Individual Factors that Affect the Training Participation of Academic Staff at Malaysia's Public Universities: View of Administrative Officers

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Abstract:
This study is aimed at exploring the individual factors affecting academic staff in the training program based on the views of the officer that manages the training at Malaysia's Public Universities. The exploration data for this study was obtained using a qualitative method where a total of seven officers in charge of the training department from seven public universities were interviewed. The data were analyzed to help of NVivo version 10 software to build code and themes for studying the issues. This study found total five individual factors influenced training participation for academic staff. These factors were revealed as attitude, awareness of staff, personal limitations, promotion, and internal conflict management. The findings give significant impacts to increase the understanding of involvement in training programs. This study potentially benefits for the administrator to achieve training objectives in Malaysia's Public Universities. In addition, this finding also provides an outlook for organizations to fulfil training objectives based on academic staff needs.

Keywords: academic staff, administrative officer, Malaysia's Public Universities, training participation.

I. INTRODUCTION

The unique guidelines that have been developed are that all staff are required to attend training activities at least seven days a year. This is applied by Universiti Sains Malaysia (USM), Universiti Putra Malaysia (UPM), Universiti Teknologi Malaysia (UTM), International Islamic University Malaysia (UIAM) and Universiti Tun Hussein Onn Malaysia (UTHM). There are also universities set all their staff to attend at least 42 hours of training a year. For example, Universiti Teknologi MARA (UiTM) and Universiti Teknikal Malaysia Melaka (UTeM). In conclusion, all mentioned universities have coordinated the requirements of their staff day or hours of training as set out in the policies set by KPTM and JPA [1].

Today, many organizations are more likely to invest in training programs [2]. This shows that through the involvement of employees in training programs can increase the level of skills and experience in the flow of economic development [3]. However, in the workers' perspective, participation in training programs is seen as an important component in skills development [4]. Obviously, the result of involvement in training programs can benefit both parties [5]. But the

effectiveness of this training program depends on the selection of the program, the involvement of a person in the training program and the organization's ability to provide training to the workers based on the needs [6]. Therefore, this study is conducted for the attempt of exploring individual-related factors that affecting an academic staff at a Public University Malaysia, based on the views of administrative officers who are managing the university's training.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Participation in training programs, learning programs or any development activities is considered as a key strategy for the development of employees and organizations [7]. Professional development in the context of academic staff is defined as systematically designed and processed activities to enhance the professional knowledge, skills and attitudes of academic staff to be categorized during a presentation to students [8]. Training is part of the academic staff career development program at the university [2]. On the other hand, there are some disagreements about this method of development based on the findings of the study.

Basically the selection of appropriate training programs is a basic thing in improving the skills and knowledge of a worker. However, that does not mean that one does not fully participate in the training program provided. Without the participation of employees in the training program can lead to failure and also affect the return on investment. This is because of a successful training program, it involves a lot of funding. If a person does not attend, it will cause loss to the organization. This is increasing when a training program involves high accommodation costs, transportation and food provision. It is important to note that the presence of the presence before any training program is to be carried out.

In addition, participation in training programs also has great impact on individual workers. This is because there are individuals who look down on the training provided. Such an attitude should be avoided as it has a great impact on the influence of friends and the individual itself. This is because if an employee is not motivated to participate in the training program, the employee will not seek to achieve what the organization requires. This will inhibit the development of the organization. It is even more unfortunate if this worker has managed to influence other workers to equally not engage in training programs. This should be taken seriously where enforcement and decisive action should be taken against those who disobey the prescribed instructions.

Over the past decade, the development of training programs in Malaysia has shown a very positive development [9]. After Independence in 1956, the Malaysian government began to channel financial resources to improve the quality of state education [10]. In 1957 a total of RM512.10 million has been allocated for this purpose under the Malaysia Plan 1 (1966-1970). The Government continued with this effort by injecting RM448.48 million under the Plan of Malaysia, 2 (1971-1975). The main aim of the program is to provide training to the parties, particularly in the higher education level to create human capital that meets market needs [11].

