

The Impact Of Outbound Training (OBT)

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Abstract: Outbound training is one of the most effective methods of enhancing individual and team behavior and performance through experiential learning. This is an off the job program which is usually conducted in the natural environment away from civilization. Outbound training relies on practical learning experiences that consisting of multiple outcomes. The research aimed to get a clear idea of the outcome of the outbound training program. A group of people who have completed outbound training from One of the Sri Lankan university is taken as the data sample. It has been identified as real-time experience about the constraints and targets to improve the efficiency of the participants with team-building capabilities. Leadership skills, time management skills, team working and following right instructions on time are achieved factors of the outcomes with a successful training program.

Index Terms: Outbound training, physical exercise, self confidence. skills, team work

1. INTRODUCTION

The wonderful concept of Out Bound Training (OBT) primarily initiated and implemented by Dr. Kurt Hahn, who born as a Jewish with an industrialist family background in Germany. He claimed that the development of the character is important in the same way as academic achievements. During World War II, this was practically initiated and applied to reality with Sir Lawrence Holt to teach the young British sailors the vital survival skills during World War II [1]. It has been found that outbound programs are particularly effective in areas that involve interpersonal relationships, trust, and bonding, interpersonal communication of shared vision and goals, motivation, behavior modification in response to change, and personal effectiveness. The most suited locations for OBT programs are remote from humans with wildlife surroundings to avoid human disturbances. It has been found that with the remote wildlife environment, people are found to become more introspective and uninhibited, paving the way for a complete and an effective learning process. The core responsibility of any organization depends on leadership training and team building. People around the globe have diverse skills and personalities which contribute to improper implementation, conflict, and competition leading to the team falling apart. It has been identified that leadership and team working should be sharpened to ensure synergy to perform smooth functioning. The basic elements of the aims of OBT has been commonly identified as:

- Building common vision, values and team spirit among the participants.
- Accelerate mutual communication, developing team strategies for getting results and achieving targets, building trust.
- Increasing collaboration & commitment to make successful ending.
- Personal development dedicating to modesty, effectiveness, innovation, adapting & managing change.
- Enhancing creativity, problem solving skills, and performing in complex situations.
- Maintaining work-life balance with quality outcome.

It has been reported that the effects of adventure programs, specifically Outward Bound, and concluded that Outward Bound programs can have a positive effect on participants' self-esteem, leadership, personality and interpersonal relationship [2]. Based on the previous studies, Georgi (1978) has been identified that the outbound training method generally rotate around activities, which are designed to improve leadership, communication skills, planning, change management, delegation, teamwork, and motivation and those activities have a positive impact to change participants' behavior [3]. According to Huie (1983), there is a positive relationship between the behavior of the participants and the effectiveness of the outbound training programs [4]. It has been recorded that outbound training programs as a unique educational experience that is directly affected by changing participants' behavior [5]. Wagner and Campbell (1994) have been identified that outbound training programs relate to participants' behavior in terms of their level of trust in their peers, their capability of problem-solving and the level of interpersonal communications between group members [6]. Chapman (1983) has been reported that stressed that physically and psychologically demanding tasks and environment support for more learning background opportunities. It has been further reported that OBT programs should consist of more and more new tasks to be fulfilled [7]. Several places are conducting OBT programs In Sri Lanka. However, the real impact of the OBT and the quality of the program has never been evaluated by the external party. This research has focused on the outbound training experiences, the events and the positive and negative impacts of the outbound training. It has been selected 40 participants from the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, Certificate in Teaching in Higher Education (CTHE) program. The advantages and disadvantages of the training, positive and negative impacts, attributes of the development program, key aspects of the events has been discussed with the given questionnaires.

2 METHODOLOGY

Effective learning program entails the possession of four different abilities which can be listed as: concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. People has been possessed and developed different learning styles based on their combination of four abilities. We make sure that the outbound learning cycle is complete by taking the participants through this experimental learning cycle which is defined as the Kolb's learning cycle (David Kolb has been published his learning styles model in 1984 from). Kolb's learning cycle is presented in Fig. 1.

