



Research proposal

**Impacts of Training and development activities on
Employees' Job Satisfaction: A case study on Unilever Plc”.**

Research Aim

The main aim of this empirical study is to find out “**Impacts of Training and development activities on Employees’ Job Satisfaction: A case study on Unilever Plc**”.

Research Objectives

Khoo (2005, p. 8) said that research objectives are those goals that a researcher wants to achieve by completing the empirical study and the research objectives give direction to a researcher to complete the project. The research objectives for this research projects are as follows:

- To find out the current training and development activities of Unilever Plc
- To find out the impacts of the training and development programs of Unilever Plc on its employees and organisations.
- To examine the employees’ job satisfaction level after attending the training and development programs of Unilever Plc.
- To provide some recommendations based on the findings of this study if any discrepancies found in the training and development programs of Unilever plc.

Research questions

Khoo (2005, p. 9) expressed that research questions are those core elements of a study that will tell what will be the research methodologies, what will be the data collection methods, or will guide all the tasks of various parts of an empirical study. The questions for this dissertation are presented as follows:

- What are the current training and development activities of Unilever Plc?
- What are the impacts of the current training and development programs of Unilever plc on its employees and organisations?
- What are the levels of job satisfaction of employees after attending the current training and development programs of Unilever plc?

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- What are the problems with Unilever's current training and development programs and how they can be solved?

A conceptual framework to guide this research for further study

Milhem et al. (2014, p.13) said that training is one kind of knowledge, attitude, and skill development process which is pre-planned and executed for the development of employees to satisfy the organizational needs. Devi, (2016, p.5) stated that before planning new training and development program, HR managers have to identify the current training gaps and have to plan how those gaps can be minimized. After identifying the training gaps, possible training sessions, or programs have to be arranged (Devi, 2016, p.5). (Cited in Obisi, 2001) revealed that training is a systematic process to develop knowledge, skills, and attitudes of employees (Devi, 2016, p.7). when an employee goes through training sessions, and organisations are benefited through many ways such as- training increases the productivity of employees, minimize work errors which ultimately leads to the cost minimization of the organisations and also effective use of the human resources is ensured (Devi, 2016, p.7). Devi, (2016, p.5) also stated that employee training and development programs should be based on three factors, such as- management skills, operational skills, and orientation for a selected purpose. (Cited in Gerbman, 2000) said that there are many goals of employees' training and development programs such as- delivering the visions, missions, and goals of the institutions, providing training on specific matters, helping employees to get insight about the organizational culture etcetera Milhem et al. (2014, p.13). when employees feel that they are facing the lack of knowledge or skills to solve the contemporary business or organizational problems, then they started to feel that they are not worthy to do the tasks or jobs which ultimately lead to the dissatisfaction of the employees Milhem et al. (2014, p.13). And Jehanzeb, and Bashi, (2013, 244) found in his study that dissatisfaction of the employees decrease the productivity of the employees and also degrade the interest in the work. This is harmful to the organisation. To solve this problem, organisations must ensure that there are enough training and development programs are running in the organisation to help the employees to learn and gain knowledge about contemporary skills and capabilities needed to solve modern business problems (Jehanzeb, and Bashi, 2013, 246). Before assigning a task to an employee, it must ensure that the employee has the required level of knowledge and training for completing the tasks (Jehanzeb, and Bashi, 2013, 247). And it is an organizational responsibility to ensure proper training and knowledge gaining program before

assigning a work (Jehanzeb, and Bashi, 2013, 248). The interesting thing found by Jehanzeb, and Bashi, (2013, 248) is that about 76.4% of organisations failed to ensure proper training programs before assigning a task, and most of the time an employee leaves the organisation for this problem. A perfect training program has a mixture of cultural learning, knowledge gaining, and career development programs. Milhem et al. (2014, p.13) found that information and technology become inevitable to do success in the organizational work and that is why this author suggested that every business organisation should ensure technological skills development program. (Cited in Barbar, 2004) stated that on-the-job training develop implicit skills in the employees (Milhem et al. 2014, p.16). Khan et al. (2011, p. 222) averred that human resources are the lifeblood of business and huge investment should be made behind the development of human resources because the development of employees ultimately results in the advancement of the business organisations.

