The Evaluation Effectiveness of training courses in University by Kirkpatrick Model (case study: Islamshahr university)

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Abstract

The Evaluation of any training programme has certain aims to fulfil. These are concerned with the determination of change in the staff’s behaviour and the change needed in the organizational structure. Hence evaluation of any training program must inform us whether the training programme has been able to deliver the goals and objectives in terms of cost incurred and benefits achieved. Training as the process of developing skills, Habits, Knowledge and attitudes in employees for the purpose of increasing effectiveness of employees in their present positions as well as preparing employees for future positions in organization. Purpose of current research is a Evaluation Effectiveness of training courses in Islamshahr University by Kirkpatrick Model. The study is an applied one and the data collection method has been descriptive. The statistical population consisted of personnels, Managers and teachers. The data was collected through the application of sampling, questionnaires. Descriptive statistics were used in order to measure the main indicators of effectiveness Evaluation of training courses. Research findings show that effectiveness of training courses is below the standard level. also data gathered about effectiveness evaluation indicated that reaction, learning, behaviour and organizational levels need to be improved. The study showed that the effectiveness evaluation in the subject centre needed to be improved through implementation of optimizing training design, redefining training roles, providing enough budget, management commitment, attention to individual, job and organizational needs, motivation mechanism, use of ongoing and summative evaluation.

Keywords: Training, on the job training, Evaluation, Kirkpatrick model.

1. Introduction:

Organizations in both the private and public sectors, regardless of types or nature of organization, agree that training and development is essential to the growth and development of the business. (Noe, 2002) Training is an essential human resource development (HRD) function of any organization. ( Rajeev et al.2009,272) Training and development is defined by Dessler (2005) as a process that utilizes various methods to provide new and existing employees with the skills they need to perform the job. This definition is similar to that used by other authors’ (Beardwell & Holden, 2003; Cascio, 1998; Cherrington, 1995; Ivancevich, 2003; Mondy and Noe, 2005; Torrington & Hall, 2005; Yong, 2003). Training is also viewed as a powerful agent for facilitating an organization’s expansion, development of capabilities and improvement of profitability. (Cosh, Duncan, and Hughes, 1998)

In order to initiate more effective training, organizations need to look at how the training and development system is aligned with the strategy of the organization and what is being done to make sure that all training and development activities are effective. ( Haslinda&Mahyuddin,2009.p40) The evaluation of training effectiveness was strategically designed to tap four levels of training effectiveness: reaction, learning, behaviour and results accruing.
due to the program. (Hamid Khan, 2002, p. 49) Organizations can no longer afford to provide training that has not been evaluated for its contribution to the organization’s strategic goals and mission and its effectiveness and use on the job to achieve those goals. (Brinkerhoff, 2005) Effectiveness goes to the heart of what training and development are all about in an organization: giving employees the knowledge and skills they need to perform their jobs effectively. (Noe & Schmitt, 1986) Cheng and Ho (2001) however, stated that training and development is an expensive investment. One of the cited reasons for considering training and development as an unnecessary and expensive expenditure is that most of the organizations are unsure of the contributions of training and development toward the organization’s overall performance due to lack of evaluation. (Bramley & Kitson, 1994) Training is “a planned effort by a company to facilitate employees’ learning of job-related competencies.” (Noe, 2002, p. 4) Employee training has become increasingly important for organizations to improve service quality, decrease labour costs, increase productivity and profitability, and effectively manage workforce diversity. (Kim, 2006) The effectiveness of a training program can thus be conceptualized as being composed of training acquisition and transfer of training. (Tracey et al., 2001). Transfer of training is an important indicator of training effectiveness. (Baldwin & Ford, 1988) In this context, the transfer of training is indicated by behavioural changes in the workplace. Training is one of the most pervasive methods for enhancing individual productivity and improving job performance in the work environment. (Goldstein and Ford, 2002; Gupta and Bostrom, 2006) Training is of little value to organizations unless it is transferred in some way into performance. (Goldstein and Ford, 2002; Kirkpatrick, 2007) Training effectiveness is a measure of how well training achieves its intended outcomes, for example, to improve job performance. (Kraiger et al., 1993) Training evaluation is a critical component of analyzing, designing, developing, and implementing an effective training programme. (IAEA, 2003, p.13) Also Evaluating the effectiveness of training can identify areas where training needs improvement and may also provide insight on ways to improve it. (Machles, 2003)

2. Literature review

Human resource management (HRM) literature (Beardwell, Holden, Claydon, 2004; Cascio, 1998; Cherrington, 1995; Dessler, 2005; Ivancevich, 2003; Mondy & Noe, 2005; Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhardt & Wright, 2006; Torrington, Hall & Taylor, 2005; Yong, 2003), viewed training and development as an important activity that contributes to an organization’s overall effectiveness in human resources management and that training and development is required to build and sustain an organization’s competitive advantage via skills and knowledge enhancement. Training Evaluation is defined as a systematic process of collecting data and information to determine whether training was effective. (Goldstein & Ford, 2002) Kirkpatrick (1998) however, referred to training evaluation as the evaluation of four parts, including reaction, learning, behavioural change and return on investment.

