

EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES IN AN ORGANISATION: AN EVALUATION

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Abstract

Training and development has become an issue of strategic importance. Although many scholars have conducted research on training and development practices in organisations in both developing and developed economies, it is worth mentioning that most of the research has concentrated on the benefits of training in general. There is however, limited focus on evaluation of training and development practices in organizations. To fill this gap, this study critically examines in detail the benefits, approaches and evaluation techniques applied in training and development of employees in an organisation. The contribution of this study is that it provides insights amongst owners / managers, policy makers and scholars on how organisation training and development practices could be enhanced in order to improve organisational effectiveness and retain human capital.

Keywords: *Organisation, Training, Development, Human Capital*

Introduction

Acton T. and Golden W. (2003)^[1], Training is considered as the process of upgrading the knowledge, developing skills, bringing about attitude and behavioural changes, and improving the ability of the trainee to perform tasks effectively and efficiently in organisations.

Training and development of employees is a systematic process that intends to ensure that the organisation has effective employees to meet the exigencies of its dynamic environment. This included adding to the employee knowledge, skills and attitudes required by an individual to improve his performance in the organisation.

The purpose of this study was to find out how training and development practices are used as one of the strategies of enhancing organisational effectiveness. In addition, the study also focuses on the role of training employees, methods used in training and employees and evaluation of training programs. The study was conducted to the answer the following research questions.

1. What is the role of training and development on employees within an organisation?
2. What are the various methods used in the training and development of employees?
3. How are training programs evaluated within an organisation?

Literature Review

Role of Training and Development of Employees

According to Asgarkhani, M. (2004)^[2] and Bartel, A. (1994)^[3], Formal training programmes are an effective way of directly transferring the organisational goals and values to a whole group of people simultaneously. Acton T. and Golden W. (2003)^[1] and Asgarkhani, M. (2004)^[2], Appropriate training can develop managers at all levels including the knowledge and skills required to gain competency in order to manage change in organisation in any business environment. In multinational companies, training can provide an important impetus to achieve shared values and facilitates network building between headquarters and subsidiaries.

Hellriegel, (2001)^[14] states that training of employees in organisation increases productivity through better job performance, more efficient use of human resources, goals and objectives more effectively met, reduced cost due to less labour turnover, reduced errors, reduced accidents and absenteeism, more capable, and mobile workforce and retention of the existing staff. Berman, E.M., Bowman, J., West, J and Van Wart, M (2001)^[4] and Bhalla, K. (2006)^[5], This linkage of training to business strategy has given many businesses the needed competitive edge in today's global market. They also provides that effective training and development improves the culture of quality in business, workforce, and ultimately the final product an educated and well trained workforce is considered to be essential to the maintenance of a business firm's competitive advantage in a global economy. Bushart S.C and Fretwell C (1994)^[6], Chandratilek, K.L (1997)^[7] and Guerrero S. and Sire B. (2001)^[13] while the success of training is contingent upon the effectiveness of performance planning and measuring by Asgarkhani, M. (2004) ^[2].

The fact of the matter is that the three fundamental aspects surrounding this approach are process classification, selection of proposed methods, and delivery. The point that the availability of high quality employees, places the organisation in a competitive advantage over others even within the same industry.

Methods of Training Employees in Organisation

According to Inancevich, J.M. (1992)^[19] and John. A. W. and James W. Cartada (2002)^[20], There are many methods of training the employees of organisation. The range of training methods used has been expanded by the application of technology in its "hard" (for example through computing technology) and "soft" (for example through instructional design) approaches.

Training of employees is intended to increase expertise of trainees in particular areas. When thinking about training method(s) to use, it is useful to consider current level of expertise that trainees possess by Palo S., and Padhi, N. (2003)^[21]. Once you have decided to train employees and have identified training needs and goals, you have to design training program.

On the job training methods

Dessler, (2005)^[11], On-the-job training (OJT) is having a person to learn the job by actually doing it. Whereas Tennanat et al, (2002)^[26] defines on the job training as a method where the learner develops skills in the real

work environment by actually using the machinery and the materials during training.

