

# PREFERABILITY AND PERCEIVED EFFECTIVENESS OF HRD INTERVENTION PROGRAMMES: A SURVEY OF NEPALI BANK SUPERVISORS

ARHAN STHAPIT

Faculty of Management

Tribhuvan University

The paper examines the preferability and effectiveness of Human Resources Development (HRD) component-cum-intervention programs in Nepali banks based on the supervisors' perception for which the five main HRD componentcum-intervention programs, viz., training and development, management development, career development, performance development and organization development were identified on the basis of review of literature. In the study methodological plan, an exploratory and analytical research approach was adopted to study the HRD program preferability and effectiveness at all private-sector commercial banks (N=25) and national level development banks (N=14) of Nepal through a survey (July–December 2016) on incumbent supervisors and managers (N = 708) selected through a proportionate stratified probability sampling technique from (a) hierarchy-based strata, and (b) from both bank categories. The sample respondents successfully surveyed by the present study numbered 708, which was well larger than the sample size of 433 as determined by Sample Adequacy Test (SAT). Both preferability and perceived effectiveness of HRD programs— although measured using different methods of the ranking questions and Likert Scale questions respectively have shown the identical ranks: the most preferred and perceivably most effective HRD program is training, followed by performance development and management development.

*Keywords: HRD intervention, HRD components and HRD program effectiveness*

## INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH GOALS

### Background

The World Economic Forum's "Future of Jobs" study predicted loss of 5 million jobs by 2020, as artificial intelligence, robotics, nanotechnology and other socio-economic factors would replace the need for human workers (WEF, 2016). It also predicted that those same IT and

technological advances would create 2.1 million new jobs. But the manual and clerical workers are unlikely to have the required skills to compete for the new roles (WEF, 2016) and it makes them vulnerable in the job market. Hence, workers should acquire and enhance the required skills to make sure they have value, as the 'Fourth Industrial Revolution' gathers pace. For the workers to sustain and thrive in the future job market, Deming (2015;

2017) prescribes developing and enhancing soft (social) skills and then mathematical ability as enormously beneficial.

With the increased emphasis on skill enhancement of workers, future work organisations face the increased need to pay attention to and get engaged in the human resource development (HRD) function through different intervention programmes.

### **HRD components or intervention programmes**

HRD is the key to skill enhancement of workers for the future work organisations; however there exists no definitive view of what constitutes HRD (Stewart & McGoldrick, 1996). Hence, McGuire and Cseh (2006) observed that there is no clear understanding and consensus on the constituent components of HRD; and it has resulted in a wide diversity of perspectives on the precise make-up of HRD. McLagan (1989) viewed HRD as the integrated use of training and development, organisation development, and career development to improve individual, group and organisational effectiveness. Essential to this view is the promotion of three HRD interventions, i.e., training and development (T&D), organisation development, and career development. On the other hand, McLagan and Suhadolnik (1989) defined HRD as the integrated use of training and development, career development, and OD to improve individual

and organisational effectiveness. DeCenzo and Robbins (1997) also identified a) Employee Training and Management Development, and b) Career Development (CD) as two major components of HRD. Hargreaves and Jarvis (1998) identified six main aspects of HRD: training and development, organisation development, job descriptions, staff planning and recruitment, staff benefits, and dealings with interest groups (e.g., trade unions).

Coming to the new millennium, Swanson & Holton (2001) contained HRD components in organisation development (OD) and personnel training and development (T&D) for the purpose of improving performance by de-emphasising career development intervention as an HRD component.

Hill (2002) adopted a similar approach to McLagan to identify the three principal components of HRD as training and development, organisational behaviour and organisation development; and Werner and DeSimone (2006) held a similar view to key out organisational/job design, human resource planning, performance management systems and selection and staffing as HRD components. Likewise, Hu (2007) specified five key activities or components: training and development, talent development, organisation development, performance development, and leadership development.

