

An Analysis of Global Training and Experience Sharing in Multinational Companies

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Global training programs are the training programs which are provided globally to the employees of a multinational company for the purpose of developing the employees' skills, and find the appropriate leader from a pool of talent. Unilever an Anglo–Dutch multinational consumer goods company with a mission to help people feel good, look good and get more out of life with brands and services arrange global training for those employees who have the most potential and leadership quality for the company. Through this study the researcher has tried to identify the perspective of global training program of Unilever i.e. importance, cost benefit and worthiness. The methods used to collect data are personal interview, postal service, and telephone interview. It has found that Unilever wants to share all its best practises, ideas and all other skills with all the members of the company across the world. These training programs help the employees to have specialised knowledge of a subject. By taking these training, the employees meet new people from different countries, know about different culture and they learn to adjust with people. This also helps them to do business successfully anywhere in the world. But the flip side of this training program is that the process is very expensive and time consuming. Most of the time the employees decide to leave the job after they come back from the training program. In spite of having some negative opinions most of the managers, management trainees and the HR managers believe that global training programs are very important and worth doing.

Keywords: Unilever, multinational, training, global training

Introduction

In today's world, most of the big, successful companies are going international; companies are challenged to expand globally. For successful competition in the global market firms are focusing on the role of human resources as an important source of their core competency and competitive advantage (Dowling, Welch and Schuler, 1999). As the human capital i.e. knowledge, skill, ability of people cannot be copied by its competitors so it is the best practice for the organization to use their human resources as a source of sustained competitive advantage. Training is the process through which a company can upgrade the knowledge, skill and abilities of its employees. Global training programs are the training programs which are provided globally to the employees of a multinational company. These global training programs are mainly used to introduce a global common concept for every branch of a multinational company in different countries. The main purpose of these global training programs is to develop the employees' skills, and find the appropriate leader from a pool of talent. To sustain in the global market firm needs smart, qualified and competent manpower and through training firm can

ensure this human qualities. In multinational companies, the employees need to be trained and smart enough to work anywhere in the world. By providing training, companies prepare their employees to be perfectly suitable for the job. Properly developed training programs can have a dramatic, lasting and huge impact on a business. These effects can show great return on investment as employees increase current skills and develop new ones (Noe, 2005; 2008). This development is a major factor in the retention of good workers.

About Unilever

Unilever is an Anglo–Dutch multinational consumer goods company with a mission to help people feel good, look good and get more out of life with brands and services that are good for them and good for others (Unilever, 2013a). In the 1890's, William Hesketh Lever, founder of Lever Bros, started the idea of Unilever (Unilever, 2013b). Its products include Home and Personal Care (HPC) Products, Food Products, Professional Cleaning, Plant Science and Trading Operations and also the company has oil milling operations (corporatetwatch, 2013). Unilever's current largest-selling brands include: Aviance; Axe/Lynx; Ben and Jerry's; Dove; Flora/Becel; Heartbrand; Hellmann's; Knorr; Lipton; Lux/Radox; Omo/Surf;

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Rexona/Sure; Wish-Bone; Sunsilk; Toni and Guy; TRESemmé; and VO5 (Unilever, 2013c).

Unilever's success has been influenced by many different events, these major events are the economic boom, depression, the world wars, the change in consumer lifestyles, and advances in technology (Unilever, 2013d). Over the years, Unilever has launched and participated in an ever-growing range of initiatives to source sustainable supplies to protect environments, raw materials, support local communities and much more (StudyMode, 2013). Today, everyone all over the world look for Unilever's products, trust their product to be of the highest and best quality. In fact, people look for Unilever's products around 150 million times a day (Unilever, 2013e). Unilever always goes for the best quality product; respect the value of their employees, customers and the environment around them. Every year, Unilever becomes successful in reaching their targets. The employees work extra hours to fulfil the demand of their customers, and in order to make their employees responsible and hard-working, Unilever sends them for global training. As a matter of fact employees' competency upgraded and they meet international standard to serve customers. Though this global training is beneficial for employees and the company but the company has to face a lot of challenge to do so.

Through this study the researcher will try to identify the strategies Unilever uses in case of global training, benefits, problems and worth of the training program.

