

The Impact of Employee Commitment and Satisfaction on Training Effectiveness

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ABSTRACT

Employee training and development are essential tools for an organization's continuing growth and productivity. Training and development provide benefits to both the individual and organization as a whole that make the cost and time a worthwhile investment. Thus, the success of employee training and development in an organization can only be quantified in a financial term as return on investment (ROI). The main aim of this study was to investigate the impact of employee commitment and satisfaction on training effectiveness. This study utilized quantitative approach in gathering the data. A total of 100 public sector employees participated in this study. The data were analyzed using the IBM SPSS Statistics software. The findings indicate the existence of a significant relationship between employee satisfaction and training effectiveness but there was no significant relationship between employee commitment and training effectiveness. The findings also indicate that there was a significant difference between employee satisfaction and training effectiveness in relation to gender and working experience. However, there

was no significant difference between employee satisfaction and training effectiveness in relation to marital status, age, race and education level. From these findings of the study, organizations will be able to identify employee needs for training and development. Organizations will also find this study useful in formulating their internal policies for training and development to gauge training effectiveness and of course, increase return on investment.

Keywords: *Training effectiveness; commitment; satisfaction; government employees*

INTRODUCTION

Employee training and development are essential tools for an organization's continuing growth and productivity. Training and development provide benefits to both the individual and organization as a whole, that make the cost and time a worthwhile investment. Thus, the success of employee training and development in an organization can only be quantified in a financial term as return on investment (ROI). With regard to the "*Pekeliling Perkhidmatan Bilangan 6 2005, Dasar Latihan Sumber Manusia*" by the Public Service Department of Malaysia (2005), all government employees need to fulfil the minimum of 7 days' work related training or a total of 42 hours.

Sharma and Taneja (2018) referred to training as the process of imparting new skills, knowledge and competencies to employees to improve their current job performance. Through training, employees are able perform their jobs more efficiently and hence, increase their productivity. Perrotta (2018), opined the best way for organizations to achieve a sustainable competitive advantage is to exploit the productive powers of their employees or human capital. In essence, the skills that employees possess are essential to their performance (Sharma & Taneja, 2018). According to Brown and Sitzman (2010), training is a core issue with respect to linking individual change to the requirements of the organizational system. Therefore, it is believed that training makes a difference in employee performance and provides a great opportunity for employees to increase their efficiency and productivity at work.

The Kirkpatrick's model (2006) has been used over the years to evaluate the success of training across organizations. The Kirkpatrick's model consists of four basic elements which include the reaction of employees after a training programme, the learning that has occurred during and after the training, the change in behaviour of trainees on the job as a result of training and the results in terms of return on investment (Alliger & Janak, 1989).

Based on the aforementioned discussion, this study argues that the measuring of training effectiveness in terms of return on investment is insufficient. Hence, this study seeks to investigate the relationship between employee commitment and satisfaction on training effectiveness. The findings will be useful to the Government, especially the Ministry of Labour to formulate comprehensive policies on training and development programmes to enhance training effectiveness. Organizations will also find this study useful in formulating their internal policies for training and development in order to gauge training effectiveness and of course, increase return on investment and earn above average return.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Training Effectiveness

Swanson and Holton (2001), defined training as a systematic approach of developing work-related knowledge and expertise among employees in an organization for the purpose of improving their performance. As for training effectiveness, it is fundamentally an evaluation that inspects the level to which training enhanced the employee's skills, knowledge, and behaviour in the organization. It is an essential element which contributes to organizational success (Mafuzah, Nordiana, & Zulkefli, 2017). Baron and Dreps (2002) added that the benefits gained from training effectiveness are increase in productivity, employee retention, fostering organizational culture, nurturing employment relationships and producing new skills. Moreover, employees will feel more satisfied with their jobs as this makes them feel motivated and more valued by the organization.

