



UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

**THE EFFECTIVENESS OF AN OUTDOOR TRAINING
PROGRAMME AT BANSEKE HUMAN
RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE**

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HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE**

By

LAU YIN YIN

**Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirement for the
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Faculty : Educational Studies

This study was conducted with the objective to evaluate the effectiveness of an experiential-training-approach using the realities of outdoors activities, conducted by Banseke Human Resource Development Centre. This study employed the four levels of the Kirkpatrick Model, focusing on the reaction and learning levels.

To date, more than 4000 people have attended courses conducted by Banseke using this approach. Generally, the majority of the participants have declared that the modules have been effective and have helped them. The participants who have undergone Banseke's Corporate Wargame courses felt that the modules and courses offered were very innovative and unique. However, a reliable academic evaluation of the effectiveness of these courses has never been carried out because of the considerable time and effort required from everyone involved, until this research was conducted.

This research employed a quantitative approach with utilization of descriptive and inferential research. Sixty-seven participants on two courses participated in this study. Another thirty-six participants became the subjects of the pilot test. During the actual test, the participants were made up of 29% of non-executive level, 40% of junior executive level and 31% of managerial level. The questionnaires developed were



adopted and adapted from Fisher et al. (1999), Francis and Young (1979), Torres and Fairbanks (1996), an unpublished survey done by Banseke (2000), Kirkpatrick (1994) and Daft (1997), using the five-point Likert-type format (1=strongly disagree, 5=strongly agree). Two types of questionnaires were distributed. These were the Learning questionnaires and Reaction questionnaires. Learning questionnaires were distributed before and after the training programme, whilst Reaction questionnaires were distributed after the programme. Learning questionnaires made up of three separate sections, namely on Knowledge, Attitude and Skill. Of the Learning questionnaires that were distributed before the training programme, 100% of the Knowledge and Skills sections were returned, while only 92.5% responded from the Attitude sections. After the training programme, both of the Reaction and Learning questionnaires were distributed to the participants before they departed for the Camp where the training was held. The questionnaires were to be returned to the Researcher after three days. The percentage of questionnaires returned was 95.5%. The questionnaires were of the self-administered type. The Cronbach's Alphas used for the reaction and learning questionnaires were more than 0.75 which were above the range of acceptability for reliability. The data collected was analyzed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to describe the data. This was reinforced by the use of inferential statistics to further describe the data. Parametric tests were used as the data had met the basic assumption of normal distribution.

This study revealed participants' satisfaction was high towards the training content, training methodology, instructor effectiveness, benefits of the training and their overall reaction. On the aspect of knowledge change, there were significant increment for leadership and teamworking but not for management. In the areas of attitude change, there were significant increment for leadership, teamworking and management but not for communication. There seemed to be no significant increment for all the four

items in terms of skill. The study further revealed that there were significant positive relationship between reaction and knowledge with $r = 0.617$ (moderate), reaction and skill with $r = 0.547$ (moderate), and reaction and attitude with $r = 0.359$ (low).

The outcomes of this study, in the manner that participants of different levels were sent together on one course, tends to indicate that the Banseke outdoor training programme was partially effective in improving the participants' leadership knowledge, teamworking knowledge, leadership attitude, teamworking attitude and management attitude. However, this training programme may not be as appropriate for those who are lower than the managerial level if the main objective for it is to improve their management knowledge, communication attitude, leadership skill, communication skill, teamworking skill and management skill. For such a purpose, a different combination of levels of participants attending one course together needs to be worked on.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Master Sains

KEBERKESANAN SATU PROGRAM LATIHAN LUAR DI BANSEKE HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT CENTRE

Oleh

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Ogos 2001

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Kajian yang dijalankan ini bertujuan untuk menilai keberkesanan program latihan luar dengan menggunakan pendekatan latihan eksperiential yang dikendalikan oleh "Banseke Human Resource Development Centre". Kajian ini menggunakan model empat peringkat Kirkpatrick dengan tumpuan utama adalah pada peringkat satu dan peringkat dua.

