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STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

OBJECTIVES

HYPOTHESES

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

RESULTS & DISCUSSION

FINDINGS

RECOMMENDATIONS/SUGGESTIONS

CONCLUSIONS

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ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING NEEDS AND EVALUATION OF TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS IN EMPLOYEES OF SELECT ITes COMPANIES AT BANGALORE

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ABSTRACT

The ITes industry, which is a rapidly growing industry in India, is not an exclusive of the industry affected by the Innovative HR trends, moreover it is the mainly the cause and effected industry for the innovations in HRM. It is necessary to upgrade and restructure every time to withstand and face the situations. Training is one such instrument which can be used to upgrade. Training is the process of acquiring and improving the skills, knowledge, and attitudes required for job performance; it is an investment an organization makes in itself. While training can take many forms, the desired end is generally the same: improved performance of job-related tasks. Further, the quality of the training output is only as good as the training data input. The purpose of evaluating training is quite simply to establish whether the training objectives have been met and, if so, whether this has resulted in solving the problem addressed by those objectives. This can be done with the help of various techniques and the choice of the suitable technique is dependent on the nature of the organization and area of training. It concludes that training is only a comma not a full stop. Training is an investment not an expense. Despite any recession, it should be maintained, as a continuous process to ensure organizations has to remain competitive and productive.

KEYWORDS

ITes, Training Need Assessment, Training Effectiveness Evaluation

INTRODUCTION

Human Resource Management is concerned with the planning, acquisition, training and developing of human beings for getting the desired objectives and goals set by the organization. The employees have to be transformed according to the organizations' & global needs with the help of an organized activity called Training. Since training involves time, effort and money an organization should be very careful while designing a training program. The objectives and need for training should be clearly identified and the method or type of training should be chosen according to the needs and objectives established. Once this is done accurately, an organization can evaluate the training program so as to know whether the amount and time invested on training has turned into an investment or it was a total expenditure for an organization.

The training need assessment and evaluation of its effectiveness is a critical activity for the training and development function. Designing a training and development program starts with the need assessment and ends with evaluation of its effectiveness. To be effective and efficient, all training programs must start with a needs assessment. Long before any training occurs, the training manager must determine the who, what, when, where, why and how of training. Conducting an assessment is a way to collect information that can be used to decide what type of development will be perceived as relevant and useful. An assessment enables a conversation to take place that helps in answering questions like what skills and knowledge are required to be more effective.

To know the success of the training, evaluation is essential. The evaluation of training forms the ending part of the training cycle. It is the function of evaluation to assess whether the learning objectives originally identified have been satisfied and any deficiency rectified. Evaluation is the analysis and comparison of actual progress versus prior plans, oriented toward improving plans for future implementation. It is essentially required because training cost is very significant in any business. Most of the organizations are prepared to incur these cost because they expect that their business to benefit from employees development and progress. Whether business has benefited can be assessed by the evaluation of training.

Today's diversified workforce in knowledge-based industries such as the ITes witnesses its evolving job demands and its changing skills and knowledge that are quite different from manufacturing industries. Today's society is enmeshed in an information revolution and the goal is not to train workforce to adapt to existing jobs, rather the goal is to enable the workforce to adapt to changing jobs. Hence, it is very essential to know the training need of the employees in the ITes sector as well as the effectiveness of the training as perceived by those employees.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

STATEMENT OF RESEARCH PROBLEM

The Indian ITes sector has witnessed significant transformation over the past decade. Indian Government is making assiduous efforts for promoting ITes. The country is well positioned to derive benefits from the ITes market and become a key hub for ITes services. It is true that there is no shortage of human resource for the ITes in India but at the same time we should also required to accept the truth that, the eligible and highly equipped human resource are in scarce. Hence, the training for the human resource for making them well equipped and to fill the gap of their performance level is very essential. All the ITes companies are investing a lot for training and development of the human resource. Nevertheless, it will not ensure the overcoming the gap in performance. The right training, for right person at right time is the need of the hour. Hence, the present study of "Assessment of training needs and Evaluation of training effectiveness in employees of select ITes at Bangalore" is an effort to minimize the training cost and maximizing the positive results. This research problem has been further simplified in the following specific research questions. i.e.,

1. What are the techniques and policies adopted by the ITes companies to assess the training needs of the employees of different categories? And what is the opinion of employees about those techniques and policies?
2. What are the tools and techniques implemented by the ITes companies to measure the effectiveness of the training on employees?
3. What suggestions can be offered to strengthen the policies and practices of assessment of training need and evaluation of its effectiveness in employees?

