



Recent Training Trends: Learning and effectiveness

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Abstract

Purpose/Objective: The purpose of the present paper is to identify recent trends in training and development function of human resource development. For the purpose five Indian companies were studied. Qualitative method was applied here using structured interview schedule. Data were collected from the managers, responsible for identifying training needs, developing training as well as selecting employees for training. At the same time, employees were also interviewed to understand their level of satisfaction and learning out of these trainings. Results show that the use of technology based training is increasing. Companies are using frequently a mix of both online and offline mode of training for their employees. At the same time, training need analysis practices are evolving to understand better the effectiveness. Moreover, more focus is given to on the job training. The emerging trends suggest definite shifts in customer priorities and greater consciousness towards evaluating the impact of learning and return on investments. Technology barriers are slowly diminishing thereby increasing the demand for on-line services to provide cost-effective training. To secure a sizable market share, training providers need to develop solutions that are competitive. Companies are offering management development programmes as a reward or incentive. Today companies do not want to offer training only to their best performers as incentive but these companies are also keen for actual learning as well. As earlier, customer priorities are still given a great emphasis, and is reinforced at the time of imparting training to the employees. Identification of cost effective methods are a priority and focus for companies.

The present work is helpful in understanding the current trends and also gives an opportunity to understand as how these companies are getting benefitted by learning from each other.

Key Words: Training, learning, development, induction, on the job training

Introduction

Training and development opportunities are provided to employees in an organization for not only upgrading their existing knowledge but also is important for making them relevant in the changing scenario. These opportunities provided to employees by a company and should not be taken or expecting immediate gains as upgrading employee's knowledge with immediate improvements in individual and organizational performance. In contemporary business context, technologies and the way of working is changing very fast. In this regard, necessary

skills and competences change rapidly, hence creating a need for continuous improvement. Employee training is about developing skills and competences that are either not easily available in the labour market, i.e., developing a set of tailor-made skills and competences that fit company's strategy and meet specific business needs. The strategic objective of employee training and development is improvement of organizational performance. Recent trends show that today organizations are eager and take a lot of interest in developing human capital and investments in employees' skills and competences. This change is reflected in a way in their approach of human resources and their deployment. Recent research supports this trend.

Training is "an organizational intervention may be defined as a well thought of set of activities aimed to facilitate learning of knowledge, attitude, and skills among its people in the organization to improve their current job performance and contribute to the achievement of organizational goals" (Edralin, 2004). According to Dessler (2013), training refers to the activities which provide new or current employees the skills which are needed to perform their jobs. According to Goldstein & Ford (2002) and Aguinis & Kraiger, (2009), training could be described as "systematic approach to learning and development to improve individual, team and organizational effectiveness". Following, the explanation of Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart and Wright (2011), training is considered as the organization's efforts, which are planned with the aim at helping employees acquire job-related competencies. And the ultimate goal of this HR function is employees apply and transfer what they learn into the job. The impact of globalization, economic and social changes as well as the rapid transition to knowledge-based society require the employees' knowledge and skills need to be constantly developed so as to keep up with changes, information flow and new technologies (Kumpikaitè, 2008). Hence, it would be beneficial for the organization to understand the nature of learning organization so that they could create a dynamic learning culture and environment to fully support their employees.

These training, opportunities equip employees with sufficient knowledge and skills, which can further be enhanced based on individual potential and capabilities. They work more efficiently and contribute to the overall organizational value as well as business development. Hence, it is seen that training is an essential and necessary activity for organizations. Punia & Kant (2013) summarized that the training effectiveness is the degree to which the training obtains the desired objectives. Noe et al., (2010) supported the view that the effective training is designed with the aim of teaching skills and, which help the organization achieve its goals. Thus training is effective and successful when it links to the organizational needs and its outcomes fulfil the organization's target.