Sehingga hari ini, lebih daripada 4000 orang telah menyertai program latihan yang dilaksanakan oleh Banseke Human Resource Development Centre dengan menggunakan pendekatan-latihan-eksperiential ini. Secara umumnya, kebanyakan peserta menyatakan bahawa modul yang dijalankan ini adalah berkesan dan telah membantu mereka. Peserta-peserta yang telah melalui Banseke's Corporate Wargame juga berasakan modul-modul dan kursus-kursus ini adalah inovatif and unik. Walau bagaimanapun, belum ada satu penilaian yang boleh dipercayai pernah dilaksanakan ke atas program latihan luar ini disebabkan oleh masa dan tenaga yang diperlukan daripada semua orang yang terlibat.

Kajian ini adalah berbentuk deskriptif and inferensi dengan menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif. Ia juga merupakan satu kajian kes sahaja. Oleh itu, sebanyak enam puluh tujuh orang peserta yang menyertai dua kursus telah digolongkan ke dalam

kajian ini. Tiga puluh enam orang peserta yang lain digunakan sebagai ujian percubaan. Semasa ujian sebenar, para peserta ini terdiri daripada 29% peringkat bukan eksekutif, 40% peringkat eksekutif muda and 31% peringkat pengurus. Soalan-soalan yang dibuat adalah diambil and disesuaikan daripada Fisher et al. (1999), Francis and Young (1979), Torres and Fairbanks (1996), sebuah survey yang dibuat and belum diterbitkan oleh Banseke (2000), Kirkpatrick (1994) dan Daft (1997) ke dalam konteks peserta di mana format lima-mata jenis skala Likert digunakan (1 = sangat tidak bersetuju, 5 = sangat setuju). Dua jenis soalan-soalan telah dihantarkan kepada peserta itu. Jenis soalan yang pertama adalah soalan pembelajaran dimana ia perlu diberi kepada para peserta sebelum and selepas program latihan luar ini. Jenis soalan yang kedua adalah soalan reaksi di mana ia perlu diberi kepada para peserta selepas program latihan luar. Soalan-soalan pembelajaran ini telah dibahagikan kepada tiga bahagian, iaitu pengetahuan, kelakuan and kemahiran. Daripada ini, 100% soalan pengetahuan dan kemahiran telah dikembalikan. Namun, 92.5% soalan kelakuan telah dikembalikan. Kedua-dua jenis soalan reaksi dan pembelajaran telah diedarkan kepada para peserta sebelum mereka bertolak daripada kem. Mereka perlu mengembalikan kedua-dua jenis soalan ini tiga hari selepas program latihan luar ini. Peratusan yang dikembalikan ini ialah 95.5%. Kesemua Alfa Cronbach yang digunakan untuk soalan-soalan reaksi and pembelajaran adalah melebihi 0.75, di mana ia adalah di atas tahap penerimaan untuk darjah kepercayaan (reliabiliti). Data-data yang kumpulkan telah dianalisiskan dengan menggunakan SPSS. Statistik deskriptif ini digunakan untuk menghuraikan data-data ini manakala statistik inferensi ini digunakan untuk menghuraikan data-data ini selanjutnya. Ujian parametrik ini telah digunakan kerana data-data ini telah memenuhi andaian asas taburan normal.

Kajian ini mendapati bahawa kepuasan peserta terhadap kandungan program, kaedah program, keberkesanan program, kelebihan program dan reaksi keseluruhan ke



atas program latihan luar ini adalah tinggi. Dalam aspek perubahan terhadap pengetahuan, didapati bahawa terdapatnya peningkatan signifikan terhadap kepimpinan dan kerja sepasukan, tetapi tidak terdapat pada pengurusan. Dalam aspek perubahan terhadap kelakuan, dijumpai bahawa terdapatnya peningkatan signifikan pada kepimpinan, kerja sepasukan dan pengurusan, tetapi tidak terdapat pada komunikasi. Namun, tidak terdapat sebarang perubahan signifikan terhadap keempat-empat item dalam kemahiran iaitu kepimpinan, kerja sepasukan, komunikasi dan pengurusan. Keputusan kajian ini juga menunjukkan perhubungan positif diantara reaksi dengan pengetahuan ($r = 0.617$, sederhana), reaksi dengan kemahiran ($r = 0.547$, sederhana), dan reaksi dengan kelakuan ($r = 0.359$, rendah).

