



Antecedents of Training Transfer Motivation: A Conceptual Model for Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This paper conceptualizes the possible model of training transfer motivation in Nigerian context through the antecedents of organizational commitment and job involvement. Training and development plays a vital role in most of the global organizations and it contributes significantly to the success and effectiveness of these organizations in today's world of competitiveness. Organizational commitment and job involvement deal with improving employees' ability through steady training transfer motivation. The concept appears to be affected factors such as perceptions of the expectations that the new knowledge and skills cannot be used back on the job which will lead to deterioration of performance. Organizations are concerned about the commitment and involvement of employees does not reflect job attitudinal concept which could result to a payoff in the form of enhanced performance. However, a sizable number of scholarly articles were reviewed to form the basis of this investigation. The findings identified few antecedents of training transfer motivation in the Nigerian context but excluded other predictors in the hypothesized model. The research recommended for the need to empirically examine the current proposed model in the Nigerian context and investigate other factors. Arguably, this is a way forward in propelling the training transfer motivation system.

ARTICLE INFO

Article History

Received: December, 2019

Received in revised form: February, 2020

Accepted: March, 2020

Published online: April, 2020

KEYWORDS

Training Transfer, Motivation and Conceptual Model

INTRODUCTION

Training of employees is considered to be the key factors of maintaining competitiveness in the changing organizational environment, this is because the need for employees with higher productivity level who can use their knowledge and skills in accomplishing the desired goals of the organization (Gunu, Oni, Tsado, & Ajayi, 2013). Based on that, organizations consider training as a bedrock for any reasonable and meaningful and development. Training transfer motivation, is viewed as employee's inspiration or drive to apply knowledge obtained from training program to a job

context. It has been a study variable that helps in understanding the job attitude such as organizational commitment and job involvement (Combs, Luthans, & Griffith, 2009).

Organizational commitment and job involvement deal with improving employees' personality and ability through steady training transfer motivation. Additionally, the trainee perceptions and expectations could be high when they experience a training program that is identical with the previously attended training (Van der Locht, Van Dam, & Chiaburu, 2013). In view of the above, training transfer motivation might be predicted by job



attitude factors (Chiaburu, 2010). Commitment of employees to the organization reflect an attitudinal job involvement which could result to a payoff in the form of enhanced performance (Jaros, 2007). In effect, there is high tendency for organizational employees to experience different degrees of motivation on job attitude factors. Work related outcomes of employees such as training transfer motivation is understood as a function of the motivational factor related to organizational commitment and job involvement. On this note, employees' behaviour may remain the same when they perceived or believed that they can perform a task, yet their actions and performances are not acknowledged by the organization.

The State Universal Basic Education Board (herein after referred to as SUBEB) workers are currently faced with number of challenges such as lack of competency, lack of strong work ethics, erratic service provision and general nonchalant attitude of staff in the discharge of their duties as well as lack of quest for excellence.

Conversely, very little research works concentrated on the impact of organizational commitment and job involvement on training transfer motivation (Seyler, Holton, Bates, Burnett, & Carvalho, 1998). Researchers acknowledged that understanding of this factor will eventually help organizations upgrade the utilization of new learned KSA on the job (Velada & Caetano, 2007). In addition, the SUBEB has been budgeting huge amount of money annually for developing and improving the capacity of its staff but yet the training outcomes are limited.

Human Resource (hereinafter referred to as "HR") practitioners, however, place lesser emphasis on the motivational elements of employee job attitude in facilitating training transfer motivation. Similarly, some studies revealed that training gained on the job is

largely depended on the job attitude factors (Cheng, 2006; Chiaburu, Dam, & Hutchins, 2010). On the contrary, HR practitioners have less information and awareness about the factors of organizational commitment, job involvement in employees' training transfer motivation (Ng, 2014). This negligible factor of organizational commitment and job involvement may bind our knowledge of their influences in training transfer motivation. Based on these reasons, there is a scarcity of research about what inspires employees to transfer the learned KSA to their daily jobs. Thus, the researcher found it necessary to advance the discovery of the relationships.

