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Training and Organisational Effectiveness – A Review

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Abstract

Training is fundamental to the development and financial prosperity of an individual, an organization, a state and therefore a country. It pervades at all levels - from personal to professional life, from boundaries of nations where a nation's prosperity is ensured via training to each organization where not only profitability is enhanced with skilled human resources but also their measure of health and job satisfaction. This is so because training offers opportunity to each and every employee to enhance his position on the organization ladder by upgrading knowledge, aptitude and skills. The after effects of any training demonstrate that at work training is firmly influenced to greater creativity, accomplishing goals (both personal and professional) and enhancing work quality.

To accomplish the goals of personal and professional enhancement, variables such as motivation of trainees, training design and execution, support from supervisor, content of training etc are important. If these factors are being taken care of then training will definitely add to the overall organizational effectiveness.

This paper through meta – analysis of existing research, tries to draw a linkage amongst training strategy, factors affecting training effectiveness and impact of these variables on organisational effectiveness.

Keywords:

Training effectiveness, Training strategies, Training variables and Organisational effectiveness

Introduction

Training is the verb "to prepare" and gotten from the old French word ‘coach; that signifies "to drag". Thus, such English definitions might be found as; to draw along; to charm; to cause; to develop in a coveted way; to plan for execution by guided direction, to rehearse, to work out, and so on. Training can be depicted as "giving the conditions in which individuals can learn adequately". To learn is "to pick up information, aptitude, capacity" (King, 1968:125). In this perspective, learning alludes to the data we get and put into memory, how it is sorted out into the structure of what we definitely know and to our comprehension of how and when it is utilized. (Kraiger and Salas, 1993:311).

Training is a piece of the human asset advancement, in addition to the other Human Resource exercises like enlistment, choice, recruitment, remuneration, and appraisals. The role of human resource department is to enhance the organizational effectiveness by giving representatives a sense and need for learning, abilities and states of mind that will enhance their current or future job execution and performance within the organisational guidelines. So, it is essential that to execute the correct training strategies, the training experts (both internal and hired) ought to know about the upsides and downsides, and effectiveness of each training strategy.

Training strategies

Training is a situational procedure, and so, that is the reason that no single strategy is appropriate for each circumstance. While a few targets could be effectively accomplished through one technique, different destinations could require different

strategies. Many training programs have learning objective in more than one area. At the same time, training needs also vary from person to person and function-wise which makes it more complex process to administer and seek the desired results. As rightly pointed by Kind (1968), 'When they do, they have to join a few training techniques into an incorporated entirety'.

Training strategies are varied and could be delegated via psychological and behavioral methodologies. Subjective techniques give verbal or composed data, show connections among ideas, or suggest how to accomplish something. These kinds of strategies can likewise be called as the job training techniques. Then again, behavioral strategies enable individuals to rehearse the given conduct in genuine or mimicked design. As per Blanchard and Thacker, (1998:277), psychological techniques are best for information improvement and behavioral strategies for abilities.

To be viable, training strategy should spur the learner to enhance his or her execution, plainly exhibit abilities, give a chance to dynamic investment by the trainee, give a chance to hone, give auspicious input on the execution, give a few intends to support while the learner learns, be organized from easy to complex errands, be versatile to particular issues, empower positive exchange from training to the job (Woods, 1995:180). For training strategy to yield results we should focus on certain variables that could play a role in effectiveness of training.

The study -

Training is quintessential for the success of organisation. The relationship can be established in the way that training can help in enhancing the performance of individual. There are variables that have a say in rendering a training effective. In this study we have mainly focused on individual variables like motivation, perception, content, self-efficacy, commitment, learning, training framing, transfer motivation for a trainee, and the organizational variables of work environment and organizational support that play a role in effectiveness of training. An effective training will enhance performance and thereby add value to organisation.

