



Enhancing Effectiveness of Employees through Training and Development in the Health Care Department of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Pakistan: A Literature Review

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ABSTRACT

This paper is mainly concerned with improving the effectiveness of training and development within Health Department of provincial government Pakistan. For this purpose training and development practices in both developing and developed countries have been explored through the review of published literature. Based on literature review, this paper has to discuss the effectiveness of training and development program through primary research based on semi structured interviews and questionnaire in the concerned department. The findings clearly revealed that training and development approach is not systematic at all with a view of just a formality in the concerned department and the main barriers appeared to be organizational environment and the political intervention. On the basis of the findings and discussion, conclusion has been drawn and recommendations have been made to adopt the training and development model presented in the literature review which is necessary to improve employee effectiveness through such programs for strategic impact. Towards the end of the paper, future research design has been discussed briefly together with future research opportunities in the same field.

Keywords: Training and Development, Employees, Effectiveness, Health Department

JEL Classification: M000

1. INTRODUCTION

In today's dynamic world organizations whether for profit or none for profit are adopting new practices and procedures in order to compete successfully together with the need to utilize their resources effectively and efficiently (Wahab et al., 2014). One of the important resources of an organization is human resource who plays fairly significant role in the success of any organization in both public and private sector (Chughtai and Naeem, 2013). According to Mullins (2007) successful organizations emphasize the importance of human element in the organizational effectiveness and focuses on their development, satisfaction, commitment and motivation in order to achieve desired objectives. Mühlemeyer and Clarke (1997) indicate that in an organization human potential has become a major competitive factor which provides the organization with mid to long-term

success. This importance of human resource in the organization require organization to develop their employees up to the required standards where they are valued by organizations and according to Heraty and Morley (1998) modern organizations require following characteristics of employees, ability to learn and adapt to changing working situations, who conceptualize the organizational effectiveness through contribution of their role, who are capable of working without supervision, who possess qualities of problem solving and creative thinking.

These points raise the importance of human resources within an organization regardless of type which needs to be understood by organizations in today's competitive environment. In order to achieve best out of the employees, human resource department perform certain functions and one of which is training and development of the workforce (Huerta et al., 2006). According

to Huerta et al. (2006) the demand of the today's business environment requires the companies to adopt new and best human resource strategies within which the training and development works as a catalyst to respond to required organizational changes effectively.

Training and development of the workforce can play a vital role in the success of both public and private sector organizations (Ndulue, 2012). In the West, public and private sectors have realized this fact. But in developing nations like Pakistan, the public sector is neglected in this regard. Although, training and development is provided at some stages but it is not on regular basis which means that human resources are not regarded as important asset indicating a lack of strategic approach towards this important function of human resource management (HRM). Colbert (2004) points out that the role of HRM has become strategic in nature which emphasizes the importance of human resources in both the formulation as well in the implementation of strategies. While, the private sector organizations (multinationals) on the other hand is providing regular training programs for the development of its employees to meet the growing demands of technological changes in the competitive business environment.

This research paper is focused on the Health Department of Provincial Government of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), Pakistan. Previously, there has been less evidence of such research neither in the Health Department KP nor in any other public sector organization of Pakistan. Generally, people in Pakistan do not realize the importance of research practices which is vital in the progression of organizations to achieve maximum benefits within the available resources. Therefore, Pakistan being a developing nation lacks the availability of such research which is very important in the development of good organizational practices.

The author's interest in this study is based on two main reasons. First, is the author's professional background which is academic sector and this study will help author further to enhance his knowledge about training and development thereby providing opportunities to exploit the knowledge in the academic sector. Second, Pakistan is the author's home country and being a good citizen it is author quest to utilize the skills that he has developed in his professional career for the development of an under developed country. Thus, Pakistan needs to be more up to date to improve their Public health sector as people in Pakistan are poor in majority and cannot afford private sector health services all the time. Therefore this research paper will help Health Department of the provincial government to improve their training and development practices so that a well-trained and knowledgeable workforce can be made available within the existing setup and resources thereby providing better services to the community.

