CHAPTER 4

RESEARCH RESULTS

4.1 Discussions of Phase 1 results

In Phase 1, 64 out of the 315 executives from the power stations administered by the TNB Generation responded with 304 problems. This only accounts for about 20.3% of the total population. The low responses from the executives was due to the nature of this survey which was open-ended and the time required to list up and describe the problems was very extensive. The number of problems projected by each of the 64 respondents ranged between 1 to 10 problems. A brief explanation on each problem was also provided by most respondents. A list which displays each respondent's grade and station together with the problems mentioned was then prepared. An identity number has been assigned to each respondent. The breakdown on the job grades of the 64 respondents is given in the following.

Grades	Number Of Respondents
JG 19	7
JG 20	1
JG 21	10
JG 22	12
JG 22/23	2

JG 23	14
JG 24	10
JG 24/25	1
JG 26	4
Grades not stated	3
Total number of respondents	64

The problems collected were then summarized and categorized by calculating the number of times they were mentioned by the respondents. Similar problems mentioned more than once by each respondent was counted as once. A list of the top twenty problems was then prepared and was used as the ranking list in Phase 2 of the study. It was observed that problems which were mentioned once and twice did not fall into the top twenty most important problems. The list of the top twenty most important problems is given in Table 1 in the following page.

4.2 Descriptions of the mentioned problems

From the Phase 1 of the study, a list of 20 most-mentioned problems was prepared and was used as the basis of the ranking form of Phase 2. A brief description of all the 20 problems as narrated by the respondents was attached with the ranking form. The descriptions of the top twenty most important problems of TNB Generation described by the respondents are given as follows:

1. Unsatisfactory Reward, Salary And Appraisal System

Many respondents felt that TNB Generation SBU did not give due consideration to reward and compensate adequately its power station staff. According to them, the staff should be compensated for their expertise and hard work. The salary was low as

Table 1: The Top Twenty Most Mentioned Problems From Phase 1

Problems Identified	No. Of Times Mentioned
1. Unsatisfactory Reward, Salary And Appraisal System	26
2. Poor Human Resource Management And Planning	23
3. Lack Of Empowerment Given To Stations	19
4. The Need For Training For All Staff	17
5. Slow And Long Process Of Procurement Of Spares And Services	16
6. Inefficient Flow Of Information And Lack Of Communication	16
7. Improper Selection Of Staff For Overseas Training	14
8. Lack Of Commitment Of Managers And Staff	11
9. Poor Implementation Of Strategies To Achieve Goals	11
10. Slow Decision Making Process By Management	10
11. Frequent Changing Of Station Manager	10
12. Too Many Restructuring Exercises And Right Sizing Causing Problems	10
13. Procurement Of Poor Quality Coals	8
14. Crossover of Competent Staff To Other Organizations e.g. IPPs	8
15. Lack Of Teamwork	6
16. The Need Of Managers With Good Leadership Qualities In HQ And Stations	6
17. Slow Promotion Of Executives	5
18. Lack Of Empathy Of Management In Solving Staff Problems	4
19. Direction Not Clear From Headquarters	4
20. Unavailability Of Managers And Executives Due To CMBA/EMBA Program	3

compared to some other companies. As a result the staff became less motivated. This kind of staff would fetch a higher salary in other organizations such as IPPs. No effort by TNB Generation was seen to sustain local expertise gained through a lot of investment. Better remuneration and career path were vital. Reward and incentives given to shift workers and those who hold competency certificates should be reviewed. The present appraisal system has led to a very subjective and personal evaluation. Many felt that the reward system should be revamped to suit changing industry or organization climate.

2. Poor Human Resource Management And Planning

Many respondents wrote that the slow filling up of complemented vacant posts has caused a lot of problems in their workplace. Replacement of retired or transferred staff normally arrived quite late. As an end result, high overtime payment incurred. If the financial matter was not a problem, it was pity to look at the staff who have to work long hours almost everyday. Constant restructuring on paper posed fear among staff. There was no plan on what to do with excess staff after the right sizing exercise. Plan should be made before hand to avoid the feeling of dissatisfaction among excess staff. The communication between Corporate Human Resource Management and Generation Division Human Resource Department seemed to be lacking.

3. Lack Of Empowerment Given To Stations

Many respondents were concerned with the lack of authority given to stations which tends to delay the process of purchasing, filling up of vacant posts and other decision making. There was little empowerment given to stations in areas of procurement of spares and services and fuel, and also in human resource management. Such areas

should be decentralized . Stations have became very much dependent on HQ on every aspect.

4. The Need For Training For All Staff

Many respondents felt the training given to staff was not adequate. Training should be given to all staff to improve their skill and level of competency.