Coles (2000)^[8] concludes that it is an effective method, because the learners apply their training in real-time rather than sitting in a classroom environment and forgetting what they have learned when they return to their work. However, off-the-job training provides opportunities to widen the boundaries of the teaching and can often be a useful initial step ahead of on-the-job training.

Van der Klink and Streumer (2002)^[28] suggests that the frequent use of this type of training stems from three incentives, the favourable relationship between training costs and benefits, the responsibility to train just-in-time^[33]; and the expectation of apposite transfer of what was learned to the employees' work situation. However, investigated the costs and benefits of OJT.

On the contrary the findings by Jacob indicate that OJT does not always result in favourable benefits. From the empirical data that are available, it is not possible to deduce whether OJT is an effective form of training, or what the factors that determine its effectiveness. The following are the methods used in training on the job employees.

According to Dessler G., (2005) ^[11], Job rotation means moving trainees from department to department to broaden the understanding of all activities of the business and to test their abilities. Job rotation is the transferring of executives from job to job and from plant to plant on a coordinated, planned basis to get an holistic view of the activities of the organisation. Furthermore Job rotation injects new ideas into the different departments of the organisation.

Noe A. R., (2005)^[18], Lecture method involves trainers communicating through spoken word what they want the trainees to learn: Class room lectures are used in many organisations to impart information to trainees. Classroom lectures are oral presentations covering particular topics and concepts. The advantages of lecture method is that it is quick and a simple way to provide knowledge to large groups, least expensive, less time consuming way to present a large amount of information effectively and in an organized manner and can be applied to large groups of trainees. Similarly lecture method as its own limitations like communication of learned capabilities is primarily one-way-from the trainer to the audience and Lecture method tends to lack participant involvement and feedback to gauge whether learners have understood or not.

In computer-based training (CBT), the trainee uses computer-based and or DVD systems to interactively increase the knowledge or skills. Computer-based training services are where an employee learns by executing special training programs on a computer relating to their occupation. CBT is especially effective for training people to use computer applications because CBT program can be integrated with the applications as they learn. CTB can take a variety of forms: Some employers have formed software libraries containing copies of different tutorial programs that trainees can check out to work on at home. Other companies have staffed computer labs where employees can drop by to practice, with personal assistance available if needed.

Still other organisations conduct online training, installing learning software on workstation computers, which allows employees to switch back and forth between job applications and training programs as their workload demands, Huselid, M.A (1995) ^[17]. CBT programs have practical advantages. Interactive technologies reduce learning time by an average of 50%. In addition its cost effective once designed and produced, and encourages

instructional consistency, mastery of learning, increased retention, and increased trainee motivation.

Off-the Job Training Methods

Classroom training approaches are conducted outside of the normal work setting. In this sense, a classroom can be any training space set away from the work site, such as the organisation cafeteria or meeting room ^[17]. Conducting training away from the work setting has several advantages over on –the-job training. First, classroom setting permit the use of a training technique, such as video/DVD lecture, discussion, role playing simulation. Second the environment can be designed or controlled to minimize distractions and create a climate conducive for learners. This method develops learners who are inquisitive (have flexible thought processes, and are open to new ideas), guide learners through the process of learning and applying effective oral and written communication skills, encourage learners to acquire the skills required to function in work environment.

Electronic learning (or e-Learning or eLearning) is a type of education where the medium of instruction is computer technology. No physical interaction may take place in some instances. E-learning is used interchangeably in a wide variety of contexts.

An Intervention to Enhance Organisational Effectiveness scenario training is the action of teaching and training through instruction, observations, or processes focused on providing needed skills and knowledge to meet immediate business goals, Bhalla, K. (2006)^[5]. Simulation is a reproduction of an event or an item. But true simulation has a specific goal in mind-“to mimic, or simulate, a real system so that we can explore it, perform experiments on it, and understand it before implementing it in the real world.” Simulation makes imitated situations available to the learner to practice and hone necessary skills, rather than having them jump into the real experience-where a ‘do-or-die’ mentality can often make the individual nervous and unconfident. Simulation is a necessity when it is too costly or dangerous to train employees on the job. Role playing had its origin in psychotherapy, but it has found wide use in industry for improving sales, leadership, and interviewing skills, as well as other skills.