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To study the techniques and policies adopted by the ITes companies to assess the training needs of the employees.
2. To assess the tools and techniques implemented by the ITes companies to measure the effectiveness of the training on employees.

3. To offer suggestions to strengthen the policies and practices of assessment of training need and evaluation of its effectiveness in employees of ITes companies.

RESEARCH HYPOTHESIS

1. H0: While assessing the training need ITes companies are not giving importance for the needs of the individual employees.
H1: ITes companies are assessing the training need based on the analysis of individual employees.
2. H0: Training objectives of the ITes companies is independent of the need assessment practices.
H1: Training objectives of the ITes companies tend to influence the need assessment practices.
3. H0: Training evaluation practices of ITes companies are not influenced by the training objectives.
H1: Training evaluation practices of ITes companies are influenced by the training objectives.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The present study confines its analysis with regard to the assessment of training need and evaluation of training effectiveness in employees of only 50 popular ITes companies situated in Bangalore. The term ITes companies as used in this study restricts itself to the IT enabled service companies which includes BPO, KPO, Call centre, LPO and Medical transcription and does not include the IT companies.

Again, the study confines itself to the training need assessment and evaluation of training effectiveness, which does not include the executive development programs, and other stages of training process. The study covers a period of 3 years from 2007-2008 to 2009-2010.

METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

The study is based on the survey method. Two sets of questionnaires (one for employees of ITes companies and another for HR manager/team leader/trainer) are prepared to get comprehensive information about the training need assessment and evaluation of training effectiveness.

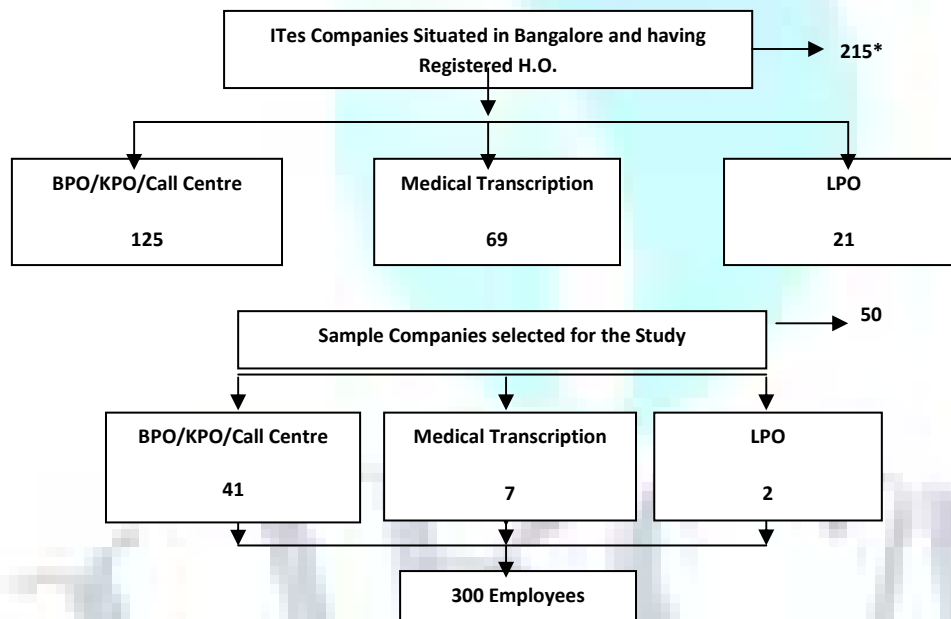
SOURCES OF THE DATA

In this study, both primary and secondary data has been collected and used. Primary data was collected from the employees, H.R. managers and from the trainers of the ITes companies through personal interviews and questionnaires. Secondary data has been collected from the published and unpublished reports by the companies, authorities, authors and magazines, business dailies, internet etc, and various institutions, which directly or indirectly deal with the ITes companies to strengthen the analysis and arguments.

