Faculty of Cognitive Science and Human Development

Evaluation of the In-house Induction Course at the Department of Irrigation and Drainage (DID), Sarawak

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Evaluation of the In-house Induction Course at the Department of Irrigation and Drainage (DID), Sarawak

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Degree of Master of Science

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The thesis entitled Evaluation of the In-house Induction Course at the Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Sarawak was prepared by Clement Langet Sabang and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Science and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirement for a Masters of Science (Human Resource Development).

Received for examination by,

............................................................
(Professor Dr. Ibrahim Bin Mamat)

Date:.................................................
DEDICATION

To my persevering parents;
Pu Laki’ and Pu Ledo
for starting me on a quest for knowledge.

To my wife
Josephine Langet
for her understanding.

To all the Langets; Lejau, Batan, Daeg and Ping
who knows when papa is busy.
I would like to sincerely acknowledge the assistance, cooperation and guidance rendered to me by several parties.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION

DID: Department of Irrigation and Drainage

HRM: Human Resource Management

HRD: Human Resource Development

HRDQ: Human Resource Development and Quality

COSEC: Core Skills for Effectiveness and Change

PLK: Pusat Latihan Kakitangan

PLPAK: Pusat Latihan Pengurusan Air Kebangsaan

PLM: Pusat Latihan Mekanikal

DE: Divisional Engineer

SPVM: Sijil Pelajaran Vokesional Malaysia

TNA: Training Need Analysis

SDP: Staff Development Program

ROI: Return on Investment
ABSTRACT

Evaluation of the In-house Induction Course at the Department of Irrigation and Drainage (DID), Sarawak.

Clement Langet Sabang

An In-house Induction is one of the ways to train new employees of an organization. However, whether it achieved the stated objectives or not will not be known until an assessment is made on it. An assessment has to be done to find out about the impact on the employees. Thus, an assessment in the form of evaluation has to be done. Most training programs are evaluated at the Reaction level. Thus, the purpose of this study is to evaluate the In-house Induction at the Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Sarawak (DID). Among the aspects to be looked into are: Impact of Course Objective on Year attended the In-house Induction, Impact of Course Content on Job Grade, Age Group, Period attended and Work Station, Impact of Trainers on Academic Background, Impact of Program Administration on Gender, Overall Impact on Length of Service before joining DID, Job Grade, Age Group, Academic Background, Work Station and Gender, Correlation between Trainers and Overall Impact. About 78 participants responded to the survey questionnaire. The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) Window 9.0, where One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), Independent Sample t-test, and Pearson Correlation were used. There were fourteen hypothesis being analyzed. Out of this ten were not significant. The remaining four were significant. The significant ones were on the impact of Course Content on the Period attended In-house Induction, Age Group and Work Station. The other one was on correlation between Trainers and Overall Impact. Therefore, based on the significant factors the study made two areas of recommendations, namely; First, Recommendation to improve existing programs including: Need to attend In-house Induction in first year, modify course content, include more details, extend duration of In-house Induction, three levels to be evaluated, bilingual trainers, presentation skill, use case study and site visits. Then the second is on Further Research which include impact on staff turnover, motivation level and work performance and study on the trainers.
ABSTRAK

Penilaian Induksi Khusus di Jabatan Pengairan dan Saliran, Sarawak

Clement Langet Sabang

CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter attempts to look into the various aspects of the study, namely: background of the study, background of the organization, the problem statement, objective of the study, conceptual framework, hypothesis, significance of the study, limitation of the study and definition of some terms used in the study.

1.1 Background of the study

The Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Sarawak (DID), has been allocated RM100,000.00 for (i) training activities / event fees; (ii) training venue cost; (iii) training resource materials. This however, does not include provision for the (i) purchase of capital items of equipment related to training for example computers and other office equipment; (ii) traveling and subsistence associated with training. Training budget may be supplemented by additional training funds from other sources such as those mentioned below.

(i) State Financial Secretary’s Office (special grants and supplementary budget);
(ii) Chief Minister’s department (COSEC, Induction etc.);
(iii) Scholarships offered by foreign governments such as by the British and other foreign governments.

