



SENSITIVITY TRAINING AS A LEARNING & DEVELOPMENT TOOL IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY ORGANISATION

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ABSTRACT

Organizations are comprised of individuals whose aim is to perform and achieve certain objectives of the organization which are preset by its constitutions. Ideal and most effective achievement of goals is when all these individuals are oriented towards achievement of preset objectives. HRD is concerned with orientation of individual behavior to focus and direct towards achievement of corporate goals. In practice it's seen that individuals have their own objectives to achieve, when it's not oriented can cause harm in the achievement of corporate goals.

In this context, IT Company (Confidential) categorical nominated their staff of various ranks for sensitivity training programme. A sample of 100 respondents from the organization went through the programme in 2015 were selected through a random sampling process. The findings were i) p is greater than 0.05 which means that there is no association between gender and group composition during the ST and ii) a) p value is lesser than 0.05 the impact of Sensitivity training program on the Overall Performance of the employees vary at different Designations. b) p value is greater than 0.05 we accept the null hypothesis and find there is no significant difference between Designation and Overall performance after sensitivity training program.

KEYWORDS

Sensitivity Training, T-group, behavioral Training Evaluation

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The HR department of The IT Company has been sending their employees to sensitivity training programme to Indian Society of Applied Behaviour Science (ISABS). A major contributing factor was that in the previous five years, 500 employees out of 2,300 had experienced T-group model. The present research paper is an example of how T-groups can have significant impact on helping businesses reach their goals; use the case to highlight cutting edge advances in T-groups; and discuss the implications for OD practice.

1.2 Indian Society of Applied Behaviour Science (ISABS):

The ISABS is a national institution engaged in applying their knowledge and skill to the wellbeing of persons, organizations, communities and society at large. Its members are independent consultants, trainers & counselors and academicians and HRD experts and community change agents. Their programs focus on human processes and aim at helping people to understand themselves better and also discover more creative and satisfying ways of relating and working with others as a group. The main method used by ISABS is experiential learning which involves the trainees in experiencing reflecting, hypothesizing conceptualizing and experimenting rather than lectures. The expectation of management of the IT Company from the employees who underwent the training in ISABS was that the individual are helped to increase their ability to :

- Sense the reactions of others to their behavior
- Sum up the behavior of others and the group on themselves. Behave appropriately & effectively in various interpersonal situations such as different ways of communicating, making decisions, handling conflicts in groups and obtaining co-operation. It also expects to expose the trainees and modify certain values held by typical executives values which if not modified will impair interpersonal effectiveness.
- The training itself was characteristic in the sense it isolated the trainees from their work situation, gave equal participation in leadership by all group members as peers. The experiments start with a dilemma, no planned agenda and rule or procedures were imposed, old values were unfrozen, new values are developed and frozen.

1.2.1 Introduction to Sensitivity Training

Most of us are not aware of our behavior in our daily life and the way others perceive our behaviors. During this training the

participants are left together in a room and are allowed to interact with each other just as the way we start interacting in our neighborhood, office.

The members are encouraged to experiment with their behaviors, offer feedbacks both on negative and positive so that they can change based on the feedback offered. The member can try out the new behavior and also can experience if he is more / less satisfied with the new behavior and its consequences.

This training emphasizes on the fact that each of us have the ability to offer solutions to any problems and there need not be a person with authority only to solve problems. It helps bring about confidence in the person to deal with day to day problems.

As the program is unstructured and highly informal setting, the participants learn how to tolerate ambiguity to see and examine their own behavior in this kind of a setting, and then finally to make some sense out of what has occurred are some of the ways in which T-groups help people learn how to learn." It encourages team spirit as each member learns from the others and vice-versa. This helps everyone to appreciate the potential contributions of the other team members.

1.3 Company Profile:

The IT Company is a global IT solutions & services company with its Head Quarters in Mumbai. The IT Company is ranked number 6 in India IT companies in 2013–2014. The company has 39 registered offices in 23 countries. It employs standards of the Software Engineering Institute's (SEI) Capability Maturity Model Integration (CMMI) and is a Maturity Level 5 assessed organization.

1.4 DESIGN OF THE RESEARCH:

1.4.1 Objective of the study:

- To find out the performance of Gender in Group Composition during the sensitivity training programme.
- To seek the relationship between Designation and Overall Performance after the sensitivity training program

1.4.2. Hypothesis

Hypothesis I: There is significance association between Gender and Group Composition during the sensitivity training.

Hypothesis II: There is significant difference between designation

and overall performance after sensitivity training program

1.4.3. Methodology:

Sample of 100 respondents were selected through a random sampling process amongst the participants based on wide spectrum of hierarchy within the IT Company both vertical & horizontal from their Chennai office of IT Company. The participants for this program itself were based on specific recommendations by the Immediate Superior who felt that ISABS intervention would be necessary for the modification of behavior of these selectees.