The financial results of companies account for 50-70% of their market value while the rest is prescribed to intangibles as intellectual property and human capital. For example, formal training programs significantly increase workforce productivity. Developing human capital is organizational prerequisite for increasing shareholder's return (Majovski & Davitkovska, 2016). Formal training and development programmes run by the companies for upskilling their employees give significant advantages, which is seen in several programmes, i.e., 495 programmes conducted in companies showed an average of 17% increase of staff productivity in three consecutive years. These efforts ultimately improves companies' productivity higher than that of competitors (Majovski & Davitkovska, 2016). A general trend in these training and development is seen that these opportunities are offered mostly to middle and top management employees as opposed to line management and other employees. In this regard, in the US, companies invest three to four times more in training on stress management and running effective meetings than skills development of employees that seek promotion (Pfeffer, 1997). Thus, it seems that it is always important to understand and realize the current trends of industry. Moreover, companies are addressing the gaps as identified by industry and academia time to time Thus, in the present paper the identified gaps and requirements are studied in the present scenario.

Method

Data for the present research were collected from a structured interview schedule. A set of questions were developed with the help of existing literature review and in consultation with the expert in the area. Different set of questions were developed for managers and employees as the purpose of information from employees was understanding of their satisfaction level with the training and with managers were the purpose of training and effectiveness. Survey/interviews were conducted in service provider companies such as insurance, IT/ITES, and banking and financial companies. Respondents were employees with having experience between 0-10 years. Before finally collecting data, a meeting was scheduled with the Executive Director HR or the senior manager to explore the possibility as how more data can be collected. During the discussion, it was derived that questionnaire survey form will be kept to each and every employee's work desk and will be collected personally after 3 days' time. Initially, employees did not support, but when researcher visited the organization and pursued employees personally; they could get ...information on the questions that were asked in the questionnaire personally. Researchers filled the questionnaire with the given information from the employees and managers to complete the survey. Although, the sample is small but was

found appropriate to run the model. Finally, researcher decided to continue the study with ... responses as a few of the questionnaires could not be used because of incomplete data.

The primary objective of the study is to investigate and to understand

Research Questions

1. To understand the training need assessment process used in the organization
2. To understand the types of trainings provided to employees at different levels
3. To analyse the factors influencing training effectiveness
4. To assess the level of satisfaction among employees with the trainings provided by the organization

Literature Review

There are a number of studies available in the literature that highlight the gaps and the needs of the industry for training and development. Studies are available, which are trying to understand current trends in training as well. According to Warr & Conner (1992), organisations face productivity and efficiency challenges brought on by global pressure. To cope with the challenges, they seek to develop and enhance their human capital as a source of sustainable competitive advantage. Evidence suggested that less than 10% of what is learned on training courses is applied effectively to enhance performance and business results. Most entry-level training is directed to the enhancement of specific functional competences in a job. It seems that training design plays a very vital role in the employee as well as organizational performance. A bad training design is nothing but the loss of time and money (Tsaour & Lin, 2004). People learn from their practical experience much better as compare to bookish knowledge. On the job training reduces cost and saves time (Flynn et al., 1995; Kaynak, 2003; Heras, 2006).

The report of Kumar & Ramchandran (2011) focused on training and development program given by the oil-mills in Coimbatore district. The survey was conducted in the district of Coimbatore by considering 120 sample respondents and by adopting tippets table. The study highlighted the impetus of the training and development programme for improving the morale of the workers and productivity of oil mills at Coimbatore. Esteves (2014) tried to identify the critical success factors for successful implementation of enterprise resource planning (ERP) project and results reveal that the company size and location have an impact on the relevance of training best practices. Moreover, there is a need to investigate the role of informal workplace trainers in ERP training activities. With the ever-changing technological environment in which we operate today, an efficient training program is essential to improve the employee's job performance, Knowledgeable, skilled employees can ensure the overall

