

**THE EMPLOYEES' PERCEPTION ON THE
EFFECTIVENESS OF INFORMATION
TECHNOLOGY TRAINING PROGRAMS
IN SABAH DEVELOPMENT BANK
BERHAD AND ITS GROUP
OF COMPANIES**

PRICILLA KUILIS



**DISSERTATION SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL
FULFILLMENT FOR THE MASTER DEGREE OF
HUMAN CAPITAL MANAGEMENT**

**SCHOOL OF BUSINESS AND ECONOMICS
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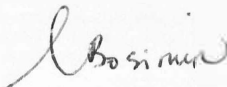
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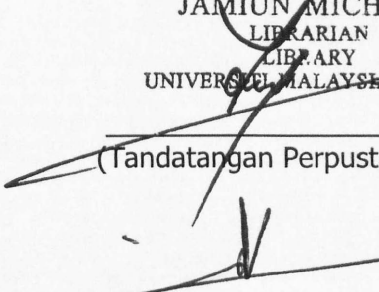
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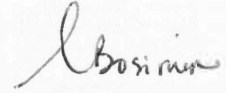
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DECLARATION

I hereby declare that the materials in this dissertation are original except for quotations, excerpts, equations, summaries and references, which have been duly acknowledged.

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ABSTRACT

Each employee perceived differently on the effectiveness of training program. Thus, this study is undertaken to examine the employee's perception on the effectiveness of Information Technology Training Programs in Sabah Development Bank Berhad and its group of companies (SDB). A survey questionnaire was conducted randomly and distributed to the employees. It was found that the majority of the employee perceived that the Information Technology Training Programs is effective.

In order to keep up with the ever changing working environment where new and better work techniques/procedures are put into practice, it is imperative for Management to ensure that its employees are constantly exposed to such changes to better equip themselves in carrying out their work responsibilities. One standard avenue for Management is by sending its employees for training (i.e. to attend courses, seminars, etc).

Based on the researcher's findings and as shown in the data collected through the study, it is necessary to conclude here that training and development do play an important role in developing and nurturing an employee. The quality and/or effectiveness of Information Technology Training Programs at SDB should be constantly reviewed to ensure that it is perceived by the staff as motivators to promote productivity. Employees' perception on the effectiveness of Information Technology Training Programs should not be taken lightly as employees are the determinant of the success and failure of the organization.



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ABSTRAK

PERSEPSI PEKERJA KE ATAS KEBERKESANAN PROGRAM LATIHAN DI DALAM BIDANG TEKNOLOGI MAKLUMAT DI KALANGAN ANGGOTA SABAH DEVELOPMENT BANK BERHAD DAN ANAK-ANAK SYARIKATNYA

Setiap pekerja mempunyai tanggapan berlainan ke atas keberkesanan program latihan yang diberi. Oleh itu, kajian ini dijalankan untuk meneliti/mendapatkan persepsi pekerja ke atas keberkesanan program latihan di dalam bidang Teknologi Maklumat di kalangan anggota Sabah Development Bank Berhad dan anak-anak syarikatnya. Satu kajian telah dilakukan secara rambang di kalangan anggota syarikat tersebut. Hasil kajian ternyata menunjukkan bahawa sebahagian besar anggota berpendapat program latihan yang mereka jalani di bidang Teknologi Maklumat adalah berkesan.

Untuk tidak ketinggalan dari alam kerja yang sentiasa berubah dimana teknik/tatacara kerja yang baru dan lebih baik digunapakai, Pengurusan perlu memastikan anggotanya sentiasa didedahkan kepada perubahan sedemikian bagi membolehkan mereka melaksanakan tugas masing-masing dengan lebih berkesan/produktif. Salah satu cara bagi Pengurusan untuk memenuhi keperluan ini ialah dengan memberi peluang kepada pekerja-pekerjanya untuk mengikuti program latihan (iaitu untuk menghadiri kursus, seminar, dsb).