Table 1 : Key HRD Components/ Interventions (Chronological Review)

Authors	HRD Components/ Interventions
1. McLagan (1989)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and development</li> <li>• Organisation development</li> <li>• Career development</li> </ul>
2. Swanson & Holton (2001)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and development</li> <li>• Organisation development</li> </ul>
3. DeCenzo & Robbins (1997)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Employee Training</li> <li>• Management -Development</li> <li>• Career development</li> </ul>
4. Har-greaves & Jarvis (1998)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training and development</li> <li>• Organization development</li> <li>• Job descriptions</li> <li>• Staff planning and recruitment</li> <li>• Staff benefits</li> <li>• Dealings with interest groups</li> </ul>
5. Hill (2002)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training</li> <li>• Development</li> <li>• Organisational behaviour/organisation development</li> </ul>
6. Dilworth (2003)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Strategic change management</li> <li>• Integration of learning processes</li> <li>• Knowledge management</li> <li>• Career development</li> <li>• Healthy and productive workplaces</li> <li>• In-sourcing and out-sourcing of training</li> <li>• Team building</li> <li>• Leadership development</li> <li>• Application of technologies to HRD</li> </ul>
7. Hu (2007)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training&amp; development</li> <li>• Talent development</li> <li>• Organization development</li> <li>• Performance development</li> <li>• Leadership development</li> </ul>
8. Abdullah (2009)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Individual development (Training and development, T&amp;D)</li> <li>• Organisation development,</li> <li>• Career planning and development</li> <li>• Performance development/ improvement</li> </ul>
9. Poojitha & Rama-devi (2012)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Training &amp; development</li> <li>• Organisation development</li> <li>• Career development</li> <li>• Performance development/ improvement</li> </ul>

Meanwhile, Dilworth (2003) ascertained the core HRD components as strategic change management, integration of learning processes, knowledge management, career development, healthy and productive workplaces, in-sourcing and out-sourcing of training, team building, leadership development, application of technologies to HRD and socio-technical fit.

Likewise, describing the HRD as a source for competitive advantage, Poojitha and Ramadevi (2012) identified training and development, organisation development, performance development and career development as the components of HRD that form HRD interventions.



*Figure 1: Interrelated Functional Components/ Interventions of HRD*

Based on the above discussions as presented in a matrix form in Table 1, the present study has identified the four key HRD constituent components or interventions as presented in Figure 1, in order to probe into the bank managers' perceived preferability and effectiveness of those HRD programmes.

## REVIEW OF RELATED WORKS

The following paragraphs discuss the previous studies on perceived preferability and effectiveness of HRD intervention programmes, respectively.

### Perceived Preferability of HRD Programmes

McGuire and Cseh's (2006) performed a Delphi survey on the international HRD research experts comprising editorial board members of the world's four leading HRD journals (namely, Human Resource Development Quarterly, Human Resource Development International, Advances in Developing Human Resources, Human Resource Development Review) and of the Board of Directors of the Academy of Human Resource Development. Their findings (based on Kendall's  $W \frac{1}{4} 0.252$ ) ranked highest the component of workplace learning, training and development (T&D) and employee education. The components of organisation development and performance improvement/ development were ranked subsequently, while the component of career development just followed them. While the study found workplace learning and training and development as the 'most important' HRD component/ intervention, they also argued that the ranking of the OD and performance improvement/ development in the middle "further confirms the prevailing notion of HRD as contributing to the bottom-line performance of the organisation."

Hence, it is relevant to investigate the managers' preferability for different HRD component/intervention

programmes in the Nepalese context and in the business context of Nepali private banks (instead of individual journal editorial experts).

### **Perceived Effectiveness of HRD Programmes**

Sthapit (2012) surveyed 104 managers of development banks (of the national and regional levels) in Nepal to gauge the effectiveness of induction training, one of the components of employee training. The study found that induction training effectiveness was positively and significantly correlated to the four strategic HRD factors, viz., a) Proactive planning with a long-term vision through continuous environmental analysis, b) Top management commitment to and involvement in training, c) Periodic review / evaluation of training programmes, and d) Change-consultant role for results-oriented competitive competency and professional intervention on training. The study of Sthapit (2012) probed into the association of four strategic HRD factors with effectiveness of training only, but it did not investigate that of other HRD intervention programmes. Therefore, there is room for assessing the effectiveness of different HRD programmes as perceived by the managers of private banks of Nepal.

