

THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE TRAINING: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK

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Abstrak

Tujuan - Artikel ini bertujuan menyajikan kerangka konseptual mengenai pelatihan karyawan. **Desain/metodologi/pendekatan** - Berdasarkan tinjauan literatur yang ada, artikel ini menyajikan kerangka konseptual yang menjelaskan dampak pelatihan karyawan (ET) terhadap kinerja karyawan (EP), kreativitas karyawan (EC), dan komitmen organisasi (OC). **Temuan** - Berdasarkan sejumlah literatur dan teori yang ditinjau, artikel ini mengajukan tiga proposisi: 1) terdapat hubungan positif antara ET dan EP, 2) terdapat hubungan positif antara ET dan EC, dan 3) terdapat hubungan positif antara ET dan OC. **Implikasi praktis** - Temuan menunjukkan bahwa pelatihan merupakan teknik yang bernilai bagi karyawan dan organisasi secara keseluruhan.

Kata Kunci: *Pelatihan Karyawan; Kinerja Karyawan; Kreativitas Karyawan; Komitmen Organisasi*

Abstract

Purpose - The purpose of this paper is to present a conceptual framework of employee training. **Design/methodology/approach** - Based on a review of existing literature, this study presents a conceptual framework that explain the impact of employee training (ET) on employee performance (EP), employee creativity (EC) and organizational commitment (OC). **Findings** - Based on several reviewed literature and theory, there are three propositions that this study proposes: 1) There is a positive relationship between ET and EP, 2) there is a positive relationship between ET and EC, 3) there is a positive relationship between ET and OC. **Practical implications** - The present findings show that training is a valuable technique for employees and organizations as a whole.

Keywords - *Employee training, employee performance, employee creativity, organizational commitment*

A. Introduction

Employees are valuable assets of organizations. They can affect the organization's reputation whether it is favorably or adversely (Sendawula et al., 2018). Therefore, it is imperative for organizations to focus on what employees need to be able to benefit the organization as a whole and the employees in

particular. Employees should be prepared in order for them to be valuable. Some studies found that training is one of the key investments well applied by organizations because training can improve employees' skills and knowledge as well as direct their attitude and behavior (Barney, 1991). It can also create efficient employees as team members (Jun et al., 2006).



Employees' skills should be developed precisely in order to be able to greatly contribute to the organization in facing competition (Schuler and MacMillan, 1984). A suitable training program can positively and properly motivate employees; hence, employees will be capable of developing their positive perception toward training program (Newman et al., 2011). Training benefits not only employees but also the organizations (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). In fact, employee training is considered as one of the advance management practices in modern era applied by various organizations (Purcell, 2000). Therefore, training is a vital part of HR activities; it even becomes one of the most significant aspects of organizational strategy that can lead to future success (Tanova & Nadiri, 2005).

Training was found in various studies to significantly affects the overall retention, employees' commitment (Nksoi, 2015), organizational commitment (Hanaysha, 2016), employee performance, and organizational performances (Bartel, 2000). Training can also help to direct employees toward their better and more creative sides (Nawaz et al., 2014), direct employees' behavior and attitude; for example, by motivating them to be creative, innovative (Ottenbacher & Harrington, 2007), and to have creative thinking (Amabile, 1998).

The increasing competitiveness nowadays has forced organizations to aim more on improving commitment in the workplace. It has been the main effort of organizations today (Malhotra et al., 2007). Organizations have also strived to improve and develop employees' creative

thinking through trainings. However, trainings should be supported by the working environment in order for employees' new and useful ideas to surface (Woodman et al., 1993).

Numerous studies have found various impacts of trainings. According to studies, training affects employee performance (Halawi & Haydar, 2018), employee creativity (Nawaz et al., 2014), and organizational commitment (Bulut & Culha, 2010). However, there seem to be no studies that combine the three impacts in a single conceptual framework. Therefore, this study aims to propose a relationship between HR practices (training) and employee performance, employee creativity, and organizational commitment.