Staff engagement studies in training programs need to be improved to identify the actual factors that influence a person to attend a training program [12]. Although there has been a previous study in Malaysia, it is very limited and still in the early stages of the study [13]. Specific studies on the involvement of academic staff in the Public University in Malaysia in specific training programs have not been conducted. Therefore, this research is very suitable to look at the issues and problems faced. Previous studies will support this study to identify and validate the factors derived from previous research findings.

Basically, staff involvement in training programs in Malaysia is still in good condition. However, until today there is still no study that looks at the aspects of staff participation in training programs, especially in the context of strategic human resource management. It is undeniable that past studies have involved the involvement of staff in training programs, but in Malaysia alone there is lacked of research on this issue. Hence, this study is very practical and useful to be thoroughly examined to provide space for future development.

III. METHODOLOGY

In a study conducted, detailed information was obtained from an administrative officer who manages the training at the Public University of Malaysia on individual factors affecting academic staff to participate in the training program provided. During the study, the investigators acted as an important instrument for obtaining the required data. This is because in this way researchers are able to appreciate the real situation that allows the desired information to be obtained in greater depth [14]. In this way, researchers can also interact with study participants more comfortably. It has been described by the researchers in which by means of making the researcher an instrument, the researchers can understand the real situation faced by the study participants and both sides can communicate face-to-face where it will have a positive impact on the information obtained [15]. Through this process, researchers can also explore the real issues and problems with each study participant in depth [15].

The study conducted a survey of seven administrative officers who conducted direct training at the university. The interviews were conducted using a semi-structural method for obtaining information in depth. The "probing" method has been used to give the participants the opportunity to give their opinions and views sincerely. This is in line with the principle of exploratory qualitative research. Participants in the study have given their true insights on the factors that influence the academic staff of the Public University of Malaysia in the training program as an agency that offers training at universities. The explanations provided by the study participants reinforce the understanding of the factors affecting the academic staff of the Public University of Malaysia in the training program provided by the university.

In the study several criteria selection of research participants was set to obtain the required information. This criterion highlights the information and data obtained. In qualitative studies, the selection of sample surveys is very important to ensure that quality information is obtained [16]. The choice of the participants of the study can answer all the issues and the issues raised [17]. In this study, the selection of research participants was determined by using purposive sampling technique. This study has been interviewed by seven administrative officers who manages live training programs at the Public University of Malaysia.

The data obtained should be analyzed to obtain the results of the study. Analyzing data is a process that has an impact and can affect the findings. The researcher acts as a very important instrument in determining the effectiveness of data obtained [18]. This is evident when the analysis process is carried out where the quality of the data is required depends on how the researcher conducts the interview. Hence, all collected data should be analyzed simultaneously with the time of data collection [18]. This is because if the data obtained is immediately analyzed, the researcher still remembers and understands what has been discussed. It was not analyzed at other times or after the interview was conducted for a while. However, previous analysts have stated that

analyzing data can be done in two stages [19]. It is simultaneously and stage after all data collection is carried out. This means the data can be analyzed during the interview process or the data can be analyzed after all interviews are conducted.

In qualitative studies, there are various ways to analyze. It was noted by previous researchers in which the basis of different studies of epistemology allows data to be analyzed in various ways [19]. For qualitative research it was never mentioned by any researchers the best way to analyze data. This study has been using a special application to analyze the data obtained IE Nvivo10 software. This application greatly helps researchers in analyzing data, especially in determining key themes and supporting themes. This was supported by previous researchers were in qualitative research, there is no specific method proposed to analyze, but it depends on researchers. This is also supported by past, researchers were in qualitative research, there is no debate or question criticizing the method of analyzing data [19]. This means that in qualitative research, the process of analyzing the data is subject to the justification of the elect to analyze the data used by researchers. However, researchers need to note that every method used is still weak. That is why the data collection process is very important to produce high quality and high quality data. By using Nvivo10 software, the data obtained are clear and categorized according to certain themes. Obviously using the Nvivo10 software method, the process of analyzing the data becomes easier and systematic.

