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An Analysis on Employee Training and Development Relationship and Technique: A Strategic HRM Function

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Abstract – In this context, human resources are the most important asset of statistical offices. Appropriate and skilled human resources are essential to ensure the production of high quality statistics and to implement more efficient and effective production processes based on new technologies. Proactive human resources management is essential to achieve the abovementioned change and to allow statistical offices to meet the challenges today and in future.

This paper highlighting good practices in human resources management Training and development in statistical offices. The papers cover a range of issues from recruitment and retaining of qualified staff and setting up training programmes, to competence mapping and management development. These papers have been presented at seminars and workshops on human resources management and training.

The purpose of the study was to investigate the relationship between Training and Development (T&D) as a Human Resource Practice and the organizational performance (OP) of the Kenyan state corporations. The study hypothesized that; there was a positive relationship between T&D and OP and therefore the need to investigate how specific the two variables relate.



INTRODUCTION

Training and development play an important role in the effectiveness of organisations and to the experiences of people in work. Training has implications for productivity, health and safety at work and personal development. All organisations employing people need to train and develop their staff. Most organisations are cognizant of this requirement and invest effort and other resources in training and development. Such investment can take the form of employing specialist training and development staff and paying salaries to staff undergoing training and development. Investment in training and development entails obtaining and maintaining space and equipment. It also means that operational personnel, employed in the organization's main business functions, such as production, maintenance, sales, marketing and management support, must also direct their attention and effort from time to time towards supporting training development and delivery. This means they are required to give less attention to activities that are obviously more productive in terms of the organization's main business. However, investment in training and development is generally regarded as good

management practice to maintain appropriate expertise now and in the future. [1, 2]

Organizations are increasingly spending more money annually on training with the belief that it will give them a competitive edge in the local and global market.

Training as 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. On the other hand, development pertains to long-term planned efforts to enhance the total growth of human resource that will lead to the fulfillment of personal and organizational goals.

Training is indispensable and becomes strategic if it takes into account long-term organizational goals and objectives. Having goals such as development of new and better products, expanding to a global market, and developing a workforce with core competencies are strategic (Lynton and Pareek 2000).[3]

The human resource management (HRM) function has increasingly been recognized as an important element of a company's strategy. Organizations attempting to succeed in today's global business environment must invest in the acquisition and development of employees. Indeed, a recent study of managerial attitudes about HRM practices in different countries found that training and development is perceived as the most important HRM practice (Jennings, Cyr, & Moore, 1995).

There are, however, substantial limitations associated with existing empirical research on training and development across nations, impeding organizations' capabilities to design and implement effective HRM practices within and particularly across nations. Recent literature on comparative HRM has called for more direct comparisons of HRM practices in different countries in order to understand the variety of practices within different contexts. This provided some of the motivation for our research.

The purpose of this study is to analyze training and development practices within and across nine countries and one region, namely, Australia, Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Indonesia, Mexico, Taiwan, the United States, and the region of Central and South America (referred to as "Latin America" in this paper and comprised of respondents from Costa Rica, Guatemala, Panama, Nicaragua, and Venezuela).

The nature of the study is exploratory and only a first step toward identifying cross-cultural training and development practices in an attempt to discover a set of common or universal practices. As such, the study has two main objectives: (1) to report on current and desired training and development practices across countries and one region, and (2) to establish whether there are common or universal training and development practices across countries, or whether these practices are country or region specific.[4]

The constant pressure to maintain superiority in the marketplace prompts the need to constantly upgrade employee skills and knowledge and to improve positive work-related attitudes. The method most commonly used to attain these goals is training and development. According to Armstrong (2006) and Haunstein (1998) the objective of training and development, as asserted by is to develop the skills and competences of employees to improve their performance; to help people grow within the organization in order for the organization to meet its future HR needs. According to Drummond (2000) training involves the use of formal and informal processes to impart knowledge and help people acquire the skills necessary for them to perform their jobs satisfactorily, while development prepares employees for other positions in the organization and increases their ability to move into jobs that may not yet exist. Development therefore is about preparing for change in the form of new jobs, new responsibilities, or new requirements. Therefore, training and

development is a necessary effort of a company to improve quality and to meet the challenges of global competition and social change.[5-7]

Arago´N-Sa´Nchez et.al (2003) observes that there is no all-embracing concept that brings together the processes of education, learning, T&D. However, it must be clear that they are inextricably linked. They share many common principles, e.g., learning theories, assessment and evaluation, and design of programs, and so there is the need for synthesis. Lundy et al further reiterate that each individual matures over a lifetime and that development is the process, which can enable employees to reach a personal full potential. Development is therefore, for the most part, long term in focus. Education contributes to each individual's development by facilitating the attainment of mental powers, character and socialization, as well as specific knowledge and skills.