In the light of above statement, this research paper has following objectives which are aimed to answer specific research question.

1.1. Research Objectives

The main objective of the study is to study the employees' motivation towards training and development programs, together with impact related to lack of these programs, and the barriers

involved in the provision training and development programs in the current state of health department in KP.

1.2. Research Question

How can Human Resource Department play a strategic role in providing necessary training and development programs to employees within the Health Department KP?

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Training and development are two different terms which in the organizational context are used interchangeably together with education and various authors define them separately and or use them together as all these activities are coordinated and improve organizational performance as a whole (Aguinis and Kraiger, 2009; Gold et al., 2013; Laird, 1978). Training is defined as "the planned and systematic modification of behavior through learning events, programmes and instruction which enable individuals to achieve the levels of knowledge, skill and competence needed to carry out their work effectively," whereas, development as "the growth or realization of a person's ability and potential through provision of learning and educational experiences" (Armstrong, 2003. p. 526). Similarly, in simple words training and development is defined by Potts (1998, p. 45) as "the gaining of skills and extension of skills respectively."

Hill and Stewart (2000) quotes a comprehensive definition of training and development as "any activity that develops skills and/or knowledge, and/or behavior where activities may range from formal training courses run internally or externally, to informal on the job training by a supervisor. Also include activities such as shadowing, coaching, and mentoring."

Al-Khayyat and Elgamal (1997. p. 88) define training as "a planned learning system aimed at attitude and/or behavioral change equipping individuals with desired knowledge and skills in order to maximize his potential performance and therefore increases organizational productivity." (Salas et al., 2012) define training as the planned and systematic activities designed to promote the acquisition of knowledge (need to know), skills (need to do), and attitudes (need to feel).

Clarke (2006) further point out that in today's competitive environment there is need of learning more than the narrow approach towards employee knowledge and skill relevant of the job only which means focus needs to be broader than ever to achieve high results. Al-Khayyat and Elgamal (1997) figure out further that training is a short-term requirement of the organization whereas development involves the long-term perspective of the organizational and individual effectiveness. But some other scholars argue that development concerns both the organization and individual at present as well as future level (Al-Khayyat and Elgamal, 1997; Nadler and Wiggs, 1986).

Therefore, training and development can be used together as both terms are clearly linked with each other as according to Cole (2002) both training and development involve the learning of individuals to varying extent within the organization who

in turn acquire knowledge, skills, understanding and attitudes. Berge et al. (2002) present the same view by pointing training and development as critical mean to learning in the organizations which enhance knowledge, skill and attitude of the employees to become effective performers required to gain competitive edge. However, Al-Emadi and Marquardt (2007) point out further that training can bring such benefits depending on the perception of employees being trained.

Pettinger (2002) further supports that for employees to be effective they must be motivated and committed to learn and apply the learned knowledge and skills in their workplace.

This means that motivation is an important employee related factor towards the effectiveness of training and development programs because if employees are not motivated then they will not be able to acquire and use knowledge, skills and attitude required for their effectiveness.

