

DETERMINANTS OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES

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DEDICATION

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

This dissertation is dedicated to my beloved father, Saidi bin Omar, who taught me that the best kind of knowledge to have is that which is learned for its own sake and for have been a great source of motivation, inspiration and of course financial.

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ABSTRACT

This study attempts to address issues regarding relationship between organizational (government policies, line management involvement, top management support, outsourcing and external consultant) and individual (motivation to learn, learning skills and peer support) factors of learning and development (L&D) towards effective implementation of L&D and their influences on the effectiveness of L&D initiatives implementation. This research adopts a quantitative approach based on 103 employees in selected ABC Bank branches in Johor Bahru. Four-section of self-administered survey questionnaire was constructed with 60 items related to L&D factors and effective implementation of L&D initiatives. Frequency and descriptive test, Pearson correlation and multivariate analysis are being applied. The findings indicated three organizational factors (top management support, outsourcing, and external consultants) and two individual factors (learning skills and peer support) correlated significantly with effective implementation of L&D initiatives. However, the other two organizational (government policies and line managers' involvement) and one individual factor (motivation to learn) are found to have no relationship at all. The findings from multivariate analysis using multiple linear regression analysis indicated that peer support ($\beta = 0.591$) is the strongest factor influencing effective implementation of L&D initiatives. However, the other two factors (learning skill and outsourcing) were also found to influence the dependent variable, although limited. The findings are hoped to provide evidences regarding type and responsibility to L&D initiatives, and to increase understanding of the L&D factors influencing effective implementation of L&D in ABC Bank, Johor Bahru.

ABSTRAK

Kajian ini cuba menangani isu berkaitan hubungan antara faktor-faktor organisasi (dasar kerajaan, penglibatan pengurus, sokongan pihak atasan, outsourcing, konsultan luar) dan individu (motivasi belajar, kemahiran belajar, dan sokongan rakan sebaya) di dalam faktor-faktor pembelajaran kepada pembangunan terhadap pelaksanaan inisiatif pembelajaran dan pembangunan yang berkesan dan pengaruhnya terhadap pelaksanaan inisiatif pembelajaran dan pembangunan yang berkesan. Kajian ini menggunakan pendekatan kuantitatif kepada 103 orang pekerja di beberapa cawangan Bank ABC, Johor Bahru. Borang soal kaji selidik terbahagi kepada empat bahagian yang mengandungi 60 item yang berkaitan dengan faktor-faktor pelaksanaan inisiatif pembelajaran dan pembangunan yang berkesan. Deskriptif, korelasi Pearson dan analisis multivariate telah digunakan untuk kajian ini. Hasil kajian menunjukkan terdapat lima faktor yang signifikan terhadap pelaksanaan inisiatif pembelajaran dan pembangunan yang berkesan. Faktor-faktor ini adalah sokongan pihak atasan, outsourcing, konsultan luar, kemahiran belajar, dan sokongan rakan sebaya. Namun, tiga faktor yang lain (dasar kerajaan, penglibatan pengurus dan motivasi untuk belajar) tidak mempunyai sebarang hubungan sama sekali. Penemuan daripada analisis multivariat menggunakan regresi linear berganda menunjukkan bahawa sokongan rakan sebaya ($\beta = 0.591$) merupakan faktor yang terkuat mempengaruhi pelaksanaan inisiatif pembelajaran dan pembangunan yang berkesan. Walaupun terhad, terdapat juga dua faktor lain yang mempengaruhi pelaksanaan inisiatif pembelajaran dan pembangunan yang berkesan. Penemuan ini diharap dapat memberikan bukti mengenai jenis inisiatif pembelajaran dan pembangunan yang berkesan dan orang yang bertanggungjawab dalam pelaksanaannya. Di samping itu juga, kajian ini dapat meningkatkan pemahaman mengenai faktor-faktor pelaksanaan inisiatif pembelajaran dan pembangunan yang berkesan di Malaysia.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	DECLARATION	ii
	DEDICATION	iii
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	iv
	ABSTRACT	v
	ABSTRAK	vi
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
	LIST OF TABLES	xiii
	LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xix
	LIST OF SYMBOLS	xx
	LIST OF APPENDICES	xxi
1	INTRODUCTION	
	1.1 Introduction	1
	1.2 Background	5
	1.3 Problem Statement	7
	1.4 Research Questions	9
	1.5 Research Objectives	
	1.5.1 General Objective	9
	1.5.2 Specific Objectives	10
	1.6 Research Hypotheses	10
	1.7 Significance of the Study	11
	1.8 Scope of the Study	11
	1.9 Limitations	12
	1.101 Conceptual and Operational Definition	12
	1.10.1 L&D Initiatives	13