### **STUDY OBJECTIVES**

Previous literatures have identified the five main HRD components or intervention programmes; namely training, development and mgmt development, career development, performance development and organisation development programmes.

The present study primarily aims at identifying the preferability and perceived effectiveness of HRD component/ intervention programmes at Nepalese private sector banks; for which the specific study objectives have been set as under:

- To identify the private bank managers' preferability for HRD component/ intervention programmes; and
- To assess effectiveness of HRD component/ intervention programmes as perceived by the private bank managers in Nepal

### **METHODS**

The study has adopted an exploratory and analytical research approach to probe into preferability and perceived effectiveness of HRD programmes at Nepalese private sector banks. The study performed complete enumeration of all the national banks in the private-sector; all 25 commercial banks (6 foreign joint-venture and 19 domestic private banks) and 14 national development banks enlisted with the Nepal Stock Exchange (NEPSE), the formal stock market of Nepal, by mid-July, 2013.

### **The Sample**

Respondents were sampled from the population of supervisor/ manager-level employees in all the studied banks through a proportionate, stratified random sampling method: the samples were proportionately drawn from (a) hierarchical strata (top, middle and low levels) and (b) sectoral strata (commercial and development banks), as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Population and Sample of Respondents

Banks	Population				Sample of Respondents Surveyed							
	Management level				Management levels/ hierarchies							
	Executive	Mid-level	Lower-level	Total	Executive	%	Mid-level	%	Lower-level	%	Total	%
1. Commercial banks (foreign joint venture)	33	218	563	814	6	18.2	98	44.0	164	29.1	268	32.9
2. Commercial (Domestic) banks	67	337	1335	1739	18	26.9	76	22.5	206	11.8	300	17.2
3. Development banks	38	86	196	320	12	31.6	52	60.5	76	38.8	140	43.8
Total (Row)	138	641	2094	2873	36		226		446		708	24.6
%						26.09		35.25		21.30		24.64

Source: Primary Data

A sample adequacy test (SAT) based on the model of Cochran (1999) was performed to ensure adequacy of total sample (N = 708) as well as of proportionate representation from each stratum. Accordingly, the sample of 708 respondents was discovered statistically adequate for the present study's data analysis, as it is greater than the required sample size of 433. Likewise, the sample drawn from each stratum is also adequate as per the test postulated by Cochran (1999).

### Data and Instruments

The study collected data through a survey of questionnaire that consisted of a ranking question where the respondent supervisors were asked to rank the HRD interventions with 1 to the most prioritised programme and 5 to the least prioritised one.

Furthermore, in the subsequent part of the questionnaire, the respondents were asked to make their evaluation on effectiveness of HRD programmes on a 7-anchored Likert's Scale, with 1 for extremely disagreed with the given statement and 7 for the most agreed one. The reliability of this part of the questionnaire was established, as the Cronbach's alpha figured 0.9, which was well above of 0.7 required for social science research (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, & Tatham, 2009).

### RESULTS, CONCLUSION AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The following section analyses data and results concerning the Nepali bank managers' preference for current HRD programmes and their perceived effectiveness towards knowledge-transfer and skill enhancement of



workers. It subsequently draws key conclusions from the discussion of the results to highlight the expected contribution to the leaders and managers of future work organisations.

**Preferability of HRD Programmes**

Table 3 presents the preference attached by bank managers to five different HRD programmes being run in their organisations. Out of those programmes, training programme with the mean value of 1.75 was ranked

highest in Nepalese banks (1 assigned to the most prioritised and 5 to the least prioritised programme). The training—as Table 3 shows—was followed by performance development (mean 2.69) and development/management development programmes (mean 3.05). Organisation development (OD) activities have come at the fourth rank (mean 3.14); while career development is the least prioritised and least frequent one (mean 4.34).