success of a company in its efforts to remain competitive and profitable. As per Dalto (2015), “Adult learners want training to be relevant to their daily lives and to be focused on completing specific tasks.” It is also important to clearly communicate purpose. “If a health and safety program’s purpose is unclear or appears to benefit the company only, many workers will not take the subject matter seriously. The audience must understand how the training directly relates to their daily personal lives” (Potts, 2016). Training needs as per Smith (2017) includes codified requirements of organizations, and also the perceived training needs of employees. Organizations have to a proper delivery style. For adult learners, this is critical. By choosing the proper tool to engage workers, employers help them stay more focused on training, which increases memory retention. Other important aspects include involvement of two measures, i.e., content retention as assessed using a short quiz or visual performance review and a feedback loop that provides management with a measure of training effectiveness.

ROI of Training

The proposed model adapted and built on the Kirkpatrick—Phillips training evaluation model, adding a sixth, risk evaluation step and specifying measurement factors for each step.

Subramanian et al. (2012), This study is aimed at testing the feasibility of a Return on Investment (ROI) model in the context of a training programme in the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), a government organization, to see whether the success of a training programme can be measured more accurately in monetary terms. This study is aimed at testing the feasibility of a Return on Investment (ROI) model in the context of a training programme in the Indian Oil Corporation (IOC), a government organization, to see whether the success of a training programme can be measured more accurately in monetary terms

Success Factors

Lee et al. (2017), This study evaluates the training program for newly appointed government officials in Korea and presents the effectiveness of the success case method (SCM) technique for such an evaluation. The results illustrate that the factors that lead to successful application of the training are 15 success factors categorized in the trainee’s individual characteristics, the training design, and the trainee’s work environment. From the perspective of individual characteristics, the trainee’s high motivation to learn and motivation to transfer appeared to be the individual characteristics that facilitate the work-site application of the training. The training design factors that facilitate the transfer included training content that is highly relevant to the work, the real-life examples, opportunity to voluntarily execute tasks, education through practice, and active interaction and networking with other trainees. This study identified three work environment factors, which include whether the work that trainees perform includes

change-oriented characteristics, whether the department culture of the current work is learning-oriented, and whether the opportunity

Fui et al. (2015) This paper combines two multi-criteria decision-making (MCDM) tools to identify the critical success factors (CSFs) that impact the performance of personnel training course projects in the semiconductor industry in Taiwan. The study found four CSFs that affect project performance and proposed five practical implications. This paper verified that combining two MCDM tools can help training institutions to allocate their resources appropriately by focusing on the CSFs, identified by their weights, and thus, promote their training courses at lower cost and with greater efficiency.

Saini et al., 2013), The purpose of this paper is to identify the success factors for implementation of enterprise resource planning (ERP) at Indian small to medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) and to provide a comparative study with the trend in Indian large organizations and the global trend. It was found that four of the five hypothesized technological factors are significantly

related to the success of ERP implementation. They are: comprehensiveness of software development/process integration plan; significance of age of IT infrastructure; comprehensiveness of data migration plan; and extensiveness of system testing. Also, four of the nine hypotheses/sub-hypotheses amongst the people factors are significantly related to the success of ERP implementation. They are: blend of cross-functional employees in the team; extent of empowerment of decision-making team; significance of morale of the implementation team; and exhaustiveness of user training. The authors have found that ten of the 11 hypothesized organizational factors are significantly related to the success of ERP implementation.

Training Trends

The study of Sahgal & Shankar (2003) focused on current management training practices and services that are valued from a training vendor, and the growth of e-learning market in corporate India. The emerging trends suggested a definite shifts in customer priorities and greater consciousness towards evaluating the impact of learning and return on investments. Technology barriers are slowly diminishing thereby increasing the demand for on-line services to provide cost-effective training. To secure a sizable market share, training providers would need to develop solutions that are competitive on three fronts. Firstly, content that is needed for specific as against "canned", off-the shelf products; on-line training in addition to the interactive training approach and thirdly, value-adding Services that goes beyond delivering a training program, to developing an integrated approach that incorporates needs assessment,