1.10.2	Organization Factors	14
1.10.3	Individual Factors	17
1.10.4	Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	19
2	LITERATURE REVIEW	
2.1	Introduction	20
2.2	The Philosophy of L&D	20
2.3	Definition of L&D	24
2.4	L&D Models	25
2.4.1	Middle-Range Learning Models at the Individual Level	
2.4.1.1	Andragogy	26
2.4.1.2	Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory	27
2.4.2	Middle-Range Learning Model at the Organizational Level	
2.4.2.1	The Learning Organization Strategy	29
2.4.3	Learning at the Workplace	31
2.4.4	The Development Cycle	32
2.4.5	L&D Cycle	33
2.5	Learning and Development Initiatives	34
2.5.1	In-house Development Program	35
2.5.2	Coaching by Line Managers	35
2.5.3	On-the-Job Training (OJT)	37
2.5.4	Internal Knowledge-Sharing Event	38
2.5.5	Mentoring	38
2.5.6	Coaching by External Practitioners	39
2.5.7	E-Learning	39
2.5.8	Job Rotation	39
2.5.9	External Conferences, Workshops and Events	40

2.5.10 Formal Education Courses	40
2.5.11 Instructor-led Training Delivered Off-the-Job	40
2.5.12 Action Learning Sets	40
2.5.13 Audio Tapes, Videos and Learning Resources	41
2.6 Responsibility in Determining L&D Initiatives	41
2.7 L&D Initiatives in Malaysia	43
2.8 Organizational Factors Contributing to Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	
2.8.1 Government Policies	44
2.8.2 Line Managers' Involvement	45
2.8.3 Top Management Commitment	46
2.8.4 Outsourcing	47
2.8.5 External Consultants	48
2.9 Individual Factors Contributing to Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	
2.9.1 Motivation to learn	49
2.9.2 Learning Skills	50
2.9.3 Peer Support	52
2.10 Measurement of Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	53
2.11 Summary	55

3 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction	60
3.2 Research Design	60
3.3 Population and Sample	
3.3.1 Population	62
3.3.2 Sampling Method	63
3.4 Data Collection	64
3.5 Development of Questionnaire	64

3.5.1	Section A: Demographic Profile	65
3.5.2	Section B: Trends in L&D	66
3.5.3	Section C: L&D Factors	68
3.5.4	Section D: Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	69
3.6	Reliability and Validity of the Instrument	69
3.7	Data Analysis	71
3.7.1	Descriptive Statistics	71
3.7.2	Inferential Statistics	71
3.8	Summary	72

4 RESEARCH FINDINGS

4.1	Introduction	73
4.2	Respondents' Profile	74
4.2.1	Respondents' Profile According to Bank's Location	74
4.2.2	Respondents' Profile According to Age	75
4.2.3	Respondents' Profile According to Gender	75
4.2.4	Respondents' Profile According to Race	76
4.2.5	Respondents' Profile According to Education Level	76
4.2.6	Respondents' Profile According to Length of Service	77
4.3	Descriptive Analysis of L&D Factors and Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	77
4.3.1	Organizational Factors	
4.3.1.1	Government Policies	78
4.3.1.2	Line Managers' Involvement	79
4.3.1.3	Top Management Commitment	79
4.3.1.4	Outsourcing	80

4.3.1.5 External Consultant	81
4.3.2 Organizational Factors	
4.3.2.1 Motivation to Learn	81
4.3.2.2 Learning Skills	82
4.3.2.3 Peer Support	83
4.3.3 Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	84
4.4 Objective 1: Type of L&D Initiatives Recently Attended	85
4.5 Objective 2: Responsibility for Determining L&D Initiatives	86
4.6 Objective 3: The Relationship between L&D Factors and Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	87
4.6.1 Organizational Factors	87
4.6.2 Individual Factors	88
4.7 Objective 4: L&D Factors and Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	88
4.7.1 Testing the Assumptions of Multiple Regression Analysis	89
4.7.1.1 Normality of Distribution	89
4.7.1.2 Linearity of the Relationship	90
4.7.1.3 Multicollinearity	91
4.7.1.4 Homoscedasticity or Independence of Errors	91
4.7.2 Organizational Factors	92
4.7.3 Individual Factors	95
4.8 Summary	98

5 DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 Introduction	99
5.2 Discussions of Study	99
5.2.1 Discussions on Types of L&D Initiatives	100