Hasil daripada kajian ini, di mana peserta-peserta yang menyertai program latihan luar Banseke ini datang daripada pelbagai peringkat hierarki, cenderung untuk menunjukkan bahawa program ini adalah separuh efektif dalam meningkatkan para peserta dari segi pengetahuan dalam kepimpinan, pengetahuan dalam kerja sepasukan, kelakuan dalam kepimpinan, kelakuan dalam kerja sepasukan dan kelakuan dalam pengurusan. Namun, program latihan ini mungkin tidak sesuai untuk mereka yang datang daripada peringkat yang lebih rendah daripada pengurus jikalau objektif utama adalah untuk meningkatkan pengetahuan dalam pengurusan, kelakuan dalam komunikasi, kemahiran dalam kepimpinan, kemahiran dalam komunikasi, kemahiran dalam kerja sepasukan dan kemahiran dalam pengurusan. Untuk tujuan ini, satu kombinasi kursus yang berlainan perlu dikendalikan untuk peringkat hierarki yang berbeza.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

“It is all part of a training session which Rossner has booked for his company’s top managers. Like many companies, he wants to put his people through a rough out-of-doors challenge to improve their team spirit. Torn away from their everyday routine, the employees experience some astonishing discoveries say the man in charge of such training, Clements Rehbein”.

This direct quotation is taken from The Star, dated Wednesday May 24 2000, at Starnberg, Germany. Most managers are interested to put their employees through an outdoor training with the aim that they are able to perform or solve the existing problems such as managing the resources effectively when they are back to the workplace. Holcomb (1998) pointed out that there are different types of managers with different expectation from their employees. Some managers want their employees to perform their work in their own ways. Some managers expect the training programmes to do the trick in changing the knowledge, skill and attitude of their employees. If these are the reasons the managers send their employees for training, it will not be surprising that the organizational problems will still remain as problems even after the employees have been sent for several in-house training or outdoor training. This is because the managers misunderstood the real meaning of training.

Training is defined as a systematic process with some planning and control where its aims are to change the knowledge, skill and attitudes of the trainees in order to improve the performance in both the present and the future job, and in return, to enhance the effectiveness of the organization (Bramley, 1991). Laird (1985) defines training as an experience, a discipline, or a regimen that causes people to acquire new predetermined behaviors, which permit them to perform to a standard of requirement. Training eliminates the old unwanted behavior and encourages the new behavior, which will bring about a positive impact to the

organization. This process involves exposure, reasoning, correcting, learning and reinforcing (Yong, 1996).

The purpose of training is to let the learners learn and reflect their experience in an environment designed where they are given real business problems to solve. This indicates the growing emphasis on the experiential learning activities that involve real business problems (Brown, 2000). Experiential learning is a process, which begins with experience, followed by reflection, discussion, analysis and evaluation. Attitudes like self-confidence, trust in colleagues, a readiness to act, a willingness to lead, the capability to change, and many other types of attitudes, are shaped by positive and powerful emotional experiences, which are fostered by interpersonal activities such as outdoor activities. Furthermore, these activities also apply the action learning towards the outdoor development where the learners learn by doing things (Bank, 1985). Bank (1985) further stated that the physical activities such as abseiling a rockface, climbing a mountain peak or navigating rapids in canoes, are the real tasks which present real problems to real people in real time with real constraints. These activities will allow the learners to make their own decisions, solve the existing problems, work as a team, leading, communicating and managing the existing physical resources, which create a learning process for the participants. Consequently, the activities will lead them to modify their behavior or change their options.

Therefore, training should be viewed as an ongoing process where the continuous improvement should be made to the programme itself, the trainers and also to the learners' knowledge, attitude and skill. Training does not provide an instant transformation to change the learners. Rather, it helps them to improve their knowledge, attitude and skill especially through the experiential learning where the real business, work-related problems are involved.

Apart from that, in the midst of a global restructuring of the world's markets, many organizations are going to face a decreasing phenomena in productivity, standard of living and balance of trade in the next decade. The exports in U.S business have dropped from 25% in 1960 to 13% currently. Japan, Korea and the Pacific Rim countries have taken over many product markets previously dominated by the U.S and are now the leaders of the world in wealth and technology (Mosca, 1997). Therefore, for U.S to enter into the service-producing areas, they need to train their workforce in order to manage this change. Mosca (1997) further added that highly skilled professions will grow rapidly and new jobs will demand more education, higher levels of language, math and reasoning skills and an ability to manage complexity. This change requires autonomous behavior and cooperation. Employees must not only be aware of the necessity of change but also the skills required of them. Moreover, Lee (1998) reported that an estimation of 40 to 200 billion dollars are spent yearly by American businesses on formal training and education programmes but it is believed that workers apply as little as 10 to 20 % of their knowledge and skills acquired in their job training.