In the real world, there are some other factors that influence the effectiveness of training and development in an organization. (Haywood, 1992) Training is only one of many possible ways to improve individual and organizational performance. (Clark & Estes, 2002; Mager & Pipe, 1983) The purpose of the strategic plan for training evaluation is to develop rigorous methods to assess and report effectiveness of training so that the findings can be used to improve training and training-related activities (such as mentoring and other transfer of learning supports). (SWEC, 2004, p.3) Many organizations are concerned with the contribution of training to organization performance, the feasibility of such validation and evaluation was not consistently ascertained. One of the reasons provided by Huang (2001) is that Training Evaluation often focused only on the quantity of training provided and not the quality of training. To ascertain the Effectiveness of Training, a Training Evaluation is required. (Bramley & Kitson, 1994; Cheng and Ho, 2001; Tennant, Boonkrong, & Roberts, 2002). From the results of the training evaluation, the organization will then be able to ascertain more accurately whether the training conducted had been effective. Broad and Newstrom (1992) however, stated that for training to be effective, the skills and knowledge learnt during training must be transferred to the job. Huang (2001) mentioned that in most studies relating to training effectiveness, the focus was on establishing the Relationship between Training system or practices or factors (individual and organizational) with training effectiveness, with emphasis on objective, content, organizational factors, expenditures, duration of training, coverage of employees, delivery methods, profitability, growth and overall.
organization performance. Although there had been various studies (Brown, 2003; Carlson & Schmidt, 1999) that had used simple pre-post tests and experimental designs to evaluate training effectiveness, such studies were still relatively limited. Rossi and Freeman (1993) define Evaluation Research as “the systematic application of social Research procedures for assessing the conceptualization, design, implementation, and utility of ... programs” (p. 5). Evaluation is defined as a study designed and conducted to assist some audience to assess an object’s merit and worth. (Stufflebeam, 2000) One major model of evaluation was identified. This model, developed by Kirkpatrick in 1952, remains widely used today (ASTD, 1997). Boulmetis and Dutwin (2000) defined evaluation as the systematic process of collecting and analyzing data in order to determine whether and to what degree objectives were or are being achieved. Schalock (2001) defined Effectiveness Evaluation as the determination of the extent to which a program has met its stated performance goals and objectives.

2.1. *Kirkpatrick’s Evaluation of Training*

An Evaluation is a systematic process to determine the worth, value, or meaning of an activity or process. (Phillips, 1997) According to Kirkpatrick (1998) the Evaluation process consists of a series of four levels. The levels, in order, are reaction, learning, behaviours, and results respectively. The first level is the Reaction level in which the reactions of the trainees are understood to mean the way in which they perceive and subjectively evaluate the relevance and quality of the training. According to Kirkpatrick, every program should at least be evaluated at this level to provide for the improvement of a training program. At this level, Evaluation measures the satisfaction of the people who followed the training. Learning can be described as the extent to which the attitudes of the participants change, their knowledge increases or their skills are broadened as a consequence of the training. A Third Evaluation level is that of changes in job behaviour or performance. This involves studying the change in job behaviour which takes place as a result of the training. Level four evaluation attempts to assess training in terms of organizational results. Phillips (1991) stated the Kirkpatrick Model was probably the most well known framework for classifying areas of Evaluation. Survey results indicated the majority (81%) of HRD executives attached some level of importance to evaluation and over half (67%) used the Kirkpatrick Model. (ASTD, 1997) The Kirkpatrick Model was assessed as a valuable framework designed with four levels of measure to evaluate the effectiveness of an Educational training. The most influential framework for the evaluation of training programmes has come from Kirkpatrick, *Kirkpatrick’s* model follows a goal-based approach. (Dixon, 1996; Gorden, 1991; Phillips, 1991, 1997; Kirkpatrick, 1959)

3. Methodology:

3.1. *Research objectives:* The present research aims at studying Effectiveness of Job-Based Training in Eslamshahr University by Kirkpatrick’s Model.

3.2. *Research Questions:*

What is The Effectiveness of Training on four levels (Reactions, Learning, Behaviour and result) there? What Practical Suggestions can used to improve the Training Effectiveness of The proposed Research?
3.3. methodology:

The method employed in this study was descriptive-survey. The study aims at focusing on the nature of the training courses and their impact on the improvement of employees' and Teachers performance. The data used in the study were collected through questioners. The data analysis done through “descriptive statistic”. The statistical population consisted of (40) Employees, (30) teachers and (11) managers. The evaluable non-probabilistic sampling method was applied. The questionnaires were distributed among subjects. The questionnaires were designed on the basis of Likert (5) item scales.

4. Results:

Table(1): levels of Model and judgment

| Level | Indicators | subject | points | Judgment Level |
|-------|------------|---------|--------|----------------|
| 1     | Reaction   | 28      | 2.76   | almost acceptable |
| 2     | Learning   | 4       | 3.23   | almost acceptable |
| 3     | Behaviour  | 15      | 2.64   | almost acceptable |
| 4     | Result     | 12      | 2.53   | almost acceptable |
| Kirkpatrick Model | 59    | 3 Groups | 2.79   | almost acceptable |

5. Conclusion:

The Results indicated that Reaction Level(2.76), Learning(3.23), Behaviour(2.64) and Results Level(2.53), all of them almost acceptable and needed to seriously attention to Training effectiveness in the Eslamshahr University.

The findings of the research indicated that the training presented, have been affected, but this effect is not very dramatic in the four levels of Kirkpatrick Model. Defining factors such as training-based job, definition training-based of poor performance, defined training based on organization objectives, consider the needs of individual learners, Staff awareness of the objectives of training courses, Continuity of trainings, Application of training in the workplace and proper implementation of training can directly lead to improving the effectiveness Training. According to the results of research, training courses should be designed for each job regard to individual, vocational and organization needs. Training programs developed by the organization should be run for each person. Training should be conducted regularly and properly will lead to greater effectiveness. Finally, the effectiveness of training depends on well designing and implementation of Training, Learner Involvement, Learner Attitude change, provides opportunity to Application New skills and Knowledge in Workplace, Job Commitment, Top Managers views for Training, connection training to Organization's Vision and Strategies and so.

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