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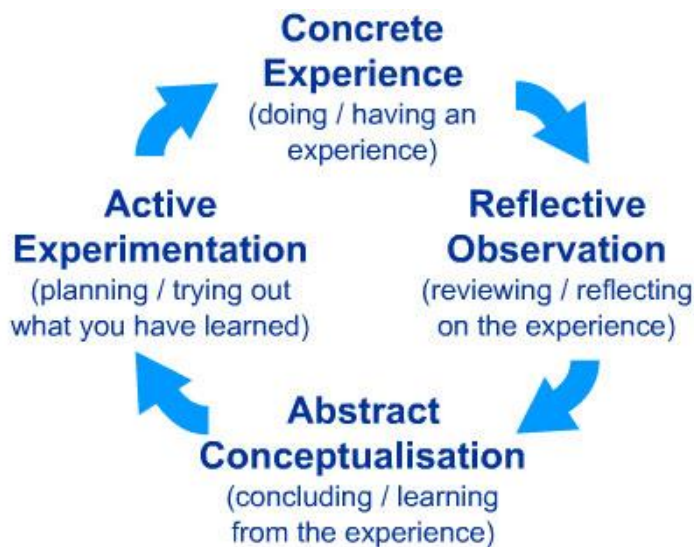


Fig. 1. Kolb's Learning cycle [8].

1. Concrete Experience - a new experience or situation is encountered, or a reinterpretation of existing experience.
2. Reflective Observation of the New Experience - of particular importance are any inconsistencies between experience and understanding.
3. Abstract Conceptualization reflection gives rise to a new idea, or a modification of an existing abstract concept (the person has learned from their experience).
4. Active Experimentation - the learner applies their idea(s) to the world around them to see what happens.

In the outbound training normally participants are divided into teams and give them certain tasks to perform within a specified time frame. Success, achievement, performance, team working abilities and behaviors of the team are observed and discussed at the discussion which is called debriefing to identify behaviors that are contributed towards enhance the result and lead towards the failures and compared these to the working or educational environment. The overall action plan is given in Table 1 with key aspects of the events during the OBT program. The organizers have been developed the program to give maximum outcomes for the participants. Even though, the objective of some events looks similar, it support for the participants to select which events are flexible for them based on their interest.

3 DISCUSSION

There are around 40 members who have been participated in OBT program are selected to gather data. A questionnaire was given to get their ideas of the OBT program which is conducted by the University of Sri Jayewardenepura, CTHE course. The main idea of the collection of the data is to identify the most dominating qualities or parameters achieved after following OBT program. The idea is to qualitatively analyze the progress of the OBT program. The collected results are tabulated to get a clear idea of the program output. The questionnaire consisted of several important factors that originally planned to be with the OBT program outcome. Fig. 2 is presenting the comparative study of the factor analysis of the given questionnaire. It can be clearly seen that "Team working" is the most dominant factor among considered factors of the research. Many of the participants have been an informed team working as the best quality they achieved of the OBT program. Trust, communication skills, and time management have gained equal importance to the training program. According to the research, quality work identified as the least affected factor of the program. However, for this analysis, only 60% of the participant of the CTHE program is selected. The qualities which has changed due to outbound training experience has been compared before and after taking training program. It has shown in Fig. 3. OBT has taught so much more than everyone was expected before the training started. It opened eyes of everyone remembering that we are human being, we are worthy of respect, and that everyone has a voice which can be heard. Team working abilities, trust and communication skills are the most influencing factors of the OBT program. The variation of those three factors before and after the training program are highly countable. The outbound training program can be concluded as highly influencing outdoor activities to enhance individual and team performance. It has clearly shown in Fig. 3, that communication skills and trust-building are the most dominating factors of the OBT program. The way of communication with others is a primary way that anyone can build trust. With the help of outdoor activities and team activities, it improves communication among team members and achieving goals within the given time frame. Both factors have improved by around 80% after the OBT program.

