

Competency Enhancement: Training Need Analysis among Local Authority Officer

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Abstract--Competency play an important role for employee to compete in a challenging environment work place. From an organisational perspective, it becomes a competitive advantage for a company if they have a competent employee. For the labourers, it becomes an advantage to earning a higher salary and creates a good career development. The purpose of this study is to identify the level of competency (knowledge, expertise and attitude) of local authority officers and the types of training needed by the local authority officers. This explanatory research design used mixed method to collect data and involved 188 local authority officers from three different local authority. Quantitative results showed that local authority officers from three different areas have a high level of competency meanwhile output from round table discussion showed that there are several respondents who stated that local authority officers are not competent in executing work, especially in terms of knowledge.

Key words--Local Authority, Competency, Training need analysis, Work environment

I. INTRODUCTION

Citizen's expectations of civil servants quality of service are high. Realizing this, the government has activated various transformations so that services could be provided to fulfil needs and ensure citizen's prosperity. At the organisational level, civil servants encounter problems in ensuring smooth management, difficulty in understanding unclear work procedures and not acquiring specific expertise such as plan drawing, financial procedures and difficulty in making decisions as they do not have the expertise or knowledge in certain areas. These problems ultimately affect the efficacy of service delivery system given to customers. To overcome this problem, civil servants must be given ample training to ensure an effective delivery system.

II. LOCAL AUTHORITY AND SERVICE DELIVERY

The local authority is deemed as the most important body of administration at the local level (Mohd Razali 1992). In Malaysia, the local authority has a main source of power which can be referred to *Akta Kerajaan Tempatan 1976 (Akta 171)*. Each local authority in Malaysia uses *Akta 171* which is better known as Local Authority. In Malaysia, the Local Authority (*PBT*) can be divided into three categories which are the City Council, Municipality, and District Council. The main function and role

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played by the *PBT* are as specified in Part XI, Section 73, *Akta Kerajaan Tempatan 1976 (Akta 171)* where *PBT* is responsible for the preparation and protection of public places, manages the discharge and disposal of solid waste, and preserves local health such as the prevention of infectious diseases.

The efficacy of delivery services is the main focus of local authority in ensuring that specific area can compete in the long-term. The impact of service provided should also create a sustainable environment and a community which is self-sufficient. Efficacy and expertise are broad concepts and are frequently associated with other criteria to ensure a balanced development. Efficacy is frequently used by economists, engineers' organisations, theorists, consultants, politicians, and managers to value and heighten effectiveness (Schipper, 1992). This includes studies in efficacy in the transportation sector (Levinson, 2003), education (Palmer & Togerson, 1999), cargo transportation (Harrera & Pang, 2005), and urban services (Dong et al., 2008). Even though there are various approaches to the detail and use of efficacy, local authorities are not excluded from being directly related to the efficacy of services to urban areas.

Several initiatives need to be strategised to heighten the local authority quality delivery services as conducted by the Training Need Analysis to ensure that the local authority services delivery remains relevant amidst challenges and current needs. The need for this training is a process to evaluate the needs of organisational training which is developed by weighing the needs of the entire organisation, tasks/expertise which are related to task execution, and the ability of the individuals tasked to execute them effectively (Deesler, 1997). The purpose of this study is to identify the level of competency (knowledge, expertise and attitude) of the local authority officers and the types of training needed by the local authority officers, the level of willingness to participate in voluntary activities and to discuss the challenges faced by students in participating in the activities.

2.1 Training Needs Analysis

Training Needs Analysis (TNA) was executed to ensure that training conducted can fulfill workers' needs and fulfill gaps. These gaps can be referred as the difference which arises from the criteria required by the organisation with the actual level of competency possessed by the workers. According to Gupta (2007), Training Needs Analysis is a method to determine the needs to fulfill the gaps. Therefore, Eric & Barbara (2008) state that the training needs analysis based on competency is one of the processes that involve the manager and the staff in identifying the competencies (skills, knowledge and ability) needed in performing their work. The advantage of this analysis provides opportunities for the employees to develop their skills in training. In addition, it can also help the employees to identify the types of training they need in bridging the gap.

