The Impact of Training on Job Performance of Technical Staff in a Semi-Government Organization in Sri Lanka

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1. Introduction

Business environment is highly dynamic and competitive today. To survive in this nature, an organization needs to achieve competitive advantage by maximum utilization of its resources. Scholars and practitioners have increasingly recognized the significant role that human resource management can play to remain competitive in the turbulent environment. More specifically, an educated and well- trained work force is considered to be essential to remain competitive.

It is believed that among various human resource functions, training is a core function or powerful agent that facilitates organization's expansion and impart required competencies. Training increases the performance of employees because they gain required knowledge, skills and attitudes to perform their current job well and they get the ability to use new technology (Khan, 2012). According to Sasidaran (2018), if an organization offers training and development programmes, employees feel the management value them and put their maximum effort to achieve goals and objectives of the organization and due to that it leads to increase the performance of their jobs. Hence, in current business world, organizations give high priority to training as a tool of increasing employee performance. Therefore, this study was aimed to discuss the impact of training on employee job performance. The main objective of this research was to identify the impact of training on job performance of technical staff in a semi-government organization in Sri Lanka.

There were four specific objectives of this study:

- To determine the impact of training needs assessment on job performance of technical staff
- To determine the impact of training contents and delivery approaches on job performance of technical staff
- To determine the impact of training evaluation on job performance of technical staff
- To identify the impact of training on job performance of technical staff

2. Problem of the Study

Government sector organizations need to compete with the private sector organizations in order to provide efficient service to the general public and the customers. Competition is not an easy task in a rapidly changing environment. Elnaga & Imran (2013), indicated that in order to survive in the dynamic business environment an organization needs to provide more effective training for their employees. Therefore, government sector organizations also spend significant amount of money on employee training. Anyhow, there is a dearth of scientific studies on the effectiveness of the training programs in the Sri Lankan context and especially in the semi-government sector. Thus, this research study attempted to bridge the above-mentioned empirical gap with the aim of investigating the impact of training on job performance of technical staff in a semi-government organization in Sri Lanka.

3. Literature Review

The success of the overall company depends on customer satisfaction while only well performing employees are able to increase the customer satisfaction and one factor that affects the employee performance is training (Khan, 2016).

Training

According to Armstrong (2009), training is a formal process of sharing knowledge and providing required skills to perform the job in a satisfactory level. Nassazi (2013) indicated that training is a tool to fill the gap between current performance and expected performance. Scholars indicated that training is a systematic process including several steps. Even though, scholars explain the steps in the training process in a slightly different manner Otuko, et al.(2013) indicated that whole training process can be described by dividing the whole process into three phases. They are training needs assessment, training contents and delivery approaches, and training evaluation.

Job Performance

Job performance is a set of actions, behaviors and outcomes which contribute to the goals of the organization (Pandey, 2019). Therefore, job performance can be defined as a combination of both behavior and results which link with organizational goal. Many authors argue that performance is a multi-dimensional concept. According to Koopmans, et al. (2013), there are three dimensions of job performance called task performance, contextual performance and adaptive performance.

Literature indicated that there are various factors influence to job performance. Mathis and Jackson (2011) divided these factors into three groups namely firm related factors, job related factors and employee related factors. Moreover, they indicated that firm related factors that affected employee performance were training culture, management support, environment dynamism, while organizational climate and job related factors are autonomy, environment and communication and employee related factors are skill level, intrinsic motivation, proactivity, commitment and adaptability.

Training literature indicated that there is a positive relation between dimensions or elements of training process and job performance.

Training Needs Assessment and Job Performance

Systematic training process begins with identification of training needs. If need assessment is not successful, the rest of the steps could be negatively affected. Need assessment is a process used to determine the training needs. Training needs assessment refers to determine training needs to fill the gap between actual and desired situation that can be filled by providing training. Training needs assessment laid foundation for the training process hence required to be carried out systematically and it should be aligned with organizational goals and objectives, and the real needs of the employeees. It involves prioritizing organizational needs by systematic planning, analysis and coordination to achieve economies of scale and avoid duplications (Bansal & Tripathi, 2017). According to Ludwikowska (2018), there is a positive relaionship between employee efficiency and effectiveness of the training needs analysis and job performance.

Training Contents & Delivery approaches and Job Performance

Training content and delivery approaches provide required knowledge, skills and ensure the change in employee behavior and attitudes (Ludwikowska, 2018). Thus, there is a need to choose the correct training method, materials, techniques, facilities to ensure a training program which meets training objectives and then trainees are able to transfer training in their real work station which result in higher performance. As noted by Otuko, et al.(2013) there is a positive and significant relationship between training content, delivery approaches and employee job performance.