Evaluation of Training and Development Practices

Based on the management axiom ‘nothing will improve until it is measured’, the training programmes have to be assessed in terms of the programme itself, of the behaviour outside the training environment and whether or not it has desired effect. In other words, training has to be assessed in terms of training transfer, Wickramasinghe V.M (2006) ^[29].

Evaluation determines the effect of training at individual, departmental and organisational levels. Though several approaches are used to evaluate training programme in organisation but there is no one best way of evaluation, just as there is no best way to train employees.

Training results can be best identified on the organisational performance which is triggered by employee performance. This involves the comparison of statistical indicators of performance before and after training took place. The measurement indicators include sales volume and revenue, levels of customer complaints, quality and quantity variables in cost reduction, productivity ratios, cost ratios in terms of stock level and On the job debt collection periods and industrial relations (labour turnover rates; absenteeism, grievances),

Thomas, 1992 [24]. Moreover, effective training can be gauged by the capacity of trainees to apply knowledge, skills and abilities gained in training to their work environment and maintain them over time in their job contexts.

However, (Berman et al, 2001) argues that training effectiveness is constrained because of inadequate transfer of learning from training environment to workplace environment, Berman, E.M., Bowman, J., West, J and Van Wart, M (2001) [4].

However, most training attempts to improve the organisation and process performance by addressing only one level (the job level) and only one dimension of the job level (skills and knowledge). As a result the training has no significant long term, training money is wasted, and trainees are frustrated and confused.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 depicts the conceptual framework. This framework highlights the drivers which compel managers to train and develop their employees in this era of competition. Similarly various methods are used to impart necessary skills and knowledge to the employees. For instance, on the job training and off the job training methods are applied to train employees. An employee who gets the necessary skills benefits the organisation by contributing towards achieving organisational goals. Training and development is then evaluated by using various approaches to see whether the employees have changed their behavior and whether they are contributing towards achieving organisational goals. In the long run it will lead to organisational effectiveness.

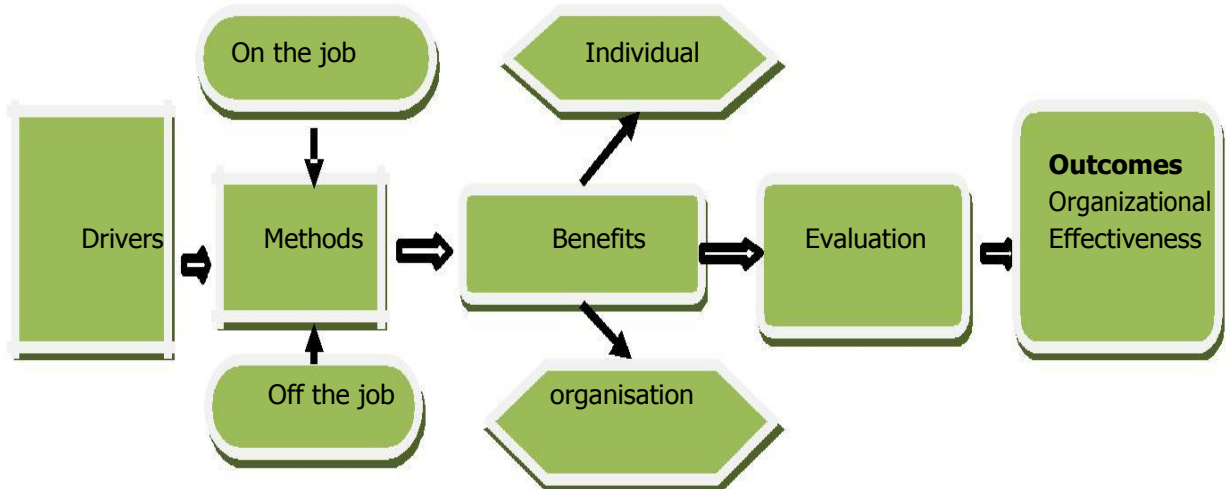


Fig.1: Conceptual Framework for training and development of employees

Research Methodology

The research design adopted for this study was a cross sectional survey. And random sampling was applied because of greater speed in data collection and availability of population elements. Eight companies/ organisations were selected randomly from the information that was provided from the Central Statistics Office