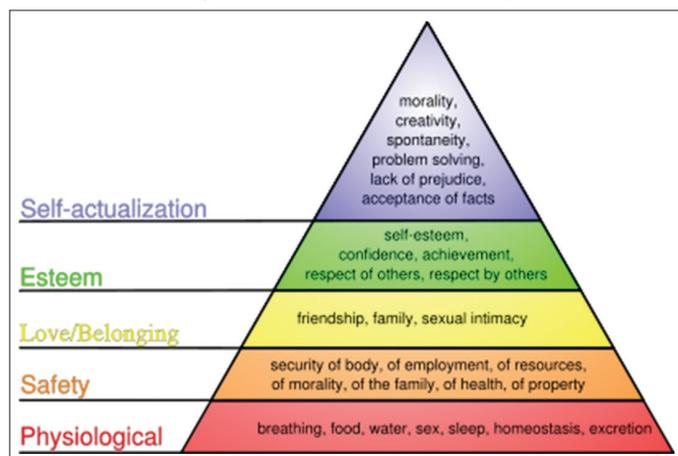
2.1. Motivation

According to Armstrong (2006, p. 5) motivation is “the process of encouraging people to apply their efforts and abilities in ways that will promote the attainment of the organization’s goals as well as the satisfaction of their own needs.” According to Tsai and Tai (2003) employees’ motivation towards training programs is an important factor in the effectiveness of such programs. They further assert that job utility and career utility greatly affects employees’ motivation towards training and development programs (Merchant, 2010). Following theories of motivations would help to understand effectiveness of training and development in the workplace environment.

2.2. Maslow’s Hierarchy of Needs

Maslow (1943) presented that motivation of human beings depend on the desire to achieve satisfaction of various levels of needs and he suggested these level of needs in hierarchy with the basic physiological need at the bottom going upward through safety, social and self-esteem level of needs. He further explains that individual tries to satisfy basic needs first and once these needs are fulfilled then he is motivated to satisfy next level needs in hierarchy (Torrington and Hall, 1991) (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Maslow’s need hierarchy



In training and development context it means what level of need is being satisfied with training and development programs or in other words do trainees perceive the outcomes worthwhile to satisfy their needs in the hierarchy? As mentioned by Monk (1996, p. 27) “adults are motivated to learn, as they experience needs and interests that learning will satisfy.” Motivation to learn is a function of individual characteristics, the work environment, and the training itself. It is suggested in one of the study that adults show higher motivation to learn when they perceive that training and development content is related to their job demands. More importantly, it is also known that when the trainee has greater motivation to learn before training, then their learning is greater and their reactions are positive (Knowles et al., 2005; Salas et al., 2012). In author’s view Pakistan being a developing nation is not economically stable enough to provide the people with enough job opportunities and good pay rates. Therefore, employees will be motivated towards training and development programs in order to secure their positions which will satisfy their lower level basic needs in the hierarchy. Monk (1996, p. 29) points out that “training satisfies a security need in the gaining of qualification, skill or knowledge that will help the trainee secure or keep a position.” However, employees need to apply the learned knowledge and skills which is important to prove the effectiveness of training and development programs. This can be explored by the expectancy theory which is as follow.

2.3. Expectancy Theory

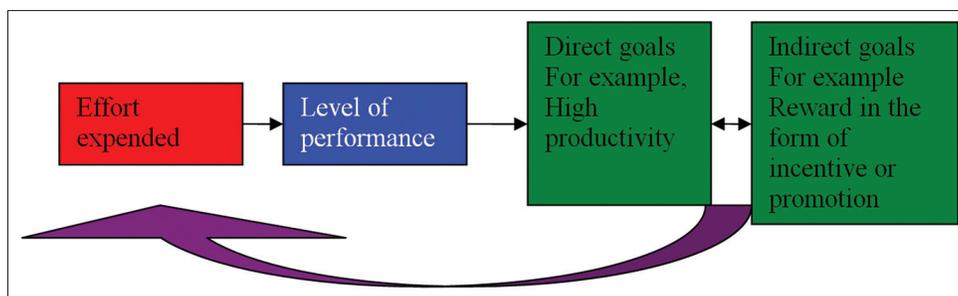
Vroom (1964) suggested that people will be motivated to act if they feel that their desired goals can be achieved through the action. He further explains that some goals are direct and some are indirect such as high performance and promotion or pay rise respectively (Figure 2).