*Table 3: HRD intervention programmes by preference [Ranking with 1 being assigned to the most prioritised programme and 5 to the least prioritised one]*

HRD intervention	N	Mean	s.d.	Mean Rank
Employee Training	708	1.75	1.15	1
Performance Development/ Management	708	2.69	1.01	2
Development and Management-Development	708	3.05	1.16	3
Organisation Development	708	3.14	1.34	4
Career Development	708	4.34	1.04	5

*Source: Primary Data*

The HRD intervention of performance development (PD) preceding that of development and management development is indicative of the finding that Nepali banks are more concerned with performance coaching, counselling and other PD interventions for bringing out instant results into the workforce than with developing them for higher-level, future responsibilities. Hence, the HRD intervention of career development was ranked at the bottom. Similarly, ‘development and MD’ was placed at the third-rank; it highlights the lack of integration and interlinking between the MD and training as well as between PD and MD in Nepalese banks.

These findings underscore the need for forging a proper integration and interlink among the HRD components or interventions, so that HRD intervention programmes are made and supplementary to one other. As a result, all HRD interventions can be organised in a great sync.

The study findings are partly in consonance with those of McGuire and Cseh (2006) that surveyed (through a Delphi method) the international HRD research experts. Their study ranked highest the component of workplace learning, training and development (T&D) and employee education; it is similar to those of present study, except

for the ‘Development’ component of HRD which was ranked third in Nepali organisations. Both of the studies found training as the ‘most important’ HRD component/ intervention. HRD intervention through performance development/ improvement was ranked second (2<sup>nd</sup>) in the present study against the third (3<sup>rd</sup>) in that of McGuire and Cseh (2006). The present study revealed dissimilarity in the ranking of Organisation Development (4<sup>th</sup>) which was ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the study of McGuire and Cseh (2006).

McGuire and Cseh (2006) also argued that the ranking of the performance development/ improvement and OD in the middle “further confirms the prevailing notion of HRD as contributing to the bottom-line performance of the organisation.” It also holds true with the present study findings.

The present study matched with McGuire and Cseh’s (2006)

in discovering HRD component/ intervention of Career Development at the 5<sup>th</sup> rank. Hence, both of the studies hint at the need for organising and delivering other HRD interventions in sync with the career development programmes, making them all and supplementary to one another.

### Perceived Effectiveness of HRD Programmes

The study performed an assessment of whether Nepali bank managers perceive each HRD component/ intervention programme as being effectively planned, organised and controlled in their organisations. Table 4 presents the assessment of effectiveness of HRD programmes on the basis of percentage of those agreeing and disagreeing with their effectiveness; whereas Table 6 shows the managers’ perceived effectiveness by the mean value of the scales.

Table 3 :Effectiveness of HRD Intervention Programmes

HRD Intervention programmes	Respondents	Strongly disagreed (1)	Disagreed to a great extent (2)	Little Disagreed (3)	Neutral (4)	Little agreed (5)	Agreed to a great extent (6)	Strongly agreed (7)	Total
Employee Training	No.	10	54	82	56	286	198	22	708
	%	1.41	7.63	11.58	7.91	40.40	27.97	3.11	100
Development/ Management Development	No.	24	72	102	86	260	146	18	708
	%	3.39	10.17	14.41	12.15	36.72	20.62	2.54	100
Performance Development	No.	20	46	108	84	264	170	16	708
	%	2.82	6.50	15.25	11.86	37.29	24.01	2.26	100



Organisation	No.	20	52	136	134	224	118	24	708
Development	%	2.82	7.34	19.21	18.93	31.64	16.67	3.39	100
Career Development	No.	50	110	134	112	178	102	22	708
	%	7.06	15.54	18.93	15.82	25.14	14.41	3.11	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 presents results concerning how effective the bank managers perceive each of the HRD intervention programmes.