Independent Variable

Employee training

Increase in competitiveness is becoming more real with the rapid technology growth in this global era. One thing for sure is that the challenges that organizations face are getting immense which eventually drive organizations to find ways to survive through this situations. One of the ways to do so is by improving employees' knowledge and skills since employees are considered to be the key factor to affect organizational performance and global competition as well as help organizational continuous development (Elnaga & Imran, 2013).

Organization can develop and improve employees' knowledge and skills by facilitating the employees with suitable training programs, giving necessary information, and assisting in every way possible to support their professional development (Elnaga & Imran, 2013). The



skills gained from the training programs can help employees to cooperate with fellow co-workers to achieve organizational goals (Truitt, 2011) and to facilitate employees to do their job well and precisely (Meyer & Allen, 1997) according to the standard that each organization sets (Huang & Jao, 2016).

Employee training is vital and beneficial for organizations. When employees get sufficient resources through training, employees' performance level will show more efficiency (Hafeez & Akbar, 2015). As a good investment, employee training results to beneficial organizational outcomes (Singh & Mohanty, 2012). Consequently, many organizations have come to realize the significance of developing and improving knowledge, capability, and skills of their employees in order to be able to create competitive advantages (Shu-Rung & Chun-Chieh, 2017).

Dependent Variables:

Employee performance

Employees' active involvement in achieving organizational success has been proven; this is why employees are considered as one of the key assets in organizations. Therefore, employees have to be prepared in order to be able to give the best performance in their job through effective training. A study by Onyango and Wanyoike (2014) found that there was a positive and significant relationship between employee training and performance. The authors stated that training was meant to develop employees' performance today and in the future. Employee attitude, skills, and knowledge will gradually improve considering that training has such impact on employee

competencies over time (Wright & Geroy, 2001).

Employee performance (EP) is measured by the performance standard set by the organization (Kenney et al., 1992). The standard is always applied in every activity with hope that it can help to achieve organizational goals effectively and efficiently (Nassazi, 2013). When employees are happy and satisfied, their performance will improve; hence, it is easier for leaders to motivate their employees to achieve the target of the organization (Kinicki & Kreitner, 2007).

Employee creativity

Employees' creativity (EC) is extremely needed in organizations and companies today. In fact, it is the top priority of organizational behavior research to comprehend the details on employee creativity in organizations (Zhou & Shalley, 2008). Creativity is defined as one's ability to see new things and distinguish the value (Pirola-Merlo and Mann, 2004); also, one's ability to possess new perspective and concepts derived from available information around them (Forgionne and Newman, 2007). Creativity only belongs to creative people since only creative people do creative things (Amabile, 1997). Creative people are capable of developing their skills well; they are intrinsically motivated, are more likely to be independent, risk-taker, open-minded, and are greatly interested in new experiences (Simonton, 1977). Because of such skills and knowledge, creative employees can contribute to organization's effectiveness, efficiency, and innovations; it also helps organizations to adapt to necessary changes in order to be able to develop and



compete in broader business world (Beheshtifar & Zare, 2013).

Organizational commitment

In order for an organization to reach its goals, it needs commitment; and commitment can only be gained by having loyal and committed employees (Locke & Latham, 1990). Several studies have proven the significance of highly committed employees. These employees are more productive, highly responsible, have high job satisfaction (Karim & Rehman, 2012), are emotionally connected to the organization where they work, have high intrinsic motivation, and are less likely to have turnover intention (Sahoo et al., 2010). Therefore, it is imperative for organizations and leaders to organize a comfortable working environment and to support them through employee training (Danish et al., 2013).