The previous researcher explains the five main steps that can be taken in analyzing the data obtained. It consists of collecting data, copying interviews in writing, coding, developing themes and providing reports [14]. For this study all the steps mentioned above have been followed in accordance with the predetermined order.

IV. FINDINGS

Total five factors related to the individual have been identified. It consists of staff attitudes, awareness, personal, promotions and internal conflicts, influencing factors influencing an academic staff at a Public University Malaysia to attend the training provided. All the relevant factors can be described as below:

Attitude. Based on these factors, it was found that the attitude of the staff greatly influenced them to attend the training program. The feedback provided noting that most academic staff who were absent from the training program were due to the easy attitude towards the importance of training, *"in terms of attitudes or attitudes as well as to academic staff in which they perceive the importance of training to them* (Participant 4) ". This fact is supported by Participant 7's attitude towards this simple attitude is a major factor in preventing an academic staff from attending the training program. In addition, the attitude is easy to look at on career development because it wants to focus on promoting the ranks in the past. This has been explained by Participant 4 who see that among academic staff who see this training opportunity not to gain knowledge, but it is more than a chance to promote, "That is why I say that they are training not to be important in terms of their career development. Not the development of knowledge, but career development in terms of promotions". This is also agreed by the Participant 7 who see today's academic staff to pursue prominence as compared to the knowledge gained. In addition, it is found that academic staff also has a perception of feeling that is enough with what is there. This reinforces their desire not to attend the training program because they think it is enough knowledge and experience that they have, "Sometimes this is more than just a senior academic. So for them ooo... so they do not need the courses which they have enough experience and are quite expert and proficient. So for them

ooo... this course is no longer needed. They do not have to attend another course (Participant 6) ". The situation is also pointed out by Participant 5 who argues that feeling fit with what is going to prevent an academic staff from attending the training program. Subsequent feedback is provided that academic staff attend training programs only to meet the requirements of training hours set by the university. This is because they are satisfied with the promotion methods available, do not want to change and are already in the comfort zone, "most of them just to meet training hours. An attitude that does not want to change. He's comfortable, comfort zone. Why in comfort zones because they do not feel it is important. If they did not go to the training program, they could still be promoted. We have TBK, there is flexibility. It is not as the main criterion for promoting this rank (Participant 4) ". However, other Administrative Officers believe some academic staff does not want to participate in training programs because they have an ego attitude, but in fact they lack leadership training. Furthermore, academic staff also feels the ego to continue studying and undergoing training provided by the university for studying at PhD abroad, "Our ego for something training about ego, which is actually lack of leadership. And most of them, I do not think they are arrogant people say to be arrogant, but when you... he's learned PhD abroad, suddenly he wants to learn here, you send them, you just imagine, he I learn a German technology. You want to make a course in Malaysia (Participant 5) ". Obviously, staff attitude is very important to determine the involvement of staff in an exercise program.

Staff Awareness. Staff awareness is also important to increase the staff's desire to attend training programs. Based on staff awareness, it is found that academic staff are unaware of the cost of loss that the university needs to bear. This can result in wastage in the payment of the speaker