TECHNIQUES OF DATA COLLECTION

In this study convenience sampling method is adopted coupled with the judgment. The reason behind this method is the informants. The informants are companies, employees and managers. There are 215 ITes companies are situated in Bangalore and having their registered head office.

SAMPLING FRAME FOR CONDUCTING SURVEY



Out of the 50 respondent ITes companies belonging to the 3 different categories, 300 employees have been selected as the sample respondents. The questionnaire has been given to the 300 respondents, but the reply received only from 278 respondents, out of which 6 were incomplete and 2 were did not attended any training program yet. Hence, the valid response is only from 270 respondents, the profile of which has been given in the following tables.

TABLE 1: CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SAMPLE

Variable	Classification	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Age (years)	21-25	138	51.1
	26-30	114	42.2
	31-35	15	5.6
	36-40	3	1.1
Gender	Male	192	71
	Female	78	29
Marital Status	Married	67	25
	Unmarried	203	75
Educational level	Below Graduate	30	11
	Graduate	72	27
	Post Graduate	164	60
	Professional	4	2
Nature of work	Accounts	72	27
	Finance	67	25
	Eng & Design	77	28
	Medical Transcription	42	16
	Legal Processing	12	4

RESEARCH ANALYSIS

TABLE NO. 2: INFLUENCE OF TRAINING OBJECTIVES ON TRAINING NEED ASSESSMENT METHOD ADOPTED BY THE RESPONDENT COMPANIES

Training Objectives	TNA Method						Total
	Performance Appraisal	Peer appraisal	Competency assessment	Skill & Knowledge audit	Written test	Self appraisal	
1.Competency	15	7	23	8	8	18	79
2.Productivity	19	7	23	8	8	13	78
3.Future challenge	15	7	15	8	8	2	53
Total	49	21	61	24	24	31	210

$t=11.62041656, p=0.311263371, d.f=10, \chi^2 \text{ test}=0.822557613$

Source: Field Survey

Note: Total number of respondents is 50 Companies.

TABLE NO. 3: INFLUENCE OF TRAINING OBJECTIVES ON THE TRAINING EVALUATION METHODS

Training Objectives	Method of Training evaluation			Total
	Observation	Questionnaire	Interview	
1.Cometency	33	22	11	66
2.Productivity	32	15	10	57
3.Facing future challenge	7	15	2	24
Total	72	52	23	147

$t=9.921769, p=0.041766, d.f=4, \chi^2 \text{ test}=0.27056$

Source: Field Survey

Note: Total number of respondents is 50 organizations.

TABLE NO.3: TRAINING EVALUATION OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANIZATIONS AND THE CRITERIA FOR EVALUATING THE TRAINING PROGRAM

Training Evaluation Objectives	Criteria for Evaluation					Total
	No. of employee trained	No. of Training Program held	Cost of training per employee	Efficiency	Performance to schedule	
1.Feedback	19	15	43	20	26	123
2.Research	8	0	8	0	8	24
3.Control	0	8	8	8	0	24
4.Power game	7	0	0	0	0	7
5.Interventions	7	8	8	8	0	31
Total	41	31	67	36	34	209

Source: Field Survey

Note: Total number of respondents is 50 organizations

TABLE NO.4: TRAINING EVALUATION OBJECTIVES OF THE ORGANIZATIONS AND THE METHOD OF TRAINING EVALUATION

Training Evaluation Objectives	Method of Training evaluation			Total
	Observation	Questionnaire	Interview	
1.Feedback	42	30	12	84
2.Research	8	0	1	9
3.Control	0	8	1	9
4.Power game	7	7	1	15
5.Interventions	7	15	2	24
Total	64	60	17	141

Source: Field Survey. Note: Total number of respondents is 50 organizations

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

1. Training need assessment can be done in multi level viz., at organizational, job and individual level. 7 companies have adopted multilevel assessment which is the better option other than which, most of the companies have preferred assessing the training needs at individual level through competency

assessment and performance appraisal and review method. Moreover, 42 companies conduct personal analysis for identifying the performance problems of the employees. From this, it is clear that, the respondent ITes companies are highly concerned about need of the individual employees rather than the organizational or job. **From this, the 1st alternative hypothesis H1: ITes companies are assessing the training need based on the analysis of individual employees have been proved and the null hypothesis has been rejected.**