2.2 Training Needs Analysis Model

The analysis of training needs covers three components which are organizational analysis, job analysis and individual analysis. Analysis is conducted in each level to find out specific needs needed in each level.

Organisational Analysis		Task Analysis		Individual Analysis
i. Organisation goal – how does the training function help to achieve goal? ii. Internal factor – how far does internal factors support? iii. External Factors - what external factors influence this?	→	i. How do they do their task to achieve the organisation's goals? ii. What are the <i>KSAs</i> needed to do the task given? iii. What are the <i>KSAs</i> needed to supply the employees?	→	i. Do workers have <i>KSA</i> as required? ii. Do workers have problems with performance? iii. Will training be able to help solve the problems?

Figure 1: Training Needs Analysis Model, Rossilah (2008)

Figure 1 shows the Training Needs Analysis Model by Rossilah (2008). In this model, training needs function to investigate further about the knowledge, skill or expertise and attitude of staff in executing certain tasks (Ivanchevich John, 2001). To obtain more comprehensive training results, each analysis needs to be conducted in each level of the organization which include task analysis and individual analysis.

Mathis & Jackson (2003) believe that training can be identified through organisational analysis in determining the knowledge, skills and abilities needed. The theory of leadership (Hasibuan, 1996) showed that organisation had been managed with a good skill, knowledge, honesty and competence (Biatna, 2007) among the officers. The organisations need to be analysed to find the commitment in the organisation itself to maintain the membership within the organization (Robbins and Judge, 2008). The internal and external factors need to be considered in the process of analysis. In addition, Ivancevich (2007) and Junaidah (2007) state that organisational needs analysis involves long and short term assessments such as the direction and development of the organisation, as well as issues that can be resolved through trainings. Meanwhile, Stone (2004) agree the environmental factors such as the element of social, rules, technology and other factors need to be analysed in determining the type of training.

Task analysis is referring to the process in determining and reporting information related to any tasks. This concept explains the job scopes of a certain task, including the skills, knowledge, ability and responsibility needed to accomplish the task. Weinger et. al. (1994) believe that task analysis is referring the information that could be obtained from performing the real-time task assessment and workload analysis tests. O'Connor, Bronner & Delaney (2002) believe that the work analysis refers to the knowledge, skills and ability that are needed in accomplishing a task. The job scope is important as it explains the employee's responsibility and ability to perform the task. Therefore, Mathis & Jackson (2003) highlight that the differences in job scope and knowledge, skills and ability possessed lead the employee to determine the suitable training. Besides, work

analysis also involves the process of identifying the content of training in producing quality output to be implemented by the employees.

Noe et. al. (2008) clarify that individual analysis helps the organisation to recognise individual who needs the training based on his performance due to lacking of knowledge, skills or attitude. They also stressed that this process of analysis is not only concentrating on the needs of training but also focussing on the strategy and the development of the training which is able to help an individual to achieve the standard of organisation target goal. Additionally, Ivancevich (2007) thinks that employee’s aspiration needs to be considered in managing their training needs. Maimunah (2008) deliberately highlights that those who need trainings are the ones with predicaments in their work. Dong and Bruce (2017) believe individualist can generate more idea when working alone in the required organisation. Paulus (1983) stated in his book that workers who perform task individually have an advantage to understand many real life setting, help group problem solving and level up their skills in individual performance (Peter and Elena, 2010). Therefore, individual training can help their skills and knowledge and satisfied many facets of individual satisfaction (Ricky, 2017).

III. METHODOLOGY

This research utilises purposeful sampling technique. A total of 188 officers from three local authority which are X, Y and Z were chosen as research respondents. This explanatory research design used mixed method to collect data. Quantitative data employed the distribution of survey instrument to 188 local authority officers in the technical and non-technical departments. As many as three levels of round table discussion (RTD) were conducted together with the local authority officers in the level of management group and professionals for qualitative data. Table 1 shows the summary of data collection method and instruments used in this study.

