

Impact of Training Programmes in HRD Activities in PSU : A Case Study

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Abstract

This paper is based on a case study carried out at APL, Namrup of Assam, India regarding the training programmes and its impact on the ongoing HRD Process. The study reveals that the employees are aware of the training facilities offered by the company. It also explains that training has impact on workers' attitude, which means the employees feel to work for the benefit of the organization if they find training to be for their benefit. If the subjects of training were pertinent to the employees' interest they find the training programmes to be more interesting and work more enthusiastically towards the benefit of the organization. The employees want the training programmes to be more specific towards their job so that they can utilize that on their jobs.

"No organisation can depend on genius; the supply is always scarce and reliable. It is the test of an organisation to make ordinary human beings perform better than they seem capable of, to bring out whatever strength there is in its members, and to use each one's strength to help all the others perform. The purpose of an organisation is to enable common people to do uncommon things."

– Peter F. Drucker

To enable a person to do some work, the organisation should brush up his skills or knowledge. This is very much essential to cope up with the changing environment of the organisation. This highlights the importance of training in the employees' life as well for the organisation. Training programmes might be away in which the workforce enhance their efficiency towards their work. A training programme helps the staff to understand the new way of doing the work (if any changes are

brought about in the working procedure) or helps them to improve their working concepts more clearly. This way the workforce can contribute more towards the productivity of the organisation. And the productivity of workforce is essential for the success of an organisation. Therefore, training has a great importance and it has an impact on productivity.

Training refers to the process of imparting specific skills, abilities and knowledge to an employee. Training is short-term process of utilizing a systematic and organized procedure by which non-managerial personnel learn technical knowledge and skills for a definite purpose (Mamoria, 1991). An employee who undergoes training is presumed to have some formal education. Education means to have some theoretical learning in classrooms. No training programme is complete without an element of education. It is to be noted that training is offered to operatives.

A programme of training becomes essential for the purpose of meeting the specific problems of a particular organization arising out of the new lines of production, changes in design, the demands of changes in economy, the quality of materials processed, individual adjustments, promotions, career development, changes in the nature of job and changes in the volume of business. O. Jeff Harris, Jr. observed, "Training of any kind should have as its objective the redirection or improvement of behaviour so that the performance of the trainee becomes more useful and productive for himself and for the organization of which he is a part. Training normally concentrates on the improvement of *operative skills* (the basic skills related to the successful completion of a task), *interpersonal skills* (how to relate satisfactorily to others), *decision-making skills* (how to arrive at the most satisfactory causes of action), or a combination of these."

The present study has been carried out with a case study of Trainings provided to the Production Department of Assam Petrochemicals Limited, Namrup — a state owned PSU in Assam. As the title suggests, the Case Study Method of Research has been followed here. The unique advantage of this method is that it can investigate into the causal relationships of complex phenomena. Moreover, it can be employed in studying the general characteristics of phenomena of any particular class or group. The generally accepted steps of case study method are : (a) Selection of cases, (b) Determining status of phenomenon, (c) Formation of hypothesis, (d) Collection of data, (e) Tentative diagnosis, (f) Instituting remedy, and (g) Follow-up rechecking (Kothari, 2006). For the purpose of this study, training as a process of imparting specific skills, abilities and knowledge to an employee has been considered. After training, the employees are ready to take more challenge arising out of the changes occurred in the environment and has linkages on their

respective jobs. For some individuals challenges bring the best out of them. They are ambitious, seek after goals and hence prefer a challenge, which motivates them. Some employees utilize the knowledge and experience from the training and put it into proper use. The present study has been designed to find out how far the training has contributed towards HRD activities in the organization. Since negligible studies could able to establish any direct relation between Training and HRD in PSUs in Assam, the present study does not opt to frame any null or alternative hypothesis. The paper, therefore, proceeds with a brief description of the methodology adopted for the study, followed by a section where the analysis and interpretation of the collected data has been highlighted. The subsequent section summarizes the study.

