to express my heartfelt appreciation and gratitude to Associate Professor Dr Maimunah Ismail for her understanding, patience, encouragement and guidance without which, this paper would not have been what it was.

I am also thankful to Encik Abdillah Suffian Abdul Rahim, the Managing Director of Center of Modern Management, Sarawak, for his valuable advice, suggestions and guidance in helping me to select a topic and then assisting me throughout the time I was writing this project paper. He is my mentor and I have learned much from him in the field of Human Resource Development.

I must also express my sincere gratitude to all the lecturers in IDEAL, UPM who had directly or indirectly contributed to the completion of this paper and my participation in the program. Their guidance throughout the program had provided me with the necessary knowledge, skills and better understanding of the development of Human Resource thus giving me greater confidence in carrying out my official duties.



I would like to record my gratitude too to my superiors and my colleagues who had been very understanding and supportive throughout the whole program. Special appreciation must be given to my Permanent Secretary, Encik Aloysius Dris whose encouragement and kind understanding had been the driving force for the completion of this program.

My colleagues and friends in the same program should be given acknowledgement for sharing their time, thoughts and ideas in the various discussions held. Special mention must be given to Hj Sulaiman Hj Husaini whose help and encouragement had contributed much to the completion of this research paper. My appreciation must also go to Cik Hajjah Ossen whose skills with the computer have helped with the quality of presentation of this paper.

I must also place my sincere gratitude and appreciation to INTAN Malaysia especially the Director, Dr Halim Shafie, whose belief and confidence in me had inspired me to do my very best. I am indebted to INTAN Malaysia for the financial sponsorship without which, it may not be possible for me to undertake this program.

Finally and most importantly, I would like to express my sincere thanks to my beloved husband, Abang Kassim and children – Nina, Nini and Nana. They had shared my stress, moments of anguish and had given me all the support, understanding and encouragement throughout the two years. The family had gone through trying moments and I am glad all of us came out of the experience, closer and stronger.

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

TEAMWORKING AS PRACTISED BY PERSONNEL IN THE SARAWAK STATE CIVIL SERVICE

By

BIBI KASMAWATI ABDULLAH @ BIBIANA MARIA PEK

APRIL 1999

This study aims to find out whether the officers of the Sarawak State Civil Service perceive that they are practising teamworking. Teamworking is achieved if the officers agree that they practise the elements of teamworking in their work place. These elements are a set of clear goals, commitment, good leadership, trust, effective decision making, good conflict management, empowerment and communication. This study also seeks to find out whether demographic variables such as age, gender, length of service, the officer's designated post and their ethnicity have any relationship to teamworking.

The study was based on a survey research design using both the descriptive and inferential statistics. Senior officers from N3 or equivalent and above and officers from the Supervisory/Support group who had undergone the team building programs organized by the State Government formed the population of the study. Respondents for this study numbered 245 persons. The Preziosi's Organization Development Questionnaires (ODQ) (Preziosi, 1980) was used to gather data from the respondents. These questionnaires were mailed to officers if their working



stations were outside the Kuching district and by hand delivered if they were in the same district.

The analysis of the ODQ revealed that overall teamworking was practised by these officers and that its level was high. However, elements of conflict management and decision making were moderately practised by officers in the service.

The analysis also showed that there was significant difference between the male and female officers and teamworking. The Professional/Managerial group showed lesser teamworking than officers in the Administrative/Managerial and the Support/ Supervisory groups. The length of service of these officers showed that there was a weak but positive relationship to teamworking. Other factors such as ethnicity and their educational background did not show any association with teamworking.

Periodic evaluation should be done on officers to monitor their process of teamworking. It was recommended that the management did regular action research of the service to obtain feedback. A study on the working relations of female officers themselves and with the male counterparts should also be done. The findings of this study would reveal the working relationship of these officers, its possible causes and the appropriate actions to be taken to ensure that female officers be given all the opportunities to participate actively in teamworking.

Abstrak kertas kerja ini di hantar ke Faculty of Educational Studies, Universiti Putra Malaysia untuk memenuhi keperluan bagi memperolehi Sarjana Sains Pembangunan Sumber Manusia.

