

**Training Program Evaluation at the National Housing
Corporation in Tanzania:
An Application of the Kirkpatrick's Model**

Oscar W. Tefurukwa
SOPAM
Mzumbe University

Abstract

Public organizations undergo training programs in order to increase employees' capacity to undertake duties. However, most of the training programs lack proper evaluation. The paper uses Kirkpatrick's model to delineate and evaluate three training programs at the National Housing Corporation headquarters-Dar Es Salaam, Tanzania. By using a sample of 42 respondents, data were obtained through interviewing (4) stakeholders, distributing a question to (38) participants, and reviewing available documents. Data were analysed using content analysis methods basing on pre-established themes. Findings reveal that above average, all three programs were beneficial to the NHC because they imparted the intended skills and knowledge that created values at the NHC. Also, according to the result, systematic evaluations of the training programs establish the worthiness of such programs. Future studies can take more programs in different organizations by employing quantitative or mixed approaches.

Key words: *Kirkpatrick's Model, Evaluation, Training programs, National Housing Corporation*

1.0. Introduction

In this epoch of worldwide intense competition and quick organization change, administrations are much more concerned with the best ways of utilizing human capital (Punia and Kant, 2013). It is risky to ignore training and human development at large to employees who encounter complex tasks in ever changing work environment (Arthur Jr at el, 2003). In particular, the changes in technologies and the preferences of the customers that organizations strive to meet, strain the heads of all organizations constantly. To keep up to date, organizations must invest in human resources through recruiting potential employees and through on-job training. Although trainings are very expensive, they ought to be on-going endeavours. This is possible if human resource managers and training professionals make justifications of the training expenses by providing succinct evidence about the positive impacts of trainings upon the organization. Fulmer (1988) portrays that the Unites States of America, for instance, spends annual estimate of over \$40 billion on Training and Human Development in university and colleges. This huge money deserves proper utilization. When this happens, they gain a lot. Phillips (1996) argues that profits of trainings as based on the American Society for Training and Development's return on investment for training especially in industries reveal that the returns on investment ranged from 150% to 2000%. Adding to this, Mathieu and Leonard (1987) portray that a training program designed for 65 bank supervisors which cost \$ 50,000 had the utility for the organization which was over \$34,600, \$108,600, and \$108,600 in the first year, third year, and fifth year respectively. All these indicate that, there are gradual and positive returns on investing in training. Organizations must manage all resources such as money,

equipment, information, and people in order to increase productivity and reduce waste (Burke, and Baldwin, 1999). Investments in training and development of employees can make employees more productive or effective in their jobs, which directly contributing to public organizations (Yambesi, 2009). This demands the training to be effective. The practicality of a training program can be measured by how many participants of the training program apply their knowledge on the job; how long participants continue to apply the learned skills on the job, and how quickly the organization realize benefits from the trained individuals (Arthur Jr., et al., 2003).

Despite the high demand of value for money in many organizations, in particular Tanzania, there is no systematic and formalised model to evaluate training programs in public organizations. Recent studies on training in Tanzania do not precisely use standardised tools. The study conducted by Mlay (2011), identified factors affecting the effectiveness of on the job training practices at the Mtibwa Sugar Estates. Another study by Milanzi (2012) explored the challenges facing the employee-training program at The Ministry of Communication, Science, and Technology. Another study on training at St. Francis Designated District Hospital-Ifakara identified that, there was no training needs assessment conducted, and that no open and staff training practice. Although in that hospital, the majority of staff members were standard seven leavers who needed training mostly. In addition, in the same place of work, training budget appeared to be inadequate in view of the number of staff who was supposed to attend (Kafwanje, 2003). In the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) Dar es Salaam, there was no approach established in preparation for training programs, hence it was not easy to evaluate

effectiveness of training programs administered in the organization (Mwakilema, 2005). In the same vein, Habi (2013:4-5)'s study which contended to examine the effectiveness of the training programs in Morogoro municipal, could only establish the factors hindering achieving effectiveness training program. In each of the studies above, the pertinent issue, about the method of evaluation of the training programs remains tangential. Therefore, it was the core duty of the current study to draw the question to its position by using the lens of Kirkpatrick.