5.2.2 Discussions of Responsibility of L&D Initiatives	101
5.2.3 Discussions of Relationship between L&D Factors and Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	102
5.2.3.1 Organizational Factors	102
5.2.3.2 Individual Factors	105
5.2.4 Discussions of Factors Which Strongly Influence Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	
5.2.4.1 Organizational Factors	107
5.2.4.2 Individual Factors	109
5.3 Limitation	
5.3.1 Sample Size	111
5.3.2 Primary Data Collection Difficulties	111
5.3.3 Published References	111
5.4 Recommendation for ABC Bank	
5.4.1 Types of L&D Initiatives	112
5.4.2 Person Responsible in Determining L&D Initiatives	112
5.4.3 L&D Factors	113
5.4.4 Documented Survey	113
5.5 Recommendation for Future Study	
5.5.1 Using Different L&D Factors and Indicators	114
5.5.2 Using Different Population/Sectors	114
5.5.3 Make Comparison Study	115
5.6 Conclusion	115
REFERENCES	117
Appendices A - B	128 - 142

LIST OF TABLES

NO. OF TABLE	TITLE	PAGE
1.1	List of Selected ABC Bank Branches in Johor and Number of Employees	6
2.9	Development of Hypotheses (H ₁)	58
3.2	The Likert Scale	65
3.3	Section A	66
3.4	Section B	67
3.5	Section C	68
3.6	Section D	69
3.7	Table of Reliability Level	70
3.8	Reliability Test	70
3.9	Summary of Statistical Analysis	72
4.1	Frequency Analysis of Bank's Location	74
4.2	Frequency Analysis of Age	75
4.3	Frequency Analysis of Gender	75

4.4	Frequency Analysis of Race	76
4.5	Frequency Analysis of Education Level	76
4.6	Frequency Analysis of Length of Service	77
4.7	Descriptive Analysis of Government Policies	78
4.8	Descriptive Analysis of Line Managers' Involvement	79
4.9	Descriptive Analysis of Top Management Commitment	80
4.10	Descriptive Analysis of Outsourcing	80
4.11	Descriptive Analysis of External Consultant	81
4.12	Descriptive Analysis of Motivation to Learn	82
4.13	Descriptive Analysis of Learning Skills	83
4.14	Descriptive Analysis of Peer Support	83
4.15	Descriptive Analysis of Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	84
4.16	Types of L&D Initiatives Recently Attended	85

4.17	Person-in Charge for Determining L&D Initiatives	86
4.18	Correlation between Organizational Factors and Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	87
4.19	Correlation between Individual Factors and Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	88
4.20	Skewness and Kurtosis Value	90
4.21	Collinerity for Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives as the Dependent Variable	91
4.22	Hypotheses for Organizational Factors	92
4.23	Model Summary of Multiple Linear Regressions for Effects of Organizational Factors on Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	93
4.24	Summary of ANOVA (Organizational Factors)	94
4.25	Results of Regression Coefficients (Organizational Factors)	95
4.26	Hypotheses for Individual Factors	95

4.27	Model Summary of Multiple Linear Regressions for Effects of Individual Factors on Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives	96
4.28	Summary of ANOVA (Individual Factors)	96
4.29	Results of Regression Coefficients (Individual Factors)	97
4.30	Summary of Results	98

LIST OF FIGURES

NO. OF FIGURE	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Andragogy in Practice	27
2.2	Kolb's Learning Style	29
2.3	Learning Organization Strategy	31
2.4	Learning in Working Life	32
2.5	The Development Cycle	33
2.6	The L&Development Cycle	34
2.7	Structured OJT Process	37
2.8	Checklist for Measuring Effective L&D Initiatives in Australian Public Service Commission	56
2.10	Conceptual Framework	59
3.1	The Basic Business Research Process	62
5.1	Summary of Pearson's Correlation Result for Organizational Factors	105
5.2	Summary of Pearson's Correlation Result for Individual Factors	107

5.3	Summary of Multiple Regressions Results for Organizational Factors	108
5.4	Summary of Multiple Regressions Results for Individual Factors	110

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

APS	Australian Public Services
L&D	Learning and Development
SPSS	Statistical Package for Social Science
SD	Standard Deviation

LIST OF SYMBOLS

N	Population
n	Sample
p	Significant
r	Pearson's Correlation Coefficient
=	Equal to
%	Percentage
β	Beta
t	T-test
F	F-test

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX	TITLE	PAGE
A	Questionnaires	128
B	Table for Determining Sample Size from a Given Population	137
C	Graphical Plots of Variables	138
D	Scatterplot	142

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

In this 21st century, many international and even local companies including government-linked companies (GLCs), private and public companies have become more aware of their employees' learning and development (L&D) initiatives (Wilson and Smilanich, 2005). Since the 8th Malaysian Plan, Malaysia has showed concern in developing their nation by providing investments in human capital. This was continued in the last two plans, specifically in the 9th and 10th plan. The 9th Malaysia Plan pointed out about producing efficient and talented workforce to increase overall productivity and growth (Munir, 2005). In addition, 10th Malaysia Plan emphasized on producing quality human capital, in order to become a developed nation with high income (Prime Minister's Department, 2010). In order to achieve these goals, effective implementation of L&D is crucially needed.