KERJA BERPASUKAN SEPERTI YANG DIPRAKTIKKAN OLEH PERSONEL-
PERSONEL DALAM PERKHIDMATAN AWAM NEGERI SARAWAK

OLEH

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APRIL 1999

Kajian ini bertujuan untuk mengetahui sama ada pegawai dalam Perkhidmatan Awam Negeri Sarawak mengakui bahawa mereka mempraktikkan kerja berpasukan. Kerja berpasukan dapat dicapai sekiranya pegawai-pegawai mempraktikkan elemen-elemen kerja berpasukan di tempat kerja. Elemen-elemen ini adalah rangkaian matlamat yang jelas, komitmen, kepimpinan yang baik, kepercayaan, membuat keputusan berkesan, pengurusan konflik yang baik, penyerahan kuasa dan komunikasi. Kajian ini juga ingin mengetahui sama ada variabel demografi seperti umur, jantina, tempoh perkhidmatan, jawatan pegawai dan etnik mempunyai hubungan dengan kerja berpasukan.

Kajian ini adalah berdasarkan kaedah penyelidikan survei dan menggunakan kaedah diskriptif serta inferential statistik. Pegawai kanan dari N3 atau yang setaraf dan ke atas, serta pegawai di peringkat penyeliaan dan kumpulan sokongan yang telah menghadiri program pembentukan pasukan yang dianjurkan oleh Kerajaan Negeri dijadikan sebagai populasi kajian. Seramai 245 orang telah menjadi responden yang mana data diperolehi daripada mereka dengan menggunakan kaedah ODQ(Organization Development Questionnaires)(Preziosi, 1980). Soal selidik telah diposkan kepada pegawai

bagi mereka yang bertugas di luar kawasan Kuching dan dihantar dengan tangan bagi mereka yang bertugas di kawasan yang sama.

Analisis ODQ menunjukkan bahawa keseluruhan kerja berpasukan dipraktikkan oleh pegawai-pegawai dan tahapnya adalah tinggi. Kebanyakan elemen kerja berpasukan menunjukkan tahap yang tinggi tetapi hanya elemen pengurusan konflik dan pembuatan keputusan dipraktikkan dengan kadar yang sederhana di dalam perkhidmatan.

Analisis ini juga menunjukkan terdapat perbezaan yang ketara dalam min pegawai lelaki dan wanita dalam kerja berpasukan. Tahap mempraktikkan kerja berpasukan pada kumpulan Profesional/Pengurusan adalah lebih rendah jika dibandingkan dengan kumpulan Penyeliaan/Sokongan. Tempoh perkhidmatan pegawai-pegawai ini menunjukkan hubungan yang lemah tetapi positif dengan kerja berpasukan. Faktor-faktor lain seperti perbezaan kaum dan latar belakang tidak menunjukkan hubungan signifikan dengan kerja berpasukan.

Penilaian berkala seharusnya dilakukan kepada pegawai-pegawai untuk mengawasi kemajuan di dalam kerja berpasukan. Adalah dicadangkan agar pihak pengurusan melaksanakan kajian tindakan yang sama dalam perkhidmatan untuk mendapatkan maklumbalas. Kajian terhadap hubungan ini antara pegawai-pegawai wanita sendiri dan pegawai-pegawai lelaki juga harus dilakukan. Hasil dari kajian ini dapat menerangkan hubungan kerja pegawai pegawai tersebut, penyebab dan tindakan yang bersesuaian di ambil untuk memastikan pegawai-pegawai wanita terlibat secara aktif dalam kerja berpasukan.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

BACKGROUND

Teamworking is very much talked about and recommended in the process of organization development for improved performance. It is a well sought after management tool, next to reengineering. As organizations are faced with scarce resources, stiff competition and the need to stay ahead of other competitors, management are very often required to increase output without increasing input.

Successful managers have turned to man's natural need to form groups and used the strength of these groups to bring about teamworking for the much desired improved performance. They believed that teams should be the basic unit of performance for most organizations. They are more productive than groups because their members are very committed to deliver positive results. So much is the interest in this phenomenon in relation to performance that it is said "teams and performance are an unbeatable combination" (Katzenbach and Smith, 1994).

There has been increasing interest in teams. People is recognized as an important resource in organizations. Managers are forever thinking of ways to capitalize on the energy and talents of employees converting it into commitment, involvement and high performance.