Providing formal and informal training experiences, such as basic skills training, on-the-job experience, coaching, mentoring and management development can further influence employees' development and hence, their performance. Training, when well done, will reflect in productivity, that is, productivity will increase, there will be reduction in accidents on the job and in the end profits of the organization would be maximized; the ultimate goal of every employer. Dessler (2003) and Mondy (2008) sums up how T&D influences corporate performance by arguing that developing human capital through continuing training may increase the productive output from each employee either through improvement in skill level or through improvement in morale and job satisfaction.

Past researchers have found evidence on the impact of training on productivity and where employees and employers were able to share the benefits from training. On the other hand, Lynch and Black (1995) whose research focused on the generality of training to OP revealed that only off-the job (general) training improves on the performance whereas on the job training does not. This is further concurred by Barrett and O'Connell (2001) that general training has positive impact on firm performance whereas firm-specific training does not. On the other hand, Nankervis, Compton and McCarthy (1999) were of the opinion that effective training would not only equip employee with most of the knowledge and skills needed to accomplish jobs, it would also help to achieve overall organization objectives by contributing to the satisfaction and productivity of employee. Therefore, one can conclude that training provide adequate criteria to an individual to perform better in a given task and subsequently contributes to the firm performance. Consequently, the hypothesis of this study is that; there is a positive relationship between employee development and organizational performance.[8-13]

OBJECTIVES

- Relate concepts and principles from the psychology of training and development to real occupational issues in order to make a constructive contribution to organisations.
- Recognize the psychological assumptions made in making training and development decisions and to manage these assumptions appropriately.
- Appreciate the contextual factors of real organisations and work situations that affect decisions concerning the application of training and development concepts.
- Provide a basis for making useful training interventions within organisations and evaluating such interventions.

EVALUATION OF TRAINING AND IMPLEMENTATION

Implementation covers the logistical aspects like venue, food, budget, equipment, resource persons, transportation, and participants. These should be properly attended to during the actual conduct of the training. Therefore, training programs are done within the company or outside depending on the nature of the program and the financial capability of the organization. It cases where the organization has earmarked a sufficient budget for major training program especially for managers, these are done outside of the company with external consultants as trainers. Companies like Fortune Medicare Inc. and Nestle Philippines have this kind of practice.

This last phase of the training process requires the assessment of the conduct of the training activity. The evaluation is concerned with the measurement of the training success or effectiveness to establish whether an investment in a particular training has paid off. The training effectiveness is usually determined based on the achievement of the previously set objectives and results, considering the needs, methods, and other areas of training administration. According to Kirkpatrick (1998). there are four levels of evaluating training programs. These are the (1) reaction: (2) learning: (3) behavioral change: and (4) impact to organization. The reaction level measures the participants' feedback right after the conduct of the training. Feedbacks are taken related to attainment of objectives, processes, methodologies, time, reading materials, resource persons/facilitators, and other logistics of the training. On the other hand, participants' learning level determines what specific skills, knowledge or even

what they learned is commonly asked at the end of the training period.

The behavioral change level assesses the changes on the attitude and or habits of the trainees after the training that is usually observable at the workplace. This will involve a follow up of the trainees in coordination with the immediate supervisor. Examples of behavioral indicators are attendance, promptness, courtesy, cooperation, and level of participation.[14]

EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND TURNOVER

Investing in human resources through training and management development improves individual employee capabilities and organizational capabilities. But investing in people is not the same as investing in equipment or machinery. When an organization invests in new computers, for example, the cost can be depreciated over multiple years; but when an organization invests in management development, it is a cost for that year and cannot be depreciated. So from an accounting point of view, dollar for dollar, it is better to invest in the equipment that employees use than it is to invest in the employees using that equipment.