In addition, surveys of current practice show that participants are rarely asked about what they have learned, how they can use their acquired knowledge, skill and attitude, and what benefit it would give to the organization. Trainers know that the evaluation process ought to measure changes in behavior and increases in effectiveness. But most of time, the evaluation is on the trainees' reaction towards the training programmes and seldom on the trainees' learning, behavior and impact to the organization (Donnison, 1995). As a result, top managers are doubtful about investing a big sum of money on their employees since they are not productive and effective after the training programmes. Rowe (1996) and Kirkpatrick (1994) said that top managers want to see the evidence of effectiveness of the training programmes after spending so much money on their employees. Thus, training

evaluation is an important tool to provide the evidence to the top managers by evaluating the effectiveness of the training programmes so that suggestions can be made whether to continue or to drop the programmes, how future programmes can be improved and why the need for training department (Kirkpatrick, 1994).

This issue, which is happening in the western countries, is also happening to many companies in Malaysia. Since Vision 2020 was introduced nine years ago, the human resource development has been the main concern of the government as it is the ultimate resource to develop Malaysia into an innovative manufacturing country. Therefore, the public and the private sectors have been called to be involved in education and training, the legislation for a Human Resource Development Fund by relaxing the inflow of foreign labourers and the calling of all Malaysians to pursue higher education to meet the challenges of modernization (Yong, 1996).

Azian (2000) pointed out that to achieve Vision 2020 as a knowledge-rich society, the nations could not only depend on the natural resources. The World Bank Report (1998) stated that poor countries differ from the rich ones because the former not only have less capital but lesser knowledge as well. Industrialized nations such as Japan and South Korea had risen because of their ingenuity of their human resources. Therefore, Malaysia needs to capitalize on the human resource to enable the country to move forward into the expanding global economy, and the key to achieve this ambition is through education.

Because of the growing concern of the k-economy (knowledge-economy), one of the Budget Strategies in Malaysia's Budget 2000 is to focus on developing the human resource with particular respect to their skills and knowledge. In one of the speeches given by Finance Minister of Malaysia, Daim Zainuddin (2000), he mentioned about "...the need for a shift in paradigm towards better investment in

people and the management of knowledge workers to attain greater competitiveness in the global market in the next millennium". He further stated that

"To increase the number and quality of skilled workers, a sum of 1.22 billion is allocated for the year 2000. This amount is used to build and equip eight National Youth Skills Development Institutes, four Institute Kemahiran MARA, three Institute Kemahiran Tinggi MARA and five new Pusat Giat MARA, as well as to increase equipment and facilities in existing training institutions".

Daim Zainuddin (2000) also announced that a total of 27 training centers will be operational and the number of trainees increased from 26,000 in 1999 to 30,300 in 2000. In addition, 145 million ringgit was set aside for the Skills Development Loan Fund which will provide loans to trainees who will undergo training in public training institutions. This indicates the concern of the government towards the human resource for the development of the nations to achieve Vision 2020. Therefore, training and education of the people in this developing country is critically stressed to venture into innovative manufacturing country.

Background of the Study

Training and development programmes in Malaysia are offered by private as well as public sectors, including the universities, colleges and companies. Local universities in Malaysia offer a wide range of education to the students from diploma level to doctorates. The courses offered include the arts, laws, woman studies, social sciences, accountancy, psychology, pure science, medicine, agriculture, forestry and many others. The private colleges, on the other hand, offer twinning programmes with oversea universities as well as with local universities, such as University Putra Malaysia. The purpose is to educate the human resources with the body of knowledge to equip them with principles, concepts and theories before they go into the career world.

The big organizations have started to emphasize on human resources where they build a continuous learning environment for their employees. Human resource departments are established to take care of the welfare of their staffs. Some organizations send their employees to outdoor-based experiential training where the real business work-related problems are involved.