Trainee Characteristics

Burke and Hutchins (2007) exerted that certain trainee characteristics such as ability, personality, self- efficacy, career commitment, work related attitudes, and demographic factors influence the training outcomes to a greater extent than others. According to Tziner, Fisher, Senior, and Weisberg (2007), employees high on conscientiousness are more motivated to excel on the job and they tend to set themselves higher standards of performance and to be more committed to the organization. Likewise, employees driven by a learning goal orientation seek challenging tasks that provide them with the opportunity to expand their competencies. They seem to devote more attention to training programmes that enable them to develop their abilities (Seijts, Latham, Tasa, & Latham, 2004). Seijts and Latham (2005) added that highly motivated employees tend to attain higher training outcomes than those low on this personality trait.

Employee Satisfaction

Employee satisfaction is referred to as a positive emotional state resulting from an appraisal of one's job or job experiences. It describes employee perceptions of whether their desires are being met in the workplace. In the context of the organization, employee satisfaction is the term used to describe whether employees are happy and fulfilling their desires and needs at work (Ensour, Zeglat, & Shrafat, 2018). Collins (2020) exerted that they are a broad range of factors that can determine the level of satisfaction that the employees experience. One of the most important determinants of satisfaction is whether the employees perceive that they are treated with respect. He added that employees feel respected when they are recognized for their achievements and when their level of compensation matches their performance. According to Mafuzah et al., (2017), it is essential for organizations to focus on workforce empowerment in order to improve the satisfaction of their employees.

Employee Commitment

Employee commitment is referred to as the strength of an employee's identification and involvement in an organization. It is the

attachment that employees have to their organization due to their experiences. It also indicates the level of satisfaction, and engagement among employees.

Adelekan, Azeez and Rufai (2016) identified three components in employee commitment, which are affective, continuance, and normative organizational commitment. The first component - Affective commitment, is referred to as an energetic passion about associating with a given organization. This component involves the employee understanding of employees in an organization to achieve the organizational goals. The second component, continuance commitment, is regarded as employees' commitment to their organizations by virtue of cost and benefit that they feel associated towards the organization. Normative commitment, the third component, refers to the employee's feelings of accountability and obligation towards the organization.

Adelekan et al., (2016) added that employees have the sense of responsibility to remain in the organization because the influence of investment through training and development that might have benefitted them. In brief, an employee commitment involves the passion, loyalty, values, and beliefs to produce a good outcome that benefits both aspects, which are organizational and individual. Hence, it is essential to influence the behaviour and emotion of employees to groom their performance with effective training that promotes understanding and creates their ability to accomplish any task given as well as contribute to organizational performance.

Employee Satisfaction and Training Effectiveness

Employee satisfaction is vital to an organization's success (Mafuzah et al., 2017). Chen, Chang and Yeh (2004) stated that the purpose of providing training to employees is to help them to reduce the possibility of anxiety or frustration when they are not familiar with the job scope and lacking job skills. Sahinidis and Bouris (2008) added that a training programme is vital to achieve organizational goals when employees are capable in delivering their services and reach the satisfactory needs of the customers. Likewise, employees who are committed to learn will show a higher level of satisfaction with a positive effect on their performance. Moreover, employees that perceived the

benefit of training effectiveness will be more competent, efficient and have a higher ability to increase the productivity of the organization (Rowden, 2002). Effective training is a driving factor from systematic training design that is able to meet job satisfaction of employees. According to Vasudevan (2014), the organizational procedures may change to fit the training programmes, based on the employee's needs. Hence, employees will react better if they feel that training will contribute to their benefits (Mafuzah et al., 2017).