The aim of having such funds is to improve the productivity of the organization. Thus, employees irrespective of their age and job grades are sent for various types of training. There are many reasons for doing this. Among others are the needs in learning more in-depth about a particular subject as well as to refresh employees with something or knowledge that they may have forgotten over the years. This is important because as time passes, new technologies may cause the employees’ present knowledge obsolete. Therefore, one of the ways to maintain the organization’s efficiency and competitiveness is to keep on upgrading the skills and knowledge of the human resources.

Generally, training enables employees to improve their performance. However, all good intentions of training may be wasted if no effort is made to assess its effectiveness. Management is interested to know about the impact of training; whether it contribute positively or otherwise to the organization. Therefore, the results of training have to be made known. If training brings changes, then training professionals are interested to know the reasons behind it.

The large amount of money invested in the In-house Induction has to be accounted for. Organizations have become the targets for examination. The stakeholders are interested to know the effectiveness of training on the employees as well as on the
organization. The Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Sarawak (DID) is no exception and it is for this reason that this evaluation is carried out.

There are many ways to find out about the effectiveness of training. One of the most popular ways is evaluation, is done by getting feedbacks from the employees. Their responses of the training will indicate either they do or do not learn anything from it. Not only that, whether the training has brought changes is for the better or otherwise. Unless factors related to the outcome of training are made known, no amount of improvement effort can be executed, because nobody is in the position to simply guess, not even the training professionals. By attempting to make changes to the program without knowing concrete evidence behind the move will only make matter worse. Thus, in order to recommend any type of changes, evaluation has to be done first.

Therefore in line with the above matter, this study attempts to get feedback from all of those who have participated in the In-house Induction conducted by the DID. Besides the participants, others who may have involved with the program in one way or another may also be interviewed to give their comments about it. The inclusion of their involvement is necessary as they know more about it.

Thus, the purpose of the study according to Denison (as cited in Sabiah Mohamed, 1999) is to examine the broad indicators of performance, such as Program Objective, Program Content, Program Methodology, Program Administration, and Trainers. As such, the study looks into the impact of the In-house Induction in DID. All these will become the core areas of the study. Whatever argument that may arise, it will be confined to these aspects of the course only. Participants will be asked to give comments and feedbacks on these areas. This is very important in order to shed some light on the program. The findings of the study may provide some bases for the HRDQ section to decide on the curriculum design for the future training programs of new employees.

1.2 Background of the Organization

At the national level, the DID is established in all the states, including the Federal Territory. In the case of Sarawak, the Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Sarawak (DID) started from what was known as the Drainage Branch in the Public Work Department (PWD). On the 1 January 1967 it was separated and became a full pledge department under the State Ministry of Agriculture and Community Development. The main duty then was limited to Drainage and Irrigation of agriculture land only. Then, from 1972 the department was involved in the field of hydrology and flood mitigation works, including urban drainage. Later in 1986, the task of Coastal Engineering was added to her responsibility (Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Sarawak). This list continued to grow as the years passed by. According to Walkins (1996) the Department of Irrigation and Drainage, Sarawak is committed to the sustainable development and management of Sarawak's water resources. The primary responsibilities and operational focus have been in two areas namely, community development and river and coastal development, supported by other services..... Thus, today the responsibilities of DID can be categorized into five main areas, namely;
(i) Land & Agriculture Development;  
(ii) Coastal Management;  
(iii) Rural Infrastructural Development;  
(iv) Urban Flood Mitigation & Waste Management; and  
(v) River Basin Management


As the agency to manage Sarawak's water resources, the department assumes the role of catalyst and enablers. This means that it must be proactive in taking the initiative to make things happen by actively supporting, helping and facilitating other public service agencies and private sector organizations as the leading partner in the sustainable development and management of Sarawak's water resources as stated by the DID's Vision and Mission attached in Appendix A.

Presently the DID, Sarawak is run by about 718 staffs, distributed throughout the state. The Headquarters, located at the ninth and tenth floor of Wisma Saberkas, Kuching is run by about 300 staffs who are grouped into nine different sections as follows:

(i) Urban Development;  
(ii) Coastal and Rural Development;  
(iii) Hydrology and Water resources;  
(iv) Water Management and Land Development;  
(v) Contract Services;  
(vi) Human Resource Management;  
(vii) Mechanical Services;  
(viii) Human Resource Development and Quality; and  
(ix) Account.

