

**Seminar Paper**  
**on**  
**Assessing the Role of Human Resource Development Projects in enhancing**  
**the skills of Civil Servants: The case of Ministry of Public Administration**



**Submitted by:**  
**Farida Yeasmin**  
**Deputy Secretary, MoPA**  
**ACAD**

**Roll # 112**  
**Email: faridapatwary@yahoo.com**

**130<sup>th</sup> Advanced Course on Administration and Development**  
**Bangladesh Public Administration Training Centre, Savar,**  
**Dhaka-1343**

# **Assessing the Role of Human Resource Development Projects in enhancing the skills of Civil Servants: The case of Ministry of Public Administration**

## **1.0 Introduction**

### **1.1 Background**

Civil service, legitimate institution of a country, plays central role in the public administration, policy formulation and its implementation process. They contribute as catalyst to leading the country for development. Studies established that civil servants should have quality of leadership, analytical and conceptual thinking, ability to cope with stress, capacity for learning and changing. They should have ability to communicate, to work in a team and to deal with criticism and conflict. They should have service oriented and proactive mentality and diverse management quality. Their behavior should be unbiased and unprejudiced. In order to achieve these quality, it is mandatory to provide goal oriented training to the civil servants of a country.

The Ministry of Public of Administration (MoPA), main responsible authority of capacity building of the civil servants of Bangladesh, has taken different initiatives to enhance the capacity of the civil servants of Bangladesh. They have taken different capacity building projects. Some of them have already been implemented. For example MoPA has implemented the “Strengthening Government through Capacity Development of the BCS Cadre Officials-Phase-I” project during July 2009 to December 2017. This project has been chosen as case study in this paper and analyzed whether the project has achieved the objective of capacity building of the civil servants. With these view, models and frameworks relating to capacity building assessment will be used. After that a set of recommendations will be furnished.

### **1.2 Problem Statement**

Ministry of Public of Administration is working on to achieve its mission of building up an efficient, service oriented and accountable Public Administration through appointment, training, increasing of institutional efficiency and ensuring effective use of human resources. Different types of training at different stages are arranged for the public servants through its subordinate training institutions. In addition to the regular training program it is implementing some projects for capacity development of the BCS Cadre Officials. Its subordinate training institutions are also implementing some projects of similar nature. But reports and studies identified that Bangladesh public administration is still lagging behind. It is inefficient. Accountability and transparency are absent in the system. Power and position are misused. There are jurisdictional infringements, corruption, low performance and low morale etc. Institutional weakness of political, social and economic apparatus and malfunctions have made the public administrative system of Bangladesh

despicable and disdainful (Aminuzzaman, 2006). To overcome the situation it is needed to create a set of efficient public servants for the nation through enhancing their capacity. It is identified by Saharan (2011) that training is imparted to enhance the knowledge and skill sets of the employees. Werner, and De Simone (2006) suggest that training typically involves providing employees with the knowledge and skills needed to do a particular task or job, though attitude change may also be attempted. Since there is no alternative of training for capacity building, the authority should ensure the effectiveness of training program implementing.

### **1.3 Justification**

Bangladesh is going to be graduated from the LCD in 2024. After the graduation Bangladesh will lose the existing International Support Measures (ISM) and will face challenges from different aspects. To cope with the changing situation, a team of efficient and proactive civil servants will be required. Moreover, to achieve the target of Digital Bangladesh: Vision 2021 and the Developed Bangladesh: Vision 2041, Bangladesh needs to enhance the capacity of its public administration. Ministry of Public Administration is working to building up an efficient, service oriented and accountable Public Administration through appointment, training, increasing of institutional efficiency and ensuring effective use of human resources. But reports and studies identified that Bangladesh public administration is still lagging behind. It is inefficient. Accountability and transparency are absent in the system. Their performance and morality are low. They suggested that intensive training and reform are necessary in the public administration of Bangladesh. So, time has come to assess the capacity building projects taken for and to find out the drawback of the projects. Since it is a continuous process, the initiative of assessing the role of human resource development projects for enhancing the skills of Civil Servants is justified. So far I know such type of initiative has not taken yet. Even though if there is any initiative, I believe more and more analyze will bring better outcome.