Organizational commitment (OC) is commonly known as work commitment (Allen & Meyer, 1990). Generally, it is defined as employees' sense of belonging toward the organization (Wadhwa & Verghese, 2015). OC strongly relates to employees' psychology (Allen & Meyer, 1996) and affects employer-employee relationship as well as employee-organization relationship (Meyer & Allen, 1997). It is a step more than employee loyalty and refers to a feeling of attachment that employee experience and show toward their work/job (Carmeli & Freud, 2004) which affects their decision or desire to stay in the organization (Khalid et al., 2015). Nguyen and Aida (2014) explained that when employee shows high OC, they will stay loyal to the organization where they work.

Employees' organizational commitment contributes to and defines the success of an organization (Sahoo & Sahoo, 2018). It is a reciprocated relationship between the organization and the employees. In other words, OC connects and unites employees and organizations (Sawithri et al., 2017), describes employees loyalty toward their organization (Ghorbanhosseini, 2012), and the reason why employees "willingly" (pg. 177) choose to stay within the organization and put effort to achieve organizational goal. Various factors can affect OC. For example, human resource (HR) practices like "recruitment, selection, rewards, recognition, and work environment" (Jawaad et al., 2019, pg. 17).

OC is composed of three psychological attachments that employees show toward their organization: 1) Desire (*affective commitment*), 2) need (*continuance commitment*), and 3) obligation (*normative commitment*) (Meyer & Allen, 1991; Abasilim et al., 2019). These three types were first introduced by Meyer and Allen (1991) and are defined as follows.

Affective commitment. This is a feeling of attachment that employees experience toward an organization based on their sole "desire". Affective commitment happens when employees belong to an organization specifically because they "want to".

Continuance commitment. This is a feeling of attachment that employees experience toward an organization based on "need". Continuance commitment happens because employees put a lot on stake and cannot afford to lose the job unless they find another "alternative" such as finding a better job or being



recruited by what they consider as a better organization.

Normative commitment. This is a feeling of attachment that employees experience toward an organization because they have to or are “obliged”. Normative commitment happens or often develops before employees join an organization because of personal reasons and continue to develop after employees join the organization as the result of the contributions or rewards that the organization may have given to the employees. In other words, employees chose to be committed not because they “want to” but because they “ought to”.

Briefly, *affective commitment* is employees’ own desire to stay in the organization based on their personal feelings of attachment; *continuance commitment* is employees’ choice to stay with the organization because it costs them greatly if they leave the organization; and *normative commitment* is employees’ choice to be committed to the organization because of the feeling of responsibility (Khalid, et al., 2015). When employees are committed to the organization, they will remain within the organization, put strong effort, and strive to reach its goals (Abasilim et al., 2019). These psychological attachments are factors proven to significantly affect commitment because according to Eddleston (2009), employees’ tendency to compare their cost and reward with each other can affect their commitment toward the organization where they work.

Therefore, there are several things that organizations can do to improve OC, particularly *normative* and *affective*

commitment, and increase employees’ desire to stay within the organization:

1. Provide constant learning (Khalid, et al., 2015)
2. Let employees be independent in their careers (Bambacas, 2010)
3. Enhance employee retention (Khalid, et al., 2015)
4. Ensure a healthy and positive working environment (Cho et al., 2006)

Social Exchange Theory

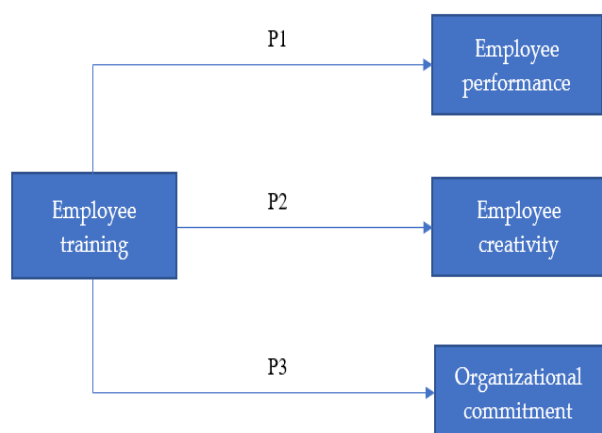
Social Exchange Theory (SET) was adapted by Blau (1964). The author was the first to promote SET and defined it as “voluntary actions of individuals that are motivated by the returns they are expected to bring and typically do in fact bring from others” (p. 91). He suggested that in social relationships, both parties should anticipate the reward that they expect from each other. The focus of SET is to bring satisfaction as a result of fair exchange between the people involved (Cook & Emerson, 1987). The two major elements of SET are “cost” or “negative value” and “reward” or “positive value” that each party receives (West & Turner, 2007). SET only happens when the organization and the employees exchange mutual trust and responsibilities (Jawaad et al., 2019) or when employees give service for the exchange of proper reward from the organization (Koster, 2011).