The first five sections report directly to the DID Director. The remaining four report to the Deputy Director of DID. Besides that, the department has also established seven offices at the divisional level as shown in Appendix B, headed by the respective Divisional Engineers (DE). The reason for having a wide establishment of the department's offices is to ensure the smooth implementation of both the state and federal projects in those areas.

Meanwhile, at the national level, the DID carries out various types of in-house training for the staffs in all the three training centers, namely; Pusat Latihan Kakitangan
(PLK). Kuala Lumpur), Pusat Latihan Pengurusan Air Kebangsaan (PLPAK), Kota Bharu and Pusat Latihan Mekanikal (PLM), Ipoh. The training programs can be categorized into four types of training:

(i) **Main Functions** - Training programs that cover all the department’s five main functions such as Drainage, Irrigation, River Engineering, Coastal Engineering and Hydrology and Water Resources;

(ii) **Management** - Training programs related to Management, Administration, Finance, Quality and others that are non technical in nature;

(iii) **Technical** - Training programs related to Mechanical, Electrical, Hydraulic, Pump and other technical;

(iv) **Computer** - Training programs that involve computer such as MS Office (Excel, Word, Power point, Access), E-mail, Internet and others.

(Source: Jabatan Pengairan dan Saliran Malaysia, 1999)

Besides the internal training programs, the department also arrange for the staffs to participate in external courses to enhance their knowledge and career. This type of training and development program can be categorized into:

(i) **Long Term** - This is where DID officers are offered the Federal Training Awards to further their studies to the Masters and Doctorate levels; and

(ii) **Short Term** - The DID officers and personnel are encouraged to attend local short term courses organized by local institution of higher learning, government agencies, professional bodies and private companies. This is to enhance their knowledge in management and administration.

1.3 **Statement of the Problem**

Every year, new employees of various grades are brought into the department. Some of them may have a lot of other working experiences before coming over, others may be fresh from schools or institutions of higher learning. Besides that, many of them may have heard about the department and thus may develop some kinds of preconceived ideas about the department. Others may not know about the DID before they come. These varied background they have may cause them to have different expectations from their respective jobs as well as perceptions of the department. As such, all these need to be put in the proper perspective, if it is for the benefits of the organization. That is the reason why these new employees are required to go for the In-house Induction, which has to be taken within the first three years of joining the department. The HRDQ section of DID
organizes the event by getting the relevant facilitators as well as arranging the venue. Participants from all over the state will be informed of the event. They will have to join the In-house Induction until the end of the course and thus, some forms of assessments should have been done, in order to find out about In-house Induction's impact on the participants. Unfortunately, this has not been done. Since its introduction in 1995 until today, there is no evidence to show that an evaluation on the course has been carried out. Instead, every year new group of employees routinely go through the same course again. The trainers have been presenting the same materials to every new batch of employees, with the hope that it could meet their needs. Thus, there is no way for the management to gauge the impact. According to Reeves (1994), many organizations are interested to find out the impact of training on individuals. Therefore, this study is done to evaluate the perceptive impact of the In-house Induction on the staffs of DID, Sarawak.

1.4 Objective of the Study

1.4.1 General Objective

The general objective of the study is to examine the impact of the In-house Induction on the various categories of participants in DID, Sarawak.

1.4.2 Specific Objective

The specific objectives are to identify whether:

1) Different Year attended In-house Induction affects perception of the Course Objective;
2) Different Job Grades affect perception of the Course Content;
3) Different Age Groups affect perception of the Course Content;
4) Different Period attended the In-house Induction affects perception of the Course Content;
5) Different Work Stations affect perception of the Program Content;
6) Different Genders affect perception of the Program Administration;
7) Different Academic Background affect perception of the Trainers;
8) Different Length of Service before joining DID affects perception of the Overall Impact;
9) Different Job Grades affect perception of the Overall Impact;
10) Different Age Groups affect the perception of the Overall Impact;
11) Different Academic Backgrounds affect perception of the Overall Impact;
12) Different Work Stations affect perception of the Overall Impact.
13) Different genders affect perception of the Overall Impact.
14) There is correlation between Trainers and the Overall Impact.
1.5 Conceptual Framework

There are a number of factors that are likely to affect the impact of the In-house Induction. The following is a conceptual framework showing the relationship of the factors.