In training and development context according to Elangovan and Karakowsky (1999) employees will be motivated to learn if they perceive the importance of training and development with respect to their expectation in the form of improved performance, reward, bonuses and promotion (Wahab et al., 2014). Similarly, According to Al-Emadi and Marquardt (2007) employees who perceive training beneficial will be more committed to organization. Furthermore, Brinkerhoff (2006) points out that “the best result that training alone can is an increase in capability i.e., the ability to perform.” He further explains that to achieve high level performance from employees there should be incentive or rewards together with proper feedback, direction and job aids which in turn drives effective performance. This means that employees who perceive training effective means of satisfying their lower level needs together with high level needs such as self-esteem or self-actualization will be more effective performers. Therefore, organizations whether private or public sector need to understand the importance of training and development of employees so that motivation factor should be taken into consideration in first place for the effectiveness of this important HR function.

3. IMPORTANCE OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN ORGANIZATIONS

According to Berge et al. (2002) the focus of training and development has been changed from programmed instruction

Figure 2: Expectancy theory



Adopted from Mullins (2007, p. 267)

to performance system analysis where learning takes the shape of competitive strategy in the world workplace which means improving organizational performance through well trained and knowledgeable workforce. Similarly Tai (2006) states that in today's rapidly changing business environment where technological changes are quick and will be continued, the individuals and organizations must be adaptable to compete successfully as technology changes the nature of work, and require employees to equip themselves with new knowledge and skills to perform their job satisfactorily which raises the importance of training and development. He further indicate that various researchers such as (Colquitt et al., 2000; Wasiluk, 2014) predict two important oncoming trends which are ageing workforce and adoption of new technologies and both of these require organizations to take training and development strategically important. Heraty and Morley (1998) figure out the same emerging challenge that 80 % of today's workforce will be faced with 80% of the new technology in the next 10 years as technological changes have been very significant in the last two decades and this brings challenge for the organizations to develop their workforce through a learning environment thereby increasing productivity in the organizations. Moreover, according to Huerta et al. (2006) training brings the positive attitude in the employees which promote the adaptation of long lasting required working practices which means training is a strategic factor. Therefore, in author's view training and development programs have strategic importance and should be taken seriously by organizations for the attainment of corporate objectives because if the organizations fail to realize the importance of providing proper training and development to their employees they will end up dealing with number of issues or problems.

4. SYSTEMATIC TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT MODEL

A strategic and systematic approach towards training and development can be presented in the model shown in Figure 3 that has been adapted from the macro model of training and development originally presented by the Al-Khayyat and Elgamal (1997). Few of the input factors have been changed for the purpose of simplicity and understanding as the basic meaning and functioning remains same. For example, in case of Human Resource Development (HRD) perspective, which according to Al-Khayyat and Elgamal (1997) is management perception about the importance of the role of training and development activities within

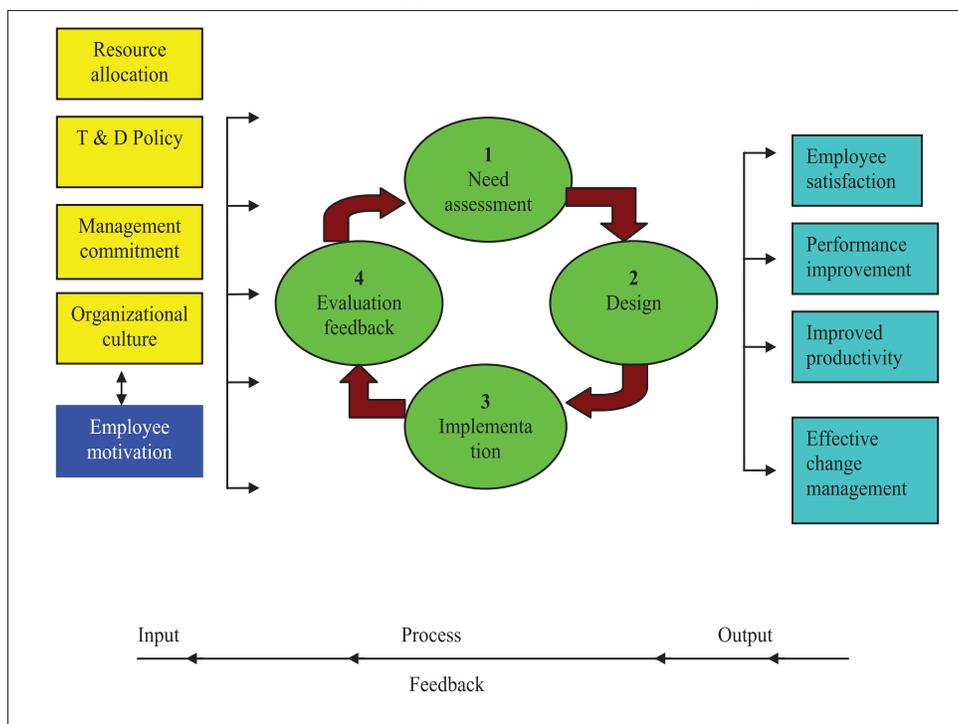
the organization, the term management commitment has been used. In other words, management commitment will be absent unless they realize the importance of training and development in the long-term organizational success. In addition to this an employee perspective has been added as an input factor to the original model because without employee motivation towards training and development programs desired outcomes of such programs cannot be achieved as mentioned by Elangovan and Karakowsky (1999) that training will be only effective and beneficial if employees are motivated to learn and transfer the learned knowledge and skills to workplace (Grossman and Salas, 2011).

