

Identifying Variables Regarding Effectiveness of On line Management Development Programme (MDP) in Covid - 19 Scenario

Krishna Chaitanya Jha

Research scholar,
Manipal University Jaipur (MUJ)
chetan_120374@hotmail.com

Manvinder Singh Pahwa

Professor
School of Business & Commerce
Manipal University Jaipur (MUJ)
manvinder.pahwa@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

Training and Development programme for employees acts as capacity building measures not only for the employees but also for the organisation. Expenditure on Training and Development programme may be termed as investment on human asset of the organisation, which upgrades knowledge, skill and attitude of the asset.

Management Development Programmes (MDPs) is one of the important interventions for continuous development of executives in an organisation. Over a period of time, MDPs has become an important business requirement of the company. In MDPs, the executives of all level i.e. junior, middle, senior and top level are sent for short term class room Programme to renowned training institutes or arrange In-house need based customised training.

During unprecedented Covid 19 situation, it has been not only difficult for the institutes to run class room MDPs but also for company to send its employees for MDPs. In the given scenario, institutes started running **on line MDPs** and accordingly, executives of different organisations are being nominated for on line MDPs/need based customised training.

The main objective of this study:

- To identify variables regarding effectiveness of on line Management Development Programme in post-Covid 19 Scenario.

Key Word: *MDP, Training & Development, Training Effectiveness, Customised Training, On line training.*

INTRODUCTION

Training and Development programme for employees acts as capacity building measures not only for the employees but also for the organisation. Expenditure on Training and Development programme may be termed as investment on human asset of the organisation, which upgrades knowledge, skill and attitude of the asset.

Management Development Programmes (MDPs) is one of the important interventions for continuous development of executives in an organisation. Over a period of time, MDPs has become an important business requirement of the company. In MDPs, the executives of all level i.e. junior, middle, senior and top level are sent for short term class room programme to renowned training institutes or arrange in-house need based customised training.

Management development may be defined as the expansion of a person's capacity to be effective in a manager's roles and processes. (Velsor, 2004). Concepts of "leadership development" & "management development" are encompassed together in Management Development literature. (Viitala, 2008).

Management Development Programme is strategically significant for an organisation. In order to achieve strategic goal, an organisation must analyse, plan and design its MDPs in a manner where in, it proved to be effective for individual and organisational growth. A phenomenal time and money is spent on MDPs, accordingly it must yield result and add value to business of an organisation. There are many mode of undertaking MDPs. Short duration open programme by an institutions and organising a customised training programme on a specific topic are important mode of undertaking MDPs.

In the volatile business environment, it is quite impossible to succeed in the business without simultaneous development of managers (Warrenfeltz, 2003, Vol2 No.1). Management development (MD) is required to be seen as developing and maintaining the complete management and organizational capability of an organization. (Jackson S, 2003 Vol 22 No, 3)

During unprecedented Covid 19 situation, it has been not only difficult for the institutes to run class room MDPs, but also for the companies to send its employees for MDPs. In the given scenario, institutes started running on line

MDPs and accordingly, executives of different organisations are being nominated for on line MDPs.

PROBLEM STATEMENT/HYPOTHESIS

”Whether Online MDPs has been as effective as classroom MDP or more/less effective than classroom MDPs.”

OBJECTIVE OF RESEARCH

The main objective of this study:

- To identify variables regarding effectiveness of on line Management Development Programme in post-Covid 19 Scenario.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The method of research in this paper is exploratory on the basis of archival method of literature review. Researcher after searching all possible sources could not get much substantial research work on the topic after year 2008, hence, the literature published till year 2008 has been reviewed in this research work. In the Covid 19 scenario, on line MDPs has been a compelled method to carry out the MDPs. Benefit of cost effectiveness and time flexibilities has been evident as regard effectiveness of on line MDPs in Covid 19 scenario. To explore effectiveness on other count, a pilot team of 30 persons from participants, sponsoring companies and organising institutions were interacted. On the basis of literature review and interaction with pilot team of participants, sponsors & institutes, the following parameters apart from cost effectiveness of On line Training vis-à-vis Classroom training were discussed and explored:-

- Linking MDPs to Business Plan of the organisation.
- Continuous Validation of Programme Content.
- Responsiveness to individual needs.
- Responsiveness to Organizational need.
- Time flexibility.
- Interaction amongst participants.
- Interaction with faculties.
- Psychological freedom to ask question.
- Availability of reference material.
- Availability of IT support.

