

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

This chapter reviews the literature in three main parts are reviewed as follows:

- 2.1 The theory of training
- 2.2 The theory of evaluation
- 2.3 The questionnaire
- 2.4 Related studies

2.1 THE THEORY OF TRAINING

Buckley and Caple (1995, p. 13) stated that training is a systematically planned effort whose aim is to develop knowledge, skill or attitude and to have satisfactory performance in activities. The purpose of on-the-job training is to enable people to have abilities to do their job tasks.

Training provides two main aspects of benefits. In the aspect of the short-term benefit, “intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction” (Buckley and Caple,1995, p. 17) can be gained from training. Intrinsic satisfaction is such as doing a task well. On the other hand, extrinsic satisfaction is such as being promoted or getting more income due to good performance.

In the aspect of the long term benefit either direct or indirect ways. Training in the direct role concerns with the leadership, groups or of organizations such as solving organizational problems. For the indirect role, through the management of individual and group training a culture of an organization can be affected in an unobvious way. For example, the content and trainees’ attitudes can be passed to others (Buckley and Caple,1995, p. 17).

It is necessary to analyze training. Training analysis has two main forms (Buckley and Caple, 1995, p. 95). The first one is manual skill. The second one is social skill. The former is for trainees to perform manual tasks. The latter will be emphasized here regarding the in-service English course for Thai teachers. A form of behavior analysis is needed to analyze social skills.

Buckley and Caple classified the forms of analysis into three main phases (Buckley and Caple, 1995, p. 99). The first form is the analysis of the target population. For example, the trainees who use Thai as a teaching medium may be drawn. The second phase is measuring knowledge, skills, and the target population's attitudes. The third phase is that of identifying the target population's characteristics such as age, gender, marital status that may affect how the training should be arranged.

Training criteria is also an important area to be considered. The assessment of training and a trainee's performance is related to some factors. As cited in Buckley and Caple, Goldstein says that how adequate the selected criteria are affects the trainees' performances and training (Buckley and Caple 1995, p. 102).

In developing such criteria, the following questions are of concern.

- *When and why should the assessment / measurement take place?*
- *How, and against what specific criteria, are training and the subsequent effects of training, i.e. on job performance and results, going to be assessed?*
- *In what form should the standards of acceptable training and on-job performance be couched? (...Buckley and Caple 1995, p. 103).*

Examples of criteria are as follows:

Knowledge *How well can the trainees:*

- *Retain /recall facts and procedures?*

- *Recognize and select appropriate procedure?*
- *Demonstrate analytical abilities and understanding of concepts and principles?*

Skills *How effectively can the trainees:*

- *Apply concepts and principals through solving problems, e.g. numerical calculations?*
- *Perform straightforward procedures, i.e. conform to certain prescribed actions, followed in a particular sequence with a specific time limit?*
- *Perform physically skilled actions that meet qualitative and quantitative standards?*

Handle certain sorts of inter-personal and group situations by employing a range of appropriate social behaviors? (...Buckley and Caple 1995, p. 104).

2.2 THE THEORY OF EVALUATION

The Concepts of Evaluation

Many research studies have defined the meaning of evaluation. Davidson (2005) identified the definition of professional evaluation as the following “Professional evaluation is defined as the systematic determination of the quality or value of something (p.13)”. Kaufman, Guerra, and Platt gave the definition of evaluation as “Evaluation, as its core, is simple and useful: finding what works and doesn’t” (p.1).

Beeby (1978) stated that evaluation is “the systematic collection and interpretation of evidence, leading as a part of the process to a judgment of value with a view to action” (p. 22). There are four main issues supporting this definition.

First of all, information has to be organized in a systematic way. Not only information that is acquired from standard tests, but collected from other means such

as observational procedures, questionnaires and interviews is used to conduct evaluation. Nevertheless, how information is gathered is not the main point. It is important to obtain information in “a systematic way” (Beeby, 1978, p. 23). The second issue is that a vital consideration is introduced by “interpretation of evidence” in evaluation and is sometimes disregarded. The third issue is “judgment of value” concerning questions on how well educational or social goals are met by a program. Beeby’s last issue is “with a view to action”. The differences between responsibility with no tangible actions and that for the real action are shown. Educational evaluation is conducted for better policies or improvements.