L&D can be defined as related activities specifically designed to change attitudes or provide knowledge and skill required by the organization to meet their goals and objectives (Simon Fraser University, 1995). Harrison (2009) pointed out the main objective of L&D is to aid the collective process through facilitation of learning in order to ensure it is continuously implemented to develop organizations and individuals. L&D has become a powerful tool in ensuring organization as well as individual gains in terms of enhancing their knowledge, skill and abilities, thus enabling them to keep pace with today's competitive working environment (Robotham, 2003). Recently, the terminology of L&D emerged instead of the term training and development (even though it still is a popular one), employee development and human resource development (Clifford and Thorpe, 2007; Harrison, 2005; Sadler-Smith, 2006). Similarly, other authors prefer to use the word workplace learning or even work-based learning (Streumer, 2006; Fuller *et al.*, 2004; Evan *et al.*, 2006; Cunningham, 2004).

In addition, learning is a process which involves behavioral change and development and is more focused on the process of gradual unfolding or growth occurs at any place and time (Garavan, 1997). Meanwhile, Harrison (1997) informed development as:

Developing people as part of an overall human resource strategy means the skilful provision and organization of learning experiences, primarily but not exclusively in the workplace, in order that business goals and organizational growth can be achieved.

(Harrison, 1997: 1-19)

The process of learning and development involves employees as the main trainee, audience and the receiver. Employee can be defined as an individual who gets paid for doing the job (Malaysia, 1955). Each employee needs to be trained through the process of learning and development in order to do the right work at the right time and place especially in today's competitive workplace.

Basically, L&D is an approach where employees go through the process of behavioral change and continuously develop themselves in the workplace. Many L&D initiatives such as mentoring and on-the-job training can be implemented effectively through assistance of factors, like top management commitment and line management support.

The 2009 CIPD learning and development annual survey report (CIPD, 2009) stated UK organizations spent approximately £220 per worker so they can send out their employees to upgrade their knowledge and skills; this amount is lesser than in 2008 due to the economic downturn. In Malaysia, 40 percent from RM 230 million had been allocated to non-physical development such as human capital development of skills development (Prime Minister's Department, 2010). These long term investments can help companies gain competitive advantages and move towards a learning organization culture through their skillful workers that had undergone the process of learning and development. The continuous improvement among today's workers has become crucial since people are rushing to obtain as much knowledge as they can to equip themselves with the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitude to survive in a competitive business environment.

Malaysia is more concerned with this issue as Malaysia is moving forward with the motion of K-workers within these next couple of years. Training providers are rushing to update their L&D program, the government is busy with the budget and organizations are racing in order to ensure they have what it takes to equip their employees with the latest L&D opportunities in order to stay competitive. In 2010, Malaysia already had over 3,000 skillful workers and by 2012, Malaysia is expected to have around 5,000 knowledgeable and world standard skillful employees in order for Malaysia to operate in its future economies (Prime Minister's Department, 2010). The urgency to produce an excellent workforce had automatically increased the need to identify the determinants of effective implementation of L&D initiatives.

In achieving this, employees must be equipped with the latest and current knowledge and skill through learning and development initiatives. According to Longenecker (2010), learning has become a crucial tool for managers to achieve higher level of performance, deliver better results, to be promoted and to secure their job. It is not a debate anymore that L&D increases the employee sustainability in today's workplace. All companies, including government-linked ones, are investing a large sum of money in ensuring their employees get the best training opportunities so as to consistently attract employees to stay motivated and skillful in performing their jobs in the current work environment. Since L&D is regularly discussed in an attempt to understand the need to equip their employees with adequate knowledge, skill and ability, employers and the government have to fully provide adequate resources, facilitation and funds in executing effective L&D initiatives.

According to Harrison (2005), the recent trend in L&D initiatives indicate an increased decentralization of HRD to line management training investment, human capital reporting, the emergence of a new knowledge economy and also a focus on workplace learning. Similarly, CIPD (2009) also pointed out the greatest changes in learning and training methods are the introduction of new programs to develop the role of line managers and effort to develop an L&D culture across organizations. One of the surveys also indicated 47% of respondents believed coaching by line managers is one of the most effective L&D practices. In addition, research findings from 28 organizations in seeking factors influencing learning in work suggested a continuing shift from training to learning where the role of HRD practitioners is changing and line managers are increasingly responsible for developing their employees (Sambrook, 2002; Ellinger, 1997; Watkins and Ellinger, 1998)

1.2 Background of ABC Bank, Johor Bahru

This research will be conducted in ABC Bank, Johor Bahru. This bank is listed as one of the government-linked companies in Malaysia. According to Khazanah Nasional Berhad (2010), government-linked companies are companies which have primarily commercial objectives and are controlled by Malaysian Government. Malaysian Government has the right to appoint the Board of Directors members, senior management and decide on major decisions such as restructuring and strategy.