### Effectiveness of training

Training is the most popular and widely used of all HRD interventions in the studied organisations. Based on the general survey (N=708), a bigger majority (71.47 percent) of the respondents agreed with the effectiveness of current training programmes. To this tune has no other HRD components/interventions been endorsed by the respondents for their effectiveness. While hardly one-fifth (20.62 percent) of the respondents disagreed with the current effectiveness of the training programmes, 7.91 remained neutral. As such, going by the respondents' evaluation, current training programmes in the studied organisations have been most effective of all other HRD intervention programmes.

### Effectiveness of Development and Management Development

Three in every 5 respondents (i.e., 59.89 percent) agreed that the current development and management development programmes in their organisations are effective in delivering desired results. As against the neutral opinion standing at 12.15 percent,

those disagreeing with the effectiveness of such development programmes accounted for 27.97 percent. Overall, the current development and management development programmes could also be evaluated as effective in Nepalese banks.

### Effectiveness of Performance Development

The current practices relating to developing human resources through performance coaching, counselling and performance appraisal are relatively effective in Nepal. Based on the respondents' evaluation, performance development programmes have just stood second to the training programmes and ahead of all other programmes, in terms of their effectiveness. Almost one-third (63.56 percent) of the respondents acknowledged the effectiveness of the current performance development efforts, while one-fourth of them disagreed and 11.86 percent stood neutral.

### Effectiveness of Organisation Development

The effectiveness of current organisation development efforts in Nepalese banks received almost an evenly mixed endorsement, as a little more than half (51.69 percent) of the respondents agreed with the OD

effectiveness, while 29.38 percent disagreed that the current OD efforts were effectual. The surveyed managers who took a neutral stance in evaluating the current OD programmes stood at 18.93 percent which is highest of all HRD interventions. It indicates the respondents' indecisiveness in evaluating this particular HRD programme.

### **Effectiveness of Career Development**

Of the five HRD intervention programmes, career development programmes were evaluated as least effective in Nepal. More than half of the respondents either disagreed (41.53 percent) or remained neutral (15.82 percent) when asked about the effectiveness of the career development programmes currently being undertaken in Nepalese banks. Barely 42.66 percent— lowest of all programmes— of respondents evaluated the career development as effective.

Overall, effectiveness of training, performance development and management development programmes was evaluated as largely high, while that of organisation development and career development was little dampened. The result indicates that an integrative approach to HRD is either lacking or weak in Nepalese banks, because effective training and performance development must result in overall organisation development and career development also. But, due to lack of proper integration between them, the programmes on training, performance development and management development were

individually effective, yet could not really make substantial and measurable contribution to OD and career development. Hence, there is a need for building a mechanism that integrates all five HRD intervention programmes to hone workers' skills and generate desired HRD outputs.

### **Binomial Z-test of Differences Between 'Disagreed' and 'Agreed' Responses on HRD Programme Effectiveness**

A binomial z-test of the differences observed between the managers' opinions (agreed and disagreed) on the effectiveness of five HRD intervention programmes (HRD components) was performed on the data by formulating the following hypothesis.

#### **Hypothesis**

##### **Null, $H_0$**

There is no significant difference between the 'agreed' and 'disagreed' opinions on the effectiveness of HRD intervention programmes

##### **Alternative, $H_1$**

There is a significant difference between the 'agreed' and 'disagreed' opinions on the effectiveness of HRD intervention programmes

As per Table 5, since the calculated z-value of manager-opinions for four HRD intervention programmes (HRD components), viz., Training, Development and Management Development, Career Development, and Performance Development is greater than the expected value (2.575) at 1 percent level of significance, the result has rejected the null hypothesis.