If an organization invests in new equipment, it is expected that the equipment will pay for itself in faster production, less waste, lower maintenance costs, and so forth. But if an organization invests in improving the knowledge and skills of its employees, there should be some benefit to the organization. How should the organization measure the effect? As measures of training program success, Kirkpatrick (1959) suggested using four criteria:

1. Reaction: what the trainees thought of the particular program;
2. Learning: what principles, facts, and techniques trainees learned;
3. Behavior: an assessment of changes in trainee job performance; and
4. Results: the impact of the training program on organizational objectives, such as turnover, absence, and costs.

Measuring the return on investment for a training program adds a fifth level to the criteria. Phillips's (1996) summary of the American Society for Training and Development's return on investment for training case studies in a variety of industries notes that the returns on investment ranged from 150% to 2000%.

There is a second reason that organizations have a bias toward investments in equipment rather than employee development. Developing your employees

makes them more attractive to other employers, potentially making them more likely to turnover. After they have been developed, employees are free to leave the organization to work for another organization, taking the organization's investment in their improved level of knowledge or skills with them to their new employer. According to this counterproductive logic, it is better not to develop your own employees, to prevent competitors from potentially benefitting from the training.[15]

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

The study sought to find out whether T&D had an effect on organizational performance. T&D as an independent variable was investigated. Preliminary questions were if the T&D department existed in an organization and the indicators of need for training. Majority of the organization, 87.9% indicated it was in place while 12.1% indicated it did not exist. The indicators of need for training are 61.7% Performance Appraisal reports as outlined on table 1. This contradicts the earlier findings that Performance Appraisal was not used to indicate training needs. Employees' grievances indicate training need by 23.3%, absenteeism, tardiness and turnover indicted 6.7%, accidents and others 4.2% each.

Indicator of Need for Training	Percentage
PA reports	61.7
Employees grievances	23.3
Absenteeism, tardiness and turnover	6.7
Accidents	4.2
Others	4.2
Total	100

Table 1 Indicator of Training Needs.

Other issues under T&D were investigated in relation to the organizational performance as shown in table 2. On the issue of existence of T&D policy, 65.6% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that it was in place. Another 51.2% of the respondents either agreed or strongly agreed that training needs identified were realistic and were based on organizational training needs. This is good for respective corporations since 80.3% of the respondents said training and had a strong influence on organizational performance. However, quite a number of respondents ranging from 59.4% to 71.8% either strongly disagreed, disagreed or were neutral on adherence to T&D policy, sharing of knowledge gained during T&D process, attendance to regular training programs, whether training programs aim to train employees new skills and if T&D enhances teamwork. This findings are in line with Chang and Chen (2002)'s findings who in his study in Taiwanese high technology firms, established that T&D significantly affected productivity. Other Researchers Chiu et al. (2002); Tepstra and Rozell, (1993) established that T&D has positive association with firms' performance. [16,17]

T&D issues	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
There is T&D policy in place	8.0	12.0	14.4	46.4	19.2
T&D policy is strictly adhered to	17.9	22.0	29.3	21.1	9.8
Employees are given opportunities to share knowledge gained during T&D process	8.0	26.4	25.6	33.6	6.4
Employees undergo regular training programs	12.2	28.5	18.7	26.0	14.6
Training needs are identified through a formal process	12.7	27.8	21.4	28.6	9.5
Training programs aim to train employees new skills	8.8	21.6	24.0	31.2	14.4
T&D enhances teamwork	10.5	32.3	29.0	18.5	9.7
Training needs identified are realistic based on organizational needs	7.3	22.0	19.5	36.6	14.6
T&D has strong influence on organizational performance	0.8	7.4	11.5	25.4	54.9

Table 2 Training and Development.

CONCLUSION

The purpose of this study is to analyze training and development practices within and across nine countries and one region. It is also to address whether there are common or universal training and development practices across countries. While we could find no universal or common practices across all the countries and region examined, we found significant similarities in practices within country clusters.

The study sought to find the kind of relationship that existed between training and development and organizational performance. Majority of the organization, 87.9% indicated training and development department was in place. The indicators of need for training are 61.7% performance appraisal reports.

The findings on Training and development revealed its strategic positioning since it directly promoted organizational business goals and objectives, and thereby enhancing organizational performance. The environment in which most organizations operate today is continuously changing, and the rate of change is increasing. Almost most organizations are now involving in tremendous increase in international business and foreign assignments. Training and developing the workforce offer an interesting case of change for any organization in light of uncertain and rapidly changing environment.

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