2. The identification of the right training need even depends upon the person who makes the assessment. Out of 50 respondent organizations, the training need assessment work is assigned mainly to the managers and team leaders who are in regular touch with the employees instead of the training professionals or any other heads.
3. It is always advisable to the any organizations conducting training need assessment at multi level to get the proper perspective. But most of the respondent organizations analyze only job and related task that need to be learned. And few in addition with that go for analyzing the organizational goals and objectives as well as the capabilities of the employees.
4. Out of 50 organizations 42 conduct personal analysis for identifying the performance problems of the employees. And this personal analysis is done by most of those companies through performance appraisal. Once the training need has been identified, 60% of the respondent organizations go for finding possible causes and solutions rather than recommending directly for training which is always better from the cost, time and effort of management as well as the employee point of view.
5. Most of the respondent companies are determining the individual training need by the competency assessment and performance appraisal and review method. And the respondent employees of the opinion that these two methods are highly suitable one. In addition to these two methods, employees are also preferred Skill and Knowledge Audit/SWOT analysis as a highly suitable technique of training need assessment. One has to consider here that, the training objectives of the respondent organizations do not have any impact on the training need assessment practices. And the same has been proved with the help of Chi- square test, where the table value is > the calculated value (18.31 > 11.62041656) at 5% level of significance. Hence, **the alternative hypothesis 2: Training objectives of the ITes companies tend to influence the need assessment practices has been rejected and the null hypothesis Training objectives of the ITes companies is independent of the need assessment practices has been accepted.**
6. Out of 50 respondent organizations 43(86%) companies evaluate the training programs based on the cost of training per employee than the performance, efficiency of the training programs, the number of training program held or the number of employees trained. It clearly tells that, the cost factor is the highly influential factor in the training program evaluation.
7. All the 50 respondent companies evaluate the training programs for the purpose of getting feedback. Other than this, having intervention with the training programs to take corrective actions is the purpose of training evaluation in 15 companies. These objectives have very less influence over the criteria of training evaluation.
8. Almost all the respondent organizations are evaluating the training programs up to 4 levels viz., Reactions, Learning, Behaviour and results and 43 companies are evaluating even at the 5th level called ROI. It should be noted here that, those 43 companies which are calculating the ROI are the one which consider the cost of training per employee as the criteria for training evaluation.
9. Most of the organizations consider trainee reactions and feed back in the form of filled in questionnaire as the sources of evaluating effectiveness of the training programs.
10. On the job assessment and Pre and post test is the most widely used method to measure the extent of knowledge, skill and attitude has changed. And all the respondent organizations use on the job observation for measuring the extent of behavior changes of the organization. Quality inspection is the most preferred method of knowing the results of the training.
11. Training evaluation can be done at any stage of implementation of the training program. 50% of the respondent organizations evaluate training programs before, during and after the training implementation. And few evaluate at any one stage. It shows the importance given by the organizations for the training evaluation.
12. Training evaluation can be done by observation, questionnaire or interview techniques. Most of the respondent companies adopted observation method during the implementation of the training program as well as after the implementation of the training for evaluating the effectiveness of training programs. The important aspect to be noted here is that, the application of any one of the above three techniques are influenced by the training evaluation objectives (t=9.921769>9.49). Hence **the 3rd alternative hypothesis Training evaluation practices of ITes companies are influenced by the training objectives has been accepted and there by the null hypothesis has been rejected.**
13. 270 respondent employees have given the preferential rank for the organizational factors which are influencing the success of the training programs. Based on the WAS organizational culture is highly influencing factor (WAS 4.15) where as the influence of reward system is less(WAS 2.75). And if the overall influence of the organizational factors is considered, employees are of the opinion that all the listed organizational factors have an average impact (WAS 3.48) on the effectiveness of the training program.
14. Employees are of the opinion that, the personal factors have higher influence (WAS 4.07). And , amongst the listed 7 personal factors, Desire for growth (WAS 5.1) Previous Training(WAS 4.52), Comfort level (WAS 4.4), Relationship B/W training Program and personal objectives(WAS 4.37) , Benefits expected(WAS 4.14) and family situation (WAS 3.08) have more influence than the personal problems which is just an influencing factor(WAS 2.95).
15. Employees feedback about the training program in lickerts 5 point scale shows that, all the aspects of training program are good(WAS 3-4).

