



The Effectiveness of On-The-Job Training in Increasing Employees' Knowledge, Skill and Attitudes among Private Sector Workers in Kuala Lumpur

Dashini Muthiah¹ and Azlini Hassan²

ABSTRACT

This study examines the effectiveness of on-the-job training in increasing knowledge, skill and attitudes among private sector employees in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia. There are three factors that have been created for this study that will influence the effectiveness of on-the-job training, namely, personnel commitment, trainer's qualification, and training time. A hundred respondents from the private sector participated in the study. The research objectives of the study were answered using descriptive, correlation and regression analysis. The study shows that personnel commitment and trainer's qualification were strongly related to the effectiveness of on-the-job training effectiveness. However, training time has no correlation with on-the-job training.

Keywords: Effectiveness, on-the-job training, personnel commitment, trainer's qualification, training time.

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizations use on-the-job training in order to enhance employee performance. This includes just about every department across all managerial levels. Wright & Belcourt (1995) stated that on-the-job training is a concept where the employees are trained by professionals or experts in the specific field. Morgan (2000), meanwhile, believes that on-the-job training will take place in a normal working environment in which all employees can motivate themselves and find new ways of reinventing their work in light of the company's changing needs. This is to enhance their skills and to conduct the normal task or working activities assigned. Employees, who receive such training generally find it helpful in increasing their talent and developing their ability to perform at the workplace (Hooi, 2010).

¹DASHINI MUTHIAH, dashen.dashni_1010@yahoo.com

²AZLINI HASSAN, lecturer, School of Business Innovation and Technopreneurship, Universiti Malaysia Perlis, Perlis, Malaysia, azlini@unimap.edu.my.

Companies devote considerable attention to employee training in order to see enhanced performance and high productivity. As a result, many industries, especially manufacturing in the private sector, provide on-the-job training to their staff. The setback here is how much consideration is afforded to this kind of training in the company? Basu *et al.* (2002) found in their investigation that management gives less importance to on-the-job training than it does to company' sales. Lack of commitment and support from the management can generate negative effects on on-the-job training.

Effectiveness is a decisive factor in training evaluation to ensure that any on-the-job training program has achieved its objectives. However, there are also on-the-job training programs that fail to deliver the expected purposes. Hamblin (1974) assumed that, one cannot assess training effects unless one knows something about the before-training situation for comparison with after-training. Different individuals in an organization need different types of training based on their position, experience and the task requirement and these requirements are a few of the problems that organizations face when planning for staff training (Ooi, Lee, and Bryan, 2007).

According to Baldwin and Ford (1988), there is a myth that only 10% of training transfers to the job. In the absence of interest and desire to learn, learning may not be successful because the employee will not be able to give full concentration on what is being taught (Yahaya, Othman, & Azizan, 2009). Sometimes, what was a successful training program yesterday may not be a cost-effective program tomorrow.

In line with the observations highlighted above, this study attempts to answer the following research questions:

1. Does personnel commitment influence the effectiveness of on-the-job training?
2. Does a trainer's qualification influence the effectiveness of on-the-job training?
3. Does training time influence the effectiveness of on-the-job training?

There are three objectives for this study, namely:

1. To determine personnel commitment in influencing the effectiveness of on-the-job training
2. To determine a trainer's qualification in influencing the effective on-the-job training
3. To determine training time in influencing the effectiveness of on-the-job training

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Although on-the-job training is a low-cost training method (Beaver & Hutchings, 2005), it remains an extremely potent method of transferring skills (Watanuki, 2008). Watanuki supports his research by adding that the whole body can experience the training using a person's five senses of seeing, hearing, taste, smell, and touch. On-the-job training also is the most frequently used training method among manufacturers (Blanchard & Thacker, 2010).

