

# **STUDY ON PROFESSIONAL SKILLS OF NON TEACHING STAFF AND ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING NEEDS: A CASE STUDY OF SELECTED HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS FROM ASSAM, INDIA.**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*The objective of this paper is to study the professional skills and assessment of training needs of non-teaching staff from five selected Higher Educational Institutions of Assam, India. Training of non-teaching staff working in higher educational institutions for up-gradation of knowledge and required skill has already been recognized as prime concern. Both primary and secondary data were collected for the purpose of the study. The primary data were collected with the help of the questionnaire designed for the purpose from the immediate Controlling Officer of the employee. Convenience sampling method was adopted for the study that gives flexibility to approach. Analysis of the data reveals that existing skill level of the respondents in most of the selected parameters was 'somewhat satisfactory'. The training need of respondents was strongly agreed in respect of Job Knowledge, Accuracy of assigned work, Level of Output, Use of Computer & relevant Software, Professional Competencies, Professional Attitudes and Professional Ethics. Association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training needs in selected attributes has also been established*

## **KEYWORDS**

*Non-teaching Staff, Higher Educational Institutions, Training needs, Professional Skill.*

## **INTRODUCTION**

Skilled manpower with necessary competency is the prime requirement for the Organization to achieve its predetermined objectives and for this purpose training of employees is

one of the important components of Human Resource Management. Now, in today's environment, where jobs are complex, importance of training increases. The imparting of specific skills, abilities & knowledge to an employee is training. Training needs may occur whenever the human asset (knowledge, skills and attitude) of the organization fails to meet the demands made on it. According to Miller & Osinski (2001) the need assessment is the first step in the establishment of a training and development programme. The ultimate aim of the need analysis is to establish: (1) what needs actually exist; (2) whether they are important; (3) how the need become apparent; (4) how they were defined; (5) how they may best be addressed; and (6) what priorities are (Erasmus et al, 2000). Once the need analysis has been completed, the needs that were identified are translated into measurable objectives that can guide the training process. It is used as the foundation for determining instructional objectives, selection & design of instructional programmes, implementation of the programme and evaluation of training provided. In the changing business environment, in order to maintain market competitiveness and business survival, the organizations have to continuously provide their employees with certain skills, knowledge and abilities (SKAs). A formal approach for organizations to update employees' acquisition of job related SKAs is through training. Research claimed that training is an important factor that could facilitate a firm's expansion, develop its potential and enhance its profitability (Cosh, et al, 1998; Tung-Chun, 2001).

The most common technique used by many organizations to identify training needs at individual level is performance review/appraisal, (Osborne, 1996). Wilson (1999) suggested the conventional and simpler methods such as interviews, questionnaires, observations and focus groups to gather information for HRD need analysis. On the contrary, Gilley, et.al. (2002) suggested the more analytical methods such as critical analysis, root-cause analysis methods to gather information. However, Mathews, et.al (2001) opined that training needs assessment is dominated by senior management decision and supervisor's opinion. The skills inventory is the most widely applied formal technique. In general, objectives and formal methods should be adopted more widely.

Like other business entities, higher educational institutions in India are also facing competition because of changing business environment. In order to survive in the competitive market, the higher educational institutions must function efficiently with innovative ideas and for this the human resources of these institutions must be equipped with competent and skill manpower. Identification and enhancement of required skill must be the prime concern of staff

development of higher educational institutions. Training of the non-teaching staff working in higher educational institutions of India to upgrade their skill and knowledge has already been recognized by the Government of India as well as University Grant Commission (UGC). University Grant Commission has been taken initiative in this regard by implementing various training programmes for non-teaching staff basically through the UGC- Human Resource Development Centres located in different Universities. In the word of Coombs (1998) ‘‘Unless educational systems are well-equipped with appropriately trained modern managers-who, in turn, are well equipped with good information flows, modern tools of analysis, research and evaluation, and are supported by well-trained teams of specialists-the transition of education from its semi-handicraft state to a modern condition is not likely to happen.’’

The present Research Paper is an analytical study of professional skills and assessment of training needs of non-teaching staff from selected higher educational institutions from Assam, India. The main objectives of this study were:

- i) To study the existing level of skill of non-teaching employees of higher educational institution.
- ii) To explore the training needs on non-teaching staff.
- iii) To identify the areas in which development is needed by non-teaching employees to perform their duties in a competitive way.
- iv) Formulation of recommendations for staff development programme of Higher Educational Institutions.