(CSO) since it is the one that have all the statistics of the companies that exists. From each company/organisation ten employees will have to fill in the questionnaires that will be placed in their respective companies/organisations. In total all the respondents will amount to hundred and twenty (i.e. $8 \times 10 = 80$). However there were 64 completed and returned questionnaires for the periods of data collection, an 80% response rate. Out of these, 3 were found unusable for the study as respondents only answered the demographic questions and not the questions which mainly answers the objectives of the study (part B, C, and D of the questionnaire).

The survey instrument

The research instrument contained questions which were closed-ended questions and were measured by a 5-point Likert scale (Strongly agree to strongly disagree). The questionnaire was divided into four parts. Part 1, dealt with demographics of the respondents, part 2, comprised questions of the driving factors for training employees, part 3, comprised of role of training employee and part 4, dealt with training evaluation of employees. The questionnaire was first pre-tested with 10 managers and employees to test the content validity of the instrument. Their suggestions were incorporated before final distribution of the questionnaire to the sample selected for the study.

Discussion and Findings

Demographics characteristics of the respondents

There were 61 respondents who constituted 28 Males and 33 Females from the study conducted. The percentage of male to female is 46:54. This depicts that from the organisations surveyed there were many females as compared to males despite the fact that some questionnaires (3 of them) were not used and that some were not returned, leading to a response rate of 80%.

