A STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF TECHNICAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS IN SUPPORTING TOWARDS LIFELONG LEARNING IN A TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY IN MALAYSIA

By:

Nor Hisham Ghafar

A STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF TECHNICAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS IN SUPPORTING TOWARDS LIFELONG LEARNING IN A TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY IN MALAYSIA

A project paper submitted to the College of Business
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Human Resource Management
Universiti Utara Malaysia

By:

NOR HISHAM BIN GHAFAR

©Nor Hisham Ghafar, 2009. All right reserved

KOLEJ PERNIAGAAN
(College of Business)
Universiti Utara Malaysia

PERAKUAN KERJA KERTAS PROJEK
(Certification of Project Paper)

Saya, mengaku bertandatangan, memperakukan bahawa
(I, the undersigned, certified that)

NOR HISHAM BIN GHAFAR (800807)

Calon untuk Ijazah Sarjanamuda
(Candidate for the degree of)

MASTER OF HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT (MHRM)

telah mengemukakan kertas projek yang bertajuk
(has presented his/her project paper of the following title)

A STUDY ON EFFECTIVENESS OF TECHNICAL ACADEMIC PROGRAMS IN SUPPORTING TOWARDS LIFELONG LEARNING IN A TECHNICAL UNIVERSITY IN MALAYSIA

Seperti yang tercatat di muka surat tajuk dan kulit kertas project
(as it appears on the title page and front cover of the project paper)

Bahawa kertas projek tersebut boleh diterima dari segi bentuk serta kandungan dan meliputi bidang ilmu dengan memuaskan.
(that the project paper acceptable in the form and content and that a satisfactory knowledge of the field is covered by the project paper).

Nama Penyelia : **EN. GHAZALI BIN DIN**
(Name of Supervisor)

Tandatangan : _____
(Signature)

Tarikh : **30 DECEMBER 2009**
Date)

DECLARATION OF THESIS

I hereby declared that this thesis had not been accepted for any degree and is not concurrently submitted in candidature of any other degree.

I hereby declared that any valuable contributions and all resources have been used as an acknowledgement to this thesis research.

NOR HISHAM GHAFAR
800807
College of Business
Universiti Utara Malaysia
06010 Sintok
Kedah Darul Aman
Malaysia

December 26, 2009

PERMISSION TO USE

In presenting this thesis as partial fulfillment of the requirements for a postgraduate degree from Universiti Utara Malaysia, I agree that the Universiti Utara Malaysia may make it freely available for inspection. I further agree that permission for copying of this thesis in any manner, in whole or in part, for scholarly purposes may be granted by my supervisor, or, in their absence, by the Dean of the College of Business. It is understood that any copying or publication or use of this thesis or parts thereof for financial gain shall not be allowed without my written permission. It is also understood that due recognition shall be given to me and to University Utara Malaysia for any scholarly use which may be made of any material from my thesis.

Request for permission to copy or to make other use of material in this thesis, in whole or in part should be addressed to:

Dean of Research and Innovation
College of Business
Universiti Utara Malaysia
06010 Sintok
Kedah Darul Aman
Malaysia

ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effectiveness of academic program towards supporting lifelong learning in a technical university in Malaysia. This study explored the relationship between various components in academic programs namely teaching and learning strategies, learning materials, role of instructors, course content, support system, and practical sessions; and students' attitude towards learning and their motivation to learn. A total of 263 students from semester 2 to semester 7 in eight academic programs were surveyed. The finding reveals that the students have good perceptions on each component of the academic programs and all those components have significant relationship with the students' attitude towards learning. It is also further learnt that the students' motivation to learn has a very strong positive connection with the students attitude towards learning.