5. Slow And Long Process Of Procurement Of Spares And Services

Many respondents felt that the process of procuring spares and services was slow due to long decision making and approval at the Headquarters levels. There were too many red tapes in the process of getting spares and awarding tenders and contracts. The slowness of the process has often resulted to delay in the completion of important works. The level of authority on purchasing given to Station Managers was low. Station Manager should be given increased authority accompanied by accountability to decide on matters related to procurement of spares and services.

6. Inefficient Flow Of Information And Lack Of Communication

Many respondents felt that TNB Generation SBU was lacking on communications. Staff were not being brief on plans and changes that were going to be made. Such failures have resulted to staff receiving unclear and confusing information. The management should ensure that all staff clearly knew and understood the division's mission, vision, objectives and goals, and also the policies and the implementation strategies adopted to improve the SBU. Such practices would ensure our success in achieving our TNB Generation's long term objectives. According to them, the time taken in the flow of information to the staff was long.

7. Improper Selection Of Staff For Overseas Training

Many respondents voiced their frustration on the way staff were being selected for overseas training. It was quite common in Power Stations, staff related to the training were not sent. Instead the training was given to unrelated personnel not maintaining or operating the related plant, either from HQ or from the same or other power station. In the end, staff who were not sent for the overseas training would be maintaining or operating the plant. In other cases staff sent for specialized training were posted to other sections not related to such training.

9. Lack Of Commitment Of Managers And Staff

Some respondents observed that since LLN was privatized as TNB, the attitude of our staff in Generation Division including power stations from top to bottom has not changed at all. There was a lack of commitment of staff (managers and other employees) in the whole of TNB Generation SBU including power stations in striving to achieve our SBU's goals and objectives.

10. Slow Decision Making Process By Management

Many felt that decisions by management were slow in coming even after many meetings. The decision making process involved a lot of bureaucratic steps and a lot of time would have to be spent before a final decision was made.

11. Frequent Changing Of Station Manager

Many respondents felt that frequent changes of key personnel such as Station Manager have caused frequent changes of ideas and policies. This did not reflect a good management decision in order to ensure continuity in the sense of responsibility, commitment and accountability for the station development. As a result there was a

lack of continuity in strategies adopted earlier by their predecessors to improve the performance of the station. In the long run, the set objectives and overall performance would be affected.

12. Too Many Restructuring Exercises And Right Sizing Causing Problems

Many respondents felt that the right sizing exercise was not proper and more like downsizing. The dramatic reduction of staff especially in the maintenance sections resulted to an increase in the workload. According to them, TNB Generation seemed to be paying a great attention towards statistics rather than effectiveness and necessity.

13. Procurement Of Poor Quality Coals

In the opinion of some respondents, the Generation Division at Headquarters did not take due considerations on the opinion of the station in the purchasing coals. This has resulted to purchasing poor quality and problematic coals. As a result the availability of the coal fired units were affected along with some other coal related problems.

14. Crossover Of Competent Staff To Other Organizations e.g. IPPs

Many respondents were concerned with the number of competent Power Station staff leaving TNB for other organizations such as IPPs and other private companies. This has resulted to Power Stations losing many competent and experienced staff.

15. Lack Of Teamwork

Many respondents felt that we were not working as a team but emphasized only on section or division. Team spirit was lacking. We were not thinking as an integrated entity. There was a lack of unity as a team.

16. The Need of Managers With Good Leadership Qualities In HQ And Stations

According to some respondents, there was a need of managers with good leadership qualities and managerial skills in Headquarters and Stations to uplift the division and stations to a higher level of success.

17. Slow Promotion For Executives

Many respondents felt that the promotion exercise in TNB Generation was slow as compared to the other SBUs in TNB.

18. Lack Of Empathy Of Management In Solving Staff Problems

Many respondents said that many of our managers were insensitive to problems encountered by the staff.

19. Direction Not Clear From Headquarters

Many respondents felt that the TNB Generation was having an unclear direction. They mentioned that the policies kept changing and structures couldn't be finalized. According to them, we need proper guidelines and clear direction on how to reach our vision.

20. Unavailability Of Managers And Executives Due To CMBA/ EMBA Program

Many respondents felt that managers and executives attending CMBA/EMBA Program in IKATAN have resulted to the delay in getting approval on certain items leaving engineers working under them to take all other responsibilities. Approval could not be obtained due to their absence and this was causing some delay in carrying out works.