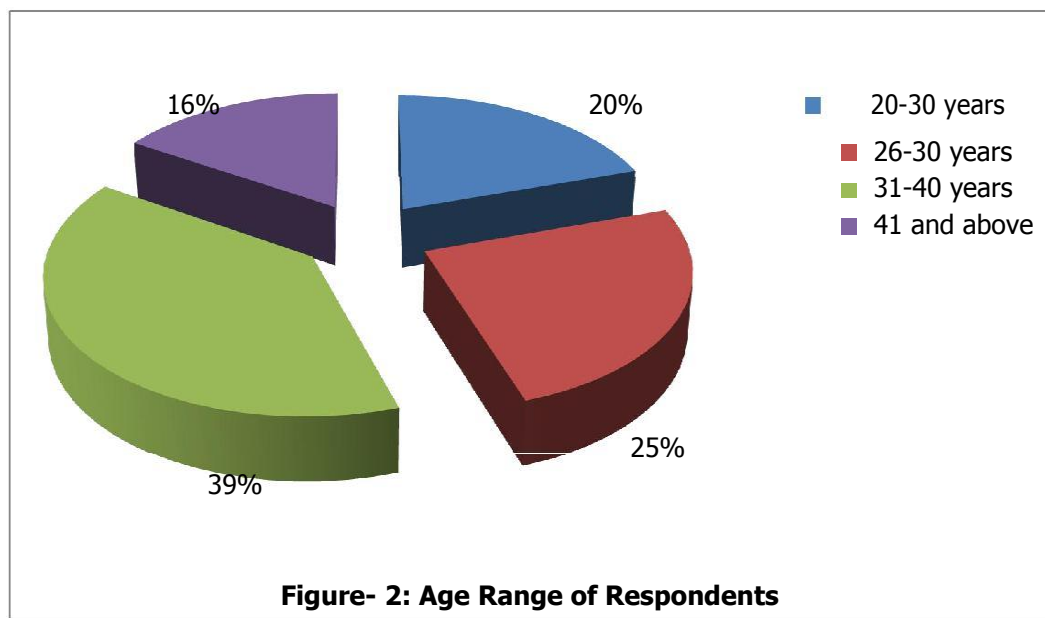
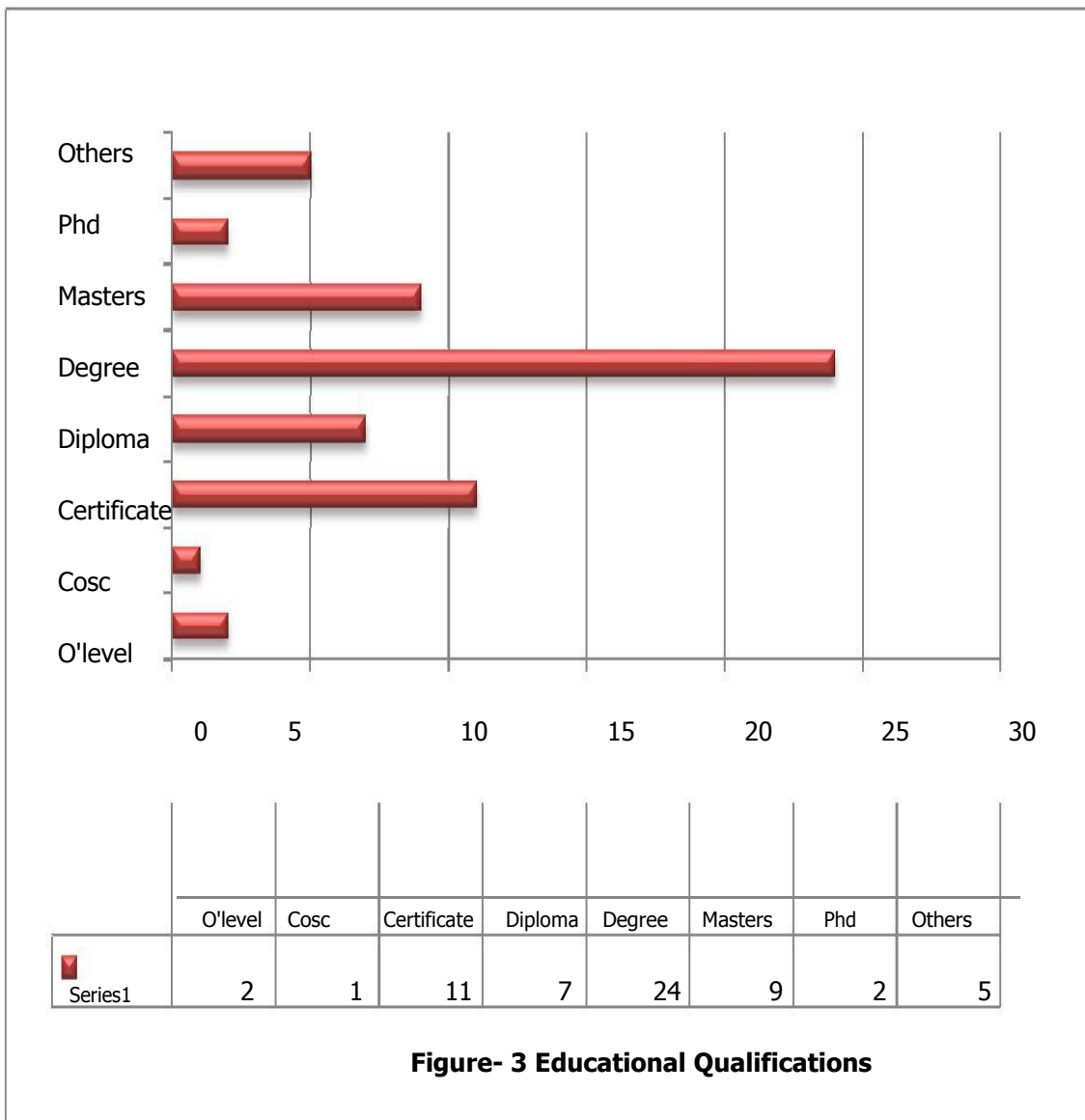


Fig.2 depicts the age range of respondents from which the research was conducted. Age range 20-25 has 20%, 26-30 has 25%, 31-40 has 39% and those who are above 41 years of age constitute 16%. Thus most of employees fall in the age range of 31-40 years.