### **1.4 Objectives of the study**

The general objective of the study is to identify the effectiveness of development projects to enhancing the skills of Civil Servants in Bangladesh. The specific objectives of the study are to

1. Identify the effectiveness of educational/ training project to enhancing the skills of Civil Servants
2. Suggest the way forward for making the best use of development projects to strengthening the capacity of Civil servants

### **1.5 Limitations of the Study**

The study deals with the evaluation of the effectiveness of educational/training projects taken for the capacity building of the civil servants of Bangladesh. “Strengthening Government through Capacity Development of the BCS Cadre Officials-Phase—I” project of the Ministry of Public Administration has been chosen as case study. Since the duration of the study is less than six weeks

and three days is given to collect primary data, it was difficult to collect more primary data from the ground. Mainly secondary information is used for the analysis. Recommendations are furnished based on the secondary data, although limited primary data is used. So the main limitation of the study is time constraint. It should be mentioned that it is very difficult to evaluate the real impact of a project based on the limited primary data. So, the use of limited primary data is another limitation of the study.

## **2.0 Methodology of the study**

Since the study is qualitative in nature and limited time is given, secondary data is considered as main source of information. These secondary data is collected from various journals, books, reports, periodicals and government documents etc. Limited primary data are used that are collected through structured questionnaire. These structured questionnaire are prepared based on the four standards set in the Donald Kirkpatrick's model of evaluating the impact of training program. Data are also analyzed using Kirkpatrick's model. For the analysis of the data researcher's experience and insights developed through the institutional involvement in similar works for a considerable period of time is used.

## **3.0 Literature Review**

To determine the value, worth and significance of a program, evaluation of it is mandatory. It helps the planners to redesign or restructure the program to make it effective. Like other programs, evaluation of training related program is also important. It helps to determine whether training has had the desired effect, secondly do participants able to implement what they have learned. Gopal, (2009) mentioned that good training interventions initiated with identifying the TNA i.e training need analysis and ends with evaluation process. Evaluation should be to identify whether trainees are able to implement their learnings at their work places. (Nagar, 2009).

It is noted that theoretically effectiveness refers the level of obtaining objectives. It includes whether or not the intended problems are solved or not. Actually, effectiveness is nothing but to do 'right thing in a write way'. From training perspective the effectiveness of a program depends on the program design, structure, and content and need assessment of the client. One of the main cause of failure of training program is designing training program without having a rigorous training need assessment.

Although there is no well accepted and established model for evaluation of effectiveness of a project related to education and training. Still scholars are trying to come up with effective evaluation mechanism to evaluate the training programme. There are some famous models used for evaluation of training. These are CIPP (context, input, process & product) Evaluation model by Daniel Stufflebeam and colleagues in the (1960s), CIRO (contents, inputs, reaction and output) approach by Warr, Bird & Rackson, (1970s), Phillip's Evaluation approach (reaction and planned action, learning, applied learning on the job, business results & return on investment) by Phillips

(1996), Kaufman's five-level Evaluation (enabling and reaction, acquisition, application, organizational outputs & societal outcomes) (1995), Kirkpatrick Model (reaction, learning, behaviour, & results) (1990). Out of these models Kirkpatrick's Model is considered as more effective tools for the evaluation of effectiveness of a training programme. In this paper Kirkpatrick's Model is used to evaluate the effectiveness of the project under consideration. Using the Kirkpatrick's Model, satisfaction of the beneficiaries about the program are measured. Their level of learning from the programme is measured. It is analyzed whether training helped them to increasing their knowledge and skill. It is also identified whether the training has changed the behavior of the beneficiaries and whether they become competent to use their gained knowledge in the work field. At the end it is also identified whether the project has any positive impact on the organization i.e. there is any positive change in the service delivery.

#### **4.0 Analysis of project Documents**

"Strengthening Government through Capacity Development of the BCS Cadre Officials-Phase—I" project implemented by the Ministry of Public Administration during July 2009 to December 2017 has been chosen as case study. The main objectives of the project was to enhance the efficiency of the cadre officers of Bangladesh and to make them acquainted with the use of modern Information and Communication technology and also make them competent to achieve the goals of MDGs and to face upcoming challenges of the modern world. To do so the BCS Cadre Officials were provided training of different categories on Negotiation, Good Governance, ICT Management, Human Resources Management, Project Management, Organizational Leadership, Financial Management, Development Economics, Environmental Management, Global warming/ climate change, Renewable Energy, Sustainable Development, Poverty Alleviation and Disaster Management. They were provided scholarship to obtain Master Degree and Diploma from foreign University. Refreshers course were arranged for the Secretaries/ Senior Secretaries. 3/6 months training courses were arranged for the Assistant Secretary/ Senior Assistant Secretary/ Deputy Secretary and 30/ 15 days short course were arranged for the Joint Secretary/ Additional Secretary. It is noted that all the training program were conducted in abroad.