curriculum development, training evaluation, performance support and performance tracking. Sahgal & Shankar (2003) focused on recent trends of management training practices, the services that were valued from a training vendor and the growth of e-Learning market in corporate India. It indicated definite shifts in customer priorities and greater consciousness towards evaluating the impact of learning and return on investments. It was found that technology barriers are slowly diminishing thereby increasing the demand for on-line services to provide cost-effective training. To secure a sizable market share, training providers would need to develop solutions that are competitive on three fronts. Firstly, content that is need specific as against "canned", off-the shelf products; on-line training in addition to the interactive training approach and thirdly, value-adding Services that goes beyond delivering a training program, to developing an integrated approach that incorporates needs assessment, curriculum development, training evaluation, performance support and performance tracking. Suhasini & Suganthalakshmi (2015) indicated that Organizational training is a dynamic concept experiencing a total transformation. The change is due to technological up-liftment. The article traced the evolution of training to present day. It then discusses the current technological trends in training- YouTube, Social Media, Smartphone, and E- Learning trends are discussed. Kansal & Joshi (2014) explained the purpose of training and development initially, and subsequently investigated extent of corporate disclosure on human resources (HR) in the annual reports of top performing Indian companies. This is first study that tried disclosure of HR by the Indian corporate sector in the CSR domain with a disclosure analysis for a period of nine years. This research provided new directions for the literature in this area and tried to promote comparative studies on HR-based studies from different perspectives. Kumar and Ramachandran (2011) explained the focus of training and development programs given by the Oil-Mills in Coimbatore District. With 120 sample, the survey was conducted in the District of Coimbatore adopting Tippets table. Statistical tools such as weighted average and chi-square analysis were used. The study highlighted the drive of the training and development programme to improve the self-confidence of the workers and productivity of oil mills at Coimbatore.

The study of Yadapadithaya (2003) reported current practices of evaluating training and development programs in the Indian corporate sector. Data were collected from written questionnaires mailed to 252 respondent companies—127 private, 99 public, and 26 multinational corporations (MNCs). The results and discussions were based on major drivers and key result areas of training and development; purposes, levels, instruments, timing, and designs of evaluation; serious limitations of the training system; and finally the major

challenges currently faced by the Indian corporate sector in strengthening the training and development function.

Malhotra & Dubey (2017) pointed out that Outbound Training being an innovative training concept in recent market trends bridges the gap between the industry requirements and academics. The paper identifies the study of the prerequisite factors essential for a successful OBT operation, which may lead to attainment of training objectives. Srimannarayana (2017) attempted to explore training evaluation practices in India due to increasing demand of training in all parts of the world. Davar & Parti (2013) presented meta-analysis, which indicated that training provided to employees does have significant effect on productivity, and it affects productivity across the board.

Stromme (2013) had indicated that training plays an important role in protecting workers from various hazards. Thus, effective safety and health training is needed for employees (including contract workers) for identifying hazards & precautions against them. With the advancement of oil and gas industry, the need for workers had risen, and this resulted in that new workers were hired for whom necessary preparation and training needs to be provided so that these workers are educated on the safe work practices associated with drilling and servicing a well. At the same time, experienced oil and gas workers should not be overlooked.

Khan et al. (2011) studied training and development initiative of organizations. They found on the job training, online/e-module of training, blended module of training, and training design and delivery styles, the four attributes are generally given focus to understand the positive effect of these training attributes on organizational performance by creating a sound environment of training. Kumar & Ramachandran (2011) emphasised on training and development program given by oil-mills in Coimbatore district by adopting tippets table. It also highlighted the impetus of the training and development programme for improving morale of the workers and productivity of oil mills at Coimbatore.

Kirwan & Birchall (2006) pointed out that a model solely “describes a sequence of influence on outcome occurring in a single learning experience and does not demonstrate any feedback loops”.