From the above mentioned definitions, evaluation means a systematic way to assess the quality or value of programs, courses evaluated in order to find out areas for actual improvement or to maintain some good quality.

The Purposes of Evaluation

Davidson (2005, p. 14) also classified the purpose of the evaluation into three main purposes—to assess the overall quality or value of the things evaluated, to find areas for improvement and both of the above mentioned purposes.

It is important to evaluate the overall quality or value. Reporting and decision making are the purpose of this type of evaluation than improvement. “This is sometimes called summative evaluation” (Davidson, 2005, p14). Reasons exemplified are stated to assess the overall value. One example is to inform funders or shareholders. The next example is to make a decision in order to receive service or products. Next is to select among options for products to be bought. Another is to provide decisions, to allocate budgets for scholarship. The last example is to analyze for competing against competitors (pp.14-15).

Not less than these above two reasons are the purposes of the summative evaluation. Not only informing of facts, but summative evaluation is also significant for constructing competitive benefits, making sound decisions.

Formative evaluation is often called for evaluation for improvement (Davidson 2005, p.16). This evaluation is for two main reasons as follows.

-To help a relatively new product, service, or program “find its feet” or to help a relatively new staff member get up to speed

-To explore ways of improving a “mature” product, service, or program

When a new program or service is used, the earlier the mistakes occur the better it is to achieve using it.

Formative evaluation can help find out ways to improve a product, service or program. It is like asking “How well does the content of this training program match the real needs of our minority trainees? (Davidson, 2005, p. 19).

A Framework for the Evaluation

Some researchers studied about an evaluation framework (Philips, & Stone, 2004; Wolf 1990). Wolf stated about a framework for evaluation (p. 22). The first framework is the primary status of the learners. Information on who they are and how good they are regarding the content they are studying is essential (p. 23) which relates to Kaufman, Guerra, and Platt who stated that “... the value of an educational program is based on how well that program meets the needs...” (p. 2). The second framework is that it is important to study the improvements learners have made after training. All training is supposed to change the trainees especially in ways the trainees desire which are supposed to be figured out (p. 24). The third framework is the operation of the course or what the program is about, for example, the materials or

supplies are used in the beginning or almost at the end of the course (p 26). The fourth framework is costs which is an issue of no interest in most evaluations (p27).

Philips and Stone (2002, pp. 4-7) described five levels and types of data for an evaluation framework. The first level is “reaction and/or satisfaction and planned action” The attitudes of the population towards programs are revealed, that is there is a relationship between the attitudes and the programs. Also the findings of the data may lead to improvements of programs (p. 4).

The second level is “learning”. Measuring what are presented in the training is concerned with learning evaluation. Due to the new interesting activities the participant learning has taken place. The adjustments in the program content, design of the program, and the teaching depend on the data on learning evaluation (Philips and Stone, 2002, p. 5)

The third level is “job application and/or implementation” (Philips and Stone, 2002, p. 5). Behavioral change on the job is measured after the training has been finished.

The fourth level is “Business impact” This evaluation concerns improvements in the performance of organizations (Philips and Stone, 2002, p.6).

The last level is “return on investment”. This involves money and investment of the organizations (Philips and Stone, 2002, p. 7).

2.3 THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Hamilton and Parker (1997, pp. 24-29) stated that a questionnaire is a form of the formal communication networks which is divided into three types- - downward, upward, and horizontal network. They also said that in the upward communication,

one distinct disadvantage is the “MUM EFFECT” or the tendency to provide feedbacks or answers more acceptable to their superiors because subordinates may be afraid that their career path may be blocked (p. 28).

