

RESEARCH NOTE

Workplace Factors Affecting Training Transfer – A Meta Evaluation

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Paper Received on December 09, 2018, Accepted on March 01, 2018 and Published Online on April 01, 2018

ABSTRACT

Training transfer is an important concern for researchers and practitioners due to the huge budget on training but lower estimation of transfer in practical domains. However, training is one of the most popular ways to build the capacity and enhance the productivity of individuals. It has been widely reported in literature that training investment often does not succeed to deliver the desired and expected outcome. This study intended to examine factor affecting training transfer within work environment. A meta-analysis of earlier studies was performed to explore the magnitude in which work environment manipulates training transfer. The independent variables for this study included transfer climate, social support, continuous learning culture, situational constraints, relapse prevention, mentorship, time lag opportunity to perform, and feedback. These variables were analyzed independently to compare their correlation to training transfer.

Keywords: Training; Transfer; Workplace; Factor;

Training is one of the most popular ways to build the capacity and enhance the productivity of individuals. Many organizations spend an immense sum of money on training, believing that training will improve their employees' performance and enhance the firm's productivity (Yamnill, 2001). Despite the large investments in and potential benefits of training, organizational decision makers are often not sure to what extent individuals perform differently once back on the job. It has been widely reported in literature that training investment often does not succeed to deliver the desired and expected outcome. A major component of effective training is the ability of trainees to apply the knowledge, skills, and abilities gained in training to their work. It is a fundamental prerequisite for the success of a training programme and the most important aspect of training effectiveness.

Training transfer is an important concern for researchers and practitioners due to the huge budget on training but lower estimation of transfer in practical domains. Baldwin and Ford (1988) conceptualized transfer of training as the extent to which knowledge, skills and attitudes are acquired in a training programme

which are applied, generalized and maintained over some time in the job environment. Transfer may encompass both maintenance of behaviour and its generalisation to new applications (Broad and Newstrom, 1992). The overall purpose of this research project is to perform an exhaustive meta analysis to investigate the extent in which the work environment influences training transfer.

METHODOLOGY

The study is quantitative in nature and employs data analysis to summaries of individual studies. The study consists of meta-analysis of previous studies to integrate the results of multiple studies and to draw general conclusion. Data were collected from primary empirical studies reporting a correlation between training transfer and at least one of the variables under consideration. The targeted studies selected for participation in this meta-analysis were peer reviewed articles, theses, or dissertations. Four basic criteria were applied to select targeted studies for participation in this meta-analysis. First, training transfer must be the dependent variable in these studies. Second, the measurement of transfer must be in the work place.

Table 1. Relationships between independent variables and training transfer

Independent variables (K)	No. of studies size (N)	Total Sample size	Average sample (r)	Corrected Mean correlation limit	95% Credibility interval	
					Upper limit	Lower
Transfer climate	7	1390	199	0.24	0.51	-0.03
Social support	13	3200	246	0.52	0.77	0.27
Continuous learning culture	17	5630	331	0.23	0.50	-0.04
Situational constraints	23	3642	158	0.07	0.19	-0.05
Relapse prevention	8	1023	128	0.37	0.59	0.15
Mentorship	9	1730	192	0.34	0.56	0.12
Time lag	8	980	123	0.29	0.44	0.14
Opportunity to perform	12	4130	344	0.27	0.48	0.06
Feedback	13	2360	182	0.32	0.53	0.11

Third, the studies need to have variables to measure that are related to what occurs in the workplace, such as: transfer climate, social support, continuous learning culture, situational constraints, relapse prevention, mentorship, time lag opportunity to perform, and feedback. Fourth, the studies must contain statistical data to incorporate into the meta-analysis. In total, 34 articles were selected for inclusion into this meta-analysis.

Data was extracted from the selected 34 articles into a database template, which was formulated in accordance to the objectives of the study and the requirements of meta analysis. *Hunter and Schmidt, 1990*, *Methods of Meta-Analysis* was used as the primary guidance for this study.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The purpose of this meta-analysis was to cumulate studies of training transfer for overall assessment of the independent variables and their relationship in the workplace. The relationship between each independent variable and training transfer was assessed and provided interesting results. The results of the meta-analysis are presented in Table 1. The results showed positive

relationships to training transfer in all independent variables with social support (0.52) having the highest correlation to training transfer. Further, relapse prevention (0.37), mentorship (0.34) and feedback (0.32) had moderate relationships with training transfer. Time lag (0.29), opportunity to perform (0.27), transfer climate (0.24), continuous learning culture (0.23) and situational constraints (0.07), had small to moderate relationships with transfer of training at workplace. Similar findings is also reported by *Brinia and Efstathiou (2012)*.

In addition, the 95 per cent credibility intervals for the correlation between independent variables and transfer were calculated, indicating the presence of moderators on how effective these interventions were on improving transfer.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that social support, mentorship, relapse prevention, time lag, opportunity to perform are the major factors affect training transfer within workplace environment. Organizations can use this information to determine what particular factors to use to increase the chances of long-term transfer within workplace.

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