Table 1: Summary of Data Collection Method and Instrument

Approach	Method	Instrument	Purpose	Item
Quantitative	Survey	Questionnaires	Survey was conducted to obtain relevant information about training needs of <i>PBT</i> officers	A. Respondents’ Background B. Individual Competency Evaluation C. Attitude Evaluation D. Work Scope Competency Evaluation
Qualitative	RTD	Set of questions	To obtain relevant information from those involved directly with the execution of training programs in <i>PBT</i> which is the Officers Training Unit. Apart from	E. The current <i>PBT</i> level of competency in providing service to community. F. What type of training is needed by <i>PBT</i> ? Suggestions?

			that, discussions were conducted with representatives from each department to obtain explicitly detailed information.	
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IV. RESEARCH FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

4.1. Respondents' Background

Table 2 shows the background of respondents who participated in the study. Research findings show that out of 162 respondents, 54% were male, as opposed to female (45.1%) and most are between the ages of 26-30 (30.2%). A total of 56.2% of respondents are holders of STPM/Diploma and 32.7% are degree holders. This finding is in line with the employment data which show that respondents are mostly JA 29 (n=39), followed by J29 (n=30) and N41 (n=1) and only 14 respondents are in U41-W52. It is showed that all of the respondents were in executor category and they need high level of knowledge, skill and ability when they do their task.

Table 2: Respondents Demographic

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Men	89	54.9
Woman	73	45.1
Age		
25 – below	6	3.7
26-30 years	49	30.2
31-35 years	32	19.8
36-40 years	27	16.7
41-50 years	28	17.3
51-55 years	10	6.2
56 and above	9	5.6
Education Level		
PMR/SRP/Sijil	1	0.6
SPM/SPMV	4	2.5
STPM/Diploma	91	56.2
Sarjana Muda	53	32.7
Sarjana	7	4.3

Others	3	1.9
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4.1.2 Workers' Competency

Competency aspect was measured by knowledge, skills and abilities. Table 3 shows the summary of the entire competency level of local authority officers. The knowledge level of respondents was found at a high level of (61.1%) where most of them stated that they knew about the functions (min=4.14) and work system in the organisation (min=4.04) as knowledge today is necessary in this rapid era and disseminated it through the organisation itself (Earl et. al., 1999). Respondents have a broad knowledge on the role as civil servants as stipulated in the customer charter (min=3.89) and knowledge about the standard of knowledge and expertise stipulated in the organisation (min=3.94). In terms of skill or expertise, more than half (78.4%) has a high level of expertise. Most respondents have high levels of expertise in conducting tasks according to the appropriate standards (min=4.07) and have good communication expertise (min=4.07). This finding directly reflects that the local authorities have a good communication in their daily tasks and Petra (2014), supported this with their findings that internal communication can help in the process of solving various problem that can occur. Therefore, the respondents agree that the present expertise can be used to increase work quality and their jobs (min=4.08). Relatively, high level of competency among local authority workers showed that they served the people rightly to ensure that people can live in good condition. According to Khuram et. al. (2014), level of competency in an organisation cannot remain aloof and successful organisation can increase with workers' work skills. Also, expertise can help to contribute to organisations by supervising workers with their own level of abilities.

The ability of respondents is also at a high level (85.2%). Majority of the respondents show that they can receive work instructions well (min=4.28) and are able to receive with clear instructions which have been given by their superiors (min=4.11), verbally or non-verbal. This study complement findings of Boer and Petruta (2015), which stated that work instruction are detailed document that had the responsibilities for each members, also give information regarding procedures and the process that each members had to fulfil with every instruments and documents. Respondents were also found to be able to work in groups (min=4.18) and accept the opinion of others (min=4.22). These findings directly show that the environment in the organisation is conducive as each officer is able to practice a systematic work culture (min=4.06) and can work outside with their work requirements (min=3.93). This findings further supports the findings of Petruta and Boer (2014) who discovered that systematic work culture can be improved with a good work place and good quality in terms of creativity and solution orientation.