ABC Bank has mainly three types of banking which are consumer, investment, and Islamic banking with the largest network in Malaysia. Besides Malaysia, they also have branches all around the globe such as in Singapore, Indonesia, Thailand, Hong Kong, China, UK, USA, Brunei, Myanmar, Vietnam, Bahrain and Cambodia. With the vision to be South East Asia's most valued universal bank, they practice three major philosophies which are, "we are in the business of creating value for our customers", "we believe the best way to create the most value is by enabling our people" and "in order to protect our reputation and business, we speak and act with integrity".

With the staff strength of over 37,000 worldwide, they are equipping their workforce with excellent human resource practices. They have also been awarded as Best Human Resource Management in private sector and Bank of the Year in Malaysia, both in 2010. In addition, ABC Bank has also been awarded the Best Employer's Award and HR Excellence Award (Gold recognition as well as Grand Award) for 2008 until 2009. These awards are organized by Malaysian Institute of Human Resources Management, who is responsible in determining the winner.

ABC Bank also adopts a holistic approach in managing employees' needs and compensations. This approach comprises of the four main areas of rewards and advancement, staff benefits, conducive working areas and L&D. L&D initiatives in ABC Bank focus on expecting employees to continuously learn. They provide on-the-job exposure as well as ample training opportunities, both in terms of technical knowledge as well as personal development. In addition, the top management also strongly encourages staff to pursue professional and post-graduate qualifications through the provision of sponsorship and scholarship schemes. For the purpose of this research, selected locations of ABC will be within the area of Johor Bahru, consisting of the various branches (refer to table 1.1)

Table 1.1: List of Selected ABC Bank Branches in Johor Bahru and Number of Employees

No.	Branches	No. of Employees
1.	Holiday Plaza Johor Bharu, G86 Holiday Plaza Jalan Dato' Sulaiman, 80250 Johor Bahru	15
2.	Nusa Bestari, 76 Jalan Nusa Bestari 2 ¼ Taman Nusa Bestari 2, 81200 Johor Bahru	14
3.	Perling, 382 Jalan Simbang, Taman Perling 81200 Johor Bharu	15
4.	Bandar Baru Uda, No. 24, Jalan Padi 1, Bandar Baru Uda 81200 Johor Bharu	14
5.	Taman Impian Emas (Skudai),No 93A Jalan Seri Impian 1,Taman Impian Emas, Skudai 81300 Johor Bharu	14
6.	Taman Ungku Tun Aminah, 87 Jalan Pahlawan 1, Taman Ungku Tun Aminah, 81300 Skudai	15
7.	Taman Universiti Skudai, 21 Jalan Kebudayaan 4, Taman Universiti, 81300 Skudai	15
8.	Tampoi, 193B Batu 4 ½, Jalan Skudai 80200 Tampoi, Johor	15
9.	Universiti Teknologi Malaysia Skudai Bangunan Hal Ehwal Pelajar, UTM 81300 Skudai	7
10.	Jalan Belimbing, 18 Jalan Belimbing 81400 Senai, Johor	16
Total:		140

1.3 Problem Statement

With the increase of awareness regarding L&D initiatives among organizations throughout the world especially in Malaysia, determining the best L&D initiatives, methods or practices can be quite a challenge. These organizations are not aware of their own strengths and weaknesses in terms of deploying L&D initiatives (Harrison, 2005). They are not exposed to the best practices in L&D and benchmarking in practicing effective implementation of L&D initiatives (Serrat, 2009). This situation will lead to ineffectiveness in implementation of the L&D initiatives itself. In Malaysia, the term itself is not commonly used even though it has actually been discussed in publications regarding knowledge management, e-learning, action learning, apprenticeship, coaching and mentoring and talent management. All of these activities support the training process in order for them to upgrade their knowledge, skill and ability continuously and this is called L&D.

According to Training Foundation (2010), many organizations are focusing more on training instead of learning. Activities are focused on simply ensuring employees have adequate knowledge, skill and abilities needed to meet the needs of today's workplace through training. This situation limits the organization's ability to draw out the full potential of its employees. Of course, training is still needed for employees to cope with today's competitive workplace; however learning culture promotes change that leads to new innovation and discovery.