Literature review

Training serves to help increase upward mobility within the organization, to adjust workers to the technological changes affecting the workplace, and often simply to introduce people to the world of work at the entry level (Deutsch, 1979). Blanchard and Thacker (2005 and 2007) pointed that a chronological process that provides an opportunity to learn knowledge, skill and attitudes for current and future jobs is training. Training is very important for every employee who wants to go to the higher level in the business world. On this topic, many researchers worked very hard and gave their honest opinion. According to Frank & Marge Rison (1978), as trainers we are moving towards providing training interventions which place emphasis on solving organizational problems as well as on developing individual skills. Armstrong (2001) argued, training is necessary to develop the employees and improve their performance, to help people grow within the company so that the employees can fulfill the needs of the HR in the company, to reduce learning time for employees, and to reduce time and make more opportunity for jobs and promotions.

Global training programs are the training programs which the company provides to their employees to develop the skills to understand global opportunities. In the multinational companies' global training or employee development programs are very important. Many opportunities and the challenges of the global world need to be handled by the expatriate employees of the global companies. The expatriates need to know about the culture, legal, economic issues, labor market, and language of a country to do business globally. Noe (2005, 2008) pointed, expatriates' cross cultural assignment involves predeparture phase, on-site-phase and repatriation phase. He has also mentioned that predeparture phase involves language training, orientation in the new country's culture and custom. It is also necessary to include the family member in the orientation. On-site-phase phase is the continuation of orientation to the host country, new culture and customs through a formal program. Repatriation is actually the preparation for expatriate return to the parent company. This is really a stress for the expatriate and his family because of the changes that has occurred during this time, they have to readjust this.

The importance of the expatriate should not be overlooked, since they are an important part of the multinational company in achieving the goals and targets in the international market. Expatriates are also used to identify a subset of expatriates, who are citizens of a foreign country working in the home country of their global companies' employer (Hill, 2007; Harvey & Fung, 2000). These expatriates are sent to a foreign country to control their operations and to provide technical and administrative services. As the international assignment appear as an important way of training international operators, developing the international team as well as helping to build personal networks to support soft control mechanisms (Dowling, Welch and Schuler, 1999).

Training is essential for every aspect of an organization. In an organization, there are different sectors in which employees need training to develop their performance, and need to work harder to satisfy their employers, customers and other colleagues. Customer service, employee autonomy and collective problem solving, employee development, culture, change, organization development, health and safety, interpersonal good relations between the employees; all these aspects can be handled satisfactorily by training and development programs. Different companies do different things to train their employees.

Novartis is one of the examples of multinational company which uses a global training program to work in the international market successfully. The main purpose of this company to use global training programs is to create good communication and cooperation within the team members (Global

Integration, 2013a). The training programs developed for Novartis focused on remote and virtual team building, cultural diversity, matrix organizations, global structure in large organizations, and global talent members (Global Integration, 2013a). On the other hand, SAP one of the world's largest inter-enterprise software companies is also using the same strategy i.e. team collaboration and synergy for the company's success (Global Integration, 2013b). Because of the diverse workforce, the company faced problem in language and also lack of technological knowledge outside own geography (Global Integration, 2013b). So the company arranged a workshop for them with a series of global projects where their team with the member of 50 people all from different countries, who had never spoken to each other before, met and take an idea of the strategy, team building and define their team goals (Global Integration, 2013b). Their main focus was to build the confidence of the leader, and to be able to build an effective community with their own team members (Global Integration, 2013b). Multinational companies need to develop more flexible and smooth workforce, so that they can cope with the continuous change of the market. To respond to the customers need and satisfaction, a company needs to have flexible and skilled employees who can move around from global market to market, country to country. For an example, companies like, ABB McKinsey and Accenture, PricewaterhouseCoopers (PwC) use the same strategy to get the most result from the diverse workforce.

Methodology

This study has used both primary and secondary source to collect data. The methods used to collect primary data are personal interview, postal service, and telephone interview. The main reason for doing personal interviews to collect primary data is because all the questions that were decided to ask require detailed answers. Beside face to face interviews, interview on the telephone, and interview by e-mail was taken. Postal service is used because this study is about global training program of Unilever, so taking personal interviews of the managers of different countries of Unilever would have been impractical and time consuming. The last method is the telephone interview. This method is used because some of the managers of Unilever preferred to do their interviews over the phone, and because of the distance and their work pressure, they did not have enough time to write answers and post them.