The rest part of this paper is organised in the following sections: section two explicates training and training evaluation. Section three delineates the methodology employed in the study. Section four highlights on the models of measuring training and effectiveness. Section five details Kirkpatrick's Model of Measuring Training Effectiveness. Section six reveals the findings from the current study. In the last part is about the conclusion and recommendations.

2.0. Methodology

In order to achieve the mission, three training programs were used: International Financial Reporting Standards Training Program, Balance Scorecard-Training Program, and Customer Service Training Program, all designed for the employees at the National Housing Corporation (NHC)-Headquarters, in Dar es Salaam. In order to unearth the effectiveness of the programs, among other things, the researcher enquired the feelings of the learners about: the training; facts and knowledge gained; skills learned and used on the job as well as how they applied new skills to tasks. The population of the study was employees, heads of sections, heads of department, and NHC management.

These were selected because they were mostly concerned with the problem under study. The plan was to talk to and request all 67 NHC staff that had pursued training in the past three years to take part of this study because the number was manageable. However, only 42 agreed (see table 1).

Table 1: Population and Sample Size of the Study

Directorate	Population of the Study	Sample Size	%
Directorate of Property Management	9	5	55.6
Directorate of Regional Operations and Administration	2	2	100.0
Directorate of Innovation	17	10	58.8
Directorate of Finance	11	6	54.5
Directorate of Human Resource Management	5	3	60.0
Directorate of Business Development	6	3	50.0
Directorate of property management	4	3	75.0
Procurement Unit	3	2	66.7
Legal Services	2	2	100.0
Corporate Affairs and Corporate social Responsibility	4	3	75.0
Internal Auditing	4	3	75.0
TOTAL	67	42	62.7

The researcher administered 38 copies of a questionnaire to various staff at the NHC-HQ as the table 1 displays above. The Staff members from these departments had attended 19 different training programmes. For the sake of this study, the programs included only those that at least four staff members attended;

namely: *International financial reporting standards, Customer service, and Balance score card training.*

Primary data were collected through interviewing 4 people and administered questionnaires to 38 participants. The interviews involved the heads of departments and sections under which the trainings were held. Heads of units from 11 directorates were sampled. Secondary data from the articles in journals, published and unpublished dissertations, books and the government documents were very carefully scrutinised

Table 2: Training Programs and Sample Size of the Study for Questionnaire

s/ n	Programs Attended by the Employees	Departments/Directorates									
		DF	IA	CSR& CPA	DHR	DPM	DBD	LS	DROA	PMU	Total
1	International Financial Reporting Standards	5	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	5
2	Procurement Forensic Audit	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
3	Career Development	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
4	Public Private Partnership	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
5	Fraud Knowledge Training	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
6	Customer Service	-	-	3	-	-	1	-	-	-	4
7	Recruitment and Selection	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
8	Building Maintenance	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	-	2
9	Fibre Optic Cable Installation	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	1
10	Trial Advocacy	-	-	1	-	-	-	1	-	-	2
11	Procurement Management Information Systems	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
12	Marketing Facilitation Approach	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
13	Contract Negotiation	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-	-	3

14	Microsoft Project	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	2
15	Capital Allocation Program	-	-	-	-	-	2	-	-	-	2
16	Quantity Surveying	-	-	-	-	1	-	-	-	-	1
17	Balance Score card Training	-	-	-	4	1	-	-	-	-	5
18	Vote book Tally.	--	2	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
19	International Public Sector Accounting	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Total	6	3	4	6	4	5	4	4	2	38

In analysing data, Microsoft excel was used to simplify frequencies, percentages, graphs, and histograms where necessary. For the recorded interviews, the researcher first transcribed manually and then typed them to facilitate the content analysis process. The validity and reliability of secondary data depended on the source of the information. All written materials were scrutinised before being used in order to ascertain their worthiness in the current study.

3.0. Conceptualizing Training and Training Evaluation

Training

Training is an organized process for increasing the knowledge and skills of people for doing a particular job. It is a learning process involving the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Gupta, 2001). The purpose of training is to reduce the existing gap between the skills, knowledge and experience that the organization requires and the existing skills, knowledge and experience currently possessed by employees in performing their duties (Armstrong, 2001). Therefore, as Laird (1985) and Nadler (1990) opine, training enhance employees' present skills for their current job.