In addition, Coulson-Thomas (2003) stated learning would not enhance a company's competitiveness unless it is channelled into an effective and strategic L&D initiative in order to succeed. In the other hand, effective training would also not ensure effective deployment of L&D among employees. The British Institute for Learning and Development (BILD) (2009) also mentioned that training courses are of little use to an employer unless the techniques learnt are appropriate and can be applied in the workplace.

Furthermore, Malaysia needs to have a clear view of L&D initiatives practiced in the organizations as well as in government-linked companies, thus specifically allowing better forecast for the next five years. It is very crucial to identify the most effective L&D initiatives possible for the company since it is difficult to plan and challenging to execute (Moskowitz, 2008). In order to ensure better planning and enrolment of L&D initiatives, this research provides the organizations with the foundation of today's L&D initiatives in the market place. Furthermore, it gives the organizations extra advantages in developing their human capital and thus would influence the company's profits and losses.

According to Longenecker (2010), the findings in a survey conducted on 20 US service and manufacturing managers revealed barriers in executing L&D, especially during today's challenging environment. He found individual and organizational factors do give major impact in influencing success of L&D implementation. Individual factors such as being unmotivated to learn and organizational factors such as having no support to learn are main failures in implementing effective L&D. In addition, others barriers which distracted respondents to implement effective L&D are time pressure, un aware of the fact that they have a learning skills gap, no performance feedback or coaching, lack of self-reflection, ego and over-confidence, ineffective boss, no development plan, and lack of resources. Are there really relationships between these factors and how strong it can influence effective implementation of L&D initiatives?

After the massive economic downturn and government efforts in producing knowledgeable human capital, organizations are becoming more concerned on the implementation of L&D. It is because, almost every year process of L&D involves allocation around \$100,000 which is a big amount of money, time and human capital thus by hook or crook they need to ensure the effectiveness of initiatives being implemented (UNESCO , 2010). According to Streumer (2006), many organizations are afraid to roll the dice and invest in something of which the effectiveness they are unsure of. Thus, by identifying effective L&D initiatives, implementing them would be of ease for the company. This is where trends of L&D initiatives are seen as one

way to achieve it, hence the need for careful identification can ensure the success of the implementation. Furthermore, Robotham (2003) stated undoubtedly a lack of focus on the importance of learning for today's organizations.

Apart from organization perspectives, individual factors also can be one of the determinants in looking at implementing L&D initiatives effectively. The employees which are also adult learners are becoming more aware of their continuous personal development. Some of them are even willing to pay for their own classes. The determinants such as motivation to learn, learning skills and peer support play important roles in today competitive world. Unfortunately, most employees are not aware they are the one who is responsible to decide on their own regarding their continuous personal development. Even though they know continuous personal development is important to them, they still wait for management to send them.

1.4 Research Questions

- i. What are the types of L&D initiatives recently attended?
- ii. Who is responsible for determining L&D initiatives?
- iii. Is there is a relationship between L&D (organizational and individual) factors and effective implementation of L&D initiatives?
- iv. Which L&D (organizational and individual) factors strongly influence effective implementation of L&D initiatives?

1.5 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study can be categorized into two, which are general objective and specific objectives. They are:

1.5.1 General Objective

To explore the current L&D initiatives employed, who is responsible in ensuring these initiatives are rolled out and the L&D factors which contribute to its effective implementation in government-linked companies especially in ABC Bank in Johor Bahru.

1.5.2 Specific Objectives

The specific objectives are as follows:

- i. To determine which types of L&D initiatives recently attended.
- ii. To determine who is responsible for determining L&D initiatives.
- iii. To identify the relationship between L&D (organizational and individual) factors and effective implementation of L&D initiatives.
- iv. To explain which L&D (organizational and individual) factors strongly influence effective implementation of L&D initiatives.

1.6 Research Hypotheses

- H₁ There is a significant relationship between L&D factors (organizational and individual) and effective implementation of L&D initiatives.
- H₂ L&D factors strongly influence effective implementation of L&D initiatives.

1.7 Significance of the Study

This study is a significant endeavor in promoting better implementation of L&D initiatives in the workplace, along with the factors for its implementation. This study is also beneficial to students, employers, employees and practitioners in the L&D field in understanding their drive which leads to successful process of L&D, especially in the work environment. By understanding these factors, those who are involved can be assured of achieving their goals and gaining competitive advantage.

The results from this case study will also be the first comprehensive study regarding L&D initiatives involving organizational and individual factors, thus leading to better understanding of implementing effective L&D initiatives. Furthermore, the exploration of current L&D initiatives and identification of determinants that contribute to effective L&D initiatives can be used as guidelines in executing future L&D initiatives by HR managers and executives. Besides that, these findings may provide recommendations and encourage HR executives and managers to re-evaluate and improve their L&D implementation in light of the revealed L&D initiatives and problems of others. In addition, this research also serves as future reference for researchers on L&D field for further exploration.