As regards individual effectiveness of on line MDPs, the following profile variables of participants and faculties have been explored in this paper:

Participants	Gender, Age and Management Level
Faculties	Gender, Age, Designation (Faculty Level) and Domain of expertise

Perception regarding effectiveness of MDPs on different parameter tends to change as per respondents' profiles.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Volatile, uncertain, complex and ambiguous (VUCA) business environment in the past decade has been the product of developments such as the technology revolution, globalization, downsizing into business networks and re-engineering. As a result, now organizations are more flexible and focus on shorter phases in managing performance (Conger, 2001) (Vicere, 1998 vol 17 no.7). In late 90, in order to have competitive advantage, the Management Development has been well on the corporate agenda. (Goodge, 1998 Vol. 17 No. 1,) (Luoma, 2005, Vol. 24 Nos 7/8,). Competence based Management Development has been subsequently applied throughout the western countries. (Briscoe, 1999). There has been difference of concept regarding competencies parameter across the countries. Different conceptualisation of competencies are there for different countries. (Garavan, 2001 Vol. 13 No. 4,) However, competencies in the broadest term refers to the total of knowledge, experiences, traits, skills, attitudes, social role and values, which have been acquired by managers during their lifetime (Pickett, 1998 Vol. 27 No. 1). In a broader term, the domain of competencies skill may be categorised as intra-personal skill, inter-personal skill, leadership skill and business Skill (warrenfeltz, 2003, Vol2 No.1). Corporate believes that these competencies skills can be developed by the way of Management Development Programme, however there is very scarce source of authentic research based result available to substantiate this belief. (Goodge, 1998 Vol. 17 No. 1,) (JA, 2000 Vol 24 No. 1). The outcome of MDP effectiveness are up to the extent the learning of MDP could be applied in day to day job (Alvarez, 2004 Vol. 3 No. 4,).

MDP is one of the most traditional methods of management development. MDPs can be in-house customised or get organized by external agencies. Both internal customised MDPs and externally organised MDPs have their own advantages and disadvantages. In the internal customised MDPs, there is an opportunity to connect learning and development to the company's specific strategic imperatives (Neary, 2000 Vol. 39 No. 2&3). In the past few decades, the MDPs have considerably evolved. It has become a major tool for building learning-oriented competitiveness and revitalizing corporations. (JA, 2000 Vol 24 No. 1). Evolution of Multi-variety development methods and emotional character of participants has been two major emerging trends in the field of MDPs (Hughes, 2004 Vol 27 No.1). Some of the future trends in the field of MDPs envisaged are the global and international face of management concepts, the role of technology and pressure to demonstrate return on investment (RoI). There has been a considerable deviation from externally arranged development towards in-house customised training programmes. The content has now not only been limited to gain functional upgradation but also to adopt to change management, leadership development and other soft skill upgradation. With regard to MDP methods, there has been a shift to emphasize on experiential methods rather than limiting it to traditional and moralistic. Experimental learning, to be efficient, requires structured mechanism, which in turn help managers to articulate learnings on the job, to share the learnings with other managers, and to integrate the learning into the existing knowledge base of both the organization and themselves. Time and cost effectiveness in MDPs has been another factor which is being demanded by the organisations and the participants.

The wide use of IT services and online internet based trainings are gaining popularities among MDP-methods. (JA, 2000 Vol 24 No. 1) suggest that action learning processes might use internet-based learning as an important supplementary role. Technology, via venues such as e-learning, e-mentoring/shadowing, chat-rooms, and business simulations will augment the development and sharing of knowledge among participants. While technology may be useful for some aspects of MDP, importance of bringing leaders together to deepen their relationships and their learning experience cannot be replaced by technology (Hughes, 2004 Vol 27 No.1).

Keeping in view that organisation functions as team rather than an individual, the MDPs approach should include both managers' skill and team skills (R, 2002 Vol 21).(Goodge, 1998 Vol. 17 No. 1,)comments that cost-effectiveness is a significant factors or variables while selecting the technique of MDPs, which suggests plans that use low-cost and easily arranged activities. On the other hand, the most cost effective approaches may not be the ones through which most in-depth learning takes place.

(Mabey, 2001)report that 37 percent of the surveyed entities has gained poorly or not at all in respect of achieving objectives of MDPs, 43 percent entities reported to have met the objective averagely and only 19 percent entities reported to have fully succeeded in achieving objectives of MDPs. Developmental activities depend in part on organizational conditions such as top management support and learning culture within the organisation also play their part in developmental activities (Brown, 2003 Vol. 27 Nos 6/7).