This study collected secondary data from Unilever's training handout, Unilever graduate leadership program, internet and Unilever fact sheet. These papers are collected from the HR manager of Unilever during the personal interview to collect primary data. These handouts, fact sheets

and graduate book gave all the details about global training programs of company; how they do them, why they do them, what strategies they use, and so on.

Sampling

The study has used purposive sampling method to identify the people who are the most typical in the group for the interview. In this study all the managers of HR department and other managers and trainees who have connections with the global training programs, are interviewed. This is because they can give more details, personal experiences and all the positive and negative sides of these global training programs.

The information was collected from December 2008 to March 2009. The questions which was asked was: Why is Unilever spending so much money to train their employees globally? Why don't they just hire some new employees from the local area so that they do not have to send someone overseas to train? Why are global training programs so important? What are the main benefits Unilever is getting from these training programs? How much are they spending to train their employees? When the employees go back to their home country, what facilities and problems does the company face? What type of training is given to the trainees?

Discussion of Global Training of Unilever

Unilever a successful multinational company always believe that their hard working and knowledgeable employees need to be trained and developed. So every year they send their employees to different countries to train them in a global manner.

Unilever's training program focuses on two broad areas; some are aimed to upgrade the skill of an individual which is more of a functional training, whilst others are aimed to elevate the leadership quality of an individual, which is more of a behavioral training (Unilever, Handouts of training). Training programs of Unilever also depends on the PDP of an individual which is jointly reviewed by an individual and his or her line manager. Also, multi-source feedback from the individual's peer group provides important information on which areas the person needs development. Training is of various types i.e. functional training (functional skill development), general skill development like safety training (Du-pont designed), negotiation skills development, and people management. Training is aimed to develop elementary to superior leadership (Source: Unilever, Handouts of training). However, while skill up-gradation is quite a common requirement, leadership development is not a unilateral requirement, and depends on long term requirement (succession planning), individual's reciprocity, performance and potential. Based on

these, the development plans are prepared for every individual, which are not always based on overseas training. These could also be through coaching & mentoring, interactive study, on the job training, in house/local training etc (Unilever Hand book, n.d).

There are mainly three type of training program which Unilever follows to train their employees: they are on the job training, off the job training and e-learning. These are mainly designed for employees for different levels. On the job training programs are for the employees who are at entry level in the company. They are called general skill. General skill training is taken by the external vendors most of the time. It's more about industry knowledge. The trainees are taught about the business and the industry. That is why, it is called general skill (Unilever Handout). Off the job training programs are for the mid-level and upper-level employees. These types of training programs are called functional skill. Most of the time, these training programs are held both locally and regionally. These training programs are mainly for professional skills. For the upper-level employees, they do more conference, workshops etc. The cost of these training programs is very high and they are regional trainings (Unilever Handout). Unilever already introduced E-learning for their employees as a part of global training. Because of all the new issues and the economic crisis, Unilever is also trying to cut its extra expenses. The HR department of Unilever decided to train some of their employees by using WebEx and only the very deserving employees, who have talents and future leadership quality, will go for global training. It will cut the extra costs and save a lot of time. This process is time consuming, cheap and easy to learn (Unilever Handout).

Global training programs of Unilever are not cheap. Unilever spends a lot of money every year to develop its employees. It sends its employees to different countries to make sure that Unilever works as a team no matter where they are based. Unilever works globally; it sends its employees to different countries to train them, and develop them in the global sector. Some of these training programs are for 6 months or perhaps even longer. These training programs cost a lot of money to Unilever. They are sending approximately 35 to 40 managers annually every year to different countries for global training programs. This number changes depending on the country, their budget and the number of eligible candidates. According to Shahbuddin Ahmed, The Human Resource Manager of Bangladesh, they sent 20 managers in the year 2008 for global training. The budget of these training programs is \$3000 per head; depending on the country they are spending approximately \$2000 to \$3000 per head on their employees as per Ms. Tanvira Choudhury, Global HR manager of Unilever UK. The budget in 2008

of Unilever Bangladesh was 18 million taka, but they spent almost 21 million taka. This shows that they spend a lot of money to train their employees in the global sector, and sometimes they cross their budget to train their employees in this way. This illustrates the importance of these training programs for Unilever.