Training Evaluation and Job Performance

Training evaluation refers to the process of collecting outcomes that are necessary to determine the effectiveness of training. In other words, it is a systematic process of gathering information to make decision regarding the effectiveness of the training program. Training evaluation is to ensure the achievement of training objectives (Ludwikowska, 2018). According to Kirkpatrick (2006) training evaluation can be conducted in four levels: reaction, learning, behavior and results. Training evaluation provides guidelines to decide whether the organization should continue the training or not, because training programme can become obsolete, continuously change like IT training and how to improve future training programmes (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006). According to Otuko, et al. (2013) there is a positive and significant relationship between training evaluation and employee performance.

Training and Job Performance

Training is considered as crucial as it creates potential to achieve competitive advantage on the basis of the value and uniqueness add to the employee competencies. AMO theory proposed that work performance depends on the ability, motivation and opportunity for employees (Marin-Garcia & Tomas, 2016). According to this theory, performance depends on the ability, motivation and opportunity and one of the best methods to acquire and enhance ability and motivation is through the effective training.
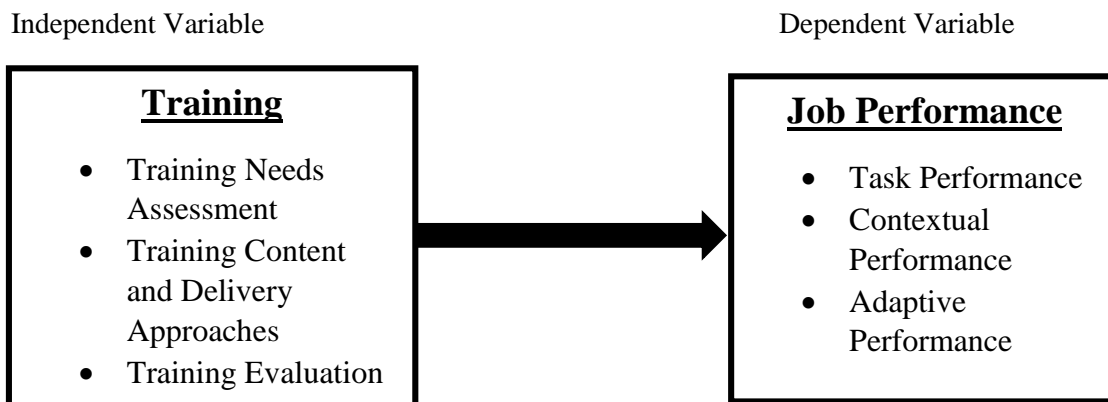
Hafeez (2015) indicated training as a performance base strategy that being a success factor for an organization due to its improving employee skills and motivation in various performance and development areas. It is not only improving skills and competencies but also increase the ability to think in a creative way and they will become more productive employees to the organization (Showkat, 2018).

According to Otuko, et al. (2013), there is a positive and significant relationship between training needs assessment, training content and delivery, training evaluation and employee's work performance. But sometimes it is difficult to identify the success of training strategies due to it taking time to exhibit the results and therefore, it is not easy to measure the effect of training on employee performance (Rowland, et al., 2017).

4. Research Framework

Based on the above literature review following research framework and hypotheses were developed.

Figure 01: Research Framework

Independent Variable   Dependent Variable

Training	**Job Performance**
• Training Needs Assessment • Training Content and Delivery Approaches • Training Evaluation	• Task Performance • Contextual Performance • Adaptive Performance

The hypotheses of the study are given below.

H1   : There is a positive impact of training needs assessment on job performance of technical staff.

H2   : There is a positive impact of training contents and delivery approaches on job performance of technical staff.

H3   : There is a positive impact of training evaluation on job performance of technical staff.

H4   : There is a positive impact of training on job performance of technical staff.

5. Method/s

Study Design

Cross sectional method was used to collect data for the research by using questionnaire survey method. The unit of analysis is individual technical staff. The research was conducted for a population of 480 technical staff. The sample size was 150 technical staff. The convenience sampling method was used as the sampling method of the study. A questionnaire was distributed among the sample of technical staff to collect the primary data for the study and the secondary data were collected through company annual reports and other company documents, company website, research papers, books, journals, magazines, etc.