ABSTRAK

Tujuan kajian ini adalah untuk menyelidik sejauh mana keberkesanan program akademik dalam menyokong pembelajaran sepanjang hayat di salah sebuah universiti teknikal di Malaysia. Kajian ini melihat dari sudut hubungan di antara pelbagai komponen dalam program akademik iaitu strategi pengajaran dan pembelajaran, bahan mengajar, peranan pengajar, kandungan kursus, sistem sokongan, dan sesi praktikal; dengan sikap pelajar terhadap pembelajaran serta motivasi mereka untuk belajar. Sejumlah 263 pelajar dari Semester 2 hingga Semester 7 dalam lapan program telah dikaji. Hasil kajian telah menunjukkan bahawa responden mempunyai persepsi yang baik terhadap setiap komponen dalam program akademik dan kesemua komponen tersebut juga didapati mempunyai hubungan yang signifikan terhadap sikap pelajar terhadap pembelajaran. Hasil kajian juga telah membuktikan bahawa motivasi pelajar mempunyai hubungan secara positif yang sangat kuat dengan sikap pelajar terhadap pembelajaran.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

In the name of Allah, the Greatest and the Most Merciful. Praise to Allah S.W.T. for granted me strength, courage, patience, passion, and inspirations in completing this dissertation.

My utmost thank to my Supervisor, En. Ghazali bin Din, who was advising and mentoring me throughout the research process until the producing this dissertation.

A special thank is also dedicated to my beloved wife, Hazmila Abdul Hamid, who always be my source of inspiration and taking on many of the family's responsibilities to afford me time that I needed; and to my sons and daughters, Hafizi, Hakimi, Huda and Husna, who understand on your father's limited time to entertain all of you.

A heartful thank to my boss, Professor Ahmad Zahir Mokhtar who is also the Dean of UniKL MIAT, who granted the access for me to conduct the research within UniKL MIAT's facility and who always provide supports to me until I was able to finish this report.

Last but not least, this dissertation could not have been completed without the supports from my all office colleagues who directly or indirectly provide assistance and encouragement until the completion of this dissertation.

NOR HISHAM GHAFAR
Universiti Kuala Lumpur – Malaysian Institute of Aviation Technology
Sepang, Selangor.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLES	PAGE
	PERAKUAN KERJA KERTAS PROJEK	i
	DECLARATION OF THESIS	ii
	PERMISSION TO USE	iii
	ABSTRACT	iv
	ABSTRAK	v
	ACKNOWLEDGEMENT	vi
	LIST OF TABLES	ix
	LIST OF FIGURES	xi
1	**INTRODUCTION**	
	1.1 Background	1
	1.1.1 Program Effectiveness Structural Model	5
	1.1.2 Background of studied university – UniKL MIAT	6
	1.2 Problem statement	7
	1.3 Research objectives	9
	1.4 Significance of this study	9
	1.5 Research outline	10
	1.6 Operational definition of terms	11
2	**LITERATURE REVIEW**	
	2.1 Introduction	12
	2.2 Relationship of teaching and learning's components with lifelong learning	12
	2.3 Students' perception and attitude towards learning	16
	2.4 Willingness and motivation to learn	16
	2.5 Principles of learning	18
3	**METHODOLOGY**	
	3.1 Introduction	23
	3.2 Conceptual framework	23
	3.3 Sample and procedures	26
	3.4 Data collection	27

	3.5	Data analysis	27
	3.6	Research design	28
	3.7	Instrument development	29
	3.8	Pilot study	30
4	**FINDINGS**		
	4.1	Introduction	33
	4.2	Respondents' demographic profiles	33
	4.3	Results and findings	34
		4.3.1 Analysis on research questions	34
		4.3.2 Analysis on significant difference according to demographical characteristics	56
	4.4	Research hypotheses testing result	63
5	**DISCUSSION, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**		
	5.1	Conclusion	66
	5.2	Recommendation	71
	5.3	Limitation and suggestion for future research	73
	REFERENCES		74
	APPENDIX		78
	Appendix 1: Survey questionnaire		

LIST OF TABLES

Table	Title	Page
1.1	Strategic groups of knowledge workers	4
2.1	Nine principles of guiding teaching and learning – The framework for a first-class university teaching and learning environment	13
3.1	Respondents return rate	26
3.2	Davis' Index	28
3.3	Cronbach's Alpha result of pilot study	31
4.1	Profiles of respondents according to demographic characteristics	33
4.2	Mean score and standard deviation for Teaching and Learning Strategy	34
4.3	Mean score and standard deviation for Learning Materials	36
4.4	Mean score and standard deviation for Roles of Instructors	37
4.5	Mean score and standard deviation for Course Content	38
4.6	Mean score and standard deviation for Support System	39
4.7	Mean score and standard deviation for Practical Sessions	40
4.8	Result of correlation between overall Teaching and Learning Strategy and Attitude towards Learning	42
4.9	Result of correlation between overall Learning Materials and Attitude towards Learning	43
4.10	Result of correlation between overall Roles of Instructors and Attitude towards Learning	44
4.11	Result of correlation between overall Course Contents and Attitude towards Learning	45
4.12	Result of correlation between overall Support Systems and Attitude towards Learning	46