Table 3: Level of Competency

Mean / Competency	Frequency	Percentage
Knowledge		
Low	2	1.2
Middle	59	36.4
High	99	61.1

Skills / Expertise		
Low	1	0.6
Middle	32	19.8
High	127	78.4
Abilities		
Low	1	6
Middle	21	13
High	138	85.2

4.2 Result of Qualitative Study

4.2.1 Background of Respondents

Three sessions of round table discussions were held and involved 30 respondents who were the heads of departments, administrative officers and assistant administrative officers. Table 4 shows the total of respondents according to the local authority.

Table 4: Respondent of Local Authority

PBT	RTD 1		RTD2	
	Total	Percentage	Total	Percentage
X	2	40	10	40
Y	2	40	10	40
Z	2	40		

4.2.2 Competency Level among Local Authority Officers

Competency Level of Local Authority

Several respondents stated that local authority officers are not competent in executing work, especially in terms of knowledge. This shows that respondents do not master their job specifications. Feedback and statements from the respondents are detailed in Table 5.

Table 5: Level of Local Authority Officer Reputation

Item	RTD 1	RTD 2
Not Competent	3	6
Competent	2	1

Table 6: RTD Analysis of Local Authority Officer

RTD Statement	N	Analysis
“...for landscaping machines and machinery, most PBT staff do not know how to repair, have no expertise, if they are given ample training, we can repair and maintain the machines ourselves...”	5	Not Competent
“...actually, in PBT, we ourselves receive a lot of complaints from the public about PBT problems.”	1	Not Competent
“some officers lack expertise in their frame of work – office administration, like using new software and basic computer usage.	4	Not Competent
“...for me, knowledge required centers around financial management for PBT, because PBT finance management and that of other organizations are different. Therefore, there are some amongst us who are not clear about financial management of PBT”	1 1	Not Competent
“...new software technology such is GIS, photoshop, design software- these are the ones we are not familiar with, if possible we need courses to learn these...that is better”	1 3	Not Competent
“ Communication problems with the public are always an issue. Sometimes, whatever the PBT officer tries to deliver to the community, the message is not delivered, here we see, weakness in communications where the public is concerned.	1 0	Not Competent
“...there is an assistant officer, he knows what needs to be done, that means he has the knowledge...but he is not skilled. When a superior asked to do something at the site, he is not able to do the work...”	7	Not Competent

Table 6 shows many respondents admit that half of them are still not competent especially concerning knowledge and agree to the need for more training in line with their job descriptions so that they can improve the level of service to be given to the community. Similar to Ajeet and Dharmaraj (2016), workers believe that knowledge and technical skill can be learned through on job training. Mohan et. al., (2015) added that training is an indispensable aspect needed in organisation. The analysis shows that the group of professional managers and support as well as execution group still require training despite the different contexts such as office management, financial management, and communication. Solomon et. al., (2015) agreed that there is a lack of work skills, knowledge sharing, team cooperation and individual contribution in office management either among the managers or workers. Officers in technical and non-technical area were also found to have the same potential to receive training in ICT, landscaping, finance management, and office management.

V. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

In general, local authority officers from the management and professional group, and the execution and support group still need training according to their job description. Monitoring officers' competency in the aspect of knowledge, expertise and ability are important to heighten the quality of the public service system. As an agency who is directly involved with the community, local authority officers are observed as needing the same amount of training albeit in technical and non-technical skills. The types of training needed are also basic ones which include ICT, office management, financial management, and landscape basics. Nevertheless, local authority officers also admitted to requiring advanced training in visual design of landscape, high level of corporate communication, and management of property law. Therefore, it is suggested that training should not only focus on the job scope of local authority officers but also general training such as personal development, and legislative and regulatory and financial management.

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