Berdasarkan kepada penemuan yang ditunjukkan daripada data yang dikutip melalui kajian, bolehlah dinyatakan di sini bahawa latihan dan pembangunan (sumber manusia) mempunyai peranan yang penting dalam pembangunan dan memupuk (kesetiaan) pekerja pada organisasi. Kualiti dan latar keberkesanan program latihan di SDB dan anak syarikatnya sebaiknya sentiasa dikaji bagi memastikan ia dilihat (oleh anggotanya) sebagai suatu pendorong ke arah meningkatkan produktivi. Persepsi anggota ke atas keberkesanan program latihan diambil berat memandangkan anggota sesuatu organisasi adalah penentu berjaya atau gagal nya sesebuah organisasi tersebut.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 OVERVIEW OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

It has long been argued that the skills and competences of individuals, whether developed through formal education, training or experience, are essential for economic growth and activity (Skinner, *et al.*, 2004).

Training and development are frequently cited in the literature as the cornerstone of human resource management (Sadler Smith, *et al.*, 2000) and are portrayed as indisputable win-win scenarios. Organizations benefit from a more flexible, committed and motivated workforce while employees experience the psychological rewards of feeling valued, recognized and appreciated by the organization and are able to undertake more interesting and challenging work.

However, a necessary ingredient to ensure that these truly are win-win scenarios would seem to be a shared understanding among all those involved of the skills and competences deemed necessary and/or desirable for current and future performance. Indication that this shared understanding may not exist and that there is an incompatibility between provision, existing skills and future needs (Sahinidis, *et al.*, 2008)

The research will highlight the Information Technology Training Programs provided by Sabah Development Bank Berhad (SDB) and its group of companies to its employees and their effectiveness and suitability. Furthermore, the relationship between Information Technology Training Programs and employees' perception in terms of motivation will be analyzed.

A study on the employee's perception on the effectiveness of Information Technology Training Programs in SDB and its group of companies was to determine the most suitable training programs to be provided to the employees in order to enhance employees' performance and ultimately to achieve the organization's goal.

The scope of this paper would be based on the researcher's real working life experience with SDB since 3rd April 1995 and also in relation to other work experiences/exposures in other organizations where training do come into play.

The research was conducted on the employees of SDB and its group of companies who are currently employed in the ambit of the organization from February to April 2008. These employees were selected randomly from all levels irrespective of their position in the hierarchy of the SDB and its group of companies.

1.2 BRIEF HISTORY OF SABAH DEVELOPMENT BANK BERHAD AND ITS GROUP OF COMPANIES

Sabah Development Bank Berhad (SDB), with its company number 34638W, was incorporated on the 9th August 1977, as a public limited company under the Companies Act, 1965 of Malaysia. It commenced operations in June 1978, having its current office at SDB Tower, Wisma Tun Fuad Stephens, Karamunsing, Kota Kinabalu.

The rationale for the existence of SDB is to have a Development Finance Institution (DFI) that will act as a catalyst for investment and to be an engine for growth. Its primary role is to ensure and facilitate economic development by providing a comprehensive range of financial services related to its core business of project financing.

SDB is currently subjected to the regulations contained in and made under the Banking and Financial Institutions Act (BAFIA), 1989 of Malaysia. It is designated as a "Scheduled Institution" under BAFIA.

In 2006, SDB acquired the following companies under its group of companies:-

1. SDB Asset Management - 100%;
2. Asal Baru Sdn Bhd - 33.3%;
3. Corporate Dynamics Sdn Bhd - 100%; and
4. Jetama Sdn Bhd - 100%.

1.2.1 Vision and Mission Statement of SDB and its Group of Companies

The Vision statement of SDB and its group of companies is "To be the leading development financial institution (DFI) in the State of Sabah and to be the DFI that remains on the cutting edge in Malaysia and also to go in depth into investment, and at the same time to assist the government in managing resources".

The Mission statement of SDB and its group of companies are:

1. Strive to provide sound and prompt financial and advisory services to the Sabah State Government and its agencies;
2. Determine to venture into every aspect of development banking for both public and private sectors; and
3. Build a Bank of Integrity.....build also a People who are....