Another issue of concern is methodological issue where the understudy variables are separately investigated (Bin & Yusof, 2012; Holladay & Quiñones, 2003; Hussain, 2010). Earlier researchers concentrated on employee training transfer motivation but their discussion on the subject matter were brief. That is to say, for its proper understanding, further clarifications are needed. Consequently, surveys are often use to access attitudes and opinions of employee overtime. Thus, its application in discovering employees' training transfer motivation has not been fully exhausted. This methodological gap calls for quantitative research method which would provide a better means of generalization. Additionally, there is lack of adapted, adopted and validated quantitative research instrument to measure training transfer motivation from the Nigerian perspective.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Discussion of Prior Empirical Studies and Hypotheses Formulation

A number of previous studies have been reviewed to support the proposed role of organizational commitment and job involvement on training transfer motivation. For the purpose of this study, the following



formulated hypotheses have been adopted and adapted from the previous research work in order to guide future researchers in their scientific social inquiry, thus the theoretical, empirical, methodological, and practical gaps identified for this study could be bridged (Akinbobola, 2011).

Organizational Commitment and Training Transfer Motivation

Velada et al. (2007) investigated the relationship between three predictor variables of training transfer motivation and their results suggested that in order to increase transfer of training organization shall design training programs that give the trainee the capacity to transfer learning, ensure that the training content is retained over a period of time and reinforce the beliefs of trainees in their training transfer ability, and give suitable feedback in regards to employees performance on the job. Tracey et al. (1995) demonstrated that a training transfer climate for a continuous learning culture had been found to have direct effects on post-training behaviors. This group of researchers concluded that commitment of organizations in supporting innovation and learning encourages the training transfer to the job. Seyler et al. (1998) studied the possibility of mediating effects of attitude and reactions to training program, in the relationship between trainee organizational commitment and the result of the study showed a positive relationship. Employees have been discovered to reciprocate organizational commitment through their daily performance as well as involvement and citizenship behavior (transferring knowledge/skills to a work situation) (Awadh, 2010).

Egan et al. (2004) too found that organizational commitment and organizational training are significantly related with each other. Research of Mathieu et al. (1992) has found that despite any emphasis on training and

learning, an uncommitted organizational climate for employees will decrease their level of opportunities and commitment for transferring the trained materials. An empirical study carried out by Baldwin, Magjuka, and Loher (1991) found that engaging employees with the right learning activities and follow-up from their managers are expected to result in stronger training transfer intentions. In the study done by Nijman et al. (2006), they further explored that that the greater the perceived level of support from management, the more likely the occurrences of training transfer motivation.

Johlke, Stamper, and Shoemaker (2001) studied a group of salespersons based on sample and found that a perception of the quality of an organization's commitment was positively related to organizational commitment. Tella and Ayeni (2007) affirmed that their study found a strong positive relationship between commitment and performance. Highly motivated employees who are encouraged to carry out their task are more likely to view their organization as the only means to obtain future benefits. Tansky and Cohen (2001) bring to light that employee job satisfaction was positively correlated with organizational commitment and support from the organization was positively associated with organizational commitment. Cromwell and Kolb (2004) examined the role of organizational commitment in transfer of training and revealed that there are possible types of support that emanates from co-workers, managers, and other stakeholders versus support from broader organizational features or work characteristics.

In their quantitative survey of informational technology employees, Egan et al. (2004) asserted that learning culture (organizational) was significantly determined by both transfer motivation to learn and job satisfaction. Wu and Liu (2006) in their studies have identified organizational commitment as factors



that directly influence transfer of training. Organizations that show higher levels of fair access for employees to attend organizational trainings will be more likely to produce employees with increased level of commitment to their organization (Bartlett & Kang, 2004). Studies by Uygur (2009) show that organizational commitment has been correlated with leader behavior, job knowledge, and decreased employee turnover. Quite a lot of literature revealed that organizational commitment and training program are significantly associated with each other (Sabir et al., 2014).

Akrofi (2016) stressed that organizations nowadays the effect of training and development on firm's performance has significant implications for the effective development of employees' capabilities as a means of improving organizational effectiveness. Thus, training programs per beyond the investment on improving employees' competencies and capabilities to perform better on the job functions, but also as a vital tool to link improved behaviors and job performance to increase organizational performance and effectiveness. Successful knowledge of transfer to workers should provide a flow of relevant commitment of employees to organization, flexible application of knowledge techniques to suit local circumstances and explanation of techniques with major emphasis on continuous improvement of KSAs.