At time, executives and/or organisations are reluctant to attend/organise MDPs(Mihal, 2007).The reason for resistance of organisation and participants for attending/organising MDPs may be many, related to content of MDPs, non-responsive to individual need, MDPs not linked with business plan. MDPs become ineffective due to the aforesaid resistance of executives and organisation for the MDPs.

So, make the MDPs effective, following may be ensured: (Mihal, 2007)

- Linking MDPs to Business Plan of the organisation.
- Validating Programme Content in line with business plan.
- Building programmes responsive to individual and organisational needs.
- Encouraging the transfer of learnings of MDPs.
- Anticipate and avoid Wrong timing, wrong solution to the problems.

In a research(Viitala, 2008), the results indicate that when it is about development of senior executives perceived effectiveness of MDPs, longitudinal methods with experience based learning were effective whereas dominance of traditional short-term managementdevelopment activities' continues.Evaluation of respondents about their perceived effectiveness was to the extent it helped in their pursuit of personal development. International assignments were perceived as the most

effective management development tool. The second most positive evaluations were given to personal career planning and job rotation. The methods ranked next were special job assignments, mentoring, regular performance evaluation and self-help activities. As per managers' own perception, management education and training did not appear to be one of the most effective methods. However, it was the most common method of the target respondents' group. On exploring further, there was difference of opinion in perceived effectiveness of the different forms of training. The most effective form of training was ranked to be management education programmes, comprising of short-term training sessions. Additionally, long-term training sessions and processes containing experiential learning activities were evaluated to be effective. Overall, long-term training was seen to be more effective than short-term training programmes. The respondents stressed that the strength of these methods entrusted in being it suitable for organisation development as whole and not merely individual development. Internet-based learning was easy to arrange, not difficult for time and place but does not motivate much but there is lack of interaction with others in Internet-based learning. As perceived, short-term class room training is superficial/routine type of method, did not offer any new learning and difficult to fit with personal and organizational needs. It is also matter of study whether individual background profile variables had an effect on these perceptions regarding effectiveness of MD-methods.

CONCLUSIONS

The unprecedented Covid 19 has compelled Business entity to carry out meetings, conferences, training etc. without personal contacts and a new normal has emerged to carry out these activities with the use of Internet and IT support. Conduct of on line MDPs are also being resorted to under this new normal environment and has been proved to be very effective in terms of Cost and Time.

There are mainly three actors involved in imparting MDPs i.e. Sponsors (The company/organization), Participants (employees) and Organizers (institutes/faculties).

On the basis of literature review and also discussion with pilot group of 30 members, following variables of MDP effectiveness is identifiable in this research work:

Sl. No.	Variables	Conclusion	References
1	Linkage with Business Plan and Content Validation.	Sponsors' sole aim to nominate its executive in MDPs is to fulfil its business strategy and accordingly they look for MDPs which suits to their Business Plan. Realigning and continuous validation of programme content as per business plan seems to be smooth as regard On line MDPs.	Mihal, J. K. (2007).
2	Cost effectiveness	As MDPs involves a substantive amount of cost and time, cost effectiveness is a parameter which a sponsors always look for. If we compare cost involved in on line MDPs and off Line MDPs, the cost involved in on line MDPs is almost 50% of that of off line MDPs. Apart from increase in participation fee, the off line MDPs involves travel and stay (Lodging/Boarding) cost of the participants also.	Goodge, P. (1998)
3	Time flexibility	On Line MDPs has been proved to be very flexible in terms of its time. The online session can be time scheduled which is mutually convenient to organizers and participants. At times, many participants are reluctant or have difficulties in relocating themselves for MDPs. On line MDPs has been proved to be a boon for such categories of participants. Also, when situation demands, rescheduling of on line MDPs is easier in comparison to off line MDPs as the later require in - advance infrastructural arrangements	Discussion with pilot group of 30.