SECTION-I

METHODOLOGY

For the purpose of the present study, simple random sampling method has been used. The required data has been collected through a survey questionnaire served on the randomly selected sample. The respondents were the employees of APL who received some form of training during their work life at APL. The questionnaire consisted of a set of pre-conceived questions. The questionnaire was designed into two parts : Part-A and Part-B. Part-A consisted of general information of the employees. Part-B is further divided into three sections : Section-I, Section-II and Section-III. Each section consisted of three questions. Section-I assesses whether the employees are aware of the various training programmes offered by the company. Section-II finds out whether the training offered by the company had any impact on the employees' work behaviour. Section-III is meant to obtain suggestions from the employees about what or how they want the training programmes to be. The data has been collected during the period May-July, 2008. The questions were rated on a five-point semantic scale, i.e., in an order of +2, + 1, 0, -1 and -2.

The data has been collected from the production department of APL. The production department constituted of 156 employees. This particular department was selected for the study because employees of this department were often sent for training or provided in-house training. A total of 156 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents, out of which only 112 responded positively.

SECTION-II

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The analysis and interpretation of the data has been done using a five-

point Semantic differential scale. The analysis and interpretation of the data obtained from the questionnaire has been furnished below :

ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM SECTION-I OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Table 1
Awareness of the Training Facilities Offered

Value in Semantic Scale (V)	Respondents/Frequency (f)	V × f
Strongly Agree +2	44	88
Agree + 1	56	56
Neutral 0	6	0
Disagree -1	6	-6
Strongly Disagree -2	0	0

$$\Sigma f = 112 \qquad \Sigma V \times f = 138$$

$$\text{Therefore, weighted average mean is} = \frac{\Sigma V \times f = 138}{\Sigma f = 112} \\ = 1.23$$

The value of awareness of the training facilities of the respondents is 1.23, which signifies that the employees agree that they are aware of the training facilities offered by the company.

Table 2
Utility of Training for Better Understanding of the Job Requirements

Value in Semantic Scale (V)	Respondents/Frequency (f)	V × f
Strongly Agree +2	48	96
Agree + 1	46	46
Neutral 0	8	0
Disagree -1	4	-4
Strongly Disagree -2	6	-12

$$\Sigma f = 112 \qquad \Sigma V \times f = 126$$

$$\text{Therefore, weighted average mean is} = \frac{\Sigma V \times f = 126}{\Sigma f = 110} \\ = 1.13$$

The value that is calculated from the data given by the employees regarding training helps them better understanding of the job requirements is 1.13. This can

be interpreted that the employees seem to be agreeing to the fact that training helps them better understanding of the job requirements.

Table 3
Utility of Training for Acquiring Specified Approaches/Skills

Value in Semantic Scale (V)	Respondents/Frequency (f)	V × f
Strongly Agree +2	26	52
Agree + 1	66	66
Neutral 0	8	0
Disagree -1	2	-2
Strongly Disagree -2	10	-20

$$\Sigma f = 112 \qquad \Sigma V \times f = 96$$

$$\text{Therefore, weighted average mean is } = \frac{\Sigma V \times f = 96}{\Sigma f = 112}$$

$$= 0.86$$

The value that is calculated for training helped the employees to acquire specified approaches/skills on techniques, which they can apply on their job is 0.86. It can be interpreted that the employees are less likely to agree to the given fact.

Interpretation of Section-I : From this section, it has been observed that most of the employees (90%) are aware of the training activities that are provided to them by the company. The respondents (88%) also agree to the fact that the training provided to them helps them in understanding their job requirements. The respondents (81%) further agree that such training programmes help them to acquire specified approaches/skills, which they can apply on their job. Thus, it can be said that the respondents are agreeing to the fact that they can assess appropriate information required for their job.

ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM SECTION-II OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Table 4
Impact of Training on Workers' Attitude

Value in Semantic Scale (V)	Respondents/Frequency (f)	V × f
Strongly Agree +2	40	80
Agree + 1	66	66
Neutral 0	4	0
Disagree -1	0	0
Strongly Disagree -2	2	-4

$$\Sigma f = 112 \qquad \Sigma V \times f = 142$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Therefore, weighted average mean is} &= \frac{\sum V \times f = 142}{\sum f = 112} \\ &= 1.27 \end{aligned}$$

The value is obtained to be 1.27 from the data collected from the employees. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the employees closely agree to the fact that training has impact on workers' attitude.

Table 5

The Relevance of the Topics of Training

Value in Semantic Scale (V)	Respondents/Frequency (f)	V × f
Strongly Agree +2	22	44
Agree + 1	62	62
Neutral 0	14	0
Disagree -1	10	-10
Strongly Disagree -2	4	-8

$$\Sigma f = 112$$

$$\Sigma V \times f = 88$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Therefore, weighted average mean is} &= \frac{\sum V \times f = 88}{\sum f = 112} \\ &= 0.78 \end{aligned}$$

The value of whether the subjects of training were pertinent to the employees' interest is 0.78. Therefore, it can be interpreted that the employees feel interested to learn more during their training period.

Table 6

Better Benefit after Training Programme

Value in Semantic Scale (V)	Respondents/Frequency (f)	V × f
Strongly Agree +2	16	32
Agree + 1	60	60
Neutral 0	26	0
Disagree -1	6	-6
Strongly Disagree -2	4	-8

$$\Sigma f = 112$$

$$\Sigma V \times f = 78$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Therefore, weighted average mean is} &= \frac{\sum V \times f = 78}{\sum f = 112} \\ &= 0.69 \end{aligned}$$

The value is 0.69 for whether the employees got better recognition/appreciation from their superiors after the training programme. So, it can be interpreted

that some of the employees after having training got recognition from their superiors in the form of appreciation.

Interpretation of Section-II : From this section, it can be interpreted that most of the employees (94%) believe that training has impact on their attitude towards doing their work. The subjects of the training programmes were pertinent to the interest of the employees (74%). As many as 68% of the employees are agreeing that they got better recognition from their superiors after attending the training programmes. This shows training has almost a positive impact on the employees' attitude so they feel more reluctant to do their work which have a great impact on the productivity.

ANALYSIS OF DATA FROM SECTION-III OF THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Table 7
The Effectiveness of the Trainer

Value in Semantic Scale (V)	Respondents/Frequency (f)	V × f
Strongly Agree +2	18	36
Agree + 1	60	60
Neutral 0	22	0
Disagree -1	4	-4
Strongly Disagree -2	8	-16

$$\Sigma f = 112$$

$$\Sigma V \times f = 76$$

$$\text{Therefore, weighted average mean is } = \frac{\Sigma V \times f = 76}{\Sigma f = 112}$$

$$= 0.67$$

The value for whether the trainer helped the employees wholeheartedly during their training period is 0.67. This can be interpreted that the employees want their trainer to be more co-operative.

Table 8
Effective Duration of Training Course

Value in Semantic Scale (V)	Respondents/Frequency (f)	V × f
Strongly Agree +2	34	68
Agree + 1	48	48
Neutral 0	20	0
Disagree -1	10	-10
Strongly Disagree -2	0	0

$$\Sigma f = 112$$

$$\Sigma V \times f = 106$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Therefore, weighted average mean is} &= \frac{\sum V \times f = 106}{\sum f = 112} \\ &= 0.95 \end{aligned}$$

The value for the duration of training courses should be enhanced is 0.95. The employees feel that the training duration, which is prevalent at present is appropriate for them. However, they also want that the training programmes should be enhanced.

