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Effectiveness of Training – Evaluation System; A Review of Literature

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REVIEW OF LITERATURE: The researcher has reviewed important literature on strategic management, Training, learning & Evaluation system which has direct bearing on the research problems. The Farm worker Institute for Education and Leadership Development (FIELD) serves as an intermediary between management and community organizations and provide direct training to both current employees and potential employees. FIELD was founded by the United Farm workers (UFW) union to foster the economic and social prosperity of the low income and low-skill farm workers and their families. It provides classroom training, educational literacy programs and cross-training to prepare workers for jobs in agriculture. It also provides training for those already employed based upon employer needs.

FIELD trained over 900 workers at seven companies in health and safety, which reinforced the company's principles and encouraged collaboration and conflict resolution. The company has benefited from higher productivity and fewer accidents.

Blocker (1955) and Fleischman, Harris and Burtt (1955) studied the influence of a training programme on supervisors' leadership in three phases. Tarnapol (1957) used a before-and-after attitude survey to evaluate attitude change through a supervisory training programme. Sorensen (1958) used experimental as well as controlled groups to evaluate on-the-job behavior changes as an outcome of training. Blocker (1955) and Fleischman (1955) studied the effectiveness of a course in human relations for supervisors, Flishman (1955) studied the influence of a training programme on supervisors' leadership, Tarnapol (1957) used a before-and-after attitude survey to evaluate attitude change, and Sorensen (1958) used experimental as well as controlled groups to evaluate on-the-job behaviour changes as an outcome of training.

Stroud (1959) used four groups of trainees, a control group and supervisors to evaluate a supervisory training programme. The Survey Research Centre of the University of Michigan (1961) adopted a scientific approach to evaluate on-the-job behavior of a human-relations training program conducted by Maier. Bass (1962) studied the impact of management training laboratory by screening the film "Twelve Angry Men" before-and-after two weeks of T-group training. Bass (1962) studied mood changes of 30 trainees during training laboratory by completing a mood adjectives check list at five periods during a 10 day sensitivity training laboratory for management.

Boyd and Ellis (1962) studied the behaviour change as a result of T-group experience. Estimates of change were obtained through interviews with the supervisors, two peers and two subordinates of each trainee, six weeks and again six months after the completion of training. Hillman (1962) used the case study method to evaluate the effectiveness of a training programme in terms of turnover, absenteeism, accidents etc. Moffie, Calhoon and O'Brien (1964) evaluated a problem solving and decision-making course for three levels of management by use of course end questionnaire on reactions, a controlled experiment involving two tests of learning, and an analysis of observational data collected by two observers during practical work periods of the training program. Underwood (1965) used a novel method of assessing laboratory Training Method by instructing a set of observers to report any changes they are perceived in the trainees or controlee's characteristic behavior patterns. Malouf (1966) assessed changes resulting from participation in a one-Weeks' managerial Grid program by giving trainees a set of questions before, immediately after and five months after the completion

Parry, S. (June, 1988) states that several methods have been used to develop competency models. Maxine Dalton of the Centre for Creative Leadership suggests that 70% of competency models are just a list of positive attributes obtained in a half-day meeting with senior management. Competency models will continue to be developed, particularly for

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training and development, as they help the HRD department focus its training. The Chairman of Training House Inc., a consulting firm, was discussing some issues with a client when the topic turned to competencies.

The client indicated that she had just completed a six-month survey of her company's managers to determine what the essential competencies were which would result in their having a world-class performance team. The Chairman's training firm suggests that when done properly, somewhere between 10 and 14 competencies should result.

The most important details in this text are that most managers and trainers do not understand what a competency is, and that an automated 360-degree feedback and training process is being used to measure critical skills such as customer focus, people skills, and business values. HR trainers hold mini sessions to explain the purpose and of 360-degree feedback to those involved. After receiving training, peers, supervisors and subordinates rate a manager once every months, the critical skills, and they complete a questionnaire. The manager then discusses the feedback and sets objectives improvement the next six months. Months later, the manager receives another round of feedback which indicates any improvement the areas targeted. The process is being received well, with the information sessions and feedback training helping everyone see the benefits of the process.

Antheil and Casper (1986) state that participant reaction is a measure of "customer satisfaction" indicating the level of effectiveness and usefulness of the training program. Fisher and Weinberg (1988) of Bell Communications Research, Incorporated (Bellcore) conducted a phone survey in March of 1986 to determine what training-evaluation tools were being used by industry. The data indicated that the typical instrument to gather information regarding reactions was a "short, quickly constructed, open-ended questionnaire". The Bellcore system developed a new instrument with items addressing the trainer's behavior, the participant's experience, and other issues phrased as open-ended questions. Fisher and Weinberg (1988) warn that while this questionnaire does provide a "general estimate of a particular course's success based upon the views of the participants", the data may be somewhat inaccurate.

Conway and Ross (1984) found that participants have a tendency to underestimate their pre-training skills and overestimate their post-training skills in an attempt to justify participating in the training. Therefore, if trainers continue to use participants reactions as the sole means of evaluation, and management continues to allow.