2.1 Personnel Commitment

Indirectly, on-the-job training practices will fill up the space between job desirable performance and self-competence, which at the end brings up the best job performance of an individual (Sahinidis & Bouris, 2008). According to Wright & Belcourt (1995), employees, who experience on-the-job training method, typically find it to be very useful in helping them increase their ability to perform. The training provided helps to reduce the disappointment of employees in their performance (Sahinidis & Bouris, 2008). The authors confirmed that the employee's commitment to the effectiveness of training is very important. Jayawardana & Prasanna (2007), show a positive relationship between continuous learning cultures and effectiveness.

2.2 Trainer's Qualification

A trainer is one who will be responsible for their down-line staff or trainee to understand the training and apply it effectively at the workplace (Wright & Belcourt, 1995). Although it is not necessary for on-the-job trainers to possess considerable technical knowledge and skills, they need to have solid understanding of the job and be able to use one-on-one instructional techniques effectively (Blanchard & Thacker, 2010). The ability to train workers is not an inborn skill (Aminuddin, 2009). According to Aminuddin, the best trainers are passionate to share their knowledge with others, while also being knowledgeable, patient, good-humoured, and effective communicators.

2.3 Training Time

The commitment to attend training must come from the trainees (Cotterill, 2004). According to Aghazadeh (2007), the total amount of time consumed by employees on on-the-job training leads to the desired productivity level of the particular organization. This is due to the fact that when employees are trained, they have the initial benefits of learning better ways to perform each task they must accomplish while doing their job. However, Hooi (2010) emphasized that, if the training is conducted during working hours but it is not on the job being performed, there will be a negative outcome from this situation. The outcomes

are the productivity level of employees will decrease and they will be late in hours, because of the training are not related to their job task.

3. METHODOLOGY

Based on the literature review, we developed a theoretical framework (Figure 1) and a series of hypothesis. The framework consists of the dependent variable (on-the-job training effectiveness) and the independent variable (personnel commitment, trainer’s qualification, and training time).

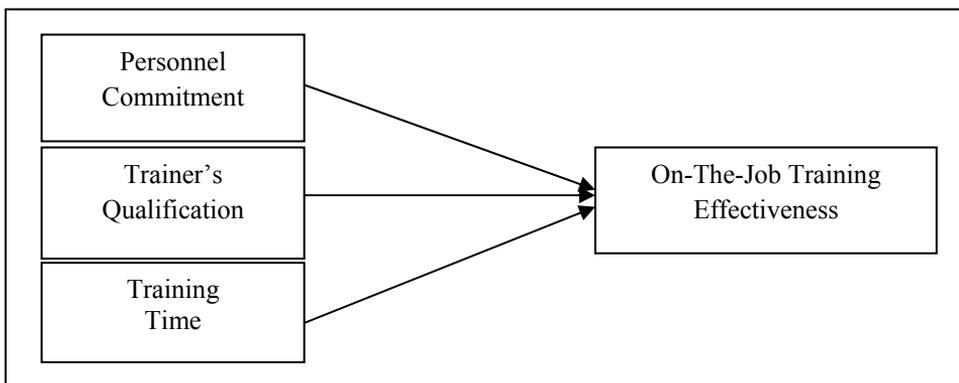


Figure 1: Theoretical Framework

Based on the theoretical framework, three hypotheses were developed.

H1 There is a positive relationship between personnel commitment and effectiveness of on-the-job training

H2 There is a positive relationship between trainer’s qualification and effectiveness of on-the-job training

H3 There is a positive relationship between training time and effectiveness of on-the-job training

We adopt a quantitative approach to data collection. The data were gathered through questionnaires. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed to selected private sector firms. The total feedback received was 100 answered questionnaires. All the questionnaires were analyzed using the Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS).

4. FINDINGS

Table 1 shows an analysis of the respondents' profile. Most of the respondents were male (68.0%), with 32.0% being female. While most of the respondents were aged between 26 to 35 years old (46%), 29% of respondents were between 36 to 45 years old, 13% (respondent less than 26 years old), and 12% (46 to 55 years old). The data that were collected by Indian respondents were the highest, which was 55%, 27% of Malay respondents and 9% of Chinese respondent and also for other races in Malaysia is also 9%. 61% of the respondents came from a middle-level managerial position, 23% from lower level and 16% top level. Most of the respondents' length of service was between 2 - 5 years (31%). Whereas they were 28% respondents have 6 – 10 years working experiences, 22% (working experiences less than 2 years) and 19% of respondents had working experiences of more than 10 years.