These training programs are not only for the high level managers. Unilever sends its management trainees in these global training programs as well. Unilever UK has its own 4 Acres site for training its employees. Not only that, Unilever sends its employees to train them in institutes like Harvard, IIM, INSEAD etc. Only the very deserving employees get the chance to go for their training and developing programs.

Data Analysis and Findings

Based on the collected data the study has identified the following issues

Why global training

The global training program is very important for Unilever. Unilever works as a whole. Every year, they send their employees to different countries to train them and develop them. Unilever wants to share all the best practices, ideas and processes to adapt to every country. This is not possible without sending employees to different countries to learn them and adopt them. The global training programs are useful for getting expensive trainers at one location for benefiting maximum number of employees from a wide range of countries.

According to C.S. Pervez, C&F manager, Unilever Pakistan, *"To improve specific skill and competencies need as identified in PDP process, to make familiar with new changes/process driven by Unilever globally, to make conversant with better working experiences and to improve orientation on business, global training programs are very important for a multinational company like Unilever."*

Global training programs are done for people who have the most potential in the company. People feel more recognized if they can attend a global training program. On the other hand, as it is away from local context, people can concentrate more on their work and training program. These training programs are not easy to manage and create as these are time consuming and costly. So these types of training programs are now significantly reduced. Only high profile and high potential managers are sent to these global training programs. That is why Unilever is also finding different ways to develop and train its employees in the global sector.

As said by Delwar Hossain, Finance Director, Unilever Iran, *"Many of these training programs*

now a day are done though WebEx to reduce cost. So people really do not need to travel, rather they gather virtually to discuss debate and understand new business processes or thoughts. It saves travel cost as well as people's time."

For every company, training is a continuous process and the money spent for training is ultimately an investment. Considering the current economic condition of the world it can be said that companies are cutting their costs and other expenses rapidly in order to avoid loss and bankruptcy. Unilever is also dealing with this economic crisis but still the company is sending its employees to global training programs which are very expensive and time consuming.

As stated by Monica Lahir, HRM manager, Unilever Singapore, *"Unilever places utmost importance for training and that's why it keeps spending money for training. However, during economic crisis or difficult times some training may get deferred / postponed."*

Unilever is dealing with this economic crisis very strongly. They are not letting this effect their working policies and attitude much. They are very positive about every situation.

According to Nick Wilson, Supply Chain Manager, Unilever India, *"It is true that the whole world is going through an economic recession. However this is a recent outcome as against Unilever's long term plan of its people development. In Unilever, people development is an integral part of the business and related goal/plan is set with a long term view of leadership development and hence is not short term project. Also, even in normal scenario, cost is one element which always creates pressure on business and it is the strength of a business, through its internal strategic programs, which enables it to withstand such pressure on a sustainable basis. In Unilever, irrespective of economic crisis or abnormal commodity price we internally run a program, every year and year on year, to contain cost by identifying and eliminating business wastes and inefficiencies and thus creating more value to the business."*

Developing countries like Bangladesh are still not that affected by the credit crunch. Rather they are enjoying the sudden double-digit growth. Even Unilever in the global context is in a healthy state. Although the development of employees completely depends on the budget of the HR department, it varies from country to country. Since both country and company are doing well, then there is no material change needed in company policy in sending managers for overseas training. However, to cut the cost and time, Unilever is now doing more E-Training.

Why spending so much for global training

Like many other companies, Unilever could just

hire local employees rather than sending managers globally to train them. It would cut a lot of their costs. As mentioned earlier that cost is the main issue of global training programs. The managers of Unilever, however, believe that the quality and value of deliveries from trained employees far outweigh the costs for training. Also in some areas, the availability of trained employees is very poor. So to train the local employees, they send trained, high profile managers from one country to another.