The State Government of Sarawak has committed itself seriously in trying to do the same and the authorities have decided that one of the main human resource programs for the organization is team building. This study aims to provide a better understanding of teamworking in the Civil Service. It is



hoped that with this understanding, proper steps can be planned to further improve the performance of the officers in the Civil Service.

The Organization – State Civil Service, Sarawak

The State Government of Sarawak is taking a revolutionary step to transform the old Civil Service that rigidly adhered to keep to law and order into a New Civil Service – one that is dynamic, proactive, efficient, collaborative and flexible enough to keep within the procedures and regulations. The transformation is aimed to make the New Civil Service the prime mover in bringing the State and its people towards the attainment of Vision 2020. One of the ways to accelerate the transformation is through teamworking. Through teamworking, the officers will be able to function effectively within their own organizations or with other departments. The world is entering the next millenium and with the dynamic and fast global changes that are pressuring everyone, the State Civil Service has only two decades to achieve its goals.

THE PROBLEM AND ITS CONTEXT

The Malaysian Government has set itself a vision. This vision was officially formulated and made known to the whole nation in 1991. Its aim is to transform Malaysia to be a fully developed nation in its own mould by the year 2020. Officially known as Vision 2020, Malaysia would like to be developed in all dimensions : economically, politically, socially, spiritually, psychologically and culturally.

The Sarawak Government is not going to be left behind in the race for full development by the year 2020. In fact, the Honourable Chief Minister, Datuk Patinggi Tan Sri Hj Abdul Taib Mahmud has additional aspirations for Sarawak: to be a prosperous society and a model state in Malaysia. With these hopes and aspirations, he practised the Politics of Development and has acknowledged that development plans cannot be implemented by using old ways. The old structure of the State's Civil Service is no longer capable in keeping abreast with the development objectives of the present time (Sarawak, 1994).

Sarawak's State Secretary, Tan Sri Datuk Amar Hamid Bugo realized that while the State is discussing the next step along the traditional stages of growth and development, other post-industrialized countries are well ahead in areas of genetic engineering, biotechnology and other high technology fields. If Sarawak is to carry on with her former pace of development, she will not only have difficulty to catch up with these countries but will be left behind forever.

To attain the vision of a prosperous society that Sarawak sets herself by the year 2020, she has to change and to do the quantum leap "to catch up and to by-pass the state of the present post industrialized countries" (Bugo, 1996).

To undertake this quantum leap, the following strategies have to be adopted by the State :

1. Emphasize the development or acquisition of high technology, including the information technology
2. Provide an effective education system that allows efficient acquisition of knowledge by students

3. Ensure that our activities and products are knowledge based
4. Produce high quality human resource and a work force that has a strong desire to acquire knowledge and skills and are adept at producing the acquired skills
5. Supply good infrastructure that enhances quality of life and enables our people to progress together.
6. Adopt and practise a set of values that would support change and growth, enabling us to adjust and modify our way of thinking, our approach and our paradigm.
7. Establish practical, excellent and proactive institutions, in particular a Civil Service that is able to steer and facilitate economic development.

The State Government hopes that teams can be developed in the service. It realizes that teams can outperform other groups and individuals and they represent one of the best ways to support the broad based changes necessary for the high performing organization. The authorities in the Service believe that behaviorally based characteristics like quality, innovation, cost effectiveness and customer service can help build up sustainable competitive advantage and they have given top priority to the development of team performance.

The State Government of Sarawak has shown commitment in her decision in transforming the Civil Service that can cater to the present and future needs of the State. The transformation of the organization began in 1994 where the government approved the formation of the Center of Modern Management (CMM) and the Sarawak Information Systems (SAINS), both are

subsidiaries of the State Government. CMM looks solely into the training needs of the State Government officers while SAINS implements the electronic system and information technology.

CMM's main objective is to revamp and restructure the Civil Service into a new entity through training programs. With sufficient and up to date management tools and aided by effective teamworking, it is believed that the Civil Service is expected to change and change fast enough in order to fulfil her new role as an agent of change. The Team Development program has been selected as one of the core training programs to assist the New Civil Service to achieve this higher standards of performance.