Fig.3 shows the educational qualifications of the respondents. Most employees possess degree (24 /61*100 = 39%) and the lowest qualification being Cosc (Cambridge Overseas School Certificate) (2%). A total number of 14 (i.e. 23%) respondents who returned the questionnaires possess qualifications below Diploma, 42 (i.e. 69%) possess qualifications above Diploma (inclusive) and 5 (i.e. 8%) possess others.



The frequencies at which employees are trained are shown in Table 1. The results indicated that 5% of the employee are trained every month, 8% are trained quarterly, 13% are trained bi-annually and 39% were trained for the first time they joined their organizations and only 11% did not indicate the frequency at which they are trained. This clearly demonstrates that most of the organisations surveyed have training practices in place. This approach is good for the organisation in this era of competition.

Table 1: Frequency of Training Employees

FREQUENCY OF TRAINING					
Every month	Quarterly	Bi-annually	every year	trained once	Not indicated
3	5	8	14	24	7
5%	8%	13%	23%	39%	11%

The contribution of the training programme, to employee’s performance indicated in Table 2. From the empirical findings a total of 67% of the employees believe that training contributes to their job satisfaction, 56% agreed that training contributes to their work motivation, 53% believes that training will give them chances of being promoted in their jobs, 58% consented that their morale in doing their job has been positively affected by training, 74% indicated that training has increased their skill(s) level, 68.52% indicated that training has a significant role in building team work amongst them, 76% of employees has indicated that their job performance has been gratified due to training, 71% of the employees has seen training as a way to transfer skills and knowledge into the workplace and 58% of employees have seen communication being effective in their organisations due to training.

Table 2: Contribution of Training to the Employees performance

Variables	1		2		3		4		5	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Job satisfaction	3	5	6	11	9	16	28	51	9	16
Work motivation	2	4	9	17	13	24	24	44	6	11
Chances of promotion	7	12	4	7	16	28	21	37	9	16
Boost morale of employee	3	5	7	13	13	24	24	44	8	15
Skill(s) level	1	2	1	2	12	22	28	52	12	22
Encourage team work	1	2	4	7	12	22	29	54	8	15

Job performance	1	2	4	7	8	15	-	55	12	22
Transfer of skills & knowledge	-	-	88	15	8	15	28	51	11	20
Improves Communication	55	5	5	9	15	27	22	40	10	18

Respondents were asked to rank the importance of training to their organisations with regard to seven aspects of training related effectiveness, is training effectiveness related to organisational achievements? The empirical findings indicated that the percentage proportion of each variable to overall success of the organisation to be 70%, improves of the organisation financial status contributed by the training to the organisations to be 72%, on this variable the public owned organisations (under government) did not respond to the question as a way of generating profits rather on the usage of the funds allocated to them. 57% of the respondents agreed that training makes easier achievement of organisational goals into practice, 60% indicated that training has led to the organisations to have employees with necessary skills to aid the organisation to achieve its goals. With regard to encouragement of culture of quality, 56% indicated that training promotes the culture of quality within the organisations, in attaining the market share it has been found that 69% have agreed that training has a role to play in achieving and keeping the company in the market place and 56% indicated that trained employees are retained in their organisations as indicated in Table 3.

Table 3: Importance of Training to the Organization

VARIABLE	1		2		3		4		5	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Overall success of organisation	-	-	7	13	10	18	25	45	14	25
Financial status	2	4	3	5	11	20	25	45	15	27
Achieve organs' goals	1	2	9	16	14	25	18	32	14	25
Employee skills acumen	-	-	7	12	16	28	21	37	13	23
Culture of quality	-	-	9	16	16	28	21	37	11	19
Increase market share	-	-	3	5	14	25	27	49	11	20
Retention of employees	1	2	9	16	15	27	20	36	11	20

Notes: 1. Total sample size is 56

2. scale ranging from "very poor (1)", "poor (2)", "fair (3)", "good(4)" to "very good(5)."