- **Demographic Variable**
  - Year Attended Induction
  - Job Grade
  - Age Group
  - Work Station
  - Length of Service before joining DID
  - Period attended In-house Induction
  - Gender
  - Academic Background

- **Independent Variable**
  - Inquiry Areas
    - Course Objective
    - Course Content
    - Course Administration
    - Trainers

- **Dependent Variable**
  - Overall Impact of In-house Induction

In this study, the author is going to evaluate the effectiveness of the In-house Induction conducted at DID, Sarawak. The study attempts to look into the impact of the In-house Induction on the participants. The impact will be measured based on the Demographic Variables that is from the perspective of Year attended the In-house Induction, Job grade, Age group, Work Station, Length of Service before joining DID, Period attended the In-house Induction, Gender and Academic Background. For that purpose, the study has identified the Independent and Dependent variables. The Independent Variables are the Inquiry Areas which cover the Course Objective, Course Content, Course Administration and Trainers. These elements will be analyzed to find out about the feelings of participants towards the Inquiry Areas.

The Dependent variables which cover the Overall Impact of the In-house Induction will look into the participants, how do they feel about the general impact of the In-house Induction.

1.6 Research Hypothesis

The hypotheses of this study are stated in the null form.

- **Ho1**: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Course Objective between the different Year attended the In-house Induction;
- **Ho2**: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Course Content between the different Job Grades;
Ho3: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Course Content between the different Age Groups;
Ho4: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Program Content between the different Period attended the In-house Induction;
Ho5: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Course Content between the different Work stations;
Ho6: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Program Administration between the different Genders;
Ho7: There is no significant difference in perception regarding Trainers between the different Academic Backgrounds;
Ho8: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Overall Impact between the different Length of service before joining DID;
Ho9: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Overall Impact between the different Job Grades;
Ho10: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Overall Impact between the different Age Groups;
Ho11: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Overall Impact between the different Academic Backgrounds;
Ho12: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Overall Impact between the different Work Stations;
Ho13: There is no significant difference in perception regarding the Overall Impact between the different Genders; and
Ho14: There is no significant perceptual correlation between Trainers and the Overall Impact.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is very significant because the results will give the In-house Induction planners some insight into how participants feel about the course. As such, the findings will act as feedback which will enlighten the Human Resource Development and Quality Section, Trainers as well as the Management of DID, Sarawak on issues that may be affecting the effectiveness of the program. By realizing these issues, the department may be able to make full utilization of the time as well as money allocated for the In-house Induction in future. The study is also very important because the environment of work keeps changing in a fast pace since the course is initiated. Thus the training methodology as well as other knowledge required in performing the job today may also change. Furthermore, the expectations of participants are also different now as they have the exposure to Information Technology (IT).

As such, when the environment and expectations has changed, naturally the task of giving training becomes more challenging. The challenge is not only from the training techniques that are changing very fast because of the availability of the Information Technology and other facilities but also, the mentality of employees today differ from those of yesteryears. In the past, employees accepted work assigned to them without questions. Today it is different, they want to know why they have to do certain things in certain ways. Employees are also more aware of their rights.
Employees today have a greater exposure to different curriculum during their school days when compared to those who joined the workforce earlier than them. Thus, this group of employees may need different course designs. However, this point can only be proven if an evaluation of the In-house Induction is conducted. Towards this end, it is very important to get the participants to share their thoughts about what they have gone through. Whether the course has brought a positive or negative impact on them. If the impact brought is positive, the management needs to know which particular areas of the course are good and which areas need to be modified to suit the situation now. The results will provide evidence whether to support the statement made by Grove and Ostroff (1990) that in-service training provides a great deal of irrelevant and idealistic information. The findings of the study will give answers to this later. Participants of the course are in the best position to comment on the subject content. On their part, participants feel being part of the course because they are being consulted and thus may give more ideas for improvement in the future. At the same time, the department is hope to organize an In-house Induction program which is up to date, for the benefit of everybody.