To understand the factors contributing to effectiveness of training, researchers analysed various secondary data available. These existing studies, have considered one or other variables impacting training effectiveness in piecemeal. Our idea is to give a comprehensive picture to the reader / practitioner by aggregating these scattered piecemeals from various researches and drawing a meta-analysis (analysis of analysis) with an expectation that it would be useful both at micro & macro level. The variables considered are at individual, organizational and also training design aspects that can enhance training effectiveness. It is also believed that training delivered and implemented effectively would increase the organizational effectiveness.

Training effectiveness -

Different variables both individual and organizational, may have either an integral, or partial or negative effect on any training while contributing to generating different perspectives of the trainer, trainees and organisation as a whole that affect in framing an effective training strategy and its implementation. For ease of understanding, we have segregated individual, training design and organizational factors. However, these factors have an inter-play and at times it becomes difficult to measure them individually or separate them from each-other as they may have a causal relationship.

Individual Factors -

Trainees' Motivation

London and Mone (1999) through their research concluded that employees are motivated to join training program if they perceive that the organisation always support continuous learning. Such a sustained support works as a driving force for employee learning. Facteau et al. (1995) found that managers who received support from their immediate superiors before attending the training program will be highly motivated to attend the training program and learn from the training program.

According to Tannenbaum and Yukl (1992) and Battistelli (2008), trainees' capability to learn and also trainees' motivation can be used to determine the training effectiveness. Switzer, Nagy and Mullins (2005) stated that highly motivated trainees will be benefited from the training program.

Chaudhary and Sharma (2012) argued that higher the level of employee motivation, more productive the workers. The situation might be linked to feeling satisfaction and happiness of the workers to an extent that employees with high level of motivation frequently attempt to accomplish every aspect in their duties. Thus, increasing job performances would lead to higher productivity of organizations and might be contingent on level of work motivation.

Trainees' Perception

In philosophy, psychology, and cognitive science, perception is the process of attaining awareness or understanding of sensory information. The process of perception being linked with the sensory organs plays an important role in what the trainees wish to learn. Mathieu, Tannenbaum, and Salas (1992) found that perception of situational constraints have a negative effect on pre-training motivation, which in turn influences training reactions and learning.

Perception also steer guides the selection (convert the environment stimuli into meaningful experience, organization (organize it in some way by finding certain meaningful patterns like shape, color, texture, size, etc), and interpretation (the process of attaching meaning to the selected stimuli) of any training activity. Therefore they tend to relate their perceptual cognizance with the trainer as well as the activities and the motif of training. As rightly noted by Steiner, Dobbins and Trahan (1991), 'trainees should perceive trainer behaviors which are directed at the factor to which they attribute their training performance as more appropriate than trainer actions directed at other factors'. Their natural inclination is based on their perception about the trainer as well as the usefulness that may add to their work efficiency.

Self- efficacy

Self-efficacy represents an individual's beliefs on his or her ability to perform a specific task (Bandura 1977 and 1986; Werner and DeSimone 2006). It refers not only to the individual skills but instead their judgment of what they can do with whatever skills that they have. According to Bandura (1986) the individual who have high self-efficacy in performing a particular task will focus their attention on the challenges that occur and put their full effort in mastering them. As according to the major prediction of the social learning theory a person's self-efficacy expectation will determine whatever a behaviour will be performed, how much effort will be used and how long the person will continue to perform the behaviour (Werner and DeSimone 2006). Bandura argued that individual with high self-efficacy in performing a particular task will put more focus on their attention on the challenges that exist in the situation and then used their greater effort in mastering them. This will increase the chances of successful task performance. Meanwhile it is different for the individual with low self-efficacy because they will prefer to focus more on their thoughts on obstacles and shortcomings. This then will result in reducing their chances of performing a successful task (Werner and DeSimone 2006).