A carefully planned training program will meet learning objectives and provide evidence through training metrics that the program is meeting the needs of the organization and the participants. The organisation has full-fledged Corporate Training Department, to augment the learning and development requirements of its officers. The company conducts its training program by training needs analysis. By application of the most vibrant aspect Systematic Training Cycle (STC) emerged in 1960, a four stage process, the company will engage

organisational as their Training and Development work lacked a strategic focus (Boydell 1976). Truitt (2011) suggested that it is mandatory for training and development professionals to design, implement, and evaluate effectiveness of their programs in reducing disputes in workplace performance. It reconnoitred the relationships between training experiences and attitudes and attitudes about perceived job proficiency.

The specification of values forms the basis for evaluation. The basis of evaluation and the mode of collection of information necessary for evaluation should be determined at the planning stage. The process of training evaluation has been defined as “any attempt to obtain information on the effects of training performance and to assess the value or training in the light of that information.” Evaluation leads to controlling and correcting the training programmes. Hamblin suggested five levels at which evaluation of training can take place, viz. reactions, learning, job behaviour, organization and ultimate value.

It is very necessary for the organization to design the training very carefully (Michael Armstrong, 2000). The design of the training should be according to the needs of the employees (Ginsberg, 1997). Those organizations which develop a good training design according to the need of the employees as well as to the organization always get good results (Partlow, 1996; Tihanyi et al., 2000; Boudreau et al., 2001).

Analysis

The analysis of both public and private insurance sector reveals the facts that among the total respondents about 47% were female who are keenly interested and also took active part in the training programs. Table 2 shows age ranging between 18-30 years are much more interested to participating in the recent digitalised training programs of insurance sectors.

Table 1: Demographic profile

MALE	FEMALE	% OF MALE	% OF FEMALE
32	36	47.05	52.94

Table 2: Demographic Profile: Age

MINIMUM AGE	MAXIMUM AGE	AVERAGE AGE
18	50	34

Freshers are much enthusiastic to attend the training or any developmental programs to reach at a certain height in the insurance sector. Few participants have work experience, which helps

them a lot in gaining momentum in the insurance sector as insurance advisor in both the sectors as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Work Experience

MINIMUM WORK EXP.	MAXIMUM WORK EXP.	AVERAGE WORK EXP.
0	20	10

The duration of the training is about 2 weeks minimum which is mandatory for all advisors or management trainees in both the sector. Table 4 also shows that the duration of the training can be also 2 months depends on the institutional capacities or training modules.

Table 4: Duration of the Training

MINIMUM DURATION	MAXIMUM DURATION	AVERAGE DURATION
14 DAYS(2 WEEKS)	60 DAYS(2 MONTHS)	37 DAYS (1MONTH 7 DAYS)

The different types of training as seen from the data table 5 based on different categories like induction, audio-visual, computer based and on the job. Significant differences are found in the different types of training levels due to different age groups as well as staff category. The candidates between the age 21-25 & 26 – 30 are the better performers than the other age groups. Types of trainings are listed in Table 5. The age in years have significance at 5% level. the trainee category of the candidate performing better than the sales personnel, as identified from table 6.

Table 5: Types of Trainings

INDUCTION	AUDIO-VISUAL BASED	COMPUTER BASED	ON-THE JOB
100.00%	50%	50%	26.47%

Hereby the analysis is the combined output of learning, Effectiveness & qualification (Table 6 to 12). Data collected for this study was analyzed thoroughly and results showed that these trainings improve performance and productivity of employees. It helps in measuring the training effectiveness in a sound manner for both the sectors. There is a significant increase in the employee performance level. Among the employees who are in the performance level of 75%-90% before training, 45% of them have improved their performance to 90% - 100%. The highest level of employees productivity increase is 78.6% from 50%-75% to 75%-90%. The

next highest percentage is 65.2% from below 50% to 50%-75%.50% of the employees have not shown any improvement in their productivity. They remain in the same percentage of productivity 90% - 100%. The learning level also increased, it was high of about 58% with 5 point scale. Moreover it indicates that in the improvement of employee productivity with variable educational qualification which reveals that the employees who have completed their under graduation have performed well in organisation.