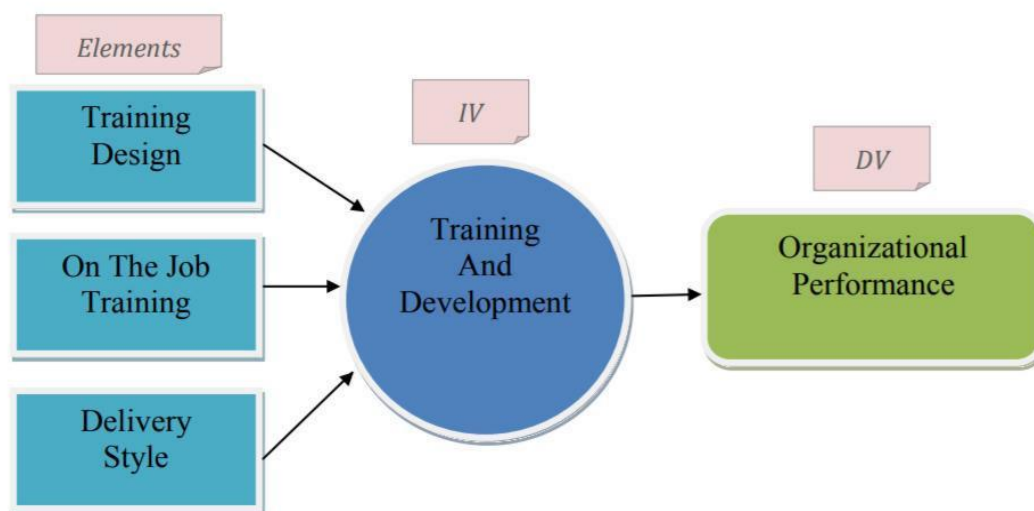


Figure 1: Element of a good training plan (Source: Khan et al. (2011, p. 222)

Design of the training should be according to the organisations' need and a research led by (Khan et al. 2011, p. 223) found that those organisations who didn't design their training programs according to the organisations and employees' need failed to get a good result. (Cited in Deming, 1982) claimed that on-the-job training is far better than the training of off-the-job training. Because with the on-the-job training, employees can learn things practically whereas, in

off-the-job training, only bookish knowledge is provided to the learners. On-the-job training helps an employee to solve real-life problems and also helps to develop soft and technical skills and also this method is a very time and cost-saving method (Khan et al. 2011, p. 223).

Khan et al. (2011, p. 224) said that only designing a good training program is not enough, there must be a good delivery style in the trainer. When the delivery style is not impressive, employees fail to be attracted to the learning sessions (Khan et al. 2011, p. 223). As a result, one cannot expect a good outcome from those sessions which are not animated. That is why, a trainer should design his training sessions with something very interesting and impressive so that learners feel enthusiastic to attend the sessions (Khan et al. 2011, p. 223). Though it is very costly to give training to the employees but the feedback that an organisation gets is far bigger than the investment behind the training (Khan et al. 2011, p. 223).

Research Methodology

Research philosophies

Saunders et al. (2009, p. 169) said that Research philosophies are one kind of belief or system that is used for creating knowledge through a systematic process. There are many research philosophies like- pragmatism, positivism, interpretivism, and realism but among them, positivism and interpretivism are most popular (Flowers, 2009, p.2). In the positivism philosophy, the scientific method is followed for analyzing and creating information or data (Flowers, 2009, p.2). Highly structured data and large samples are used in this philosophy and the quantitative method is used for analyzing data (Flowers, 2009, p.2). The bottom line of positivism philosophy is that the researcher only works with those data which are given and which are present in existence, not implicit data (Saunders et al. 2009, p. 169). In the interpretivism philosophy, data are collected and analyzed from different perspectives. Non-structured data and small samples are used in this method and the qualitative method is used for analyzing various information and data (Saunders et al. 2009, p. 170). The mainline of interpretivism philosophy is that one thing can be judged from different angles and views and there is no restriction in evaluating a thing (Saunders et al. 2009, p. 169). Positivism philosophy will be used in this dissertation because a large sample of data and quantitative methods will be analyzed for further study.

Data collection method

Data collection methods indicate some process through which data is collected, organized, and structured for research purposes (Kabir, 2016, p. 6). Generally, there are two types of data collection methods are used, such as- primary and secondary data collection methods. (Cited in Cohen and Manion, 1994) found that what will be the data collection method for a study is dependent on some factors such as- time, costs, and researchers' conveniences etcetera (Kabir, 2016, p. 7). Questionnaires, surveys, case studies, focus group discussions and experimental methods are the primary data collection methods used for collecting primary and secondary data (Cohen and Manion, 1994, p.265). Primary data are those data which is not used prior to the research and only the researcher will have access to those data (Kabir, 2016, p. 8). On the other

hand, journals, books, conference paper, newspaper are the sources of secondary data and Cohen and Manion, (1994, p.265) said that secondary data are those data which are already published in many sources and everyone has access to those data and also anyone can use it by following proper rules and regulations. In this study, the researcher will use the primary data collection method for collecting data from the employees of Unilever Plc and also will use secondary data collection methods for collecting secondary data from various journals, books, conference papers, and newspaper etcetera.