Training evaluation

Kaufman and colleagues (1995) define training evaluation as the systematic collection of descriptive and judgemental information necessary to make effective training decisions related to selection, adoption, value and modification of various instructional activities. It is the process of assessing the results or outcomes of training (Armstrong, 2006). Phillips (1997) adds that it is a systematic process to determine the worth, value, or the meaning of training program and how it affects the organization.

The link between training and training evaluation is cemented by the fact that, organizations have strategic goals. The goals are achievable if there are right people with the right skills at every moment. In order, this to be present, organizations must invest in human capital through training (Smith, 2012). Training is assessed to validate not only its impact to the individual trainees, but also to the organizations and the society as large (Watkins et al., 1998) All this can be assessed by the aid of models as it is discussed in the next section.

4.0. Models of Measuring Training Effectiveness

There are different models of evaluating training programs. Noe (1986) came up with the model of training motivation. The model shows that a motivated employee due to training first realises that: high effort will lead to high performance in training; high job performance in training will lead to high performance; and that high job performance is important for obtaining desired outcomes and avoiding undesirable outcomes. Swason and Sleezer model (1987) presents three aspects to be evaluated when to test effectiveness of training program. The aspects are firstly the effectiveness of the training evaluation plan; secondly, effectiveness of tools for measuring training and thirdly the effectiveness of the evaluation report. Motivation, attitude, and basic ability were found to be potential individual variables in effective training program in the hospital industry (Zaciewski, 2001). Concerning transfer of the learned skills, knowledge, experiences, and attitudes the organizations must provide suitable environment for practical issues; case study and real problems (Burke and Baldwin,1999). Donald Kirkpatrick

(1959)'s model has four levels of evaluation as it is detailed in the next section.

5.0. The Kirkpatrick's Model of Measuring Training Effectiveness

This model comprises of four levels of evaluation namely: reaction, learning, behaviour, and results. According to Donald Kirkpatrick (1959), each level is essential and has an impact on the next level. *The first level is the reaction level* that focuses on the participants' perception of the training programme mainly the "the measure of customer satisfaction". The study tried to seek the views of the trainees about the content, process (presentation style), definition of course objectives, attainment of course objectives and overall course value.

The second level of evaluation is the learning level. It refers to the attainment of knowledge, behavioural change, skills, and attitudes. The focus, in this paper is on what was covered in the training event. We wanted the trainees to reflect on before and after training experience specifically by focussing on the knowledge, skills, and attitude. *The third level is the behavioural level.* This level measures whether the knowledge, skills, and attitudes learned were transferable to the workplace to reflect positive changes in behaviour and job performance. Here, the focus is on the behavioural change of the trainees whether they transferred the knowledge, skills, and attitudes from the training context to the workplace.

The Results level or level 4 is the effect on the business or environment resulting from the improved performance of the participants. At this stage, heads of the department were

interviewed to get their opinions. The following section presents the findings and further discusses the application of the model.

6.0. Findings and Discussion

According to table 3 below, the findings reveal clearly that training at the NHC were well organised above average to achieve what they wanted to impart to the trainees. In all training programs evaluated at the NHC, we note that there were general good achievements. No program was under rated in any of the four levels.

In the evaluation of the international financial reporting standards, at the reaction level, employees found the programme valuable because it contributed to their performance to the organisation. Large number of respondents found the training extremely beneficial and that the communication of the objectives was positive due to its frequency. More than the average of the respondents said that, the training objectives were achieved because the training helped them to apply new skills and knowledge.

At the learning level, the trainings raised confidence of the employees, and positive attitudes towards work. Participants were highly supported by the organisation and colleagues in applying new knowledge and skills. This enabled the employee to transfer skills and knowledge to the workplace. At the behaviour and performance level, the skills and knowledge were found to be highly sustainable because the knowledge was adapted at the workplace in their daily activities and employees became aware of the change of behaviour and performance.

At the results level, majority of the employees said the programme increased the organisational productivity greatly because they were able to produce reports timely. The reports produced after the training programme and customer complaints were reduced because the reports became more reliable after training program. The programme succeeded to meet organisation objectives but it was recommended that there is a need for more improvements in the future programmes such as proper communication of training objectives to the employees.