THE PROBLEM STATEMENT

The State Government wishes for a Civil Service that has a strong desire to acquire knowledge and skills and be able to steer and facilitate economic development. With a growing interest in teamwork that has brought successes to some multinational companies in the global scene, and the fact that this phenomenon is fast spreading in the South East Asian region, the Sarawak State Government has initiated team building programs in the organization and hopes that it can be used to bring equal successes in productivity and quality. The State Government has recognized that her workforce is an important resource and it needs to be working well together through teamworking to bring about the quantum leap to achieve the objectives of the State.

The Team Building Program has been targeted at the senior officers level (N3 or its equivalent and above) and the supervisory group (N5 and N6 or its equivalent). The State Service has a total number of 1,071 officers in these two categories and to date since the program started in 1994, a total of 510 officers had undergone the program (file information, Human Resource and Personnel Section, Chief Minister's Office, Sarawak). The State Government has spent more than RM700,000.00 in this program and this does not include the overhead costs of providing outdoor facilities for the practical use of the program, the transport and accommodation costs of officers who had come from all over the State. The allocation for all the above expenses came from the State's coffer.

Attendance in this program is compulsory and it forms part of the officer's service record. When implementing this program, there was no pre evaluation done on teamworking amongst the officers. Some may argue that it is early indeed to ascertain the success of teamworking in the service. However, with the involvement of such a large number of officers, the management would require some form of evaluation in the program. The management knew there was some form of teamworking in the service, but it was necessary at this point to know the level of teamworking. It was important for the management to ascertain the real situation so as to take necessary steps to improve and reinforce the performance of her officers. Thus, it may be necessary to address the following research questions in this study:

1. What is the level of teamworking amongst the officers of the State Civil Service under study?

2. Which elements of teamworking are evidenced amongst these officers in their work place?
3. Would the demographic characteristics (such as age, gender, length of service, ethnic diversity, educational background) have any association on the level of teamworking of these officers?

OBJECTIVES

General Objective

The general objective of the study is to determine whether the officers of the State Civil Service who have undergone the team building programs perceived that they are practising teamworking in their work place.

Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are:

- to determine the level of teamworking as perceived by the officers in the Civil Service
- to determine which elements of team building are being practised in the work place
- to determine whether factors such as age, educational background, length of service, gender and ethnic diversity do relate to teamworking of these officers in their work place.
- to find out the job categories of officers who are more likely to have perceived they are doing teamworking

LIMITATIONS

This study is confined to the Professional/Managerial, Administrative/Managerial and the Supervisory/Support groups who had attended the team building programs. The findings of this study is not applicable to other levels of the administration. The scope of this study is to establish and to determine whether there is teamworking in the service. It also hopes to determine whether the demographic variables such as age, gender, educational background, present post held and the length of service do have any relationship to teamworking. The findings of this study is limited to the perceptions of these officers only.

Teamworking here is only based on the elements which are limited to the ones in the study. It may be possible that officers perceive other elements such as motivation or reward which could be equally important to them.

The measurement used to rate the level of teamworking is very subjective rather than using an objective and scientific technique. It is possible then that an outside observer may have a different perception of the same situation.

ASSUMPTIONS

The general assumption of this study is that the relative measurement of success for teamworking is the fulfillment of the elements of teamworking of the organization. Since it is difficult and there is no proven measurement of success in teamworking, the study acknowledges that the fulfillment of these elements of teambuilding will be an indication of success. Perception of officers are acceptable in the relative measurement of productivity and

satisfaction in teamworking. It is also assumed that factors affecting good teamworking from the western models are universal and applicable to the local setting.

It is also assumed that the State Government has identified their performance weaknesses in the various departments and that the team building program has been identified as one of the main interventions for improved performance in all these departments.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The study is significant to respective stakeholders of the program. The Human Resource and Personnel Section of the Chief Minister's Office wants the program to succeed as it is anxious to bring about the required change needed in the Civil Service. The results of this study will give an indication to the authorities on the present level of teamworking of the officers. This will further alert them on the necessary actions to take to ensure that the achievements of the State can be realized through teamworking. Much time, effort and money have been committed to this program and it is very important that the plans of the State Government have to succeed.

This study is significant to the CMM who has to shoulder the responsibility of transforming the present Civil Service into the new one within a limited period and financial allocation. The CMM is also anxious to find out the factors that bring about or hinder teamworking so that adjustments can be made to reinforce their team building programs. Respective departments on the other hand, who have sent their officers to this program expect better performance from their officers.