Table 5 :Binomial Z-test of agreed and disagreed responses on HRD programme effectiveness

HRD Intervention programmes	Respondents	Total Disagreed (1+2+3)	Neutral (4)	Total Agreed (5+6+7)	Total of 'agreed' and 'disagreed'	Z-value
Employee Training	No.	146	56	506	652	11.4*
	%	20.62	7.91	71.47		
Development/ Management Development	No.	198	86	424	622	5.25*
	%	27.97	12.15	59.89		
Performance Development	No.	174	84	450	624	7.22*
	%	24.58	11.86	63.56		
Organisation Development	No.	208	134	366	574	0.90
	%	29.38	18.93	51.69		
Career Development	No.	294	112	302	596	3.91*
	%	41.53	15.82	42.66		

Source: Primary Data

\* significance measured at 0.1 level of confidence Result: Null hypothesis is to be rejected, since Calculated z-value > Expected value (2.575)

Hence, there is a statistically significant difference in the Nepali managers' opinions (agreed and disagreed categories) regarding the effectiveness of all HRD intervention programmes— except for Organisation Development— at their respective organisations.

### Overall Ranking of Effectiveness of HRD Intervention Programmes

Based on the mean of the responses on the 7-anchor (point) Likert Scale, training programme was ranked first with mean value of 4.75. It is evident from Table 5 that training programmes were most effective and sufficient of all other HRD interventions in the banks.

Likewise, the banks' performance development (4.55) was ranked second; indicating that, to a large extent, they had a plan and programme on developing and improving performance in different functional areas of banking (credit, international business/foreign exchange, L/C, guarantee, marketing, operations and remittance).

As shown in Table 5, performance development was followed by development and management development (mean 4.41) that involves providing incumbent bank supervisors with adequate, effective development to prepare them for future, upper level managerial jobs.

The programmes on organisation development (mean 4.33) that are meant for empowering employees/managers in the entire organisation to manage changes and promote organisational growth was ranked fourth; it indicates there is sufficient room for improvement in this respect. With their position at the lowest rank, the banks' career development efforts were both inadequate and ineffectual.

There is a need for the banks to have a properly laid down career plans and career path in each functional area of banking (credit, international business/ foreign exchange, letter of credit (L/C) business, guarantee, marketing, and operations) that are organised in unison by establishing inter-linkages and complementarities with one another.

*Table 6 Rank of effectiveness of HRD intervention programmes [Assigning 7 to strongly agreed and 1 to strongly disagreed on the Likert Scale]*

HRD intervention	N	Mean of scales	s.d.	Mean Rank
Training	708	4.75	1.34	1
Performance Development	708	4.55	1.38	2
Development/ Management Development	708	4.41	1.45	3
Organisation Development	708	4.33	1.39	4
Career Development	708	3.92	1.60	5

*Source: Primary Data*

## Conclusion and contributions

Since the world is likely to witness a loss of 5 million jobs, and creation of another 2.1 million new jobs by 2020 due to IT and technological advances, as per the WEF (2016) prediction, workers should acquire and enhance the skills required by future work organisations in wake of the emerging Fourth Industrial Revolution .

Both preferability and perceived effectiveness of HRD programmes—although measured using different methods of the ranking questions and Likert Scale questions respectively—

have shown the identical ranks: the most preferred and perceivably most effective HRD programme is training, followed by performance development and management development. The Nepali bank managers showed less preference for OD and career development programmes both of which they perceived as less effective.

The practical implications particularly from the results of perceived effectiveness of HRD programmes are important to follow: HRD professionals should maintain and sustain the effectiveness of their HRD programmes at all levels with

all professional finesse, even in a case where the perceived effectiveness of such HRD intervention programmes as OD and career development have been found just mediocre. It hints at the inference that there is sufficient room for improvement in such perceivably under-performing HRD programmes so that the work organisations can hone skills and increase competency of their workers to proactively face the future challenges.

The study findings should prove instrumental to HR managers in gearing their HRD function and intervention programmes towards skill enhancement and competency development of workforce that help them achieve better HRD outcomes in the future work organisations.

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**ARHAN STHAPIT** is a management practitioner-turned academician with 22 years of industry experience (banking, development and journalism). Email : [arhansthapit@gmail.com](mailto:arhansthapit@gmail.com)



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