Employee Commitment and Training Effectiveness

The ultimate aim of training and development in an organization is to enhance the productivity of employees and the profitability of the organization. A study by Meyer and Smith (2000), found that employees prefer evaluation of appraisal practices and assessment of the benefits offered by the organization. Similarly, Sahinidis and Bouris (2008) also found that these appraisal practices had driven employees to be more committed in the organization. The more frequently trainings are provided to employees, the stronger the employee's commitment to the organization. (Oluwakemi & Tunde, 2011). In addition, the crucial factor to maintain employees' performance is by designing effective training that appropriates with their needs (Oluwakemi & Tunde, 2011). Brum (2007) and Owen (2006) exerted that an organization is able to achieve its organizational goals by providing training to its employees. Thus, the positive outcomes from the training will lead to more committed employees who are likely to remain in the organization (Brum, 2007).

Understanding the effectiveness of training programmes is important for both the researchers and practitioners to have a fair knowledge on how training can lead to an improvement in an individual's job performance and the organization wide productivity. Based on the fore argument, this study argues that measuring the success of training in terms of return on investment (ROI) is insufficient. There is a need to take a step further to explore how employee perception on training effectiveness can be measured in terms of their commitment and job satisfaction. This study seeks to build on the prior research and investigate the current topic in a different perspective. The conceptual framework of the study was established based on previous literature reviews as shown in Figure 1.

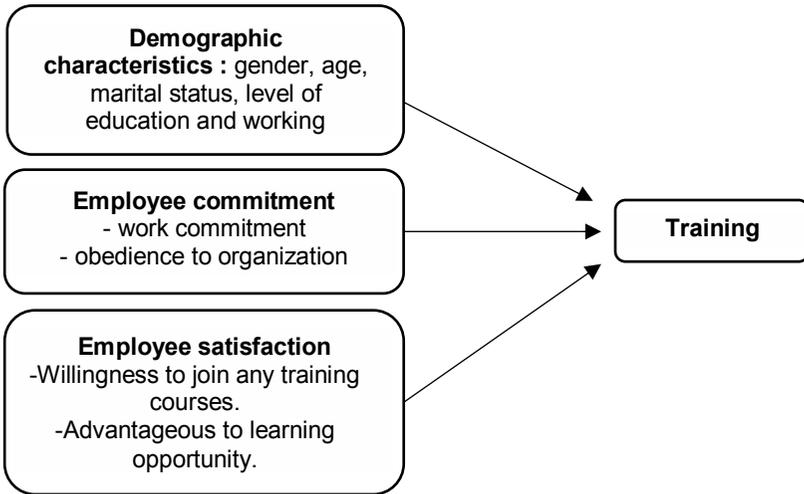


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

EXPERIMENTAL / COMPUTATIONAL DETAILS

This study was administered by distributing the questionnaires to various levels of the public sector employees in Kuala Lumpur. According to Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2014), in order to determine a sample size, the 1:15 formula can be used. One variable for a particular study is equivalent to 15 respondents. Since this study involved three variables thus the suggested sample size would be 45. However, the researchers managed to get 100 respondents to participate in this study analysis. The sampling technique applied for this study was purposive sampling.

The questionnaire for this study comprises three sections. The first section consists of 5 items of the demographic profile of the respondents. The second section comprises both independent variables consisting of employee commitment and employee satisfaction with 6 and 5 items, respectively. The third section consists of 1 item for the dependent variable that is training effectiveness. Five-point Likert scale measuring the level of agreement is applied to as the response scale for Section 2 and Section 3.