There are two major methods of delivery of training: on-the-job and off-the-job. Table 4 lists two venues and nine delivery approaches or methods employed by organisations in imparting training to their employees. Respondents were asked to indicate their satisfaction against each method used. The empirical findings indicated that on-the-job training was most preferred, job rotation (53%) with the least being coaching (40%) and for off-the-job training the highest score goes to role playing (59%) and the least being internet teaching (34%).

Table 4: Methods used for training employees in the organisation

Variable	1		2		3		4		5	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
On the job Training										
Apprenticeship	2	6	6	19	9	28	9	28	6	19
Job rotation	2	4	14	13	14	30	17	36	8	17
Coaching	2	4	13	28	13	28	13	28	5	12
Off the job Training										
Role playing	3	11	6	22	2	7	9	33	7	26
Simulation	2	5	4	11	9	24	18	47	5	13
Case study	4	12	3	9	8	24	8	30	8	24
Video tapes	7	21	3	9	10	30	10	24	5	15
Group software	5	18	5	18	7	25	7	25	4	14
Internet training	5	19	3	11	10	37	10	15	5	19

The respondents were also asked to indicate how the training effectiveness can be measured or evaluated once the trainees are in the workplace-.The results are indicated that in Table 5, that most indicators used for measuring the training is basic production skills (68%) and the least, accident rate (20%).

Table 5: Indicators used for Evaluation of Training

Indicators	1		2		3		4		5	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Basic production	8	15	29	53	15	27	2	4	1	2
Basic quality tools	8	15	20	38	4	37	4	8	1	2
Labor turnover	3	6	21	42	6	40	6	12	-	-
Absenteeism	3	7	16	35	7	28	7	15	7	15
Accident rate	3	6	12	24	10	43	10	20	4	8
Revenue	8	15	22	41	3	37	3	6	1	2
Machine utility & d productivity	5	8	26	43	16	27	12	20	1	2
Problem solving skills	9	17	22	41	17	31	5	9	1	2
Material wastage	6	11	14	26	19	36	9	17	5	9
Customer complaints	11	20	14	25	18	33	9	17	2	4

Findings

The findings of this research support the literature review in number of key areas. First, organisations tend to recognize the need for, and potential of, training programmes for their survival and further development. However, (Tennant et al, 2002) argues that it is questionable whether the depth of training is sufficient to realize the necessary benefits of behavioural change and skill development leads to the realization of business benefits.

Employee training and development of employees is an important issue for organisations in general, and it is particularly an issue for all organisations in both private and public sector due to the potential loss of valuable knowledge and skills with the departure of key people within the organisation. Organisations are cognizant of this fact and the majority sees employee training and development as an important priority in organisation. Since the workforce is getting more and more diverse, training is a 'must'.

To conduct training effectively, it is critical for any organisation to acknowledge the diversity of employees. In addition there is need for evaluation and continuous improvement of training and development programs in an organisation to gauge its effectiveness.

Organisations stand to benefit either directly or indirectly from training and development of employees. In particular, the employees who are part of the organisations that are committed to training gain significantly from their training in terms of improved job performance, job satisfaction, work motivation, chances of promotion, skills level, team work, transfer of skills and knowledge and communication. Additionally, organisations that are committed to training gain an advantage over non-committed firms with respect to employee training and

development.

From the study we conclude that training plays an important role to the organisation itself. Taking the mean of the overall percentage, 63% of the respondents indicated that training has a positive role in the organisations in which they work for. The importance is reflected in the overall success of the organisation, transfer of organisational goals, skill set needed in the organisation, culture of quality, improved market share and retention of existing staff.

However, the study conducted by Acton and Golden, (2003)^[1] showed that organisations provide high quality training do not see their employees stay longer with them. An explanation for this was while employees see training as important for career development; it is not one of the key factors that influence the decision to stay in a particular job. Furthermore, argues that it is also difficult to measure the correlation between implementation of training and the overall success of the organisation. The extent to which the success of the organisation can be attributed to the use of strategically planned training is difficult to prove, therefore, be difficult to justify. This is particularly the case when the success of the company is measured in financial terms, as per se can improve the financial performance.