Table 1: Analysis of Respondents Profile

Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	68	68.0
	Female	32	32.0
Age	<26	13	13.0
	26-35	46	46.0
	36-45	29	29.0
	46-55	12	12.0
Race	Malay	27	27.0
	Indian	55	55.0
	Chinese	9	9.0
	Others	9	9.0
Job Title	Top level	16	16.0
	Middle level	61	61.0
	Lower level	23	23.0
Length of Service	< 2 years	22	22.0
	2-5 years	31	31.0
	6-10ears	28	28.0
	>10 years	19	19.0

Table 2 shows the relation of independent variables with the effectiveness of on-the-job training. The significance level is $p < 0.01$. For personnel commitment, it is found that the value of correlation coefficient, r is 0.756. It shows a strong relation between personnel commitment and effectiveness of on-the-job training. On trainer's qualification, it is found that the value of correlation coefficient, r for trainer's qualification on the effectiveness of on-the-job training is 0.731 at $p < 0.000$. It also shows a strong relation. On training time, the value r is 0.273 with a p value of 0.006. Is shows a strong relation between training time and effectiveness of on-the-job training.

Table 2: Correlation between Personnel Commitment, Trainer’s Qualification, and Training Time, with Effectiveness of On-the-Job Training

	Personnel Commitment	Trainer’s Qualification	Training Time	Effectiveness of On-the-Job Training
Personnel Commitment	1	0.469** 0.000	0.284** 0.004	0.756** 0.000
Trainer’s Qualification		1	0.360 0.000	0.731** 0.000
Training Time			1	0.273 0.006**
Effectiveness of On-the-Job Training				1

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (1 tailed)

A multiple regression analysis was carried out and the result is shown in Table 3. The result indicates that adjusted R² was 0.749 with F value 60.051.

Table 3: Regression of Personnel Commitment, Trainer’s Qualification, and Training Time, with Effectiveness of On-the-Job Training

	B	S.E	Beta (β)	t	sig
Constant	-0.077	0.233		-0.331	0.741
Personnel Commitment	0.479	0.060	0.503	7.960	0.000
Trainers’ Qualification	0.536	0.079	0.462	6.794	0.000
Training Time	-0.074	0.055	-0.076	-1.337	0.185
Durbin Watson = 1.974					
R ² = 0.762		F= 60.051			
Adjusted R ² = 0.749					

*p<0.01, **p<0.05, ***p<0.10

As can be seen from table 3, the results of hypothesis testing were shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Summary of Hypotheses Testing

	Hypotheses	Result
H1	There is a positive relationship between personnel commitment and effectiveness of on-the-job training	Accepted
H2	There is a positive relationship between trainer's qualification and effectiveness of on-the-job training	Accepted
H3	There is a positive relationship between training time and effectiveness of on-the-job training	Rejected

5. DISCUSSION

In this present study, hypothesis H1 examined the relationship between personnel commitment and effectiveness of on-the-job training and yet this hypothesis is accepted. Based on Sahinidis & Bouris (2008), they concluded that employee's commitment to the training effectiveness is important. Same goes to Jayawardana & Prasanna (2007). In their study, there is a positive relationship between training and effectiveness if the trainees is focused and dedicated. Wright & Belcourt (1995) agreed that, on-the-job training provides a design and applications of series of steps that enables the trainee to perform a job efficiently.

Hypotheses H2 also examined the positive relationship between trainer's qualification and effectiveness of on-the-job training. Wright & Belcourt (1995) agreed that trainers are the important person who is responsible in giving adequate training, especially for the new staff. Training is known as a process where modification of attitude, knowledge, and skills takes place through experience taught by trainer to trainee (Wan, 2007). This is to ensure that their teaching does not go wrong and follow the standard required by the management. By appointing trainers who are not qualified, it may affect the performance of trainee.