1.8 Definition of Terms

1.8.1 Evaluation

This refers to the process of finding out how the course affected the participants. It is done at the Reaction Level only.

1.8.2 Participants

This refers to all those who had attended the In-house Induction at DID from the year 1995 to 2000. They are from the Headquarters and Divisional Office.

1.8.3 In-house Induction

This refers to the Training conducted internally in the DID to enable all new employees to improve their knowledge about the department. It is a two-days course.

1.8.4 Perception

Refers to how the participants see and feel about the In-house Induction based on a rating scale of 1 for Strongly Disagree to 4 for Strongly Agree.
1.8.5 Course Content

This refers to the various topics being covered in the lectures. In this case, it covers all the functions and roles of the 10 sections plus the site visit.

1.8.6 Year attended In-house Induction

This refers to the particular year the respondents attended the In-house Induction at DID. In this case the year varies from 1995 - 2000.

1.8.7 Job Grades

This refers to the different classification of job performed by the respondents at DID. In this case, the jobs have been divided into: Managerial and Professional group, Supervisory group and Supporting group.

1.8.8 Age Groups

This refers to the different range of ages of the participants who had attended the In-house Induction. In this case, it has been classified into: \( \leq 20 - 29 \geq \) years old, \( 31 - 39 \geq \) years old and \( 40 \geq \) years old.

1.8.9 Trainers

This refers to the Facilitators of the In-house Induction. In this case, they are head of the various sections.

1.8.10 Academic Background

This refers to the different categories of respondents' educational level. In this case, it is being classified into graduate and non-graduate.

1.8.11 Overall Impact

This refers to the perceptual effect of the In-house Induction on the participants following the course.

1.8.12 Length of service before joining DID

This refers to the number of years the participants have worked elsewhere before joining DID. It is being divided into: \( 5 \leq \) years, \( 5 > \) years.
1.8.13 **Period attended In-house Induction**

This refers to the period when a new employee is being sent for the In-house Induction, whether in the first, second or third year of service in DID.

1.8.14 **Program Administration**

This refers to the way the In-house Induction is conducted.

1.8.15 **Gender**

This refers to whether the participant is a male or female.

1.8.16 **Data**

This refers to the feed backs obtained from the participants using questionnaires.

1.8.17 **Work Station**

This refers to the places where participants currently work, which is either in the Headquarters in Kuching or any one of the Divisional Offices throughout the state.

1.8.18 **Non-graduate**

This refers to the participants who possess Diploma and below from an institution of higher learning.

1.8.19 **Graduate**

This refers to the participants who have degree and above from an institution of higher learning.

1.9 **Limitation of the Study**

Since this study is the first of its kind to be conducted on the In-house Induction in the DID, Sarawak, it is expected to have some limitations. Among others are:

1.9.1 **Lack of comparative data**

Being the first study of this nature to be conducted in the department, therefore there is no previous data to compare the findings with. As such, it may be difficult to make comparison of the findings.
1.9.2 Depending on past memory

Participants attended the course at different times. Some may have attended it as far back as five years ago, whereas others may be just as recently as last year. As such, their ability to recall may differ, which may affect their perception of the course.

1.9.3 Lack of commitment

Since the participants attended the In-house Induction in different years, their level of commitment related to the study may vary likewise. Those who took it recently may take the evaluation seriously whereas others may not, because they may feel the evaluation should have been done immediately after the course.

1.9.4 Generalization of Trainers

Since the In-house Induction is held over a 6 years period, it is difficult to evaluate the trainers individually. Thus, the data gathered is based on the trainers in general.

1.9.5 Far from the Training Center

Being far from the Training center may change their perception of what has been covered in the course earlier on. The working environment at present may be different from what they were in DID Headquarters during the training.

1.10 Summary

Chapter One has discussed the introduction and background of this study, in which the aim is to examine the impact of the In-house Induction on the participants. Fourteen specific objectives and hypotheses are laid out for discussion. Beside significance of the study, operational definitions as well as the limitations of the study are also laid out. The next chapter will review related literature on training, in-house induction as well as evaluation of the course.