As said by Tanvira Choudhury, Global HR Manager, Unilever UK, *"We fresh recruit from market would be able to deliver as per desire/expectation if they are not properly oriented or trained in accordance with Unilever need. A fresher cannot be substituted of globally trained managers."*

These global training programs are mainly for recognition and best performance of the managers. Not only that, the cross cultural and cross functional experience sharing and best performance sharing is with all the other managers of Unilever across the world. Unilever brings more international courses for training their managers, for which, these global programs are necessary. Not only the high profile managers, Unilever also provides global training programs to their management trainees.

According to Andy Anderson, buying manager, Unilever Australia, *"As far as management trainees are concerned they are inducted into the system, after a meticulous and rigorous screening, as potential business leaders for future and Unilever never views them as non-permanent employees rather they are always viewed as the future leaders who will be instrumental in transforming and leading the business in future and hence their career plan and skill development is chalked out very carefully and with utmost care so that they can flourish rapidly and can contribute to the business timely and effectively."*

Unilever operates over 80 countries of the world. Unilever hires new employees for all levels; entry, mid and top levels, and the business is mainly managed by local resources and believes that management trainees are the future leaders of the business. They are normally in the fast career track. Developing these management trainees is an investment for the company.

As stated by Lutfur Rahman, Unilever Pakistan, *"Management trainees are permanent employees of the organization. It's true that they can have some training while in probation. That is a calculative risk the business takes. For an example, knowing the fact that few of them may leave. However, the management trainees' turnover ratio is not that high to stop training for the management trainees."*

Like all other successful companies, Unilever also treats its employees as an asset. They believe that developing their employees mean developing their business. That is why they do not hire local

people only; they also send their employees to different countries to develop themselves and develop the company.

Consistent with Manoj Kumar, Unilever India, *“People are our one of the key resources and training are planned for our people as a part of people development, leadership development who will be the integral part of the business. It is seen as an investment for shaping the future leadership. Hiring people from outside does give a solution to sustainability and it does not ensure the continuity in leadership, though it may/may serve short term objective. So, it is not a sustainable business model as far as Human Resource Management is concerned.”*

Benefits of global training

Global training programs are very beneficial for both the employees and the company. Unilever spends a lot of money for all these benefits which is very important for the success of the company. To improve the leadership skill of managers, global training is necessary. Unilever is a successful multinational company because of its skilled and trained managers. By these global programs, both the company and trainees are benefiting.

According to Shamoel Choudhury, Management trainee, Unilever Bangladesh, *“The benefit is twofold. For an example, individual’s development aligned with long term company vision. Through these trainings, employees become externally oriented, their leadership develops and meaningful skill up-gradation happens. The morale of the employees goes up.”* Shamoel is a management trainee in Unilever Bangladesh and she is of the opinion that these global training programs are a big opportunity for them to develop their career and make them able to go far in their career. Unilever thus sends their managers and also their management trainees for global training programs every year.

A management trainee from Bangladesh, Tanvir Zamil, who is now in a six month training program in UK, says, *“global training programs helps to gain specialized knowledge/information from the relevant experts, this also helps the participants to meet the people in other Unilever operation. This helps in future problem solving/best practice sharing.”*

By doing these training programs, employees are seeing and understanding the new trends in business. They are not doing what they think is right in isolation; they are rather doing what Unilever as a whole is driving. These training programs are helping to encourage a motivated workforce. They get better performances from their employees after the training provided, which is a big benefit for Unilever; not only for the company, but also for the employees. These employees meet new people, interact, integrate, and share their experiences with them. This in turn helps them to

learn about a different culture, contrasting values, attitudes, and lifestyles. This is a big opportunity for them to understand the global context of the company business, which is very valuable. So in the future, if they want to work somewhere else, in a different country perhaps, it becomes easier for them to adopt the changes. These global training programs help them to have much better career progression.

According to Tanvira Choudhury, Global HR manager, Unilever UK, *“such training improves the skill and competencies of individual managers. Generally, training program is designed from specific need of the managers. Unilever historically has very robust “Personal Development program-PDP” which identifies specific training need for the managers. In order to bridge the gaps, subsequently individual “Development Action Plan- DAP” is prepared for individual managers. Unilever DAP and PDP process worked as corner stone for developing training program for the managers.”*

Such training program helps to improve weak areas of the managers. In addition, those well trained managers can contribute better in growth of the company. As the above strong processes address both training need of the managers, finally it benefited both the managers and company. Globally trained managers are the talent who can take charge of the baton for the next lap and who can also prepare the next level, beyond their tenure. Also skill development trainings have been very fruitful for proper functioning and up-gradation of work environment.