The model above shows a complete system approach towards training and development process which emphasize that training and development is an ongoing process rather than a single step activity (Al-Khayyat and Elgamal, 1997).

The input factors affect the whole process which is required for the proper need assessment, design of training activities according to need, implementation of training programs and evaluation through proper methods, and the whole process should be evaluated on the basis of feedback from the outcomes (Al-Khayyat and Elgamal, 1997). Therefore, to achieve the benefits of above model organizations need to have a competent HR department which fulfills the input requirements such as long-term HR policies, allocating proper resources to carry out planned training and development activities successfully, management commitment and knowledge of importance of the whole process, and employee motivation towards training and development programs otherwise these input factors can be barriers towards achieving the outcomes. However, before going in to details of the input factors it would be useful to define Pakistan national culture which ultimately affects these factors. Hofstede (1980) define national culture in terms of four factors such as individualism, power distance, uncertainty avoidance and masculinity.

The important factor here is power distance which according to Hofstede (1980) "measures the extent to which less powerful members of the society accept the unequal distribution of power and in organizations this is the degree of centralization of authority and exercise of autocratic leadership" Torrington and Hall (1991, p. 112). Now Pakistan can be categorized as high power distance culture where there is unequal distribution of power and the public sector organizations have formal structure and status conscious management leading to inflexible working environment for individuals.

Figure 3: A systematic approach towards training and development



Adopted from Al-Khayyat and Elgamal (1997. p. 90)

5. TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT POLICY

According to Mühlemeyer and Clarke (1997) that organizations in order to get benefited from training and development require strategic planning of training and development process. This means that HR department need to have a clear training and development policy which according to Heraty and Morley (1998) organization's philosophy towards employee development and governs priorities, standards and scope of its training activities. He further explains that such policy provides the organizations with the frame work for whole process. Holden (1991) points out further those organizations in order to act strategically need to have well written training objectives in their HR strategies which emphasize the training importance with respect to organizational goals. Olaniyan and Ojo (2008) suggest that systematic training and development policies based on defined corporate objectives improves organizational effectiveness.

In author's view Public sector organizations in Pakistan are bureaucratic and centralized in nature and every change in the policies and procedures need to be authorized by the Federal Government. In case there is not a well written documented training and development policy based on the corporate objectives of the Health department KP, there may be an approval problem in the politically unstable condition of the country.

6. RESOURCE ALLOCATION

Al-Khayyat and Elgamal (1997) suggests that availability of resources such as physical and financial are very important factor in the provision of systematic training and development.