One of the outdoor training providers applying the outdoor-based experiential training into the human resource development courses is Banseke Human Resource Development Centre (Banseke). They apply experiential learning approach through the events-of-high-adventure in the outdoors combined with a method of integrated training that they pioneered and named the Corporate Wargame.

Banseke conducted its first course for MEDEC-ITM in Langkawi in August 1992. It was a personal development and teambuilding module to complement MEDEC-ITM's programme for thirty-four participants who were known as Unemployed Graduates.

It was not until September 1993 that Banseke first designed and conducted its first Corporate Wargame course proper. This was for twenty-seven participants of all levels of the officer-ranked staff from one of the branches of the Malaysia Airlines.

From then on, the requests for similar programmes proliferated. The client-organizations were mostly from the business private sectors. But there were also those from the government as well as semi-government organizations. The list of organizations that have attended the programmes is found in Appendix A.

Banseke has used several famous philosophies in the process of designing and implementing their modules and courses. The famous Aristotelian philosophy is "what we have to learn to do, we learn through doing", "a professional or adult learns much more effectively if the learning is facilitated for them to emerge more through the learner's own efforts", and "learning, for most people, would be more effectively achieved if the processes for it were creatively and innovatively facilitated". Also on

Banseke's own beliefs which probably could have been influenced by the syntheses of the latest theories, concepts and principles of a scholar who said that "...decisions are often made that go beyond technical knowledge, such as which problems to solve and which form of knowledge necessary to solve it..." (Cervero, 1988). Thus these philosophies helped to shape the basic concept in the design and implementation of Banseke's modules and courses. For instance, Banseke designs and implements their modules so that the learning would emerge not from their staff as instructors, nor as lecturers or teachers – since they consider themselves merely as facilitators – but more from the participants' own selves, their course mates, and the challenges of the natural elements of the outdoors. Banseke also provide continuity from where orthodox and contemporary teachings and learnings in management, leadership and teamworking left-off. Banseke, in a way, say to their module-participants "...now that you have already possess the knowledge of concepts, theories and principles through your studies at colleges and universities, or your attendance of courses, seminars and workshops, let's see now how you apply these knowledge to practicalities ...". The candidates then are facilitated to undergo highly hands-on practical based learning processes in an extremely "fun-way".

The courses and modules are designed in such a way with the purpose of assisting the organization in their continuous processes to keep on developing and improving the managerial, leadership and teamworking effectiveness of their people. The participants need to link their knowledge of leadership, management and teamworking (which they usually acquired in the form of theories, concepts and principles), to the realities of actual and practical events and happenings. This knowledge may be acquired from their formal learning processes such as at colleges, universities, seminar, workshops or even from informal learning such as their own readings of relevant materials.

The events and happenings Banseke employed are normally in the form of problems to be solved and missions or tasks to be accomplished in teams of eight to twelve people per team. Some of the main features of Banseke's corporate wargame courses provide participants with opportunities and facilities for them to practice, in utterly realistic conditions and environment. It teaches participants to manage uncertainties, with their limited resources. It deals with the implications and consequences of costs and the needs to manage them, and the inevitability of needs to deal with real people under the impactful influences of the natural elements such as in the jungles, nights, rain, swamps, rapids, leeches and many others. It also looks into the needs to be effective at identifying opportunities and seizing them under very fluid situations, that mission may be accomplished without failure (thus requiring leaders and managers to "think on their feet").

Thus, the participants who have attended the Banseke's courses have obtained great benefits in terms of refreshing their knowledge, change their attitudes and sharpen their skills but there is no proper evaluation being conducted before. One of the benefits is that the team will feel the common situations that occur in the business world such as pressures from competitors and of needs to minimize and manage uncertainties. Contributions by team members help to achieve the team's mission. Secondly, most of the participants who have attended the Banseke's courses will return to their workplaces as comrades as they have faced the challenges and have overcome the problems together. These challenges that they have overcome together usually lead to optimal effectiveness in teamworking.

Finally, the integration of personal development events provides actual illustrations that "we can go beyond the usual beliefs of the limits of our capabilities" especially after going through the corporate wargame course. This has proven to be of profound effectiveness in helping the people to strive towards excellence in the discharge of their responsibilities. If previously they had easily given up when faced