Carnevale and Schulz (1990) and Dixon (1987) both argue that data concerning participants reactions do not accurately indicate investment for training efforts. However, Carnevale and Schulz go on to say that most trainers believe participants' favorable reactions are crucial to a program's success and that participants whose reactions are favorable tend to be more receptive to the material and more likely to use it on the job. Chevalier (2004) and Overmyer-Day and Benson (1996) both show how companies are conducting evaluation, particularly behavior and results. The U.S. Coast Guard decided to evaluate at the behavioral level, asking trainees and their supervisor's three things: how well the trainees were able to perform the desired behaviors, how often they did those behaviors, and how the remaining was refined, became more relevant, and provided more efficiency.

Texas Instrument developed an automated e-mail system to increase the use of evaluations, reduce the time needed to gather information, and provide a standardized process. Century21 conducted evaluations at the results level, tracking sales, listings, and commissions for each graduate. Results showed that high-performing offices provided help when needed, had access to ongoing training, and had better support. To respond, the company had their trainers still deliver the training, but were responsible for monitoring the environment in offices where trainees were sent. This was to ensure that every trainee was an environment similar to that of the "high performing trainees" identified earlier.

Texas Instruments' HR department put on a two-hour orientation for its new assemblers, which resulted in a high rate of tardiness and turnover. A TNA revealed that new hires experienced a high level of anxiety due to fear of not meeting production requirements, old employees telling them they would never reach performance requirements, and fear of being seen as stupid. This anxiety resulted in low job satisfaction, tardiness, and high turnover.

Texas Instruments designed an additional 6 hours of orientation for new hires, consisting of 4 specific points. The new hires were told that they were likely to succeed, that they needed to disregard hazing, that they should take the initiative in talking with their supervisors, and that their supervisors were open to questions. The HR department wanted to be sure that any changes in turnover or tardiness could be attributed to the orientation, so the next batch of new hires was

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separated into two groups: a control group (that received the typical two-hour orientation) and the experimental group (that received the two-hour along with the extra six hours of orientation).

The experimental group showed 50% less tardiness and absenteeism, 80% less waste, and a 50% reduction in overall training time during the first year. Morris and Cohn (1993) reported the findings of a survey of 456 professional evaluators who were asked if they had encountered any ethical problems in their work. The three most frequent and one most serious problems were: stakeholders had already decided what the findings should be, evaluator discovers something that is illegal, unethical or dangerous, evaluator pressured by stakeholder to violate confidentiality, evaluator pressured to alter presentation or findings, evaluator suppressed or ignored, evaluator used to punish the evaluator, and evaluator used to punish someone else. It was also found that those who had experienced ethical problems were mainly external evaluators, while those who spent the majority of their time on internal evaluations tended to report not having to face ethical problems. Morris and Cohn (1993) argue that internals are so close to the problems (and stakeholders) that they do not recognize the ethical issues.

Learning is a process that brings together cognitive, emotional, and environmental influences and experiences to acquire, enhance, or make changes in one's knowledge, skills, values, and world. Learning theories have two chief values and four approaches to learning: Behaviorist, Cognitive, Humanist, and Social/situational. These approaches involve contrasting ideas about the purpose and process of learning and education and the role of educators.

BEHAVIORRISM :

Behaviorism is a theory developed by B. F. Skineer and encompasses the work of Edward Thorndike, Tolman, Gutrie, and Hull. It outlines three basic assumptions about the process of learning: that learning is manifested by a change in behavior, the environment shapes behavior, and the principles of contiguity and reinforcement are central to explaining the process. Educational approaches such as applied behavior analysis, curriculum based measurement, and direct instructions have emerged from this model.

COGNITIVISM:

The earliest challenge to the behaviorist came in 1929 when Bode proposed looking at the pattern rather than isolated events. Gestalt views of learning have been incorporated into cognitive theories, which look beyond behavior to explain brain based learning. Cognitive theories consider how human memory works to promote learning, such as sorting and encoding information and events into short and long term memory. Educators employing a cognitivist approach to learning would view learning as an internal mental process, where they structure content of learning activities to focus on building intelligence and cognitive and meta cognitive development.

CONSTRUCTIVISM :

The learning theories of Jean Piaget, Jerome Bruner, Lev Vygotsky and John Dewey serve as the foundation of constructivist learning. It views learning as a process in which the learner actively constructs new ideas or concepts based on current and past knowledge or experience. Social constructivism posits that knowledge is when individuals engage socially talk and activity about shared problem. There are many variations of constructivism, such as active discovery learning, transformational learning, experiential learning, situated cognition, reflective practice, and religious practice.

TRANSFORMATIVE LEARNING THEORY:

Transformative learning is the cognitive process of changing a frame of reference, which is composed of habits, mind, and points view. Habits mind are more fixed and influence our point view, while points off may change as a result of reflection, appropriation, and feedback. Transformative learners utilize discourse to critically examine evidence, argument, and alternative points of view. When circumstances permit, they move towards a frame of reference that is more inclusive, discriminating, self-reflective, and integrative of experience. This leads to autonomous and responsible thinking, essential for full citizenship in democracy and for moral decision making in situations of rapid change.

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