SUGGESTIONS

1. There should be continuous training for ensuring efficiency of employees, updating the skills of the employees for present and future job roles. The effectiveness of training depends on the constant efforts of adjusting training, aligning it, making field manager perceive its effectiveness and transforming it to participants'. Being training is an essence of HRD, proper care should be taken to increase its effectiveness.
2. The HR manager needs to move beyond the traditional methods for identification of training need such as performance appraisal and questionnaire. Otherwise, in addition to these methods group discussion which involves employees as well as their supervisors or team leaders should be made where in the essential training need can be identified.
3. Whatever the method used to identify training needs, at least the following three points must be kept in view:
 - a. These methods should be used in combination; that is, there should never be reliance on only one method.
 - b. They may be used to identify training needs of each of the various groups of employees.
 - c. They should be applied to individual employees since training needs will vary with the individual employee.
4. The HR manager should work towards fulfilling both the organizational and individual goals of the employees. As the turnover in the industry is high, there is no meaning in finding only the individual need and providing training and making them efficient. The organizational need should also be considered at this point.
5. Innovative training tools, modified training modules and strategies at par with changes in the business and market situation is a way towards success for any organizations. Employees must make most effective use of training programs by jointly working out their individual growth plans with the organization and aligning their learning plans with their growth plans.
6. The effects of Internet technology on employee training are indeed profound, however, technology should be seen as a tool, not a strategy or final goal. The Internet cannot, in and of itself, improve the quality of the learning and the content trainer put on it. Organisations need to use Internet technology combined with high quality, effective learning to maximize learning and retention levels. People who believe technology will totally replace great teachers in front of classrooms of highly motivated learners are as misguided as those who believe the Internet is a passing fad. The blended learning solution, i.e., a mixture of classroom and Web-based training is the most effective and comprehensive learning strategy.
7. Trainers have to consider the preferred style of the trainees. Training is more about the trainer's delivery than the trainee's learning. Hence, the importance should be given for the relevance for trainees. Instead of teaching concepts, making employees know how to use them in their work context is very essential.

8. It is strongly recommended that, in addition to providing training to the employees in those areas which are highly relevant to perform their work in a better way, organizations should provide training in general skills as well as administrative skills which are very essential to perform all around .
9. Employees retain about 50% to 60% of what they learn in a formal training workshop. Often, employees forget what they have learned within two months of the workshop. Therefore, access and opportunities to learn should be available to anyone, anywhere, and at any time within an organization. Organizational learning is as much about what happens outside formal learning programs as it is about the programs themselves.
10. In order to use training as a defense tool, companies must verify that each and every worker received training. All companies experience turnover and absenteeism problems, which undermine training effectiveness. Therefore, companies should receive written or electronic training verifications and audit those verifications periodically to ensure defensible training.
11. The first thing that many organizations do to reduce cost during tough times is to cut down on training or a total freeze on training. This can be avoided if organizations try to identify what is lacking in their current training initiatives and implement creative training methodologies.
12. Training evaluation, finding the return on investment and follow up programs need to be taken a bit more seriously.
13. Evaluation of training effectiveness should not be treated only as a corrective measure for the existing training programs offered by the organization, but also as a pro-active measure for making future training programs effective. Only an effective training facilitates in improving the human resource of the organization making them adaptable to changes that take place in their business environment.
14. Training is neither a panacea for all ills nor it is a waste of time. What is required is an insight into what training can or cannot do, and skill in designing and executing training successfully and cost-effectively.

CONCLUSION

In ITes industry, Human Resource is one of the disciplines which drives business for competitiveness. To achieve this training is very important. Competent employees will not remain competent forever. Their skills can deteriorate; technology may make their skills obsolete; the organization may move into new areas, changing the type of jobs that exist and the skills necessary to do them. Management has not overlooked this reality. In order to train the employees the **training need analysis** is necessary for enabling them to provide quality services to the customers both inside and outside. However, **evaluation** has often been overlooked or not implemented to its full capacity. Training is a critical component in any organization's strategy, but organizations do not always evaluate the business impact of a training program. Given the large expenditures for training in many organizations, it is important to develop business intelligence tools that will help companies improve the measurement of training effectiveness. These tools need to provide a methodology to measure, evaluate, and continuously improve training, as well as the organizational and technical infrastructure to implement the methodology.

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