and the food ordered if the staff is absent. This awareness should also be an individual factor that should be taken seriously by the academic staff, " If not, it will make us difficult in terms of the reason we have provided, rented a place, we've been looking for a caterer and we've been up to a speaker that's why it costs. We've got a lot of money, but we're not participating, we're losing... we're losing in terms of training (Participant 1). " It is also agreed by Participant 5 which emphasizes the awareness of the staff is very important to improve the staff's desire to follow the training. Staff awareness is also important to increase the support of academic staff to attend training on the importance of training for lifelong learning. This is because the learning process will not cease or be subject to any age group, "*for me this training needs to be continued, lifelong learning spirit, lifelong learning should be there. Because science is growing, and we cannot be in the old notch. We have to change* (Participant 1) ". Furthermore, Participant 5 also believes that awareness to improve behavior, skills and knowledge should be applied to every academic staff. In addition, the failure to understand the objective of the training and negative feedback from colleagues who attended the last training should be avoided by the academic staff, "courses involving leadership, skills that are largely related to the skills and knowledge related to our knowledge. The second is that they fail to understand the course objectives. Sometimes we pick me than the whole complete module. So, the attendee might have come, whether he forgot or not or heard from his friends... just can be negative when he comes to such courses. He looks like a simple thing, but when he comes new he knows I have to learn it, I have to learn it. " To address the issue of staff awareness, Participant 7 expressed staff awareness of how important training was to be emphasized and staff needed to improve motivation. *"That's why I said that motivation... it's actually myself. Self-esteem is*

actually ". Based on the feedback given, staff awareness is strongly supportive of staff to attend a training program.

A personal matter. Hence personal factors are factors that influence academic staff to attend training programs. Based on the feedback given, staff have a personal constraint to attend the full training due to having to take school children, "the third may be disturbed by family activities. *You've got a schoolboy what to do* (Participant 1) ". In addition, it is also not possible to attend the training program because of emergency cases such as death and so on. This is inevitable because academic staff should give priority to emergency cases like this, *"there may be an emergency ... sick to death there ... and so on. Ok, that's one of the factors I say as a personal factor* (Participant 1)". In addition, Participant 4 states that staffing factors, illnesses and children are also the factors that prevent the staff from attending the training program, "*if they give feedback, the Head of Department does not release or represent the Head of Department, the sick, MC, we accept. Sometimes a mother's problem is unhealthy, the child is unwell. "* However, the feedback was provided that family problem factors also refer to personal factors affecting staff directly, *"because of the family problem itself* (Participant 7)". Based on the feedback provided personal factors are also contributors that can influence academic staff to attend training provided.

Promotion. Additionally, the study found that promotion factors also affected staff to attend training programs. This is because staff are more likely to attend training that can help them get on their ranks quickly. This has been voiced by Participant 4 where training only helps indirectly in terms of promotion of staffing. In addition, the academic staff saw the training not the main factor in promoting the rank of staff and the university was not provided token to raise the rank of staff, *" I told you that attending the training indirectly*

helped him to advance, but not directly or one of the criteria for promotion. So that's between what I see and no tokens for academic staff who meet the training hours for promotions. The token means that in terms of career paths. If the example in our university, is to go to the Associate Professor there are some researches and books that he must write, after being reached he is promoted to Associate Professor. But the training element was not included. So, if it is not included it becomes an easy thing for them and I'm sure if the research element is not included in the promotion criteria, they will also not research, will not write books, not be university KPIs. "But this statement has been raised by Participant 5 where specific training provided by universities such as the IDP Program affects the promotion. But the staff who has a fine record and a referral because they do not go for training without any reason will be impressed with the promotion, "The Registrar will look at the promotion of the example, to go to the industrial attachment. Many objects, these files will be opened. So, attendance you, time recorder of cause and then discipline if there is a plus this letter ". This suggests that the promotion factor greatly encourages one to attend a university-run training.

Internal Conflict. Finally, this study also meets two other factors that influence staff to the training program. Both of these factors refer to internal conflicts. It was stated by Participant 5 that the staff tended not to attend training due to stress with the Head of Responsibility Center. These academic staff will use the training as a place to get rid of stress when they face conflict with their boss, "*when you have questions, you have seen that he has a problem with the boss. So, this way he wants to escape for him or her to get rid of stress for a moment, go out and then come back hopefully he will try to get it. That's a situation ".* In addition, the involvement of staff in the training program was impressed when the

Head of Responsibility Center did not allow the staff to attend the training requested by the staff themselves. Staff will be unhappy with not being given the freedom to choose or participate in their own training. In fact, participation in staff training programs is determined by certain parties, "*in fact, if the head of the department does not get rid of it, actually it is more about the internal problem between the people. Internal problem is not. Because we a... do not know how he has a relationship between him and his HOD. Sometimes he's insecure, simple-simple things cannot be tolerated* (Participant 7)". Obviously, these two responses prove that internal conflicts directly affect the emotions and motivation of the staff.