1.8 Scope of the Study

The main scope of this study is to construct a survey on the current L&D initiatives in ABC Bank, Johor Bahru, one of government-linked companies (GLCs). Johor Bahru is the capital city of Johor and the second busiest city after Kuala Lumpur. The main reason why ABC Bank was selected is because they won HR Excellence in 2008-2009 proved their practice of effective L&D implementation for their workforce.

In this research, there are two set of independent variables which are organizational factors and individual factors. Organizational factors involved are government policies, line managers' involvement, top management commitment, outsourcing and external consultant whereas individual factors include motivation to learn, learning skill as well as peer support. All of these independent variables influence the dependent variable, which is the effective implementation of L&D initiatives in ABC Bank. The population involved 140 employees in selected branches of ABC Bank in Johor Bahru. The sample size was selected using convenience sampling which involved 103 employees in 10 different branches, Johor Bahru. This research also used self-administered questionnaire as a research instrument containing 60 items related to the variables.

1.9 Limitations

The limitation of this research is it only involves employees in ABC Bank in ten branches near Johor Bahru. It does not involve other branches. This research also does not apply to other sectors in other government-linked companies. Furthermore, the researcher only focused on five organizational and three individual factors that may not be applicable to all companies or individuals. Time and resource constraints are also minor limitations influence the data collection, thus affecting the whole research process.

1.10 Conceptual and Operational Definitions

Conceptual and operational definitions provide a platform of understanding regarding the definition of terms used in this research.

1.10.1 L&D Initiatives

1.10.1.1 Conceptual Definition

The word L&D had been mutually agreed to explain the appropriate process of human resource training and development, employees training and development (Harrison, 2005). The term learning and development had long been a debate. Commonly the terminologies being used are varied among authors. Some may like to call it training and development, or the term employees learning and development, while and some researchers have used workplace learning, work based learning or even work based training. According to CIPD (2005), learning and development refers to an organizational process involves integration of learning and development process, operations and relationship. The results from its effective implementation are enhanced organizational effectiveness and sustainability and enhanced personal competence, adaptability, and employability for the individual. It is therefore a critical business process, whether in for-profit or not-for-profit organizations.

In addition, Harrison (2009) viewed the purpose of learning and development as being to assist collective progress through the collaborative, expert and ethical stimulation and facilitation of learning and knowledge, resulting in support in business goals, development of individual potential, and respect and development of diversity in workplace. In the other hand, Simon Fraser University (1995) defined learning and development as activities specifically designed to alter attitudes or provide knowledge and skill required by the organization to meet their goals and objectives.

L&D represent processes supported by events such as training, education or working (Sadler-Smith, 2006). He defined L&D as an area of management enquiry and practice concerned with the understanding and possible management of learning

in the workplace in order to maximize its impact with the achievement of work goals, the development of the individual and the enhancement of collective performance.

Recently, L&D initiatives indicate an increased decentralization of HRD to line management, increased training investment, increased effort to develop effective L&D culture across organization, the emergence of a new knowledge economy and also a focus on workplace learning (CIPD, 2009; Harrison, 2005; Sambrook, 2002; Watkins and Ellinger, 1998; Ellinger, 1997). This has encouraged many organizations to employ effective L&D initiatives throughout the organizations.

1.10.1.2 Operational Definition

For the purpose of this research, L&D initiative are operationally defined in regards to which are the latest L&D initiatives employees had experienced and who are responsible in determining any decision regarding L&D initiatives in ABC Bank. The recent L&D activities being employed by ABC Bank are also identified. The respondents are required to tick one from multiple related answers.

1.10.2 Organization Factors

1.10.2.1 Conceptual Definition

Smith (2003) stated government policies, which are also known as public policies, guide decisions and actions that relate to society as a whole. Public policies are developed by federal, provincial, territorial and municipal levels of government. In addition, Haslinda Abdullah *et al.* (2007) stated government policies as being government actions designed to affect economic activity and pursue one or more

economic goals. Commonly there are four types of government policies, which are fiscal, monetary, regulatory and judicial.

Line manager involvement can be defined as direct participation from managers in a company who are involved in production or the central part of the business, as opposed to managers of service sectors (Renwick, 2003). In addition, Gibb (2003) defined line manager involvement as manager responsibility to ensure certain organization activities are being implemented effectively and efficiently.

Furthermore, top management commitment is dedication and efforts showed by the highest level executives towards specific and critically important aspects or programs of an organization (Guns, 1996). Keramati and Azadeh (2007) defined top management's commitment as chief executive and those reporting to him or her involvement in activities such as communicating company's values, reinforcing quality messages meeting with the workforce and customers and facilitating the achievement of the mission and vision. Another important responsibility of top management in order to show their commitment is establishment of an environment which promotes L&D.