A review of literature on self-efficacy and organizational behavior concluded that an employee's level of self-efficacy is positively related to job performance. Self-efficacy may be influenced by a number of internal (that is, individual) and external (that is, situational or work-related) variables. One individual factor that may have an impact on pre-training self-efficacy is organizational commitment. (Gist & Mitchell 1992). It is important that we understand how to increase the likelihood of the behaviour changes and improvement of the performance as the results from the participation in the training program with determining the specific individual characteristic that will influence the training effectiveness (Switzer, Nagy and Mullins 2005). Studies have shown that there is a central role of self-efficacy for enhancing training effectiveness and the transfer development (Mathieu, Martineau & Tannenbaum 1993). Studies done by Gravill, Compeau and Marcolin (2002), found that self -efficacy and self-awareness will influences the individual meta-cognition process and results in increasing the effectiveness in self-managed learning. Study done by Tai (2006) shows that trainees' who receive more positive information (training framing) will have high self-efficacy. Trainees with high self-efficacy are more likely to apply trained tasks and attempt more difficult and complex tasks on the job (Ford, et al. 1992). In other words, those individuals with higher level of self-efficacy usually will have a greater degree of training transfer – thus adding to their self-belief and occupational commitment.

Another study conducted by Gist, Schwoerer and Rosen (1989) also found that self-efficacy played an important role in computer software training when trainees with high levels of self-efficacy performed better than trainees with lower levels. This finding was consistent with a later study by Gist Stevens and Bavetta (1991) that examined the effects of self-efficacy in a two-stage training process on the acquisition and maintenance (retention) of complex interpersonal skills. Therefore, the pre-information or early information provided by the supervisors or the upper management will help the employees to make an early preparation before they attending the training program. It also lays emphasis on a strategic planning of a training program in order to better measure the outcomes. Further, midst of several studies Quinones (1995) found that an individual's pre-training self-efficacy is significantly related to motivation to learn, and that motivation has a direct influence on knowledge and skill acquisition.

In regard to the moderating role of self-efficacy on the achievement culture orientation – training transfer relationship, findings of Gegenfurtner (2011), suggest that, when trainees feel confident of their ability to perform, it becomes more likely that they will take advantage of the high standards of excellence set by an achievement-oriented work environment and practise the skills/ knowledge acquired through training. Similarly, trainees with high levels of self-efficacy are more likely to 'use' the support offered by their work environment to demonstrate increased practice of their knowledge and newly acquired skills. In both achievement and humanistic work environments, 'positive' group norms are still likely to induce employees' training transfer; however, such tendency is likely to be less strong in the case of trainees who did not feel that they could succeed in their tasks.

Trainees' Commitment

Sopian Bujang and Suzan Suzanne AnakMekol in their study of the mediation effect of self-efficacy recognized the potential of commitment that may have significant effect on the relationship between training framing and training effectiveness as then they will be convinced to apply the knowledge and skills learnt at the workplace. Louis, Posner, and Powell (1973) found a significant relationship between perceptions of the value of training and organizational commitment. Their findings suggests that the investment and effort in providing useful training programs may heighten an individual's awareness of the importance of training, as well as feelings of worth and value to the organization, which builds commitment. Thus, if individuals are committed to their organization, due in part to perceptions of the value of training, then it is likely that they will also have positive pre-training perceptions of self-efficacy. Tracey et. al. (2001) discusses the factor of job involvement that may influence pre-training self-efficacy if the training is specific and relevant to their job.

Training Design Aspects –

Training Content

Trainers' effectiveness is closely linked with the Content. It includes perceived trainer mastery of topics and choice of appropriate teaching styles and methodology, such as use of teacher directed and group activities, role plays and case studies, as well as effective time management Morris, M. (1984). Content include two main concerns. Webster and Martocchio (1995) indicated that the first concern is regarding the participants' perception of the knowledge and skills provided to them as a part of training and improvement due to this on their efficacy within the organization. The second regarding individuals' personal growth and development i.e. how participants' perceive the training as contributing factor to their career prospects and opportunities.