Skillful, Adaptable, Believable, Accountable and Honourable

Source: SDB Corporate Profile, 2008

1.2.2 The Organizational Structure and Staff Strength

The responsibilities of the Board of Directors of SDB and its Group of Companies are to set policies and to oversee the activities of the group while the responsibilities of the day-to-day operations are vested with the Executive Management headed by the Managing Director/Chief Executive Officer (MD/CEO) of SDB and its group of companies' respectively.

In the case of SDB, the organizational structure is designed to denote clear demarcation of responsibilities. At the same time, it is meant to be flexible enough in order to support growth, maintain efficiency and ensure supervisory effectiveness.

Currently, the staff strength of SDB and its group of companies are shown in Table 1 as follows:

Table 1: Staff Strength of SDB and its group of Companies

NO.	NAME OF ORGANIZATION	NO. OF EMPLOYEES (AS AT 27 TH MARCH)
1	Sabah Development Bank Berhad (inclusive of Sabah Gold Traders Sdn Bhd, Sabah Development Nominees (Tempatan) Sdn Bhd, Sedia Usaha Sdn Bhd, Pengurusan EMGC Bhd and Kota Kinabalu Water Sdn Bhd)	85
2	SDB Asset Management Sdn Bhd	5
3	Asal Baru Sdn Bhd	33
4	Corporate Dynamics Sdn Bhd	130
5	Jetama Sdn Bhd	7
TOTAL:		260

Source: Personnel Unit, SDB

1.2.3 Objectives and Functions of the Training Unit in SDB and its Group of Companies

In its efforts to continuously enhance corporate efficiency and professionalism, the development of human resources has been one of the priority areas which SDB and its group of companies emphasize. Thus, in this respect, in order to achieve the vision and mission statement/objective of SDB and its group of companies, the Training unit in each Group, will, at all times, endeavor to assist the Group in achieving its objectives by upgrading and refining the skills and expertise of its human capital and to contribute positively to the development of entrepreneurial and human skills in the State, in general.

The objectives of the Training Unit are as follows:-

- (a) To study the needs of training, to improve the training quality, performance and skills of employees in order to develop the organization effectiveness;

- (b) To train employees to be efficient, motivated, dedicated, innovative in carrying out their duties through training programs such as short or long term training, or practical training;
- (c) To plan and manage continuous training programs and activities in accordance with the organization's needs.

The functions of the Training Unit are as follows:

- (a) To plan, to study, to propose and implement programs, schemes and procedures to raise the training services quality;
- (b) To plan and manage long term training programs in line with the needs of human resources in the group;
- (c) To prepare an annual budget for all programs conducted by the Training Unit;
- (d) To prepare and update data and information needed for staff training;
- (e) To upgrade and monitor the training development programs continuously;
- (f) To identify the need of short term and long term training programs for the Group; and
- (g) To ensure that it is in line with other functions as instructed by the management.

Source: SDB Corporate Profile, 2008

1.3 PROBLEM STATEMENT

Sabah Development Bank Berhad (SDB) and its group of companies allocate budget for training and development for its employees annually. However, the evaluation on

the training programs provided by SDB and its group of companies to the employees has never been conducted to measure the effectiveness of the said programs, at least in terms of the employees' perception. Therefore, this research will study the perception of the employees' of SDB and its group of companies on the effectiveness of Information Technology Training Programs.

1.4 OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

This study will undertake to:-

1. Evaluate SDB's and its group of companies employee's perception on the effectiveness of Information Technology Training Programs;
2. Evaluate the achievement of the training objectives in terms of the perception of the employees of SDB and its group of companies;
3. Evaluate the training programs through the Trainer's Competency, Quality of Modules, Interactive Communication and Participants-Centred Methods; and
4. Evaluate the adequacy of Information Technology Training Programs in terms of motivation.