In summary, organizational commitment can influence training outcomes. There is, however, scarcity of research that has examined the impact of organizational commitment on training transfer effects. Transfer motivation has long been perceived as an important determinant to be incorporated in modelling and researching employee behavior in organizations (Paulsen & Kauffeld, 2017). The well-established importance of this attitudinal variable, as a determinant of employee transfer motivation and training transfer, suggests

that it may also play a significant role in the context of training transfer. To understand better the relationship between organizational commitment and transfer motivation, the present study borrows the relevant literature from BSCLT. Accordingly, the more a trainee is engaged by the organization in the training program the more he/she would apply the gained KSAs on the job and vice versa. Thus, the hypothesized relationship between organizational commitment and training transfer motivation is as follows:

Ha₁: *There is a significant relationship between organizational commitment and training transfer motivation.*

Job Involvement and Training Transfer Motivation

Past literature on the study of transfer of training clearly indicates that employees who are involved more in their jobs seems to have a higher rate of motivation before attending training program and they can change and improve their job behavior than those employees who were not involved more in their jobs (Chauhan, Ghosh, Rai, & Shukla, 2016). The factor of job involvement is related most positively to training transfer programs that are designed with the prime aim of enhancing job performance functions, and were insignificantly associated on training programs that focused on peripheral aspects of trainees' current jobs (Joseph & Myers, 2009). Such type of employees with high job involvement are more beneficial and successful for the organization as compared to the group of employees who are not genuinely fully involved in the organization (Mohamed, Munirah & Mustapha, 2012). The management of T and D programs that enabled employees to strategically be attached to their local decisions as well their daily work operations would result in attaining the overall objectives of the organization. They also discovered an



improvement of learning and organizational effectiveness.

Sabir et al. (2014) reported that the variable of job involvement directly influences the performance of employee and suggested that managers shall observe that their members of staff who have high sense of involvement in their job assignments would produce more efficient jobs as compared to those group of employees who do not engage and involve themselves in their assigned jobs. There is no compulsion for the employees who are more committed to their job to remain or are expected to serve in the organization for a longer period of time (Hussain, 2010). Researchers also suggested that employees with high job involvement shall be more prompt to attend or partake in training program due to the likelihood of being motivated. This is because attending a training program could increase their job performance, skill level, and feeling of self-worth (Akinbobola, 2011).

Kontoghiorghes (2001) investigated the relationship between the utilization of behavior components and training transfer and he revealed that the development of learning objectives and goals was significantly related with training transfer. This indicates that participants are liable to transfer what they have learned when they have a reasonable understanding of what skills, knowledge and behaviors are needed after training.

Facteau et al. (1995) found that the variation in employee motivation level is significantly explained by job involvement of individuals. Study of Hafer and Martin (2006) too revealed that the variable of job satisfaction had a significant effect on employee job involvement. Employees' feeling of sense of self-development is more likely to be improved or enhanced through their organizational membership of social support in which they evidently enjoy their organizational membership. Elloy, Everette, and Flynn (1995) disclosed that job involvement is related to

employee situational variables in their social support such as decision-making processes, leader behavior, and interpersonal relations, trainee job attitude characteristics and work outcomes (organizational commitment, turnover, job satisfaction, and absenteeism). Moreover, Farotimi (2010) uncovered that employees with good job involvement demonstrate good job satisfaction and job involvement for the benefits of both the organization and employees. Confirming this, Sabir et al. (2014) indicated a positive relationship between job involvement and transfer of training and recommended that the extent to which employees are involved in their current jobs will have an impact on the training transfer to the workplace.

In the training context it has been observed that employees who have high job involvement are more prone to learn and transfer learning (Noe & Schmit, 1986). On the contrary, Liao, Toya, Lepakm, and Hong (2009) uncovered a distinction between the organizational perception and employees' perception of high job involvement in the work system practices within the organization with employers (organizational) perceiving a significantly higher level than employees' perception.

Employees at times fail to meet their expected performance level due to unforeseen circumstances of job involvement and organizational commitment. This is true when they are faced with low commitment from organization and lower job involvement, as they do not exhibit behaviors indicative of organizational advancement (Jehanzeb et al., 2013).

For the purpose of this study, the following formulated hypothesis has been adopted and adapted from the previous empirical studies in order to guide the researcher in his scientific social inquiry.