A questionnaire consists of a list of questions whose answers are administered by the respondents. The questionnaire has both advantages and disadvantages (Kumar, 1999, p. 114). According to Kumar, two advantages of the questionnaire are referred to. The first one is that it is convenient and inexpensive. The second one is that greater anonymity is provided compared to the interview. On the other hand, it has eight disadvantages. First, only people who can read and write can respond the questionnaire. Second, not everyone will return the questionnaire. The following factors affect the response rate - - the interest of those who are provided the questionnaire in the studied topic, the format and length of the questionnaire, the quality of the instructions explaining the importance and the purpose of the study, and the methodology used to deliver the questionnaire. Third, those returning the questionnaire may have different attitudes from those who do not. Therefore, the findings may not be representative of the total study population provided that the response rate is very low. Fourth, no opportunity is available for the meaning to be clarified if respondents do not understand some questions and if questions are interpreted differently by different respondents, the quality of the information studied will be affected. Fifth, the respondents may not provide spontaneous responses if they have time before answering. Sixth, the way the respondents answer a question may be affected by other questions. Seventh, it is possible to consult others while or before responding and respondents' own opinions may not be provided. Eighth, unlike an

interview, information from a questionnaire cannot be supplemented with other information such as observation.

Questions in a questionnaire can be divided into two main types - - open-ended questions and closed-ended questions. Kumar stated the advantages and disadvantages of open-ended questions (1996, p. 118). For one thing, in-depth information can be provided. However, it is more difficult to analyze open-ended questions. Furthermore, open-ended questions provide various types of information as respondents can express their feelings freely. Therefore, respondents are not restricted by the lists of questions. On the other hand, information can be lost provided that some respondents may not be able to express their opinions. Also, Pickard (1997, pp. 24-29) stated that answering the open-ended questions can entail too much thinking and writing and time is also a factor that some respondents do not want to answer this kind of questions. Moreover, respondents' answers are not influenced by the researcher's bias. However, a greater chance of interviewer or researcher's bias occurs in an interview.

Kumar (1996, p. 119) also stated the advantages and disadvantages of closed-ended questions. Three advantages are mentioned. The first disadvantage is that information from this kind of questions is not profound and varied. The second disadvantage is that the responses may be influenced by the researcher's bias. The third disadvantage is that respondent's opinions may not be truly affected, meaning their points of views could be conditioned by the response pattern. The last one is that respondents are likely to mark a category without thinking. On the other hand, two advantages are mentioned. The first advantage is that the researcher receives the information needed. The last advantage is that the information obtained through closed-ended questions is easy to be analyzed.

2.4 RELATED RESEARCH

Several studies found out the attitudes or satisfaction of trainees towards programs (Mallika Varasarin, 2001 Sasisopa Poompuang, 2003 Sasithorn Panchapaiboon, 2007).

Mallika Varasarin has studied the attitudes of the employees in AIA towards the In-Service English Training Program of the company. She studied two groups of trainees. Group one comprised those whose education was below bachelor's degree and group two comprised those whose education was bachelor's degree or higher. The findings were that both groups did not change their attitudes after the course.

Sasisopa Poompuang has studied the needs of the employees at TBK Krungthep Co., Ltd. Seventy staff members of the company were the subjects in this research study. It was shown in the findings that most members were confident that they had sufficient ability to work. However, some additional courses were needed to create new ways of thinking and develop the work.

Sasithorn Panchapaiboon has studied "satisfaction of auditors at Pricewaterhousecoopers Abas Limited with the training and career Development Programs". The subjects were 100 auditors at PwC who worked in the Assurance Department. The results showed that there was a relationship between training aspects including the content, method, training management and trainers' skills and the satisfaction of auditors at PwC. Also, the satisfaction of the auditors at PwC was influenced by career development aspects including career planning and performance appraisal.

Although, these above mentioned studies found out about attitudes or satisfaction of trainees, they focused on the business aspects, not academic ones.

This research explored trainees' attitudes towards the in-service English training course for the faculty staff who use Thai as a teaching medium and the support staff in Assumption College Samutprakarn regarding the course content, the instructions, the teaching materials, the timings, the evaluation, and the progress and the knowledge application.