Realistic recommendations for improvement of the Training Unit would be presented in this dissertation for the Management of SDB and its group of companies to consider, and if thought appropriate, implement.

1.5 SCOPE OF THE STUDY

It has been proven that training is associated with employee's productivity. However, most human resource managers are of the opinion that in the current economic situation, training budgets are one of the first to be slashed, omitted or shelved. Another cost effective measure is to reduce certain allowances and/or benefits. Employers are quick to reduce training budgets, sometimes at the expense

of quality, which quite often than not, affect the career development of the employees.

In some situation, companies outsource training programs without even undertaking a training needs analysis. This attitude aside, what is the effectiveness of training programs? More importantly, one might ask, are training programs really effective in these economically turbulent times?

To answer this question, the researcher will try to determine whether in the first instance, Information Technology Training Programs that has been identified are of benefit first to the individual employees, and secondly, to the group as a whole. In short, would investing in training programs produce the desired results?

However, in view of the time constraints and scope of this study, the researcher will only concentrate on the employees' perception to assess the effectiveness of Information Technology Training Programs available in this organization.

The scope of study is the employees of SDB and its group of companies in Kota Kinabalu, Sabah, East Malaysia, with the aim to obtain relevant and valuable data. There were 157 respondents comprising employees from Sabah Development Bank Berhad, SDB Asset Management Sdn Bhd, Sabah Gold Traders Sdn Bhd, Sabah Development Nominees (Tempatan) Sdn Bhd, Sedia Usaha Sdn Bhd, Pengurusan EMGC Bhd, Asal Baru Sdn Bhd, Kota Kinabalu Water Sdn Bhd, Corporate Dynamics Sdn Bhd and Jetama Sdn Bhd. However, the findings in this study do not necessarily be representative of all the employees of SDB and its group of companies.

1.6 SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

As an individual who endlessly strives to better equip oneself with proper and adequate training and development, it is only relevant and pertinent that the researcher choose the topic on "The employees' perception on the effectiveness of Information Technology Training Programs in SDB and its group of companies".

Basically, after undergoing any training, wherever and whatever type of training they may be, such as short courses, seminars, conferences or workshops, employees tend to evaluate their own job performance based strictly on their own personal judgment. In this respect, a good Evaluation System should be implemented to receive positive feedback.

The result of this study will have an impact for SDB and its group of companies with regards to the employees' perception on the effectiveness of Information Technology Training Programs.

It is hoped that the Management of SDB and its group of companies would consider the recommendations for improvement and if thought appropriate, implement.

1.7 KEY VARIABLES

The key variables used in this study have specific definition in general context as mentioned below:

1.7.1 Training

Employee training is far more prevalent today than it was ten years ago. Today, almost all companies provide some type of training of their employees. For some companies, training is a very formal process. Entire departments are devoted to conducting both initial and ongoing employee training programs. Other companies bring in outside consultants to conduct employee training sessions. The motivation for providing such training varies considerably from organization to organization. A few companies are genuinely committed to enhancing the skills and competences of their workforce. Other companies conduct training primarily to meet required job safety regulations. Sadly, many companies conduct training simply for appearance's sake (Hughey *et al.*, 1997).

1.7.2 Effectiveness

The change in the nature and content of work (Hoobler, 2004) has impacted organizational choice of human capital development programs. One of the most frequently encountered human capital development interventions is training, defined for the purposes of the present study as “a planned intervention that is designed to enhance the determinants of individual job performance” (Campbell and Kuncel, 2001, p. 278). In order to enhance job performance, the skills and behaviors learned and practiced during training have to be transferred to the workplace, maintained over time and generalized across contexts (Holton and Baldwin, 2003). Consequently, as transfer of learning remains a critical issue for researchers and practitioners (Holton and Baldwin, 2003; Holton *et al.*, 2000), it becomes necessary to test models that includes important but less-studied training-related determinants (Chiaburu, *et al.*, 2005).

1.7.3 Demographic

Demographic consists of age, gender, education and working experience.