Table 1. Out bound training activities and key aspects

	Activity	Objective
Day 1	Following Instructions	Following right instructions carefully
	Visualization and Hearing	Listen carefully and follow the instructions
	Ready to fall	Trust and confidence
	Lion-Lady-Hunter	Team work and planning
Day 2	Fallen from higher position	Trust and Courage
	Morning Exercises	Physical Fitness
	Human Trolley	Team work and communication
	Magic Turtle	Planning
	Identifying numbers-Key Punch	Following right instructions and quality work
	Lava Crossing	Team work and creativity
	Kayak Relay	Team work and leadership
	Wall Climbing Challenge	Self confidence
Human Knot	Team work and Planning	
Bon Fire	Entertainment	

Day 3	Morning walk	Physical Fitness
	Three Islands and rescue mission	Planning and achieving goals
	Blind Walk through the Jungle	Trust, leadership, communication and planning
	Zip Line	Self Confidence, Courage and Commitment

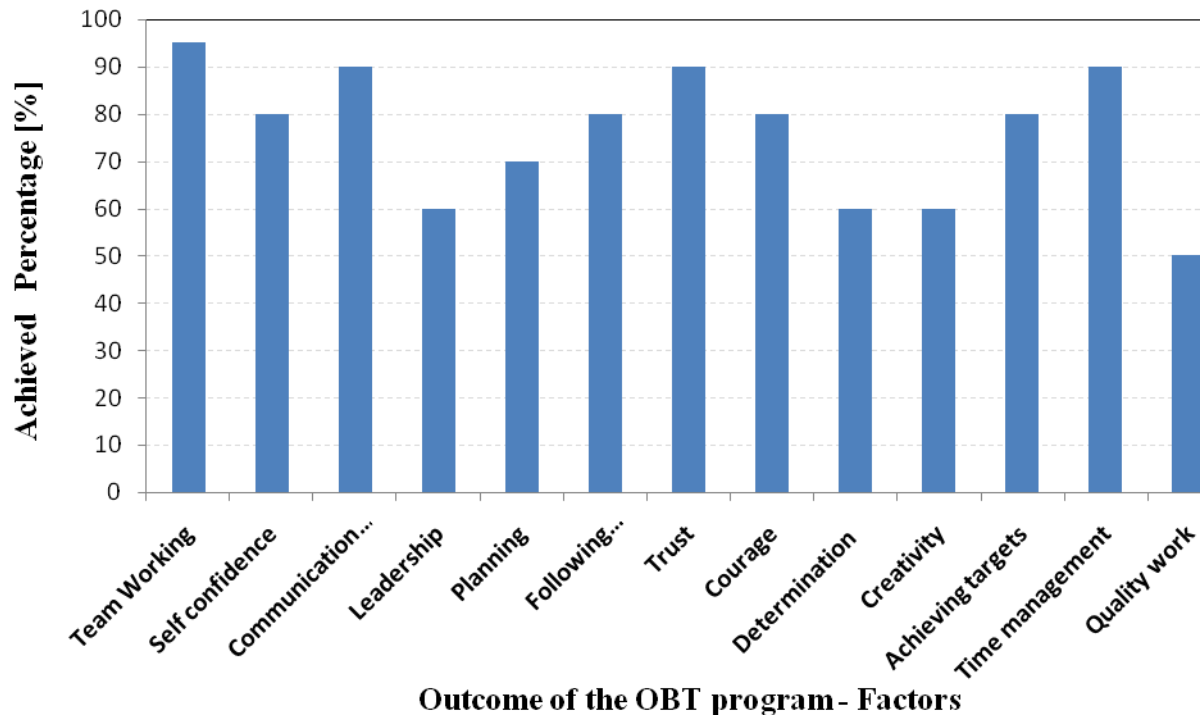


Fig. 2. OBT program outcome

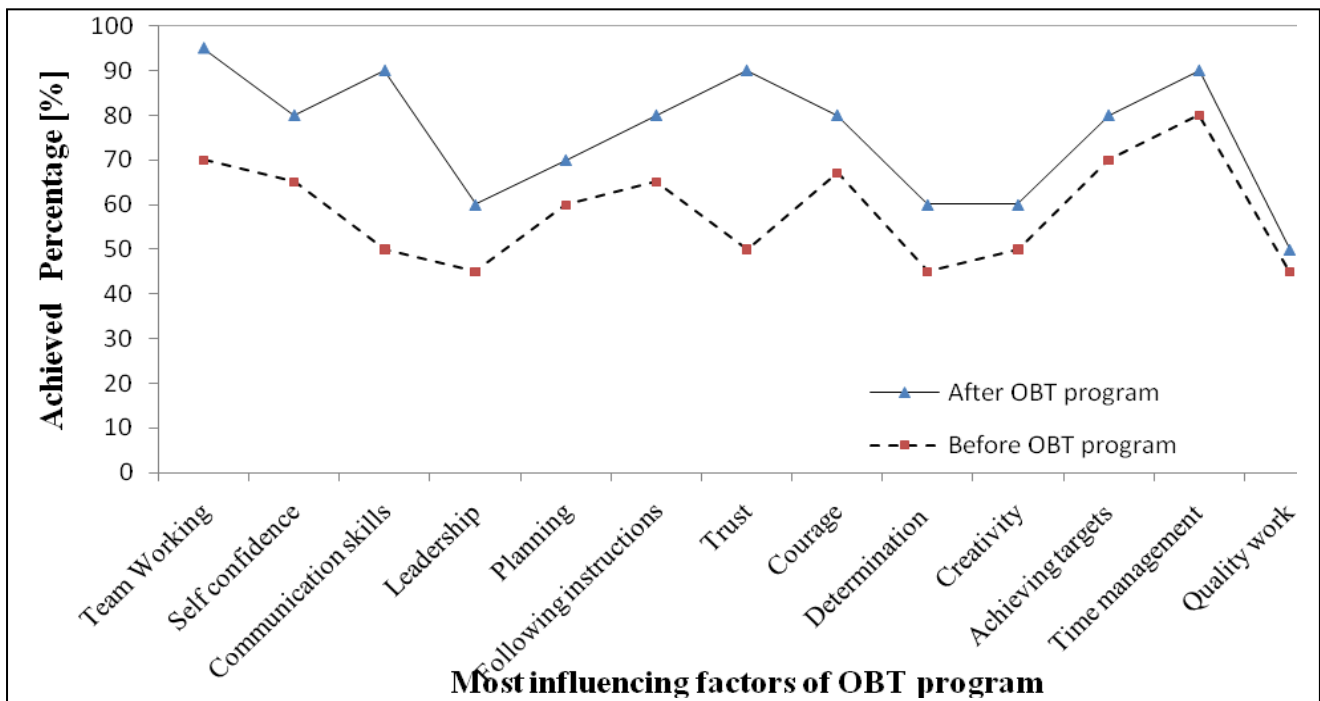


Fig. 3. Most influencing factors of the OBT program-Before and After the training program

4 CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that OBT as a potential tool for shaping & grooming the personality of the participants. It has the capability to improve the personal attitude towards I can to We can. It consists of several important points namely a few of them, group discussions, team building, time management, achieving targets with high quality, trust, and courage. This can be applicable to any organization, institute or to the students of the university. There are multiple outcomes that can be directly extracted from the real-time training program. The Kolb's four different learning cycle can be practically applied for the OBT program. The four stages of the cycle, concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation are developed and implemented through the program. The most identified factor can be defined as building in self-confidence and team bonding in individuals as an outcome of the OBT program. It can be concluded that the participants in a well-organized outbound the program always finds memorable experiences and the significant benefits which are long-lasting.

5 REFERENCES

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