4.13	Result of correlation between overall Practical Sessions and Attitude towards Learning	47
4.14	Result of correlation between overall Teaching & Learning Strategy and Motivation to Learn	49
4.15	Result of correlation between overall Learning Materials and Motivation to Learn	50
4.16	Result of correlation between overall Roles of Instructors and Motivation to Learn	51
4.17	Result of correlation between overall Course Contents and Motivation to Learn	52
4.18	Result of correlation between overall Support Systems and Motivation to Learn	53
4.19	Result of correlation between overall Practical Sessions and Motivation to Learn	54
4.20	Result of correlation between overall Attitude towards Learning and Motivation to Learn	55
4.21	Comparison according to Gender	56
4.22	Comparison according to Ethnicity	57
4.23	Comparison according to Nationality	58
4.24	Comparison according to Programs	60
4.25	Comparison according to Semesters	61
4.26	Result on research hypotheses testing	63
5.1	Comparison of overall means of this study and previous study by Morshidi et al (2007)	67

LIST OF FIGURES

Figure	Title	Page
1.1	Theoretical framework relating the variables in the study	24
4.1	Hypotheses result of theoretical framework relating to variables in the study after testing	64

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

The term of "lifelong learning" is no more an alien terminology nowadays. Most nations and leaders are now talking about its importance. Upgrading ones education to the highest level as possible is no longer a luxurious things to achieve, instead it becomes a necessity to individuals. Whereas for countries, economic growth is increasingly driven by knowledge and no country can remain competitive without applying knowledge that can boost their efficiency in producing goods and services and delivering them more effectively and at lower costs to a greater number of people (Kagia, 2002). As for the companies, employers start to realize the importance for their employees to keep pace with the speed of development of information and knowledge as well as to learn new skills in rapid changing business environment (Añonuevo, 2001). Thus, engaging seriously in lifelong learning is no longer an individual agenda, but also to companies as well as countries. Researchers (Anuwar, 2005; Daing Zaidah and Abu Daud, 2007; Erlane, Jamaliah, and Noraini, 2008) described many reasons why lifelong learning becoming so important nowadays such as rapid pace of change and globalization, economic opportunity, quality of life and security, and the development of ICT, to name a few.

The contents of the thesis is for internal user only

REFERENCES

Añonuevo, C.M. (2001). "Practicing lifelong learning in Asia in the 21st century". UNESCO Institute of Education.

Anuwar, A. (2005). "Lifelong learning: Policy of Malaysia and the role of OUM". Paper presented in Korea National Open University Seminar.

Ashcroft, L., Farrow, J. and Watts, C. (2006), "Public libraries and adult learners". Library Management, Vol 28, No. 3, pp. 125-138.

Borowske, K. (2005). "Curiosity and motivation to learn". Paper presented in the ACRL Twelfth National Conference, Hamline University: Minnesota. pp. 346-350.

Burns, R. (1995). "The adult learner at work". Business and Professional Publishing: Sydney. p. 112.

Daing Zaidah, I., and Abu Daud, S. (2007). "Participation of managers in postgraduate studies through distance education". Unpublished paper.

Erlane, K. G., Jamaliah, S., and Noraini, M. N. (2008). "Determinants of Malaysia adult learners' distance learning". US-China Education Review, Vol. 5, No. 5, pp. 17-26.

Evans, C. and Fan, J. P. (2002). "Lifelong learning through virtual university," Campus-Wide Information System, Vol. 19, No. 4, pp. 127-134.

Field, A. P. (2005). "Discovering statistics using SPSS," 2nd edition, Sage: London.

Gouthro, P. A. (2006). "Lifelong learning and the pursuit of happiness: Questioning the agenda for adult education". Conference proceeding: Adult Education Research Conference, Mount Saint Vincent University, pp. 130-135.