Measures

In this study the primary data was collected through a questionnaire which the researcher modified based on the questionnaires of Quansah (2013) and Koopmans, et al. (2013). The questionnaire consisted of three parts. First part of the questionnaire included five items to measure personal information of respondents. The second and third part of the questionnaire consisted of 21 Question items measure training (independent variable) and job performance (dependent variable) with five-point Likert scales ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

Validity and Reliability

Before, distributing the questionnaire to the main sample it was pilot tested. Moreover, inter item consistency reliability was examined by using Cronbach's Alpha test. The results of Cronbach's Alpha test recorded in the Table 1 imply that the instruments employed in this study were reliable.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics of the Variables

Concept		Cronbach's Alpha	No of items
Training		**0.951**	**21**
	Training Needs Assessment	0.927	8
	Training Content & Delivery Approaches	0.895	7
	Training Evaluation	0.882	6
Performance		**0.933**	**21**

(Source: Survey Data)

The content validity of the instruments was ensured by considering the high internal consistency reliability of each concept as represented by Cronbach's Alpha value and by the conceptualization and operationalization of the variables using the literature review.

Techniques of Data Analysis

The data analysis included univariate and bivariate analyses. Primary data collected by the questionnaire were analyzed using the computer based statistical data analysis package, SPSS version 23 for validity, reliability and hypotheses testing.

6. Results / Findings

Demographic profile of the sample was recorded in Table 2. In order to examine the normality of the data set skewness and kurtosis were calculated and they were in the threshold level. Moreover, skewness for training needs assessment, training content and delivery approaches, training evaluation, training and job

performance were -0.997, -0.964, -0.972, -0.985 and -0.99 respectively and kurtosis values were 1.057, 0.528, 0.717, 1.079, and 1.071 respectively. Those values indicated that the data of the study were approximately normally distributed.

Table 2: Demographic Profile of the Sample

Demographic Variable	Categories	Frequency	Percent
Age	Below 25	6	4.0
	Between 26-35	32	21.3
	Between 36-45	72	48.0
	Between 46-55	31	20.7
	Above 56	9	6.0
Gender	Male	109	72.7
	Female	41	27.3
Civil Status	Married	131	87.3
	Unmarried	19	12.7
Education qualifications	G.C.E.(O/L)	7	4.7
	G.C.E.(A/L)	17	11.3
	Diploma	87	58.0
	Degree	39	26.0
Experience	1-6 months	1	0.7
	6-12 months	3	2.0
	1-3 years	10	6.7
	3-5 years	13	8.7
	more than 5 years	123	82.0

(Source: Survey Data)

The univariate analysis was used to investigate the responses for independent and dependent variables of the technical staff. The results of the univariate analysis are given in Table 3.

TNA = Training Needs Assessment
TC & DA = Training Content & Delivery Approaches
TE = Training Evaluation
JP = Job Performance

Table 3: Results of the Univariate Analysis

	TNA	TC &DA	TE	Training	JP
Mean	3.9	3.7	3.8	3.8	4.2
Std. Deviation	0.73	0.76	0.71	0.65	0.44
Variance	0.53	0.57	0.51	0.43	0.19

(Source: Survey Data)

Correlation analysis and the simple regression analysis were used to test the hypotheses.
According to Pearson's correlation results shown in Table 4, there is positive relationship between overall training, training needs assessment, training content & delivery approaches, training evaluation and employee job performance.

Table 4: Pearson's Correlation between Independent and Dependent Variables

		TNA	TC & DA	TE	Training
JP	R	0.687	0.655	0.711	0.766
	P	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

(Source: Survey Data)

Table 5 recorded the results of simple regression analysis that was done to determine the impact of independent variables on the dependent variable (Job Performance).

Table 5: Results of Simple Regression Analysis

Variable	TNA	TC &DA	TE	Training
R square	0.472	0.43	0.506	0.587
Adjusted R square	0.469	0.426	0.502	0.585
F	132.519	111.432	151.495	210.764
Significance	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000
B-constant	2.538	2.717	2.473	2.174
b-value	0.418	0.384	0.442	0.52

(Source: Survey Data)

According to the information in Table 5, three dimensions of training had significant positive impact on job performance and training as whole had a positive impact on performance. Summary of hypotheses testing is shown under Table 6.

Table 6: Summary of the Hypotheses Testing

No	Hypothesis	Value	Remarks
H1	There is a positive impact of training needs assessment on job performance of technical staff in Sri Lanka Telecom head office.	r = 0.687 b = 0.418 sig.= 0.000	Accepted
H2	There is a positive impact of training contents and delivery approaches on job performance of technical staff in Sri Lanka Telecom head office.	r =0.655 b = 0.384 sig.=0.00	Accepted
H3	There is a positive impact of training evaluation on job performance of technical staff in Sri Lanka Telecom head office.	r = 0.711 b = 0.442 sig.= 0.000	Accepted
H4	There is a positive impact of training on job performance of technical staff in Sri Lanka Telecom head office.	r = 0.766 b = 0.52 sig.= 0.000	Accepted

7. Discussion and Conclusion

H1: There is a positive impact of training needs assessment on job performance of technical staff.