A few statistical analyses were performed in this study such as mean, t-test, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and multiple linear regressions. The data were analyzed using the IBM SPSS Statistics software.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 1 presents the respondents' demographic profile. In terms of gender, the result showed that the majority of them were mostly females. The respondents consisted of 84 females (84%) and 16 males (16%). In terms of age breakdown, more than half of the respondents were 45 years old or younger (56%), 28 respondents (28%) were 51 years old or older, and only 16 respondents (16%) were between 46 to 50 years old. In terms of marital status, more than half of the respondents were married which comprised 69 respondents (69%). The other 31 respondents (31%) were still single. In terms of ethnicity, the results showed that the majority of them were mostly Malays which comprised 82 respondents (82%) as compared to other ethnic groups which consisted of 4 Iban (4%), 2 Chinese (2%), and 12 respondents (12%) were from other ethnic groups. As for the highest qualification, a total of 64 respondents (64%) were Masters degree holders. PhD and Degree holders formed the smallest percentage at 18% each respectively. In terms of working experience, more than half of the respondents (64%) had more than 10 years working experience, 28 respondents (28%) had less than 7 years working experience and only 8 respondents (8%) had between 7 to 10 years working experience.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Variable	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender		
Male	16	16.0
Female	84	84.0
Age		
45 or younger	56	56.0
46 – 50	16	16.0
51 or older	28	28.0
Marital Status		
Single	31	31.0
Married	69	69.0
Race		
Malay	82	82.0
Iban	4	4.0
Chinese	2	2.0
Others	12	12.0
Education Level		
Degree	18	18.0
Masters	64	64.0
PhD	18	18.0
Working Experience		
Less than 7 years	28	28.0
7 – 10 years	8	8.0
Above 10 years	64	64.0

Reliability Analysis

Reliability test was performed to measure accuracy or reliability of the study data. Pallant (2001) mentioned that the data is considered reliable if the Cronbach’s Alpha value is more than 0.7. Table 2 shows the result of the Reliability Test for this study. The results revealed that both employee commitment and employee satisfaction variables were reliable as the Cronbach’s Alpha values were 0.848 and 0.788 respectively.

Table 2: Results of Reliability Analysis

Variable	No. of Item	Cronbach’s Alpha
Employee Commitment	6	0.848
Employee Satisfaction	5	0.788

Normality Test

Normality test was performed to determine whether the data were normally distributed. According to Pallant (2001), the normal value for Skewness and Kurtosis that can be considered as normal range is between -2 to +2. Table 3 exhibits the skewness values for both dependent and independent variables. All the variables were normally distributed since the skewness values were in the range -2 to 2.

Table 3: Summary of Skewness Value

Variable	Skewness
Training effectiveness	-0.696
Employee commitment	-0.690
Employee satisfaction	-0.753

Multicollinearity Analysis

Multicollinearity analysis was conducted in order to check the existence of the multicollinearity problem among the predictor variables. According to Hair, Black, Babin and Anderson (2010), this problem exists if the value of variance inflation factor (VIF) is more than 10 and the tolerance value is smaller than 0.1. In this study, the data analysis results of the multicollinearity problem among the predictor variables revealed that the multicollinearity problem did not exist among the predictor variables since the values of VIF and tolerance were 1.486 and 0.673 respectively.

The Relationship of Employee Commitment and Employee Satisfaction on Training Effectiveness

Multiple Linear Regression (MLR) analysis was conducted to explain the relationship between one continuous dependent variable and two or more independent variables. Table 4 summarizes the results for this analysis. The results indicated the existence of a significant relationship between employee satisfaction and training effectiveness ($p - \text{value} < 0.05$). This finding is similar to the study conducted by Soni and Kesari (2018). They found that there is a significant relationship between job satisfaction and training effectiveness. They also exerted that employee commitment has impact on employee satisfaction. Contrarily, this study

shows no significant relationship between employee commitment and training effectiveness ($p - \text{value} > 0.05$). The findings of this study contradicts with the finding by Oluwakemi and Tunde (2011). Their findings concluded that the more training given, the more committed an employee will be to the organization. Besides, the finding of the study was also not accordance with Egesa's (2015) finding who claimed that an employee commitment has a significant relationship with training effectiveness.

Table 4 also reveals that 18.5% of the total variation of training effectiveness could be explained by employee commitment and employee satisfaction while the other 81.5% of the total variation could be explained by other factors. Overall, the regression model showed significant results ($p\text{-value} < 0.05$). The findings of this study emphasized that employee commitment and job satisfaction were related to the training attended. It was also revealed that employee commitment and job satisfaction depended on several factors such as the types of training attended and the benefits of employee training. Thus, employees who expect benefits from their participation in training are likely to be more committed. Nevertheless, the social support for training is also an important component in forming and maintaining employee commitment.