Training Framing

Training framing is defined as information (pre-information, realistic information) about the training program given by the supervisor to the employee before attending the training program (Hicks and Klimoski 1987; NurulInani 2008). Quinones (1995) posited that the framing would enhance trainees' abilities to be trained. Hicks and Klimoski (1987) and Tai (2006) stated employees armed with realistic information, their motivation to attend the training program was higher. Realistic information help trainers to prepare for their training and this can increase their motivation to learn (Tai 2006). Moreover, the pre-information received by the trainees before they attend the training program will motivate them, compared to those who did not receive the pre-information from the supervisor (Baldwin and Magjuka 1991). The framing (information) regarding the training program by the supervisors will increase the employees perception towards the importance of the training program and the value for attending the specific training program (Quinones and Ebrenstein, (Eds) 1997). Tai (2006) stated that, when a manager gives clear information regarding the training programs, trainees can have stronger learning goal thus finally lead to achievement of training outcomes.

Learning

According to Werner and DeSimone (2006), learning is defined as relatively permanent changing in the individual behavior cognition, or affect that occur as a result of one's interaction with the environment. Learning is also defined as the ability to know something from the outside or the surrounding. In order to have an effective training program, trainees should believe that when they participate in learning, they will receive desired rewards (Goldstein and Ford 2002; Chiaburu and Tekleab 2005). Gagne (1985) defined learning as a permanent changing behavior as against some writers who view learning as process of giving or receiving information that is also known as pedagogy (Ibrahim, 2001). Schunk (2004) define learning as continuous change in behavior, or else the ability of one to act in a certain way that is influenced by practice and other forms of experience.

Learning refers to the knowledge and skills that are acquired by the trainees from the training program (Kirkpatrick 1976). Training also aims to increase the professional knowledge to accomplish the jobs. Seeking knowledge and information calls for a learning orientation in any individual which can be either induced or be self-motivation, and often both. Therefore, an important aspect to measure the finding of the effectiveness of a training program is learning.

Organisational Factors –

Transfer Motivation

According to Noe (1986), transfer motivation is the desire to use knowledge and skills learnt in training in the place of work. Transfer motivation is also known as motivation to transfer which concern on how the trainees apply and use what they had learnt in training program to the real work situation (Burke and Hutchins 2007). Battistelli (2008) said that transfer motivation may be influenced by a few characteristic of working context such as supervisor support, organizational environment and so forth. Switzer, Nagy and Mullins (2005) stated that highly motivated trainees will be benefited from the training program. According to Alvarez, Salas and Garofano (2004), trainees is the one that will transfer what they learn in training to the real work situation, thus, they are the best source to know whether the training program is useful or not. Noe and Schmitt (1986) stated that when trainees have the confidence to use their new skills, are aware on which work situation is appropriate to the demonstration done in the training and believe that the training contents are useful for real work situation, this show that they are applying and transferring what they had learnt to their job.

Singh (2017), found that the Learning Transfer Motivation has positive effect on Transfer of Training, and that there is direct link of Learning Transfer Motivation and Content Validity with Transfer of Training. Hence managers need to ensure such work environment which motivates trainees to participate in training and to transfer their learning. Thus she emphasized upon pre-training plan to ensure conditions that facilitate transfer, e.g., to motivate trainees to attend a training program and to communicate about the program emphasizing the benefit of the training (Noe & Kodwani, 2013). Also, the trained employees and their learning experience in turn help trainees perceive training package (Content Validity) as a tool for better performance and enhances their performance motivation though not a moderator unlike a direct positive relationship between Learning Transfer Motivation and Training Transfer. It is noted that Gegenfurtner's (2011) meta-analytic study has illustrated that the motivation–transfer relationship differed as a function of the type of knowledge trained, instruction (learner-centred vs. knowledge-centred environment) as well as assessment source (self-assessment vs. other-assessment sources) and criterion (for example, frequency of use vs. increased effectiveness of work performance).

Work environment

Baumgartel and Jeanpieere (1972) and Switzer, Nagy and Mullins (2005) found that a supportive organizational climate is important to the employee, and this environment encourages the trainee to implement what they have gain such as knowledge and skills from the training to the real workplace. Tai (2006), identified a positive affect between training framing, supervisors' attitude and its efficacy which has an influence on training results and outcomes.