Outsourcing can be defined as contracting out a job to the external provider (Delmotte and Sels, 2008). Outsourcing involves hiring outside organizations to do jobs for client organization. As compared to external consultants who only seek for advice and guidelines in making decisions, outsourcing deals with having outside organization to make decisions for client organization. On the other hand, Cook (1999) associated outsourcing definition with Human Resource Management (HRM) field as involvement of third party service provider to administer HRM activities on an ongoing process in an organization, which was normally performed in house.

External consultant can be defined as an expert in a field who comes in from outside an organization to give advice. On the other hand, De Jong and Van Eekelen (1999) stated external consultants are expert organizations that provide specially trained and qualified persons, who can assist the organization in solving any related management issues. Furthermore, Younger *et al.* (2011) stated utilization of external consultants would extend employees' capability and help in bringing in specialist skill into the organization, thus influencing the overall process of human resource management.

1.10.2.2 Operational Definition

Operational government can be defined as the organizational effort in following government policies. For example, it would be how ABC Bank used the HRD Act 1992 effectively in order to implement their L&D initiatives. In addition, how their employees perceive government policies is also one of the factors influencing their action to execute L&D.

In addition, line manager involvement can be defined operationally through active participation of their branch manager in executing L&D activities. In ABC Bank, line management involvement is measured in terms of whether there is any written report regarding L&D initiatives which have already been implemented, such as attendance report.

Top management commitment can be operationally defined as close participation from upper level of management in implementing L&D initiatives. Their commitment usually starts at the beginning of the program being executed until the last evaluation. The number of employees that agreed in this factor indicates the extent to which top managements' effort in influences the success of L&D initiatives.

Outsourcing in ABC Bank is defined operationally in terms of how many L&D initiatives have been made by hiring external L&D organization to implement these initiatives. Apart from that, the relationship between outsourcing and effective implementation of L&D is also determined according to the level of agreement between respondents.

Operationally, external consultant can be defined as the number of L&D initiatives executed with facilitation from external consultants. The level of effectiveness can be measured through the perception of employees towards the L&D activities.

1.10.3 Individual Factors

1.10.3.1 Conceptual Definition

In addition, conceptual definition of individual factors must also be considered. There are motivation to learn, learning skills and peer support. Motivation to learn can be defined as the specific desire to learn specifically through the content of learning and development initiatives (Noe and Schmitt, 1986). Klein *et al.* (2006) explained motivation to learn as an individual's own initiatives in order to engage and persist in learning and development activities.

Rusbult (2009) defined learning skills as the ability needed to learn effectively, which involves memory, concentration, reading, listening and time management. Roper (2007) identified learning skills in terms of online education in helping adult learners to learn time-management strategy, make the most of online discussions, use it or lose it, make questions useful to learning, stay motivated, communicate the instruction techniques that work and make connections with fellow students.

According to Ellinger and Cseh (2007), peer support can be defined as employees facilitating others' learning. Peer support points out encouragement from coworkers to participate in any activities arranged by the organization, especially L&D. Peer support can create supportive cultures enable the employees to mutually share and learn effectively and efficiently.

1.10.3.2 Operational Definition

Operationally, the motivation to learn among employees in ABC Bank is measured based on their desire to grab and learn learning opportunities provided by the organization. The number of L&D initiatives is the indicator of how much motivated employees are willing to learn.

On the other hand, learning skill involves identifying what types of learning skills are possessed by employees in ABC Bank. The perception of their learning skills level are identified by asking questions related to their memory, concentration, reading, listening and time management in L&D.

Besides that, peer support among employees in ABC Bank is also measured in terms of encouraging each other in joining L&D activities arranged by the company. Then, the employees also answer questions regarding facilitating others in order to indicate whether they are willing to share and learn from others.

1.10.4 Effective Implementation of L&D Initiatives

1.10.4.1 Conceptual Definition

According to APS (2003), effective implementation of L&D initiatives can be defined as the successful efforts in executing L&D initiatives, which enables organizations to achieve their desired goals especially in L&D. Brown (2008) stated effective implementation of L&D initiatives have certain features to consider in defining this statement, such as being supported by policies, being strategy driven and also the transferability of knowledge and skills back to the job.

1.10.4.2 Operational Definition

In ABC Bank, four elements are considered to indicate effective implementation of L&D initiatives. There are aligning learning with the business, creating a learning culture, managing learning effectively and evaluating L&D. All these four principles are examined in order to determine the relationship between L&D factors to its L&D effectiveness. The HR Awards given to ABC Bank showed they have excellent HR practices; hence this research seeks for the influence in its effective implementation of L&D initiatives.

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