Hypothesis H3 examined the relationship between training time and effectiveness of on-the-job training. However, researchers in this study found that there was no significant impact from training time on on-the-job training effectiveness. Cekada (2011) agreed that the training time is not compulsory in order to gain the effectiveness of on-the-job training. However, a study from Hooi (2010) found relationship between training time and its impact to the effectiveness of the training. He wrote that, if the training conducted in working hours and not related to the job task, it may give negative impact to the employees

6. CONCLUSION & LIMITATION

This study indicates that the result of personnel commitment and trainer's qualification has the strongest influence on the effectiveness of on-the-job training. Because the study was conducted in private sector in Kuala Lumpur, the findings cannot be generalized to represent other sectors, particularly the public sector. It is hoped that through the examination of the factors that leads to the effectiveness of on-the-job training, a more complete understanding on how to improve and create the effect of on-the-job training can be conducted in the future by the practitioners.

REFERENCES

- Aghazadeh, S. (2007). Re-examining the Training Side of Productivity Improvement: Evidence from Service Sector. *International Journal of Productivity and Performance Management*, 56(8), 744-757.
- Aminuddin, M. (2009). *Human Resource Management: Revision Series*. Selangor: Oxford University Press.
- Baldwin, T. T. & Ford, J. K. (1988). Transfer of Training: A Review and Directions for Future Research. *Personnel Psychology*, 41, 63-105.
- Basu, V., Hartono, E., Lederer A. L. & Sethi, V. (2002). The Impact of Organization Commitment, Senior Management Involvement, and Team Involvement on Strategic Information Systems Planning. *Information & Management*, 39, 513-524.
- Beaver, G. & Hutchings, K. (2005). Training and Developing an Age Diverse Workforce in SMEs: The Need for a Strategic Approach. *Education + Training*, 47(8), 592-604.
- Blanchard, P. N. & Thacker, J. W. (2010). *Effective Training: Systems, Strategies, and Practices, 4th Ed.* New Jersey: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Cekada, T. L. (2011). Conducting an Effective Need Assessment. *Program Development Peer-Reviewed*, 28-34.
- Cotterill, R. (2004). *Best Practice Guidance on Training for Small and Medium Sized Enterprises for PRISM*. UK: PRISM.
- Hamblin, A.C. (1974). *Evaluation and control of training*. New York: McGraw-Hill.

- Hooi, W. L. (2010). Technical Training in the MNC in Malaysia: A Case Study Analysis of the Petrochemical Industry. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 34(4), 317-343.
- Jayawardana, L. K. A. & Prasanna D. A. H. (2007). Factor Affecting the Effectiveness of Training Provided to Merchandisers of Garment Industry in Sri Lanka. *Sri Lanka Journal of Management*, 13.
- Morgan, S. (2000). Development of an On-the-Job Training Mastery Test. *Federal Aviation Administration William J. Hughes Technical Center*, 197-200.
- Ooi, A., Lee, S. & Bryan, C. L. (2007, July). The Determinants of Training Effectiveness in Malaysian organizations. *International Journal of Business Research*. Retrieved from <http://findarticles.com/p/articles/>
- Sahinidis, G. A. & Bouris, J. (2008). Employee Perceived Training Effectiveness Relationship to Employee Attitude. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 32(1), 63-76.
- Wan, L. H. (2007). Human Capital Development Policies: Enhancing Employees' Satisfaction. *Journal of European Industrial Training*, 31(4), 297-322.
- Watanuki, K. (2008). Virtual Reality-Based Job Training and Human Resource Development for Foundry Skilled Workers. *Int. J.Cast Metals Res*, 21(1-4), 275-280.
- Wright, C. P. & Belcourt, M. (1995). Down in the Trench: Learning in a Learning Organization. *The Learning Organization*, 21(1), 34-38.
- Yahaya, K. K., Othman, S. Z. & Azizan, N. (2009). *Human Resource Development*. Kuala Lumpur: Pearson Prentice Hall.