Table 6: Training Effectiveness

HIGH (5)	LOW (< 5)
33.82%	66.18%

Table 7: Overall Learning

HIGH (5)	LOW (< 5)
58.82%	41.18%

Table 8: Quality of Training

HIGH (5 or 4)	LOW (< 4)
58.82%	41.18%

Table 9: Training Experience and Satisfaction

HIGH (5)	LOW (< 5)
32.35%	67.65%

Table 10: Interest among participants

HIGH (5)	LOW (< 5)
33.82%	66.18%

Table 11: Training Usefulness

HIGH (5)	LOW (< 5)
42.64%	57.36%

Insurance industry is the multifaceted one, wherein diversified work forces are there with like kinds of targets in sales & marketing. Their demographic factors reveal that the age of the

employees in sales & marketing plays a major role and for that they need rigorous training and developmental programs to cope up the current marketing trends and satisfy customer needs.

The employee's age group of 21-25 is showing improvement in their performance. This is gradually reduced and remains almost same till the age of 35 years. As they gain momentum after training they are showing improvement in their performance after 40 years also. For the better performance and the consistence growth the undergraduate education is sufficient. The PG degree doesn't play any special role in their business. The performance of the Sales personnel is depending on the market trend and the economic condition of the people for both taking insurance policy and paying the premium. The Human Resource Management (HRM) practices other than the training followed in the organisations are very important to the employees for enhancing their interest toward the training and the subsequent developmental aspects. The performance level & the knowledge in their products, work procedure determines the necessity of the employee training other than the fresher's. It also reveals that the periodical training programmes are mandatory to the employees in the Private Insurance Sector.

The training programs have also few barriers or hindrances in both the private and public sector. The public sectors have some common obstacles which the trainees face during the programs and it should be curbed out with new motives and innovative ways. The barriers that the public insurance sector use to face are that it should be more customer centric, the sales aspect is not clear whereas the presentation should be ICT based. In the private sector the obstacles can be categorised as the unsound handling of distributors, time barriers and less sales target.

Discussion and Conclusions

Training and development are integral part of every sector. Among various streams of financial sector, insurance sector is most significant as its main motto is to deal with society's wellbeing. People out of word of mouth and faith invest their money for future and the agents or advisors, who dealt with it should be skilled and knowledgeable. For this situation, the plethora of evidence are available that training is mandatory for insurance professionals. Various demographic aspects are interwoven so strongly that insurance professionals nowadays gladly choosing this profession specially the youths. Recent statistics indicate that youth are mostly interested in such trainings and get maximum benefits out of them. Different types of trainings, especially soft skill trainings, how to convert sales targets and deal with the customers are the two most vibrating features of insurance training domain, which prove that it is purely customer centric.

It was also revealed from this study that training plays a major role in the employee performance. There is consistent growth in their performance after the training. They had

shown improvement in their performance level from 20% - 25% growth after the training. The employee's those who are already performing 90%-100% shown consistency in their performance level. The performance level & the knowledge in their products, work procedure determines the necessity of the employee training other than the fresher. It also reveals that the periodical training programmes are mandatory to the employees in the Private Insurance Sector.

Moreover, overall satisfaction was also improved as found out by the research. Employees feel that their organizations care about them and these employees feel motivated to put extra effort for the fulfilment of desired company goals and objectives. They also find doing the given task easier as the hands on trainings make them more efficient overall.

Thus, it can be concluded that training and development is a crucial part for these organizations for not only satisfaction of employees, but also it helps in better engagement score, low retention and overall better performance of the organization. These insurance company mostly depend on young employees, who are very much energetic and enthusiastic for their work. When training and development opportunities are provided, which helps them even achieving their day-today goals, they find it very important and take these trainings seriously. In to tal, it can be concluded that such activities should be promoted in most of the organizations.

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