4	Individual and organizational responsiveness	MDPs to be responsive for participants and organizations, it has to be linked with business plan. Also, the MDPs be designed in such a manner that it could be realigned and its content may be validated as per business plan requirement.	Mihal, J. K. (2007).
5	Interaction amongst participants	In class room/off line MDPs, there is an opportunity for participants to interact with co-participants and develop the inter-personal relation skill. The participants share their experience and certainly get benefitted from each other. In on line mode of MDPs, this element seems to be missing.	Hughes, H. B. (2004)
6	Psychological freedom in asking question	This effectiveness parameter involves the emotional character of participants. In off line MDPs, at times participants may feel wary to ask some question perceiving that they might be seen idiotic. However, this psychological barrier may not be hindrance in asking question/queries while attending to the On Line MDPs.	Hughes, H. B. (2004).
7	Reference Material	In off line MDPs, the study material/future reference material are available in PDF text format where as in on line mode, apart from PDF text format , one can have video recordings of class room proceedings which has an added advantage for making reference in future.	Discussion with pilot group of 30.
8	IT Support	This paper is limited to discussion pertaining to MDPs and no other form of education like academics etc.	JA, C. (2000)

		<p>are within the scope of this research paper. The population of sponsors, participants and institutes involved in this segment are urbanized, hence there might not be any issues related to internet connectivity. No other IT support apart from high speed internet is envisaged in on line mode of MDPs. Hence, on line MDPs has an edge over off line MDPs on this parameter.</p>	
--	--	--	--

From the above discussion, it may be said that on line method of MDPs has been a blessings in disguise. Initially, on line mode of MDPs was compelled method of learning due to Covid-19. However, it could be said that on line MDPs are going to stay for long run even after Covid situations improves. After identifying the effectiveness variables of MDPs, the effectiveness rate among participants, sponsors and institutes as per their perceptions is under study as regard on line MDPs.

REFERENCES:

- Alvarez, K. S. (2004 Vol. 3 No. 4,). An integrated model of training evaluation and effectiveness”. , Human Resource Development, pp., 207-15.
- Briscoe, J. a. (1999). “Grooming and picking leaders using competency frameworks:do they work? An alternative approach and new guideline for practice”,. Organizational Dynamics, Autumn, 37-52.
- Brown, P. (2003 Vol. 27 Nos 6/7). “Seeking success through strategic management development”. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, , 292-303.
- Conger, J. (2001). “Training leaders for the twenty-first century”. Human Resource Management review , 203-18.
- Garavan, T. a. (2001 Vol. 13 No. 4,). “Competencies and workplace learning: some reflectionson the rhetoric and the reality”,. *Journal of Workplace Learning*, 144-63.

- Goodge, P. (1998 Vol. 17 No. 1,). "How do we make management development effective? *Journal of Management Development*, pp. 83-7.
- Hughes, H. B. (2004 Vol 27 No.1). "Leadership development : past, present and future." *Human Resources Planning*, 24-32.
- JA, C. a. (2000 Vol 24 No. 1). "Executive Education in 21st Century". *Journal of Management Education*, 73-101.
- Jackson S, F. a. (2003 Vol 22 No, 3). "Executive DEvelopments : Meeting the needs of top teams and boards." *Journal of Management Development*, 185-265.
- Luoma, M. (2005, Vol. 24 Nos 7/8,). "Managers' perceptions of the strategic role of management development",. *The Journal of Management Development*, 645-55.
- Mabey, C. a. (2001). "Cross-national analysis of management development". Proceedings of the Global Human Resource Management Conference, ESADE, Barcelona,. barcelona.
- Mihal, J. K. (2007). "Guidelines for Designing". *Journal of Management Development* 5,5.
- Neary, D. a. (2000 Vol. 39 No. 2&3). "The role of training in developing global leaders: A case study." , *Human Resource Management*,185-93.
- Pickett, L. (1998 Vol. 27 No. 1). "Competencies and managerial effectiveness: putting competencies to work". *Public Personnel Management*, 103-15.
- R, K. E. (2002 Vol 21). "Assuring Corporate Leadership for the future.", *The journal of Management Development*, 761-79.
- velsor, M. a. (2004). "Our Views on Ledership development." In m. a. velsor, *Handbook of Leadership Development*, (pp. 1-22). San Francisco,.
- Vicere, A. (1998 vol 17 no.7). "Changes in practices, changes in perspectives: the 1997 international study." *Journal of Management Development*, 526-43.
- Viitala, V. S. (2008). "Management development of Senior Executive: Methodes and their effectiveness." *Personnel Review* Vol. 37 No. 4, 2008, 375-392.
- warrenfeltz, H. R. (2003, Vol2 No.1). "Educating the present Manager.", *Academy of Management Learning And Education* , 74-84.