The research also reflects that the most used training methods are job rotation (on-the-job training) and role playing (off-the-job training). The findings were that job rotation injects new ideas into different departments of the organisation and it breaks down the departmental provincialism. One of the major reasons for the reason why employees might have chosen this type of training might be that the employees who are considered to have potential for major executives are trained using it so as to gain job experience across the organisation. For off-the-job training, employees chose role playing as the delivery method they found appropriate for them.

However, it cannot be concluded that the two methods are the best, this would require more research in more settings as the type of training depends by largely on the type of the job the employee is engaged in and also some employees can be trained both on-the-job and off-the-job.

On the face value, the results show that basic production skills is being widely used to measure the effectiveness of training; however, more detailed analysis shows that not to be the case. This may be due partly to the present economic situation which encourages organisations to drastically prune budgets which cannot be justified, coupled with lack of tools and resources to implement an evaluation strategy. Marketers indicate that customer complaints show that training is ineffective in the service or the product offered. A company can produce more products with lot of defects and that does not reveal the true reflection of training effectiveness rather ineffectiveness.

Conclusion

Training and development of employees do exist in organisations. In addition, an organisation uses various methods, for instance job rotation is used to train employees in this era of globalization. Similarly, various methods are used to evaluate the training programs. The findings of the research showed that training of employees has a positive effect to the individuals and the organisation at large. For instance, training of employees improves communication in an organisation, transfer of skills and knowledge, improves job performance, encourages team work, boosts the morale of employees and leads to job satisfaction. Various

approaches are used to evaluate the training programs but the commonly used is the reduction of accidents in the workplace and decline in material wastage.

There are many methods used to train and develop employees but the research showed that mostly used method is job rotation (on-the-job) and role playing (on-the-job). The two methods were found to be the widely and mostly used by the organisations under investigation. However, (Schuler and Jackson, 1996) suggested that decisions concerning delivery sites and methods might be constrained by the type of learning that is to occur, as well as the considerations of costs and time.

The implication of this study is that it will broaden the literature of training and development in organisations. Furthermore, this study would spur debate among managers to come up with various strategies to ensure that employees are trained and developed to be strategically positioned to cope with any changes in the business environment. Finally, the study provokes various managers to understand the need for training and development of employees in their organisations.

Recommendations

The following are recommendations are based on the study carried out

1. In order training to play a positive role in the organisation the policies about training and development should be communicated to the trainees.
2. Organisations should take the issues of training and development of employees since trained employees will assist the organisation to cope with any changes in the business environment.
3. In order the organisation to remain strategically positioned in the business environment or to be efficient in providing quality outputs to the society, there is need for both existing and new employees should be trained regularly.
4. Approaches used to train employees should be selected after careful consideration of the trainees and the organisation needs.
5. Strategies must be developed pertains to training and development of employees in an organisation before e carrying out the training programme. These strategic approaches should be adopted to ensure that training programmes are consistent with the overall objectives of the organisations.
6. Thus, there should be clear and reliable linkage between training effectiveness and the fulfillment of strategic organisational objectives. The strategy should be based on developing appropriate training programme of data gathering, problem identification, and cause and effect analysis and solution development.
7. Furthermore, organisations need to radically change policies for training of employees to ensure that the training is and at delivering key strategic goals of the organisation

Limitations of the Study

The limitations of the study include the following: First, the number of questionnaires returned may have reduced the validity. Secondly, the training effectiveness indicators used in this study are based on subjective responses to questions about basic production skills, basic quality tools, and labor turnover. A few scholars believe that subjective measures may be more reliable than objective indicators. However, since objective indicators are believed to achieve greater accuracy, it is hoped that future studies, time and resources permitting, will employ both subjective and objective measures of training effectiveness, so that comparison can be made between the two.

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