H₂: *There is a significant relationship between job involvement and training transfer motivation.*



Theory of the Study/Application of BSCLT on Training Transfer Motivation

Social cognitive learning theory is concerned with the acquisition of new cognitive and behavioural skills and abilities and 'Knowledge of what result in what' (Olson & Hergenhahn, 2009). Therefore, Bandura (1986) mentioned that it is adherent to stress the informative and motivational functions of future results of activities. He thinks that motivation improves performance not for the reason that it automatically reinforces past behavior, but for the reason that it motivates people in anticipation. Generally, people expect the likely outcome of their respective behaviors, set objectives for themselves, and make decisions for their future as they view them (Bigge & Shermis, 2004). By way of forethought people inspire themselves and guide their action in future expectations. Expectancy of training transfer is highly considered in understanding behaviors, and people are active in their own motivation.

In the social cognitive learning theory, training transfer (outcome or results) is viewed as a predominant change in human being through the effect of human thought (Olson & Hergenhahn, 2009). Cognitive training skills enable human beings to find solutions to their challenges *via* thoughts rather than physical movement. Hence, human mind is a great agent that allows person to understand and deals effectively with their environment as it encompasses large treasure of knowledge in a form of experiences (Bigge & Shermis, 2004). By observing the results of their behaviors, people have the idea of new system of behaviors that is attached by a recognized situation in which the new system may be displayed. Signs and symbols that represent mind operations and relationships, act as a connector of thoughts. Since most external factors that affect behavior through the combined cognitive processes are factors that heavily identify, organize, and give

meanings to which environmental information will be observed in future application (Bigge & Shermis, 2004).

Bandura clearly asserted that 'psychology' cannot tell people how they shall live their life styles. It can only guide them towards the ways for impacting personal and social change. Also, it can help them in making decision by evaluating the consequences of life-styles. As science focuses on social implications of its uses, psychology must encourage people understanding of psychological issues that affect social policies and regulations in order to make sure that its results are properly used in upgrading human services. Social cognitive learning theory is concerned with functions of human beings as a whole in their different social activities; also, it has some limited implication for training transfer strategies. Hence, much of the transfer of training activities actually consists of modelling. Additionally, control through knowledge which is originated in cognitive processes is more powerful than contiguity of activities. The total effect of presenting reinforces as soon as requisite responses were emitted in a tricky process that produced mediocre results in an ethically pleasurable way (Bigge & Shermis, 2004). Social cognitive learning theory describes how a combination of personal and social environment competencies can be evolving from the social conditions that emerge.

Bandura (1986) mentioned that a large body of studies now shows and indicated that cognition is activated instructionally with favorable results. People learn, maintain, and transfer much better through cognitive aids that they gain than by repetitive reinforced performance. So, he criticized those behaviouristic theories that emphasized on performance and deemphasized awareness indicators. In view of human behaviors, internal process must eventually be linked with actions. Based on all the levels of human relationships, every person experiences some level of



powerlessness in ensuring others to behave in good manners due to the existence of reciprocal implication. People declined being taken advantage of this because in many circumstances compliant behavior results in unsuitable consequences. Thus, the reciprocal people relationship is among the conditioner and the conditioned, i.e. the personal behavior of trainee.

Cognitive transfer of knowledge is promoted through modelling and performance feedback. The nature of transfer of training shows several ways of conveying knowledge about behavior and ascertained relationship between events in the environment. Implications served as an uncompounded means of informing people what they ought to do so as to reveal certain outcomes. Through observing the several results of their actions, people eventually generate ideas of new behavior systems within which is comfortable to perform those actions.

As skilled activities are rarely repeated in exactly the same pattern, transfer of training must be generally generative in nature, so as to fit in several circumstances. Generative conceptions served dual roles; (a) it gives the rules for given well deserved patterns, and (b) it gives the standard for enhancing performance on the ground of perceived differentiation between conception and execution.

CONCEPTUALIZATION OF TRAINING TRANSFER MOTIVATION MODEL

The conceptual framework of this study was developed on the grounds of synthesizing BSCLT (1986), Baldwin and Ford (1988) model and prior empirical research findings on transfer of training. Drawing upon this synthesis, it is premised that the organizational commitment and job involvement may influence the extent of training transfer motivation. There has been extensive research aiming at identifying the impact of training transfer motivation, including several models such as Baldwin and Ford