Goldstein (1991) stated that the work environment may have a substantial influence on an individual's motivation to learn and subsequent performance during training. Indeed, a few studies have shown that characteristics of the work environment, such as the amount of choice afforded to individuals to attend a training program, may have a direct influence on their motivation to learn, as well as knowledge and skill acquisition (for example, Hicks and Klimoski, 1987; Baldwin, Magjuka, and Loher, 1991). Tracey et. al. (2001) enlist three types of work environment viz. 'Managerial support' – in terms of facilitating a cordial social environment, 'Job support' –in terms of technical know-how, and 'Organisational support- in terms of appraisal and rewards' that may influence pre-training self-efficacy and therefore the accountability.

Peer Support

Though supervisory support is a crucial one in this direction, but more effective and sustainable is the support from peer group among various other factors that affect training transfer. Most studies in training and development arena are temporal, and Baldwin and Ford (1988) called for a dynamic perspective to better understand the motivational factors of training transfer considering the importance of peer group interaction. Peer group support in a negative climate can achieve the same degree of transfer as that of a positive climate (Martin, 2010). As per the popular perception, training transfer motivation after the training intervention, decreases over a period of time. Support from various quarters can mitigate this effect. Support by organizational environment is a crucial factor that determines the transfer of training. Nevertheless, as per Bossche, Segers, & Jansen, (2010), the role of feedback given by the environment cannot be undermined. Integrative literature studies have confirmed that the number of ties or feedback sources, frequency of feedback and the helpful nature

of the feedback will positively influence the transfer of training (Bossche, Segers, & Jansen, 2010). Feedback is the crux of a positive interaction in any work environment concerning the groups. This indicates that as the peer group interaction increases the motivation to transfer also increases. Peer group support and interaction thus can influence the effectiveness of training programs through trainee motivation and positive transfer climate. It reduces anxiety and builds confidence, thus adding to the motivation and an augmented effect that is seen in scenarios where superior support also exists (Martin, 2010).

Management support

Ismail et al. (2019) have investigated the moderating effect of management support and their findings signify that recruitment and selection, training and development, performance appraisal and succession planning are strong and positive predictors of employee performance, and management support is a moderator in training and development–employee performance relationship, and in compensation–employee performance connection. The result signifies that management support fortifies the effectiveness in the human resource practices–performance relationship.

These factors will have an immense impact on the overall effectiveness of training i.e. to what extend the trainee's are able to absorb training effectively and produce organisational and individually desired results that will be counted towards organisational effectiveness.

Training and Organisational Effectiveness

While organisations endeavor to plan and implement training strategies in the long run, it is equally important to ascertain that they are able to bring effective performance by the employees. In order to gain competitive edge organisations devise such strategies that help them 'to achieve the goals' (Chen and Huang, 2009) by increasing organizational and employees' efficiencies (Ng & Siu, 2004). Tiwari and Saxena (2012) conclude that training planned for mutual benefits (employees and organization) contributes to high effectiveness. It does add value and commitment in both the employees and the employer. Studies confirmed positive influence between training and organizational performance. Tai (2006) stated that training effectiveness refers to the extent to how far had the goals of the training had been achieved and it is evaluated by measuring the amount of training and transfer outcomes. In this study, researcher focused on two elements of trainees' training effectiveness which are learning and transfer motivation.

During the last decades, researchers are focusing to identify the relationship of training, with organizational performance and have completed different dimensions in different times (Masood, 2010).'People are the most valuable asset' nobody can refuse it. Companies invest in training function to enhance employee's skills, abilities and performance (Mackelprang et al., 2012). For example, some researcher express that HRM practices have deep effect on organizational performance (Tan and Nasurdin, 2012; Qureshi et al., 2010). HRM practices such as training increase organizational performance by providing suitable and useful skills and ability in employees. Vinesh in his survey found that employee performance gains an added value and 'organisations must focus on continual learning and job trainings' and that the 'line managers should be involved TNA and policy decisions for training'. Rivai, A.H., Lukito H., and Fauzi, A.R. while considering work motivation as a moderating variable in their study found that training has positive impact on job performance.