It is seen reviewing the project document that it was targeted to train total 2164 officials under different categories of training program. Out of 2164, 517 officials were provided scholarship to obtain masters or equivalent degree, 149 officials were provided scholarship to obtain diploma degree, 30 secretary/ senior secretary were trained under refreshers course, and 1486 officials at the level of Joint Secretary, Deputy Secretary/ Senior Assistant Secretary were trained under different types of professional short courses. Among the beneficiaries 17% were women and 83 % were men. In regard to training, 413 officers were provided scholarship for subject specific masters or diploma program. Most of the beneficiaries of this categories are either assistant secretary or senior assistant secretary. Actually officers of deputy secretary and above level were given training for professional development. The project has achieved its target from the quantity perspective. It doesn't indicate that the project is successful because the success of a project mainly depends on its impact of achieving of its objectives. And so it is tried to find out whether the project has

achieved its objective of enhancing the capacity of the BCS Cadre officials. To do so information are collected base on the Kirkpatrick's Model and analyzed.

Structured questionnaire were prepared based on four level of Kirkpatrick's Model and interviewed the beneficiaries. Due to time constrained and COVID19 situation only 16 beneficiaries were interviewed physically. 20 beneficiaries were interviewed over telephone. A deputy project director was also interviewed. Out of 37 interviewees 10 beneficiaries did masters, 10 beneficiaries did diploma under the project and remaining 16 beneficiaries participated in different types of short courses. Focused group discussion was not conducted, key personnel were not interviewed, and field visit was not arranged. Concentration is given only to the participants. So, through the interview it is tried to find out whether the beneficiaries had been satisfied with the program and the program helped to increase their knowledge and skill on the subject specified in the objective of the project document. It was also tried to find out whether they were able to utilize their knowledge and experience in their work place. The impact of the project to the organization was also evaluated. The answer of the interviewee are discussed below.

### **5.0 Discussion on Findings**

Evaluation of a project is not a one shot business. It is a continuous exercise to be conducted in every step from beginning to ending of the programme. In this paper the gained knowledge of the trainees is not only evaluated, trainers, training management, training content and curriculum, training methodology etc are also evaluated with limited data. It is mentioned earlier that Kirkpatrick's Model is used to collect the primary data and accordingly a structured questionnaire is prepared. The findings are discussed below:

In regard to trainee's satisfaction, it is tried to identify whether the training program has satisfied beneficiaries and the program enhanced their skill of negotiation and communication. In response to the questions relevant with above issues 40 % replied that they are very satisfied with program, 40% are only satisfied. Only 2% responders are not satisfied with programme. 60% responders replied that it has helped them to increase their negotiation and communication skill. In regards to the knowledge about good governess and digital service delivery, 50% expressed their high satisfaction and 30% expressed their satisfaction only. In response to the questions related to capacity building, most of the responders made positive response. They strongly believe that supports provided under the project helped them to enhance their capacity, they have gathered knowledge about good governance, Management, Policy Issues and Professional Issues. Their professionalism has increased. Most of the responders strongly agreed that after the course their behavior of service delivery has been changed. In response to the application of gained knowledge in the work place, only 20% strongly agreed that they were capable to use the knowledge gained from the training in their work place, 20% agreed that they used their knowledge in the work place, 40% responders were neutral in their response. 10% disagreed with the questions. In regards to use of knowledge, responders blamed that most of the case they were not posted based on their academic background and so they did not get chance to utilize the knowledge. It is remarkable that

most of responders expressed their high understanding in favour of the project activities. They recommended to arrange such type of program more and more for the civil servants. They suggested to continue the program. They mentioned that the activities of the project, enhanced their capacity of service delivery. They have learnt the good practice of the developed countries. Specialized training program helped the participants to do develop their professionalism and they used the knowledge and experience in their workplace. Most of the beneficiaries responded that the training courses were very much relevant with the day to day activities of their profession

It is found from the response of the beneficiaries that they have obtained degree which are international standard, there is lacking of follow up, there is no legal binding for the posting of right person in the right place that hinders the best utilization of knowledge they have gathered from the program.

## **6.0 Recommendations**

1. More training program should be arranged for the civil servants;
2. Number of issue specific short term training program should be increased;
3. To use the knowledge of the trained officials, MoPA can make a career planning;
4. Ministry specific training program can be arranged and ministry specific pool of civil servants can be created;
5. Should have Ministry specific training need assessment;
6. To use the knowledge of the trainees, MoPA should have a planning in regard to posting of the civil servants.

## **7.0 Conclusion**

Since focused group discussion, key personnel interview, and field visit were not arranged and concentration is given only to the participants, the recommendations are furnished based on limited beneficiary's response. So real situation may not be revealed. But as a whole, the project was successful to achieve its objectives. Since capacity building is endless process, MoPA should come forward to take more projects on capacity building, it could be ministry or subject specific.

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