4.3 Discussions of Phase 2 results

In Phase 2 of the survey, there was only one round of ranking. A total of 145 respondents from the power stations participated in this Phase. However, 9 ranking forms were rejected leaving the number of respondents to 136. This accounts to about 43.2 % of the total survey population, an increase of about 22.9 % from Phase 1. The 9 ranking forms were rejected either because of equal ranks given by respondents on two or more problems or the ranking process was not completed. It was not known on how many of the executives who had participated in the Phase 1, participated again the Phase 2 of the study. The breakdown of the respondents who participated in this phase is given as follows:

Grades	Number Of Respondents
JG 19	18
JG 20	4
JG 21	21
JG 22	22
JG 22/23	1
JG 23	31
JG 24	20
JG 24/25	4
JG 26	10
JG 27	1
Grades not stated	4
Total number of respondents	136

As mentioned earlier in Chapter 3, the problem ranked No.1 by each respondent would be given a score of 10 points, the second most important problem would be given 9 points and so on. Problems that were ranked No.11 and above would be assigned 0 points. The process of allocating points to each problem as ranked by the respondent was done on the computer using Microsoft Access. The cumulative scores of each problem given by the computer is given in Table 2 the following page. The full result of this phase which is the output of the Microsoft Access program, is displayed in Appendix D at the end of the report.

It is quite interesting to note that the most mentioned problem in Phase 1 that is "Unsatisfactory Reward, Salary And Appraisal System" was ranked as the 5th most important problem in this phase. The most important problem as ranked in this phase is "Poor Human Resource Management And Planning" which was the 2nd most mentioned problem in Phase 1. It was quite a surprise that " The Need Of Managers With Good Leadership Qualities In HQ And Stations" was ranked the 2nd most important problem since it was only mentioned by 6 respondents during the Phase 1 of the study. The problem of "Slow Decision Making Process By Management" was ranked by the respondents as the third most-important problem followed by the problem of "Unsatisfactory Reward, Salary And Appraisal System". The problem on the "Lack Of Commitment Of Managers And Staff" was ranked as the fifth most-important problem whereas the problem on the "Lack Of Empowerment Given To Stations" which was the third most-mentioned problem in Phase 1 was ranked as the sixth most-important problem. "Too Many Restructuring Exercises And Right Sizing Causing Problem" was ranked as the seventh most-important problem followed by

"Direction Not Clear From Headquarters". The problem on the "Poor Implementation Of Strategies To Achieve Goals" was ranked as the ninth most-important problem. The last problem that fell into the top ten most-important problem as ranked the respondent is the "Inefficient Flow Of Information And Lack Of Communication".

Table 3: The Top Ten Most Important Problems From Phase 2 Of The Study

Problems Identified	Cumulative Score
1. Poor Human Resource Management And Planning	711
2. The Need Of Managers With Good Leadership Qualities In HQ And Stations	693
3. Slow Decision Making Process By Management	600
4. Unsatisfactory Reward, Salary And Appraisal System	567
5. Lack Of Commitment Of Managers And Staff	550
6. Lack Of Empowerment Given To Stations	541
7. Too Many Restructuring Exercises And Right Sizing Causing Problems	538
8. Direction Not Clear From Headquarters	501
9. Poor Implementation Of Strategies To Achieve Goals	466
10. Inefficient Flow Of Information And Lack Of Communication	411

It is quite interesting to observe on how the other problems were ranked by the respondents. The other 10 problems that did not fall in the top ten most important problems are listed in Table 3.

Table 3: Problems Ranked Above 10 From Phase 2 Of The Study

Problems Identified	Cumulative Score
11. Slow Promotion Of Executives	317
12. Slow And Long Process Of Procurement Of Spares And Services	285
13. Lack Of Empathy Of Management In Solving Staff's Problems	282
14. Lack Of Teamwork	229
15. The Need For Training For All Staff	222
16. Frequent Changing Of Station Manager	143
17. Improper Selection Of Staff For Overseas Training	140
18. Crossover Of Competent Staff To Other Organizations e.g. IPPs	129
19. Unavailability Of Managers And Executives Due To CMBA/EMBA Program	75
20. Procurement Of Poor Quality Coals	65

4.4 Comparing results from recent findings on other organizations

From Chapter 2, I have discussed the major roadblocks and obstacles to improvement within organizations as identified by Dr. James Harrington in his book

Total Improvement Management. Among the ten problems identified by Dr. Harrington, four of them were identified through this study.

The problems are:

	Identified By Dr. Harrington	**Identified In This Study**
1.	Lack of management credibility leadership	The need of managers with good qualities in HQ and Stations
2.	Poor communications	Inefficient flow of information and lack of communication
3.	Lack of delegation	Lack of empowerment given to stations
4.	Untimely decision making	Slow decision making process by management

From the similaries above, we observed that some of the problems faced by TNB Generation are common problems faced by many organizations which are undergoing a change or improvement process. Hence we can take the opportunity to learn from the experience of successful organizations on how to overcome those problems.