Rahman, A.A. et.al. (2013) investigated the effect of individual/ managerial training and process training over performance effectiveness especially through various dimensions of knowledge management practices like knowledge acquisition, knowledge application, knowledge conversion and knowledge protection. They found a positive relationship between training of these skills and organisational effectiveness. They further urge 'to devise training modules depending on the needs of individual employees, create an encouraging environment for the trained employees to apply their skills (knowledge), and develop policies to retain these employees'. An encouraging environment implies to the necessity that the 'firms have to present internal and external training opportunities to expand necessary knowledge and expertise of employees (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995).

'A review and critique of research on training and organisational level outcomes' by Phyllis Theranou, Alan M Saks and Celia Moore during their investigation found a positive correlation between training and human resource outcomes but a weak relation with the financial outcomes. They stress on the 'mediating role of employee attitudes and human capital' as well as link the training effectiveness with the 'contingency perspective' of 'contextual factors like organisation capital intensity and business strategy'.

As rightly suggested by Garavan, T. et.al. (2019), Investment in training has a 'stronger relationship' with increased organisational performance with an emphasis on the increased role of training over time in organizational response to external environment. Their findings suggest that HR managers may use general or firm-specific training to achieve desirable performance outcomes.

Human resource management makes new capacities and also new attitude that influence on employee's behaviors to achieve organizational goals (Collins and Clark, 2003). This is further validated by Gritz (1993) that Training is a one part of Human resource management practices that help employees for developing and building their competencies.

Likewise, Paul (2009) has reflected training 'as an instrument that effect on organizational culture and employees' behaviour'. LaythZuhair Al-Sakafi, Zain Mohammed Saeed Al-Hamami, Nabeel Salih Ali (2019) critically investigated the aspects of Learning Styles, Training Needs Analysis and Training Evaluation and the 'state of art in HRD system'. They endorse the significance of elements like collaboration, communication, counselling, change agent and culture building in an HRD system as indicated by Mehta, S. (2011) in addition to proposing three more elements to this model viz. understanding the preferred learning style(s) by individual(s), performing a TNA to ensure a return, and an evaluation of the training 'with regard to profitability and achieving organizational objectives'. This further stresses the strong connect between effectiveness of training with organizational performance as finally it is the individual whose productivity at large impacts the organisational productivity in the long run. Strategic human resource investment into employee productivity and well –being will lead to an improved performance delivery by employee(s) which results into healthy human behavior at work. This is not only the desired but also the best way of strengthening psychological contract between the employer and the employees.

Conclusion

Training is a considerable authoritative venture getting an attractive degree of profitability that implies connecting the training capacity and exercises to the organization's general business movement. The interest in individuals, both in creating and keeping up the fitting aptitudes, is a key piece of any organisation's technique for what's to come, and how it needs to be incorporated within the training methods. Like any venture, the efforts in training should also deliver a successful and quantifiable payback. Successful training upgrades the learning, abilities, states of mind and conduct of individuals and hence their execution. The enhanced execution of people drives specifically to benefit of not only the individual but also the company. Such a payback can be quick and noteworthy, yet it is once in a while measured or exhibited in money-related terms. Organizations which execute training give accentuation on the quantity of hours of training to the representatives in such a manner as to develop and learn designs that is normally being taken by the specialist every year. Hence any training to be effective needs a constant targeted strategic approach towards the final goal of learning sets.

A training program isn't finished until the point that one has identified the needs, assessed strategies and thereby the results as anticipated. A vital component to acquiring steady accomplishment with training programs is to have an efficient way to deal with estimation and assessment. If performed effectively and convincingly, it will definitely lead to work satisfaction and improved performance resulting into motivation of individuals in bettering themselves.

Acknowledgment of the training strategies and estimation methods are essential for the training achievement, as well as to keep orgnisational workforce look high and up. It is quintessential these days for knowledge management as well. It establishes trust in capability building by the organization, improves employees' efficacy, adds on job contentment resulting into employee retention, and finally leads to happiness in job and happiness within.

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