A Questionnaire was designed to elicit information for purpose of study and after pre-testing on a small sample of 5 staff members was released to 100 respondents.

1.4.4. Research Tool

The software used to analyze the results by the researcher was SPSS 22. The statistical tools applied was

a) Chi square Test, the association allows the comparison of two attributes (i.e. Qualitative variables) in a sample of data to determine if there is any relationship between them. The idea behind this test is to compare the observed frequencies with the frequencies that would be expected if the null hypothesis of no association / statistical independence were true. By assuming the variables are independent, we can also predict an expected frequency for each cell in the contingency table. If the value of the test statistic for the chi-squared test of association is too large, it indicates a poor agreement between the observed and expected frequencies and the null hypothesis of independence / no association is rejected.

b) One way ANOVA: is used to decide whether the difference between more than two averages of independent populations is statistically significant using sample averages.

1.4.5. Data Collection:

The questionnaire was emailed to 118 participants of 100 responded and the remaining 18 responses either the data were incomplete or insufficient. The confidentiality of the responses was ensured by not asking them to disclose their names.

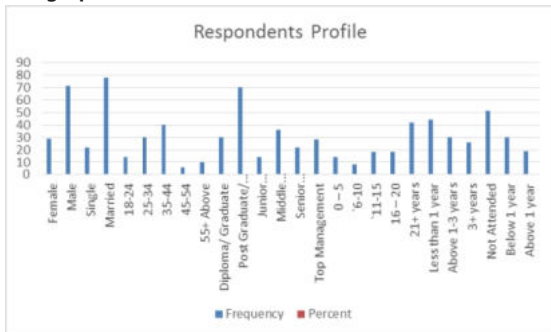
1.5 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION:

This section provides data analysis and interpretation. The appropriate tools and techniques were applied on the data to arrive at the results

1.5.1. Percentage Analysis:

Employees working in IT Company in Chennai were selected for the study. Personal and professional profile of the employees has studied in terms of age, marital status and education Bar Chart 1.1 displays the personal and professional details of the respondents.

Bar Chart 1.1 Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Demographic Characteristics



1.5.2. HYPOTHESIS

H₀1. Null hypothesis: There is no association between Gender and group composition during the sensitivity training

Table 1:2 Chi Square test - test the association between the Gender and Group Composition

	Group Composition during the sensitivity training	Gender		P value
		Male	Female	
1	Gender diversity has helped learning	22.48		>0.05
2	I was comfortable interacting with members of opposite gender	8.60		
3	Age diversity impede my learning	2.27		
4	Religious belief discussed during the sensitivity training process influenced my learning	6.00		
5	Language diversity was a barrier in learning	13.12		
6	Ethnically group enhanced my learning	6.32		

The null hypothesis is accepted as p is greater than 0.05 which means that there is no association between gender and group composition during the sensitivity training.

H₀2 Null hypothesis: Ho: There is no significant difference between Designation and Overall Performance after sensitivity training program

Table 1.3: One way ANOVA Overall Performance

ANOVA						
		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
My behaviour has improved	Between Groups	.632	4	.158	.669	.615
	Within Groups	22.408	95	.236		
	Total	23.040	99			
Performance has been enhanced	Between Groups	3.520	4	.880	2.799	.030
	Within Groups	29.870	95	.314		
	Total	33.390	99			
Organization has benefited by better employee relations	Between Groups	16.053	4	4.013	11.437	.000
	Within Groups	33.337	95	.351		
	Total	49.390	99			

If p value < 0.05, reject null hypothesis.

Interpretation: As p value is lesser than 0.05 the impact of Sensitivity training program on the Overall Performance of the employees vary at different Designations

If p value > 0.05, accept null hypothesis

Interpretation: As p value is greater than 0.05 we accept the null hypothesis and find there is no significant difference between Designation and Overall performance after sensitivity training program

1.6. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Researcher's Recommendations to the Organization for sustaining the learning:

- Create a forum for regular periodic meetings amongst participants. Identify an accredited person as a mentor to the group.
- Unwinding and debriefing appropriately on return from the programme.
- Continuing to nominate so that more number of employees are exposed to the training.
- By seeking feedback from "significant others" of participants both at office and at home; a longitudinal research could be carried out to study whether behavioral modification has occurred.

1.7 CONCLUSION:

- This training had a positive impact on the behavior of participants irrespective to gender or age in their professional

life.

- Training lead to a significant positive change in the working relation between members which leads to better productivity, cordial working relationship and this would lead to fulfillment of organizational goals.
- The challenge for the trainee was to change his/her behavior and transfer the Learning's to work place. The myth that old habit seldom die. Here in this study the above myth has proved wrong. Change can happen at any AGE provide that if he/she is aware of their behavior and wants to change voluntarily.

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