Table 9
Need for Specific, Subject-oriented Training

Value in Semantic Scale (V)	Respondents/Frequency (f)	V × f
Strongly Agree +2	54	108
Agree + 1	50	50
Neutral 0	8	0
Disagree -1	0	0
Strongly Disagree -2	0	0

$$\sum f = 112$$

$$\sum V \times f = 158$$

$$\begin{aligned} \text{Therefore, weighted average mean is} &= \frac{\sum V \times f = 158}{\sum f = 112} \\ &= 1.41 \end{aligned}$$

The value for the training programmes should be more specific, subject-oriented is 1.41. This means the employees strongly agree to this fact, i.e., they want that the training programmes should include topics related to their job.

Interpretation of Section-III : This section brings out that 69% of the respondents were getting full help from their trainer during their training period. The employees are more interested in training programmes, which are specific, and subject-oriented. They also feel that the training duration should be enhanced. The section provides facts through which suggestions are provided at the end of the project.

So, in a nutshell, the following are some of the major findings obtained from the study :

- It has been observed that the employees are aware of the training facilities offered by the company.
- The employees agree that training helps them better understanding of the job requirements.

- The employees agree to the fact that training helps them to acquire specified approaches/skills on techniques, which they can apply on their job.
- The study reveals that training has impact on workers' attitude, which means the employees feel to work for the benefit of the organization if they find training to be for their benefit.
- If the subjects of training were pertinent to the employees' interest they find the training programmes to be more interesting and work more enthusiastically towards the benefit of the organization.
- The employees agree that the trainer helped them wholeheartedly but they are not happier to the extent that they want the co-operation from the employees to be.
- The employees want that the duration of training course should be enhanced for they feel that the duration for training programmes at present is not sufficient.
- The employees want the training programmes to be more specific towards their job so that they can utilize that on their jobs.

SECTION-III

EPILOGUE AND SUGGESTIONS

Training has a great impact on the various HRM activities in the present era. Through proper training to its employees an organization can increase its performance very well. The journey throughout the whole project was not easy, yet it carries some fruitful results. It was found in the study that the training programmes that they undergo often influence the performance of the employees of APL. They got motivated or demotivated by the role, what or how the trainers play. Even though it was observed that the employees are satisfied with the prevalent training pattern, but there are certain loopholes also which need to be rectified to increase the productivity. The top management is lacking in giving formal performance feedback to the employees at a regular interval. So, the organization needs improvement in some aspects to increase productivity and profitability for the organization as well as for the employees.

SUGGESTIONS

Based on the study the following suggestions can be put forward :

- Since the employees feel that training has an impact on workers' attitude, it is very essential for the management to design the training programmes

in such a way that these foster a positive impact on the employees.

- The subjects of the training should be framed in such a way that the employees/trainees find them to be interesting.
- The trainer plays a major role in training. So, the trainer from the management should be more co-operative towards the trainees. This helps the employees to learn more from the training.
- The management should try and enhance the duration of the training programmes as per need of the employees and also try to frame such programmes in a specific way.
- The training programmes need to be arranged more frequently.
- The training programmes are of stereotype in nature. So, the content of such programmes should be modified.
- The management should make provision for a full time trainer.
- The outside training provided to the employees should also be made frequent.
- To remove the gap between the management and employees, the management must provide workshop to interact with the employees and listen their grievances, if any.
- An equal opportunity to all the eligible employees interested in attending training programmes should be provided.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

As the questionnaires were distributed only to the employees of production department, hence, the scope is limited to a greater extent. Moreover, the information given by the respondents may be biased due to various reasons resulting in the possibility of errors in the outcomes of the study. Non-uniformity among opinions and doubtful decisions may hamper in finding out the facts. Some of the respondents were found reluctant towards the statements rating and since maximum questions were framed to gather the qualitative data and for that the respondents interpretations may vary.

IMPLICATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

This paper argued that training perceived as a distinctive set of emotional abilities may offer a far more valuable means for determining the true potential of training in the workplace. Furthermore, workplace-learning interventions may well be a far more effective means for developing some emotional abilities than training

because of their contextualized characteristics. This suggests some key areas for future research within the HRD field. First, we need studies that provide data on the extent to which differing emotional abilities can be developed through training interventions. Such studies should clearly detail the content and duration of such training and identify which abilities, if any, show any change. If the central premise put forward above is correct, we should expect to see only partial evidence for the impact of training on particular measures. Studies also need to be developed that test the impact of training where the content has sought to recognize the contextualized nature of some emotional abilities and then determine training effects. This will require training programmes that are specifically tailored to organizations where the content of training requires first identifying the particular norms and rules in the workplace that govern the overall management. Such studies will clearly need to develop specific measures relating to particular training abilities as they pertain to the workplace context. Research examining the impact of workplace learning methods on training abilities is also needed. Coaching, for example, may be able to provide individuals with information on organizational norms relating to management and help them to develop their range of coping strategies for dealing with different situations. Future research should also attempt to evaluate team-based learning approaches that focus on discussing rules regarding training within the workplace context and facilitate a more open discussion on the content of work life. An explicit focus on comparing different HRD interventions and determining their effects is, therefore, required. With a greater understanding of the nature of particular emotional abilities and the effectiveness of different interventions, we should then be in a better position for tracking how the development of such abilities may then affect other work and job-related outcomes. Finally, we need studies that take into account the significance of different workplace contexts and the individuals within them.

The salience of the impact of training on the jobs performed and the nature of the individuals performing these jobs may well be important factors determining effectiveness of particular interventions. This is particularly important because, up to this study, the arguments proposed here regarding the potential effectiveness of training for developing abilities are based on the limited data so far obtained within PSU settings. It may well be that the nature of these jobs and the people working in these roles influence the extent to which certain HRD interventions are more effective under certain contingencies.

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ANNEXURE 1

Training Activities of APL

Training at APL has a great impact on the employees. There are different types of training programmes practised in APL. These are as follows :

1. Apprentice Training – This is a government sponsored training programme. The training programmes are sponsored either by Directorate of Employment and Craftsmen Training or Directorate of Technical Education also known as Board of Practical Training. The trainee is known as apprentice and he is given a programme of assignments according to a pre-determined schedule, which provides for efficient training in trade skills. It is usually for a period of one to two years. The trainees are given stipend for their training period. Half of the stipend given to the trainees is reimbursed by the government. Apprentice training at APL is, again, of three types.
 - (a) Trade apprentice, sponsored by Directorate of Employment and Craftsmen Training.
 - (b) Technician apprentice, sponsored by Directorate of Technical Education.
 - (c) Graduate apprentice, sponsored by Directorate of Technical Education.
2. The second type of training programme is of two types :
 - (a) Management training, which is Company training for BE, MBAs, etc. A stipend of Rs. 10,000/- is given to the trainees during their training period. The Company bears the entire stipend.
 - (b) Operative training is for employees who work at the operative level.

3. Employees' Training – This is provided to employees at all the levels. It is of two types :
 - (a) In-house training programmes, in which the trainers from outside frequently visit the company and interact with the employees to motivate and find out their grievances at work. This type of training is given to brush up the employees' skills. More is the training given to the employees; more is their performance of work. Frequent lectures, seminars, case studies, etc. are provided to the employees. The case studies are about the current existing problems of the company, which may be technical or non-technical. In this study, emphasis has been given on this type of training.
 - (b) Outside training, in which the employees are sent to outside places to obtain training in the form of a workshop related to a particular topic. They are most of the time sent to Bramhaputra Valley Fertilizer Corporation Ltd. in Namrup or any other place outside Namrup like Guwahati.
4. Non-Stipend Training – It is a welfare kind of training where trainees are not paid any stipend. The trainees are mostly students. The main objective behind providing this type of training is to develop the experience and knowledge of the students about the company or its working.