In the evaluation of the balance scorecard-training programme, at the reaction, on average, the training program was judged valuable because it updated participants' knowledge. However, the employees requested that future training should be more practical in order to make the training programme extremely effective. Referring to the objectives, the respondents argued that they were highly achieved because they led to increase in accuracy in self-evaluation of performance and that the results given were reliable. Training changed the attitude of the trainees since they acquired new skills that enabled them to do their tasks in better ways. The majority of the employees' knowledge increased above average. They received special attention in applying new skills, and knowledge was very high at NHC. They increased the morale and improved their performance, 40% got the rewards for change.

At behavioural and performance level, the employees managed to transfer their skills and knowledge at the workplace largely. The new skills and knowledge were found to be highly sustainable because of the follow up programme conducted to make sure the knowledge and skills were applied for a long period within the organisation. The attitudes of the employees changed after the trainings because they could produce reliable

information on self-evaluation of their performance at the organisation and bring realistic results compared to the time before the training programme was completed. Although this training program reduced internal customer complaints, there is a need for improvements such as practices to make it more practices.

In the evaluation of customer care-training programme, the majority of the respondents found the training programme valuable because it mostly sharpened their working skills. More a half average, of the respondents found the training programme valuable because it exposed their knowledge gaps on matters relating to customer service and it has helped them to have good communication with customers of the organisation. Communication of the training objectives was average because not all employees were satisfied with the amount of information given on what the training programme was going to deliver to them. However, the skills of the employees improved very their skills in conducting the training programme. Attitudes of the employees changed because they gained ability to deal with customers promptly. The employees who received training in other programs, they fully got the organizational support in applying new skills and knowledge. This resulted in substantially reducing customer complaint

Table 3: Findings in summary

Reaction		Evaluation Levels and Responses in % @ Trained Program														
		Programs			Learnin g	Programs			Behaviour and changes	Progra ms			Results	Program s		
		1	2	3		1	2	3		1	2	3		1	2	3
1	Value of program	60	60	100	Improved skills above average	50	100	75	Highly transferred skills to job	80	60	50	Benefits to the organisation	80	80	100
2 3	Benefit of training	100	80	100	Very much changed in attitude to work	100	100	50	Very well changed organization	60	80	100	Increase in productivity because of training	80	80	75
4	Communicating training objective	60	60	79	Increased in knowledge due to training	60	80	75	Reward for change	60	40	30	Significant Reduction of customer complain	60	50	50

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5	Achievement of the training objective	60	100	100	High curious for new knowledge	60	64	75	Sustainability of behavioural change	60	80	75					
6	Preferred off job training	20	20	50	Full support for applying new knowledge	80	60	75	Much aware on change of behaviours	80	100	75					
7	Practical further training needs	50	50	50					Highly capable to teach newly acquired skills and knowledge to co works		50	100					
Key: program 1= International Financial Reporting Standards; 2= Balance Score card Training; and 3= Customer Service																	

Reflecting on the current study, Ugoji and Mordi (2014) argue that lack of such program values leads to low performance and disgrace the training programs. Subedi (2008) concurs with the situation that knowledge and skills gained enable the employees to perform their duties at a reasonable time frame. This corroborates with the findings by Ugoji and Mordi (2014) that concludes that, poor training in Nigerian organizations leads to detrimental results. Concerning the communicating the training program objectives, Rama, (2012), stresses on importance of making them clear to every trainee because earlier comprehension of goals creates ownership of the process.

There were some weaknesses on the evaluated programs due to issues like lack adequate communication, and organizational support in applying the new skills. Zinovief (2008) adds that, poorly designed program results in the failure to transfer the newly acquired skills, knowledge, attitude, and experience. Observing the role of the facilitators, the trainers Ugoji and Mordi (2014) highlight that, the commitment of the trainers to ensure the organization realise the benefits from the training programs highly determine effective learning-training session from which organization benefit. In brief, getting new skills and knowledge is very motivating, but still organizations that fail to reward trained employees because any reasons demoralise them and that organisation may experience negative consequences on productivity (Punia and Kant,2013).

7.0. Conclusion and Recommendations

The study aimed at employing a systematic and formalised model to evaluate training programs in order to ascertain the effectiveness of such program to the organization. By using systematic approach like Kirkpatrick model, the study has

demonstrated that it is easy to conclude on the merit of the training programs employees attend and the benefits to the organization and the society. However, the scope of this study was narrow, future inquiries may opt to employee quantitative approach or mixed ones. They might also be comparative in nature; like private vs. public organizations and the evaluation may cover dozens of training programs.

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