Problems of global training programs

Every part of every business has two sides; positives and negatives. The global training program also has its issues. Unilever provides global training programs to develop its company and employee. These training programs some time create some problem or issues in the company. When the employees come back from global training or overseas training, they bring along some knowledge of best practices/processes and then they use them in their business. But it does not work like this all the time. A lot of the time the employees decide to leave the job after they come back from the training program.

As said by Mark Hill, brand manager, Unilever Sweden, *“the problem of global training is that these employees have a higher market value now and may decide to go for better opportunity.”*

Some of the global trainees complained that it was really difficult for them to adjust in the new environment. A lot of time the co-colleagues are not supporting and they are not friendly enough to make someone comfortable.

On the word of Anwarul Azim, Unilever South Africa, *“It took a lot of time for me to adjust here.”*

It's nearly like a year now but still I feel home sick and less motivated to work because of the cold behaviour of some employees of the office."

Not only the global trainees, the local employees also sometimes have issue with the foreign employees. Some local managers think that the foreign employees are taking their place and developing their career where the local manager could be in the same position. Most of the time, the foreign employees have problems with language, accent, attitude, and understanding of work, etc. This makes them not like them much. But on the other hand, some local managers are very helpful and supportive with the foreign managers. They help them to adopt the culture, change and handle them with patience. But most of the time, the global trainees get the positive support and help from the local managers of the country.

In the case of global training programs, managers on different levels and situations have different attitudes towards them. This is often for those managers who do not have the opportunity to go on such programs.

Consistent with Ruhul Quddus, Unilever Bangladesh, *"it may be de-motivating for those who did not get an opportunity for such training. In addition, considering cost overseas training need to be limited and can accommodate only selective managers. Hence, majority of the managers are deprived for international training. As far as employee is concerned, we don't foresee any negative impact."*

Another problem of these training programs is cost. Cost pressure can become a reason for the failure of a company. The high cost pressure is one of the negative sides. Not only that these training programs are time consuming. So the company cannot expect immediate positive change in the company. Employees do not get any tangible benefit just after performing the training. However, generally this training is aimed for the individual to prepare him for taking higher responsibilities in future, and if the individual truly reflects in line with that through his good performance, he eventually gets elevated. The problem, which sometimes happens, is the departure of an individual post training (not immediately, but at later stage). However, that is a common risk which is always there in every company and a good company will always have a back-up.

According to Ahsan Habib, Unilever, Saudi Arabia, *"In my opinion (truly personal), you may lose important asset/people, if upward elevation cannot be ensured for all competent individual timely. It is also true that it may not be possible to ensure opportunities for all individual at similar pace. So resource development should be always linked with career planning and long term company vision to avoid this type of risk, as much as practically possible."*

Is it worth doing

In this competitive business world, the global training program is leading a very important role to help a business get successful. Unilever a successful multinational company believes that their employees are their asset. So they never hesitate to spend money to develop their employees. As mentioned before, developing their managers mean developing the company as a whole. Both the managers and the company highly trust that these global training programs are worth doing.

According to Zakir Hossian, Unilever Bangladesh, *"global training programs are definitely worthwhile for both the managers and the company. I believe that, this kind of training programs make us more confident and strong."*

All the managers interviewed agreed that these global training programs are very helpful for them and are worth doing.

On the word of Tanvira Choudhury, Global HR Manager, Unilever UK, *"It is worth to mention that High Potential and High Performer individuals eventually come out as the true leader and likewise in Unilever, has produced quite a few true leaders who are the product of Unilever's well planned PDP and development plan programs. Not all of them are now with us but we are proud to be seen as one of very best institutions, in the country, who constantly produce highly effective leaders who get spread all over the world."*

These training programs are expensive and time consuming, but still the HR managers and all the other managers strongly believe to continue these training program.