## **2. RESEARCH MEHODOLOGY**

### **2.1: Research Design:**

The research type adapted to this study is descriptive research.

The information in respect of employees’ skill level and to assess their training needs were collected from their respective Controlling Officers as the immediate Controlling Officers of the employees were better known regarding the existing skill level and training needs of the employees under their control.

### **2.2: Population:**

The population comprises of non-teaching employees (Group B & C) of various level and functional areas from administration of the selected higher educational institutions under the

study. Majority of the population are educated and qualified. They were highly cooperative and ready to spend less time to respond to the questionnaire. This made the researcher to adopt the convenience sampling method that gives flexibility to approach, only those who are ready to spend time and respond to the questionnaire.

### 2.3: Sampling Unit and Sample Size:

5 (Five) different higher educational institutions from the Assam, India selected for the study is the Sampling Unit of the study. The Sample size of the study is given below:

**Table: 1: Distribution of Sample Respondents in the Study Area**

Sl. No.	Higher Educational Institution	Number of respondents
1	Gauhati University (Oldest & largest University in the North East)	126
2	Dibrugarh University (A State University)	85
3	Tezpur University (A Central University)	40
4	Assam Agricultural University (A State University)	107
5	Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati. (An Institute of National Importance)	108
Total		466

### 2.4: Method of data Collection:

Both the primary and secondary data were collected for the purpose of the study. The primary data were collected with the help of questionnaire designed for the purpose and also through personal interview. The secondary data were collected from books, journals, magazines and articles related to the study.

### 3. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION:

#### 3.1: Existing Skill level of the Respondents:

Table 2 indicates that the existing skill level of non-teaching employees in all selected parameters is ‘somewhat satisfactory’. This means that there is gap between the expected level of skill and existing skill level in performance.

**Table 2: Existing Skill level of non-teaching employees on selected parameters**

Existing skill level of non-teaching employees on the selected parameters	Very much satisfactory		Somewhat satisfactory		Neither satisfactory nor dissatisfactory		Somewhat dissatisfactory		Very much dissatisfactory	
	Freq.	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Job Knowledge	162	34.76	218	46.78	85	18.24	1	0.21	---	0.00
Accuracy of assigned work	182	39.06	191	40.99	88	18.88	5	1.07	---	0.00
Level of Output	144	30.90	220	47.21	98	21.03	4	0.86	---	0.00
Enthusiastic/attitude towards the job	150	32.19	225	48.28	88	18.88	3	0.65	---	0.00
Reliability on performance	177	37.89	226	48.50	62	13.30	1	0.21	---	0.00
Skill on expression-written & verbal	179	38.41	221	47.42	64	13.73	2	0.43	---	0.00
Use of Computer	160	34.33	171	36.70	110	23.61	25	5.36	---	0.00
Preservation of records & files systematically	217	46.57	201	43.13	47	10.09	1	0.21	---	0.00

As observe in Table 2, the existing skill level of respondents in most of the parameters selected were ‘somewhat satisfactory’ except the parameter ‘Preservation of records & files systematically’. It indicates that there is scope for improvement of existing skill level of

respondents up to the level of ‘very much satisfactory’, which can be done through appropriate training & development strategy relevant to the required skill of respondents.

### 3.2: Respondents Training Need

**Table 3: Training need of non-teaching employees on selected parameters.**

Training need of non-teaching employees on selected parameters	Strongly Agree		Agree		Neutral		Disagree		Strongly disagree	
	Freq.	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%
Job Knowledge	174	37.34	174	37.34	117	25.11	1	0.21	--	0.00
Accuracy of assigned work	180	38.63	163	34.98	123	26.39	--	0.00	--	0.00
Level of Output	209	44.85	163	34.98	94	20.17	---	0.00	--	0.00
Use of Computer & relevant software	152	32.62	146	31.33	166	35.62	2	0.43	--	0.00
Knowledge of Drafting	154	33.05	218	46.78	94	20.17	---	0.00	--	0.00
Preservation of records & files	174	37.34	224	48.07	67	14.38	1	0.21	--	0.00
Professional Competencies	227	48.71	157	33.69	81	17.38	1	0.21	--	0.00
Professional Attitude	227	48.71	163	34.98	75	16.09	1	0.21	--	0.00
Professional Ethics	254	54.51	162	34.76	50	10.73	--	0.00	--	0.00
On execution of assigned job with minimum supervision.	136	29.18	247	53.00	83	17.81	---	0.00	---	0.00
Stress Management Skill	192	41.20	241	51.72	32	6.87	1	0.21	---	0.00