According to Table 6, the correlation between training needs assessment and job performance of technical staff was 0.687, which was significant at 0.000 level. Therefore, there was a moderate positive relationship between training needs assessment and job performance. As per the simple regression analysis training needs assessment was found to have a positive impact on job performance with the strength of b value of 0.418, which is significant at 1%. and value of R square was 0.472, depicting that job performance was explained by 47.2% through variation in training needs assessment. Hence, training needs assessment was found to be a predictor of job performance. It was found that the technical staff had a favorable level of training needs assessment with the mean value of 3.8 which means technical staff were satisfied with the company practice of training needs assessment.

Findings similar to the current study were also obtained by following researchers. Ludwikowska (2018) argued that there is a positive relationship between employee efficiency and effectiveness of the training needs analysis. According to Poon and Othman (2000) as stated in Otuko, et al. (2013), training needs assessment positively influences employees' performance.

H2: There is a positive impact of training content and delivery approaches on job performance of technical staff.

According to Table 6, the correlation between training content and delivery approaches and job performance was 0.655, which is significant at 0.000 level. Therefore, there is a moderate positive relationship between training content and delivery approaches and job performance. As per the simple regression analysis training content and delivery approaches was found to have a positive impact on job performance with the strength of b value of 0.384, which is significant at 1% and R square was 0.43, depicting that job performance was explained by 43% through variation in training content and delivery approaches.

H3: There is a positive impact of training evaluation on job performance of technical staff.

According to Table 6, the correlation between training evaluation and job performance was 0.711, which was significant at 0.000 level. Therefore, there was a moderate positive relationship between training evaluation and job performance. As per the simple regression analysis training evaluation was found to have a positive impact on job performance with the strength of b value of 0.442, which is significant at 1% and R square was 0.506, depicting that job performance was explained by 50.6% through variation in training evaluation. Hence, training evaluation was found to be a predictor of job performance. It was found that the technical staff have a favorable level of training evaluation with the mean value of 3.8 which means technical staff were satisfied with the company practice of training evaluation. This finding is in alignment with the studies conducted by Ludwikowska (2018) and Otuko, et al. (2013).

H4: There is a positive impact of training on job performance of technical staff.

According to Table 6, The correlation between training and job performance was 0.766, which was significant at 0.000 level. Therefore, there was a strong positive relationship between training and job performance. As per the simple regression analysis training was found to have a positive impact on job performance with the strength of b value of 0.52, which was significant at 1% and R square was 0.587, depicting that job performance was explained by 58.7% through variation in training. Hence, training was found to be a predictor of job performance. It was found that the technical staff have a favorable level of training with the mean value of 3.8 which means technical staff were satisfied with the company training practice.

As stated by Nassazi (2013) and Showkat (2018), employees could acquire new knowledge and skills through efficient training programs and it increase the performance of employees. Similarly, Otuko et.al (2013) revealed that there is a positive relationship between training and performance of employees.

According to the findings of this study it could be concluded that three dimensions of training and training as an independent variable has a positive impact on job performance. Therefore, it is reasonable to conclude that technical staff of this organization currently have effective training programs that enhance their level of performance.

Implications

This research has several practical implications that may optimize training practices of this organization. As per the findings of the study there is a positive impact between each independent variable and the job performance. Thus it emphasizes the necessity of conducting training need analysis in more systematic way. As training content and delivery approaches positively impact job performance, the management needs to design more innovative training programs for the technical staff. Job performance of technical staff can be enhanced by conducting specifically designed educational and training programs. Management need to carefully examine whether the contents of the programs match with the training objectives, credentials of the external trainers, methods that they intend to use delivering the program. It is recommendable to provide both on the job and off the job training. Training division needs to further systematically conduct training evaluation in order to further strengthen training process. Finally, it is essential to provide required support from the top management and line managers in each phase of the training process in order to develop effective training interventions for the technical staff.

Suggestions for further studies

This study is not without its limitations. Hence, future researchers can conduct their studies with large sample in different industries. They can incorporate many design factors with longitudinal technique to examine this relationship more accurate manner. Future researchers can extend their researches to focus more on transfer of training.

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