Table 4: Multiple Regression Analysis

Variable	Result of Multiple Regression			
	Coefficient	T – test (p – value)	R ²	F – test (p – value)
Constant	1.084	1.125 (0.263)	0.185	11.017 (0.000)
Employee commitment	- 0.185	-0.761 (0.448)		
Employee satisfaction	0.842	4.235 (0.000)		

Comparison of Employee Satisfaction in Relation to Gender and Marital Status

Independent t-test was performed in order to determine if there is any significant difference between the variables. Table 5 depicts the analysis of the results. Levene's Test was also performed to assess the variances for both groups whether they are equal or unequal. The test

revealed that the variances between male and female were unequal (p value < 0.05) while the variances between single and married were equal (p value > 0.05). The independent t-test concluded that there was a significant mean difference in employee satisfaction in relation to gender (p – value < 0.05). However, there was no significant mean difference in employee satisfaction in relation to marital status (p value > 0.05).

Table 5: Results of Independent t-test

Test	Gender p-value	Marital Status p-value
Levene's Test (Equality of Variances)	0.004	0.241
Independent t-test (Equality of Means)	0.022	0.430
Conclusion	significant difference	no significant difference

Assessing Employee Satisfaction in Relation to Age, Race, Education Level and Working Experience

In order to assess the mean difference among 3 or more groups, One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was performed. The ANOVA analysis was conducted to determine whether there is a significant mean difference in employee satisfaction in relation to age, race, education and working experience. Table 6 presents the results of one-way ANOVA. The results revealed that there was no significant mean difference in employee satisfaction among all the variables except working experience. This showed that employees with different working experience will give different satisfaction towards training effectiveness.

A multiple comparison analysis (Posts Hoc Test) was performed in order to compare which categories of working experience are different. Table 7 summarizes the result for this test and presented the categories of working experience that showed a significant mean different in employee satisfaction (p value > 0.05).

Table 6: Results of One-way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)

Variable	F - test (p-value)	Conclusion
Age	1.778 (0.157)	no significant difference
Race	0.960 (0.415)	no significant difference
Education Level	0.665 (0.516)	no significant difference
Working Experience	0.2472 (0.05)	significant difference

The results showed that employees with working experience less than a year had different satisfaction as compared to employees who had between 7 to 10 years working experience. Unlikely, employees who had between 1 to 3 years and 4 to 6 years working experience had different satisfaction with employees from other categories of working experience. The findings also revealed that employees who had between 4 to 6 years working experience had similar satisfaction towards training effectiveness with employees who had between 7 to 10 years working experience. The findings concluded that there were employees who felt dissatisfied with the effectiveness of training provided for them.

Table 7: One – way ANOVA: Multiple Comparison

Working Experience	Working Experience	P – value
< one year	1 to 3 years	0.633
	4 to 6 years	0.446
	>10 years	0.547
1 to 3 years	4 to 6 years	0.953
	7 to 10 years	0.052
	>10 years	0.873
4 to 6 years	>10 years	0.704

CONCLUSION

The finding indicated the existence of a significant relationship between employee satisfaction and training effectiveness. It showed that most of the government employees agreed on the usefulness of the trainings they had attended. The finding also indicated that there was a significant difference between employee satisfaction and training effectiveness in relation to gender and working experience. However, there was no significant difference between employee satisfaction and training effectiveness in relation to marital status, age, race and education level. The findings will be useful to the government especially the Ministry of Labour to formulate comprehensive policies on training and development programmes to enhance training effectiveness. Likewise, Human Resource Development and Personnel Management should create an environment in which training participation is strongly supported by all employees. Training and development needs analysis should also be performed before sending employees to any training programmes. The findings of this study are also useful for organizations in formulating their internal policies for training and development to gauge training effectiveness and of course, increase return on investment.

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