(1988), Holton (2005), and Xiao (1996). In an effort to further investigate this extensive field of study, various researchers have set direction for future studies. Some of the studies on training such as Amin, Yunus, and Yasin (2014), Cheng (2006), Pham, Segers, and Gijsselaers (2013), and Segers and Gegenfurtner (2013) have called for the establishment of integrative models of training transfer, in a push to incorporate both individual (job attitude) and organizational context oriented elements as antecedents of training transfer (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Colquitt et al., 2000; Salas & Cannon-bowers, 2001). Furthermore, Scaduto, Lindsay, and Chiaburu (2008) recommended that it is vital to scientifically test those variables which have been less concentrated upon or overlooked by prior researchers. More so, Kauffeld and Lehmann-Willenbrock (2010) suggested that researchers and training experts need to exert more effort on examining transfer of training. There are calls and recommendations for future researchers to explain relationship among individual and situational variables. Bhatti and Hoe (2012) suggested that future researchers could consider the mediating role of transfer motivation between individual and organizational factors in other transfer of training models. Velada et al. (2007) recommended that studies in the future may examine and test the generalizability of their studies in different organizational contexts apart from grocery. They also, suggested for the use of additional research measures to be collected from several sources. Additionally, it is recommended that future empirical studies utilize employees as against the college students for surveys (Cheng & Ho, 2001). Hence, taking cognizance of the various motivational issues (Henry, 2012), job attitude issues (Awadh, 2010), motivational issues (Homklin, Takahashi, & Techakanont, 2013), limited research findings, inconsistent research findings, and the past recommendations made for future



research on the chosen variable under investigation prompted the researcher to select these variables and develop this research conceptual paper (Hua & Ahmad, 2011; Ng, 2014; Sabir et al., 2014; Scaduto et al., 2008; Torrey et al., 2006; Van der locht et al., 2013; Velada & Caetano, 2007).

CONCLUSION

This study, conceptualizes that the model of training transfer motivation could be scientifically examined, in order to be understood as a function of the motivational component associated with employees' personal job attitudes. Thus, the new indicator variables would make an extension of Baldwin and Ford's model. The conceptualization of this study is illustrative of the whole idea of the study. The reason for considering organizational commitment and job involvement is because they were identified as the job attitude related factors which there was dearth of research to that effect (Cheng, 2006). On top of that, the extension of the boundaries of training model would be done, in response to the recommendation made by (Chang & Chiang, 2011, Cheng, 2006). In essence, growth of knowledge in the field of study is essentially a cumulative and ongoing process in which new insights and contributions are added to the existing stock and body of knowledge and unsupported or false hypotheses are eliminated (Hopper & Powell, 1985). On the other hand, training transfer motivation was considered as a dependent variable due to inconsistencies in the results of the previous studies and recommendation for future studies made by past authors (Chiaburu, 2013; Homklin, Takahashi, & Techakanont, 2013; Hair, 2013; Ng, 2014; Sabir et al., 2014).

LIMITATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study only identified few antecedents of training transfer motivation in the Nigerian context but

excluded other predictors in the hypothesized model. The omission of some important predictor variables in this research might limit our general understanding of the factors that influence training transfer motivation and transfer of training. Thus, future research needs to empirically examine the current proposed model in the Nigerian context and investigate other factors such as locus of control, cognitive ability, conscientiousness, trainee motivation, anxiety, achievement motivation, self-efficacy, organizational cynicism and performance feedback (Cheng, 2006; Cheng & Ho, 2001; Mathieu et al., 1993; Noe, 1986). The insertion of these important variables in future studies might provide a thorough and crucial understanding about the effects of trainee personal factors and work contextual factors on employees' training transfer motivation.

Secondly, the present study is limited as it only considered the effect of training transfer motivation as a dependent variable. On this note, suggestions for moderating the organizational commitment, job involvement and training transfer motivation relationships have been provided. For instance, future study can examine the possibility of using other essential variables such as motivation to learn, career planning, and job satisfaction in relation to training transfer motivation as a moderating variable between organizational commitments, job involvement. This is because the organizational commitment and job involvement focus on identifying and providing the employees' job attitude needs. This may perhaps provide clearer picture of the concept of training transfer motivation which in reciprocity could contribute to the proper understanding of the factors that influence it.

Lastly, this study focused exhaustively in pointing out the dimension of training outcome from the training transfer motivation perspectives. However, the current study was unable to



outline the effect of organizational commitment and job involvement on other dimensions of training outcomes such as employee job performance and learning reactions (Bartlett & Kang, 2004; Colquitt et al., 2000). These might have limited the contribution of this study. Future research should incorporate those dimensions of training outcomes in their models and consider the respondents for this proposed model to be drawn from employees of SUBEB, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

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Acknowledgement

This research work is supported by Tertiary Education Trust Fund (TetFund), Nigeria.