V. DISCUSSION

This study has identified six individual factors affecting the academic staff of the Public University of Malaysia in participating in university-organized training. It consists of attitude, staff awareness, personal, promotions, motivation and internal conflict. This was stated [20] based on the previous study that found that individual factors are the main factors that influence a person to attend the training program. This shows that this study has significant results with previous studies. However, this study has been specifically to a specific study participant, i.e. academic staff at a Public University Malaysia. This study is of high value because it has been using the exploration method of interviewing the staff involved directly in managing the training at the university. This gives high added value and contributes to knowledge in the knowledge (knowledge contribution).

Overall, almost all the administrative officers who manage the training state that individual factors are the main factors affecting academic staff in the training program. The findings show that the attitude of a staff is very supportive in increasing the desire to participate in the training. The attitude of looking easy on the importance of training and self-development, feeling enough with what's available, being in a comfortable zone and ego is a barrier that keeps staff from attending practice. In addition, the feeling of being satisfied with the rank of promotions is also a barrier to the staff. Such an attitude should be avoided by a staff member to avoid being absent from the training provided. It is also noted by the previous researcher that such negative attitudes may be detrimental to the staff as each training provided by the organization has the objectives and goals of the staffing and career development [21].

In addition, staff awareness of the importance and ability of the trainers to improve their skills, knowledge and skills should also be applied to a staff member. Failure to understand the objective of the training and negative feedback from colleagues who attended the last training is a barrier to today. But this study also found other factors such as the simplicity of the importance of training and high motivation can improve the staff's ability to predict the exercise. Referring to this staff awareness factor, past studies also support the above statement where this awareness factor can affect the emotions and wants of the staff to participate and remain committed throughout the training. Furthermore, the study found that personal factors influenced academic staff at a Public University Malaysia to attend training. The findings of this study are high value added to the topics studied because the previous study is very poor in terms of these personal factors.

The previous study found that personal factors were factors that contributed directly to staff participation in training programs and were not discussed in detail [22]. However, this study found that personal factors such as emergency cases, sick stuff, sick children, illnesses, family problems and school children were an inevitable

problem. This makes the study more high-quality as it is a feedback that has been obtained directly from administrative staff who conduct training at the university.

The study also found that the promotion factor also influenced an academic staff to attend the training program. Based on feedback given that training factors do not help in the promotion of staffing, training is not the main factor of promotion of staffing and training is not a token for promotion of staff leads less staff to attend training. They prefer to carry out activities that can contribute directly to their ranks. But the study also found that other factors were also stated by other academic staff, namely the Self Development Program (Individual Development Program) directly affecting the promotion. The previous study also stated that the promotion factor also helped increase the staff's desire to attend training programs as one of the goals of the training was to advance the staff to a higher level [23].

In addition, the study is motivated factors and conflicts in the interior are factors that influence staff to attend training. A high sense of satisfaction can motivate the staff to participate in the recommended training. This statement also goes on to say that past, researchers are the factors of staff satisfaction as contributors that can increase the desire of the staff to successfully follow the training [24]. It is also agreed upon by a freelance researcher whose high motivation can increase the staff's commitment during the training [6].

VI. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, this study has succeeded in obtaining the benefits from the administrative officer who manages the training at Malaysia's Public University. Factors related to individuals are those that have high values based on qualitative methods of exploration. But the findings are only feedback and perceptions of staff who manage training. This is not an actual view of the academic staff. Hence, a real study of academic staff should further explore to obtain the factors that influence them to attend or not to attend the training program provided.

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