As observed in Table 3, the trend of respondents regarding training need is towards ‘strongly agree’. Training need of respondents was strongly agreed in respect of Job Knowledge (37.34%), Accuracy of assigned work (38.63%), Level of Output (44.85%), Use of Computer & relevant software (32.62%), Professional Competencies (48.71%), Professional Attitudes (48.71%) and Professional Ethics (54.51%). So, it indicates that there is strong training need of non-teaching staff working in selected higher educational institutions to develop their competency in performance.

### 3.3 Testing of Hypothesis

Following Hypothesis were tested during the study by applying Chi-Square test:

**Table 4: Chi-Square test**

Hypothesis	Pearson Chi-Square Value	df	N of valid cases	Asymp. Sig (2—tailed)	Remarks
There is no association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training need on job knowledge	53.46	12	466	.000	Chi Square value is significant (less than 0.05). Null hypothesis is rejected.
There is no association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training need on accuracy in assigned Work	48.89	8	466	.000	Chi Square value is significant (less than 0.05). Null hypothesis is rejected.
There is no association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training needs on output level	22.99	8	466	.003	Chi Square value is significant (less than 0.05). Null hypothesis is rejected.
There is no association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training need on use of Computer and relevant Software.	81.61	12	466	.000	Chi Square value is significant (less than 0.05). Null hypothesis is rejected.
There is no association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training need on drafting knowledge.	59.43	12	466	.000	Chi Square value is significant (less than 0.05). Null hypothesis is

					rejected.
There is no association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training need on preservation of records & files.	29.47	12	466	.003	Chi Square value is significant (less than 0.05). Null hypothesis is rejected.
There is no association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their skill of professional competency.	56.37	12	466	.000	Chi Square value is significant (less than 0.05). Null hypothesis is rejected.
There is no association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training need on professional attitudes.	47.97	12	466	.000	Chi Square value is significant (less than 0.05). Null hypothesis is rejected.
There is no association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training need on professional Ethics.	98.61	8	466	.000	Chi Square value is significant (less than 0.05). Null hypothesis is rejected.
There is no association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training need on execution of assign job with minimum supervision.	56.60	8	466	.000	Chi Square value is significant (less than 0.05). Null hypothesis is rejected.
There is no association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training need on stress management Skill.	37.21	12	466	.000	Chi Square value is significant (less than 0.05). Null hypothesis is rejected.



Table 4 reveals that, all the Hypotheses selected were rejected as the Chi Square value obtained is significant. As such, it is concluded that there is an association between the respondents of different Higher Educational Institutions and their training needs in selected attributes.

## **CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:**

It was observed that the existing skill of non-teaching employees from selected higher educational institutions in all the selected parameters were 'somewhat satisfactory'. It implies that staff development for higher educational institution through appropriate training practices is necessary for enhancement of their skill. It was further observed that employees training need was felt in the areas of Job knowledge, Accuracy in performing the assigned job, Output level, use of Computer & relevant software, to build up Professional Competencies, Professional Attitudes & Professional Ethics. Association between the respondents from selected higher educational institution and their training needs in selected attributes was also observed.

Development of Human Resources is one of the most neglected aspects in majority of higher educational institutions. Most of the higher educational institutions selected for this study are not organizes any planned training programme frequently for up gradation of skills of their employees. Further, most of the employees have not undergone any training/refresher course since their joining. It is important that institutions must play vital role in the grooming of their staff to perform their assigned activities in efficient way to maintain competitiveness. Further, the training imparted to the employees must provide knowledge and skill required to do the assigned task and it must be able to change their attitude towards their performance by maintaining professional ethics. Appropriate policies may also be formulated where employees of one institution may be trained in another institution in selected areas and it may be beneficial towards intellectual development and effective disposal of the official workings and will ultimately leads to the overall professional development.

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