According to Ahsan Sharif, HR Manager, Unilever Dubai, *"I truly think it is 1000% worth to do. Training is only a tool which helps an individual to perceive differently to perform more efficiently. However, success of training very much depends on the application i.e. once the learning is successfully performed. Not all the trainees come out as leaders or superior performer. It is the individual differences/ability that eventually makes the differences of Company's sensible effort to elevate individual's performance and skill."*

On the other hand, another manager did not seem to be very happy about the global training program.

As said by Rahnuma Sabur, Unilever Pakistan, *"Global training programs are very expensive and the outcome of these trainings is not always good. So Unilever should minimize these training programs and do more local trainings."* But the negative opinions about the global training programs are very few. Most of the managers, management trainees and the HR managers believe that global training programs are very important and worth doing.

As stated by Sumehra Mehek, Management Trainee, Unilever Bangladesh, *"Yes, all these*

training ultimately benefit's the person as well as the organization in developing local expertise as well as leaders."

Also, according to C. S. Pervez, C&F Manager, Unilever Pakistan, *"Yes it is worth to do. It is very much evident from the delivery of the business. Unilever is doing better and better in previous few years. It is evident from a number of indicators that the invest behind HR is paying off."*

After analyzing the above issues the study has found that global training programs are not cheap. Unilever spends a lot of money for their employees to develop and be flexible and prepare for any situation no matter where they are based. Every year, Unilever sends approximately 35 to 40 managers for global training across the world though the number depends on the country. They spend \$3000 to \$4000 per head to send a manager for this global training. A lot of time, they go over their budget to send their employees to these programs. For example, in 2008, Unilever Bangladesh spent 21 million taka, when their budget was 18 million taka. This proves that Unilever believes that the development of their employees is necessary. So they do all the possible things to make sure that they are working as a whole and satisfying their customers with their global services and best practices.

It is already mentioned that Unilever works as a whole. Unilever wants to share all its best practises, ideas and all other skills with all the members of the company across the world. Unilever selects the most high profile managers who have a very high potential to go far and become successful leaders; who have the ability to control their employees and take the company to the highest level of success.

Another thing is that global training programs are very beneficial for both the company and the employees. To develop the leadership skills of the managers of Unilever, these global training programs are very important. These training programs help the employees to have specialised knowledge of a subject. Also by taking these training, the employees meet new people from different countries. This helps them to know about a culture and they learn to adjust with people from different countries. This also helps them to do business successfully anywhere in the world. Global training programs are a mixture of networking, experience sharing, career development and knowledge of global business world.

Conclusion and Avenues for Further Research

Today in this competitive world, Unilever is considered as one of the biggest and most successful multinational companies in the world. This has possible because of its dynamic, talented and motivated workforce who met the international

standard to serve the customer. Unilever carry out global training programs every year to train and develop their employees. They believe that their employees are their asset. They never think twice to spend money to develop their employees, because they know that developing the employees means developing the company as a whole. The managers of Unilever trust that these types of global training programs make them strong and more confident. These training programs help to find the future leader of the company. Although some of the managers think that Unilever should minimize the amount of global training programs because they are very expensive and not worth doing, most of the managers of Unilever believe that these training programs are worth doing and they should continue doing it. It is very much clear from the data that global training programs are very important and worth doing.

This study is a light for the future researcher on which they can establish their the possibilities of further research are seemingly endless; there is much further research which can be conducted in order to broaden our knowledge on global training programs within Unilever as a multinational company. This further research would be ideally done after some time as passed by, in order to assess the situation in a valuable light. Other questions which could be followed up are; what do the employers and heads of departments at Unilever feel after this time has passed; do they still think to continue doing such global training programs in the future? What are the new strategies Unilever has adapted, and what are the outcomes of these global training programs of Unilever? Is it still as worth doing as it was before? How have attitudes and opinions within the company changed concerning these global training programs as time has progressed? Once the economic situation relaxes back to normal, will Unilever expand their costs for training once more? Do the pros of training employees globally still far outweigh the cons? Have global trainers been selected to train locals to save costs? Does doing so produce the same results for the company or does sending an employee abroad enhance and benefit the employee and the company far more than staying in the same country? Where are these global training programs most successful, and is there a reason for this distinction between locations? It has already been established that global training programs within the company are largely successful and appreciated, therefore further research on it would enhance this knowledge and would be worth conducting to analyse the value of global training as time goes on.

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