Pettinger (2002) further supports that organization need to be committed towards the allocation of financial resources for training and development programs and proper budgets should be allocated based on the training and development needs. According to Niazi (2011) resources will be well allocated if the training and development policy is incorporated in the corporate objectives of the organizations and in situation of any external change such as recession training and development budgets will be least affected. Similarly, in author's view many projects in Pakistan suffer because of political environment which is not very supportive in terms of stability and it will affect any training and development initiative if it is not well documented and strategically incorporated in the organizational objectives. Therefore, budgets will be likely affected as Pakistan being a developing nation is not self-sufficient in the resources in first place.

7. ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE

According to Torrington and Hall (1991) organizational culture defines the norms and values generally held in the organization about working, behaving and treating each other (Daft, 2014; Sokro, 2012). Organizational culture is an important factor in the training and development of employees as according to Elangovan and Karakowsky (1999) an organizational culture where employees are encouraged and rewarded for their performance, and provides opportunities for their development will have a positive impact on employee motivation and effectiveness of training and development (Manzoor, 2012; Sokro, 2012). Furthermore, Lok and Crawford (2000) figure out that supportive organizational culture facilitate motivation and organizational commitment of employees, whereas, bureaucratic control within

the organizational culture negatively affects such benefits (Cho and Kwon, 2005).

Therefore, in author's view as the public sector organizations in Pakistan are bureaucratic in operations where employees have to follow tight rules and regulations in their work routine could pose hinders to employee development and encouragement leading to decreased motivation and dissatisfaction.

It can be concluded that in the Western world the training and development is more advanced than developing nations including Pakistan where the trend has to follow as more and more multinational firms are moving to developing countries and bringing best HR practices thereby improving employee development and organizational effectiveness as indicated by Namazie and Frame (2007) that multinational firms influences HR strategies such as learning and training of local employees to new management practices and continuous development.

8. MAJOR FINDINGS

This review helped to explore both employees and management perception of training and development programs which lead to identification of various new insights. However, these revelations are based on management's visible response and their openness towards their weaknesses which cannot be expected in the high power distance culture where people are very status conscious. These new insights include lack of performance appraisal clarity and political influence intervention in the health department. In addition to these, findings from the primary research also confirms various themes identified in the literature review such as issues related to lack of training and development, barriers responsible for the lack of training and development, and the strategic role of HRM in the provision of training and development. Further, the employees' perception has also been generalized in both the literature and primary research findings. This section will reflect on the findings and literature regarding these aspects of training and development required to achieve research objectives and answer the research question which would in turn help health department KP to improve their performance. The following topics are directly related to the aims and objectives of the study which try to answer the research question comprehensively.

This current review of literature on training and development also helped to understand and explore the term from various perspectives such as importance of training and development together with issues caused by its lack. Furthermore, literature review also emphasizes on the importance of following themes such as:

- Motivation: Employees' perception about training and development programs which is essential in the effectiveness of training and development and provides the theoretical background for primary research to be conducted at employee level.
- Identifying best practices: Literature review also helped to explore the current trend and practices in both developing and developed nations which emphasize the importance of strategic role of this important HR function with a

systematic approach in today's rapidly changing technological environment.

- Barriers to achieve best practice approach: A strategic model of training and development has been adapted and presented taking a system approach which helped identify input factors required to follow a systematic training and development function. These input factors would help to identify the barriers in Health Department of the Provincial Government of KP, Pakistan through primary data collection.

9. CONCLUSION

It was observed through the review of literature that organizations can only be competent and successful in today's turbulent environment if they perceive their employees as a strategic asset which needs to be developed through essential training and development programs. This leads to strategic approach of human resource department towards training and development programs in a systematic manner which requires organizational climate that facilitates such approach. The main purpose of the study was to improve employee effectiveness through training and development programs in the current practice within the health department KP. It has been seen that provision of training and development programs in the health department KP is not based on strategic and systematic approach at all. However, it has been observed that top management within the health department KP is well aware of the importance and need of training and development but still fails to adopt a strategic and systematic approach towards these programs. Thus, leading to observation that in order to follow a strategic approach the Health department KP needs to overcome certain barriers which pose hinders in the whole process.

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