1.7.3.1 Age

Age is the length of time that a person or thing has existed and at a particular stage in someone’s life (Concise Oxford English Dictionary, 2002).

1.7.3.2 Gender

Gender refers to how social and cultural factors shape our reality and our sense of identity (Ansemi & Law, 1998). In addition, Brannon (2002) said that “Gender is to describe the traits and behaviors that are regarded by the culture as appropriate to men and women”.

1.7.3.3 Education Level

Citing Peters (1972), an English philosopher of education regards being “educated” as a state which individuals achieve, while education is a set of processes that lead to this state. Again, Peters (1972) claimed that education, like many other phenomena, is too complex to define and suggests a set of criteria for consideration as the basis of education. Others such as Jarvis (1995) added the following criteria:-

- ❖ Education must involve a learning process;
- ❖ The learning process must not be a single event;
- ❖ The process should be planned rather than haphazard;
- ❖ Education is essentially a humanistic process; and
- ❖ Learning has to involve understanding.

These criteria led Jarvis (1995) to define education as any planned series of incidents, having a humanistic basis, directed towards the participants’ learning and understanding. This definition does not restrict education to a specific learning process, to a specific time in life, or to a specific location.

1.7.3.4 Working Experience

The working experience for all employees would be the number of years the employees are being employed.

1.8 SUMMARY AND ORGANIZATION OF REMAINING CHAPTERS

The study is being categorized into five Chapters; which is Chapter One - Introduction, Chapter Two - Literature Review, Chapter Three - Research Framework and Methodology, Chapter Four - Data Analysis and Chapter Five - Discussion and Conclusion, respectively.

Chapter One - Introduction, provides an overview of Training Programs, Brief History of Sabah Development Bank Berhad and its Group of Companies, Problem

Statement, Objective of the Study, Scope of the Study, Significance of Study, Key Variables, Summary and Organization of Remaining Chapters.

Chapter Two - Literature Review, reviews studies previously done by other researchers and their findings. In addition, this chapter would also discuss the Introduction, Definition of Key Concepts, Human Capital Factors, Previous Research on Employees' Perception on the Effectiveness of Training Programs and Summary.

Chapter Three - Research Framework and Methodology would discuss the Research Framework encompassing Dependent, Independent and Moderating Variables. Hypothesis, Research Design, Unit of Analysis, Sampling Design, Instrument Design, Data Collection Method, Data Analysis Method and Summary would also be covered in this chapter.

Chapter Four - will concentrate on the analysis of the results. These are divided into a few sections. The introduction would be the first one followed by the Profile of Respondents, Reliability of Measures, Descriptive Analysis of Variables, Hypothesis Testing and Summary of Findings.

In the final chapter, Chapter Five - Discussion and Conclusion would be based on the findings of this study. A brief introduction, followed by a Recapitulation of Study, Implication and Discussion, Limitation of Study, Suggestion for Future Research and a Final Conclusion.

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1. INTRODUCTION

Recruitment and selection form only the first step in ensuring that a competent workforce is secured for the organization. In this globalization era and for achieving high performance standards, the employees must receive appropriate training. Effective training enables the employees to perform more efficiently on the job. Continued training or retraining helps the employees to upgrade their skills and prepare them for positions of higher responsibility (Dessler, 2005).

Among those literatures reviewed in this study are summarized in Table 2.

Table 2: Literatures Reviewed

ITEM	AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	TYPE	DATA GATHERING	DATA ANALYSIS
1	Nina Cole and Ted Rogers	2008	How long should a training program be? A field study of "rules-of-thumb"	Research Paper	Questionnaire	Two-tailed independent t-tests
2	Alexander G. Sahinidis and John Bouris	2008	Employee Perceived Training Effectiveness Relationship to Employee Attitudes	Research Paper	Questionnaire	Minitab Computer Program
3	Wei-Tao Tai	2006	Effects of training framing, general self-efficacy and training motivation on trainees' training effectiveness	Research Paper	Survey	Bi-variate cor-relations