Henning, M. (2007). "Students' motivation to learn, academic achievement, and academic advising". Unpublished research article.

Henke, H. (2001). "Learning theory: Applying Kolb's Learning Style Inventory with computer based training,". Unpublished article.

Institute of Strategic and International Studies (ISIS). (2002), "Knowledge-based Economy: Master Plan," Kuala Lumpur.

James, R. and Baldwin, G. (2002). "Nine principles of guiding teaching and learning – The framework for a first-class university teaching and learning environment," Centre for the Study of Higher Education, The University of Melbourne: Australia.

Kagia, R. (2002). "Lifelong learning and the knowledge economy: Summary of the Global Conference on lifelong Learning" (as presented in the Global Conference on Lifelong Learning 2002 at Stuttgart, Germany).

Kementerian Pendidikan Malaysia (2001). "Pembangunan pendidikan 2001-2010: Perancangan bersepadu penjana kecemerlangan pendidikan [Education Development 2001-2010: Integrated Planning for Generating Education Excellence]," Kuala Lumpur.

Knowles, M.S. (1978). "The adult learners: A neglected species 2nd edition". Houston: Gulf Publishing Company, Book Division.

Knowles, M.S. (1990). "The adult learners: A neglected species 4th edition". Gulf Publishing Company, Book Division: Houston.

Laird, D. (1985). "Approaches to training and development". Reading, Mass: Addison-Wesley.

Leong, Y.K. (1997). "Lifelong learning and Vision 2020 in Malaysia". In lifelong learning: Policies, practices, and programs, pp. 129-139.

Loewenstein, G. (1994). "The psychology of curiosity: A review and reinterpretation". Psychological Bulletin 116: 75–98.

McGill, I. and Beaty, L. (1995). "Action learning, second edition: A guide for professional, management and educational development," Kogan Page: London.

Meredith, S. and Burkle, M. (2008). "Building bridges between universityand industry: Theory and practice". Education and training, Vol 50, No. 3, pp. 199-215.

Mohd Najib, T.A.R (23th October 2009). "Budget Speech 2010". Ministry of Finance Malaysia, pp. 24-28.

Morshidi, S., Rozinah, J., Nagarajah, L.H.L. and Ambigapathy, P., (2007). "The effectiveness of academic programmes at higher educational institutions (HEIs) towards lifelong learning," National Higher Education Research Institute (as presented to the Ministry of Higher Education Malaysia).

Om, K. S. and Sadiq, S. M. (2002). "Roles of delivery, course design, and teacher-student interaction: Observation of adult distance education and traditional on-campus education". Internatioanl Review of Research in Open and Distance Learning. Vol 3, No. 2.

Pintrich, P.R. (2001). "The role of goal orientation in self-regulated learning". Handbook of self-regulation, Academic Press: San Diego, CA, pp. 451-502.

Raghavan and Kumar (2007). "The need for participation in open and distance education: The Open University Malaysia experience," Turkish Online Journal of Distance Learning, Vol.: 8 No, 4, Article 8.

Rozhan, M.I. & Hanafi, A. (2004). "Lifelong and lifewide distance education". First COLLA Regional Worksyop, Putrajaya, Malaysia.

Schmitt, N. (1996). "Uses and abuses of Coefficient Alpha". Psychological Assessment, Vol. 8, No. 4, pp. 350 – 353.

Stolen, G. (2008). "Emotion, adult and lifelong learning," University of Tromso: Norway.

Tabachnick, B. G. and Fidell, L. S. (1996). "Using multivariate statistics". 2nd Edition, Harper & Row: New York, p. 640.

Tuckman, B. W. (1999). "Conducting educational research," 5th Ed., Wadsworth Group.

Vermeer, H., Boekaerts, M. & Seegers, G. (2000). "Motivational and gender differences: sixth-grade students' mathematical problem-solving behaviour". Journal of Early Adolescence, Vol. 16, No. 4, pp. 390-406.

White, S (2004). "What motivates them? Some adult learner's perception of and reasons for engaging in lifelong learning". New Zealand Journal of Adult Learning, Vol. 32, No. 2, pp. 66-76.