Research methods

According to Sharma (2018, p.2), researchers use three research methods, such as- qualitative, quantitative, and mixed research methods etcetera.

Sharma (2018, p.2) said that the quantitative research method deals with numerical data for transforming into a statistical method and this method is also used for quantifying behavior, opinion, or attitudes of human beings. This method is also used for formulating facts (Sharma, 2018, p.2). The output of quantitative research methods is analysed and interpreted through correlation, regression analysis, standard deviations etcetera (Sharma, 2018, p.2). Data is collected in this research method by using an online questionnaire survey form, kiosk survey, or through face-to-face or mobile interview (Sharma, 2018, p.3). A researcher can easily do broad research and can find out accurate results and also can do compare with other results. But the main drawback of this method is that researcher has to invest huge time and money behind collecting data (Sharma, 2018, p.2).

The qualitative research method is used for getting insights into a problem, reasons, or opinions to develop a hypothesis for further quantitative study and this method deals with non-numerical data (Sharma, 2018, p.3). Interviews, case studies, or focus group discussions are used to collect non-numerical data in this research method. This research method has some benefits such as- through this method, depth analysis can be ensured and also the researcher gets fresh information to conduct the study (Sharma, 2018, p.3). The main drawback is that- total work and research of the work depends on the expertise of the researcher which means this research method has a

dependency problem and also biasness can easily get into the research output (Sharma, 2018, p.3). That is why, in scientific research, this method is not used (Sharma, 2018, p.3).

A mixed research method, a new research method in the research arena, is the combination of both quantitative and qualitative research (Sharma, 2018, p.4). when a researcher wants to understand a problem more deeply and also wants to get good results than using either quantitative or qualitative research method, and then s/he uses this method (Sharma, 2018, p.4). With this research method, the weakness of both qualitative and quantitative methods can be eradicated or solved (Sharma, 2018, p.4). The results got from this method are far accurate than that of a qualitative or quantitative method.

The researcher will use mixed research method as s/he wants to get a better depth understanding of the problem.

Research approaches

Grover (2015, p.3) said that deductive, abductive, and inductive reasoning is mostly used in dissertations, and among them, deductive and inductive reasoning will be chosen for further discussion. Deductive reasoning is used in those studies where Quantitative analysis is used and the researcher wants to test the research hypothesis based on theories (Grover, 2015, p.5). In this method, observations are used to excerpt data from the circumstances (Grover, 2015, p.5). On the other hand, inductive reasoning deals with generalizing data from observations, and this reasoning deal with qualitative data. Moreover, by using inductive reasoning, a researcher wants to find out the relationship between important aspects of the study (Grover, 2015, p.5).

As this study will deal mostly with numerical data and the research hypothesis will be analyzed based on existing theories, deductive reasoning will be appropriate for this empirical work.

Sampling (Population profile, sampling theories, and sampling size) and Accessibility

As access to the population is time-consuming and costly, the researcher will go for a sample. A total of 90-100 employees of Unilever plc will be chosen as the sample size for this study and random sampling techniques will be used. Before sending a questionnaire survey form, consent

from the employees will be taken by using a consent letter that will be sent to them through their mails. And after getting the employees' consent, a questionnaire survey form will be sent to them.

Ethics approval application

27 July, 2020

Dr. Hugo Gaggiotti

University of West England

Subject: an application for ethics approval

Dear Dr. Hugo Gaggiotti

With all due respect, I want to state that I am planning a research called **Impacts of Training and development activities on Employees' Job Satisfaction: A case study on Unilever Plc** that involves collecting information from the employees of Unilever plc for further study. Some aspects regarding this research project are as follows:

Possible risks to me: As I will not be going physically to collect data from the participants rather will send them an online questionnaire survey for collecting data, so the chance of physical risks in this study is less.

Probable risks to participants: As no personal information will be collected, so there is no risk regarding the leak of the personal information. But employees of Unilever plc might find some questions with whom they might not be familiar or they might feel uncomfortable to answer though, in the questionnaire survey, there will not be any question like that. To avoid this problem, the permission of the participants will be taken through the consent form. All of the possible risks that may stem from this study will be discussed or explained to the employees or participants before sending the survey form.

Probable risks to the organisation: all of the information got from the survey will be kept confidential and all of the raw data will be destroyed after completing this project. Moreover, if needed, proper consent for doing a survey on the employees of Unilever plc will be taken from the manager or authority.

So, I, therefore, pray and hope that you would be kind enough to consider all the things I have said and grant me permission for doing further work to complete this study.

Yours sincerely,

kakoti

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