In this study, SET explained that by the time the organization focus on their employees by giving training to improve their ability, skills, and knowledge, then employees’ performance, creativity, and organizational commitment will increase.

B. Conceptual Framework And Propositions



Based on the reviewed literature, the researcher proposed a conceptual framework as follow.



Employee Training and Employee Performance

Employee training (ET) is related to two things; the first one is employee performance (EP). One of the key program that human resource management (HRM) can offer is to train employees to develop their skills, knowledge, and ability as what the organization expect them to have so that every employee can do their job well (Lakra, 2016). The second one is employee confidence and employee satisfaction. Through training, employees can develop and improve their confidence as well as satisfaction toward their job; hence, it will lead to improve in productivity and profitability (Zhao et al., 2014).

In HR field, the concept about training gradually becomes well-known due to its positive impact to the relationship between training and employee performance (Kiweewa & Asimwe, 2014). Training was found to be one of the most significant HRM practices due to its capability to positively affect employees' skills and knowledge quality which lead to higher employee performance in their job and responsibilities (Elnaga & Imran,

2013). A study conducted in an education sector in Pakistan confirms this relationship. The study found that trained employees had higher and improved level of commitment and it eventually led to higher performance (Amin et al., 2013). Training programs was also found to positively affect employee performance in the workplace (Halawi & Haydar, 2018). Thus, there is indeed a significantly positive relationship between training and employee performance (Sendawula et al., 2018).

Therefore, the researcher proposes:

Proposition 1 *There is a positive relationship between employee training and employee performance.*

Employee Training and Employee Creativity

Work engagement, abilities, and better skills can be improved through employees' own attitude and behavior (Combs et al., 2006). When employees are engaged in their work, they will automatically trigger their creative side. The main question left now is how to make employees develop an engaged behavior. One of the answers is through HR practices such as training. It can be said that employee training is one of the most suitable strategies to lead to employee creativity (Nawaz et al., 2014).

In order to be persistently competitive, organizations should strive to improve employee creativity. In general, employee creativity is affected by leadership characteristics (Clapham, 2000). Hence, leadership can facilitate employee creativity through employee training. Besides training employees to be creative, training them to have cognitive skills is also imperative because it can help to



develop their creativity (Scott et al., 2004). Not only that but it also able to improve both employees and organizational creativity in general (Nawaz et al., 2014).

Employee creativity has various benefits. One of them is organizations' ability to become more efficient and adaptable to changes; thus, organizational and leadership support is highly recommended (Beheshtifar & Zare 2013).

Therefore, the researcher proposes:

Proposition 2 *There is a positive relationship between employee training and employee creativity*

Employee Training and Organizational Commitment

Nowadays, company and organizations strives to develop employee skills and ability through HR practices such as training. Literature review related to training and organizational commitment described the relationship between both as one of the most significant factor to support organization in lowering recruitment and other costs related to it (Al-Emadi & Marquardt, 2007). It is also described as an incessant professional development and has an important role in building organizational commitment (Tarasco & Damato, 2006).

I personally believed that committed employees can bring the outcomes that the organization expects. This is why studies found that there was a relationship between training and organizational commitment and that this relationship affects organizations as a whole (Dias & Silva, 2016). Studies also found that training positively affects employee commitment (Bulut & Culha, 2010); and along with teamwork and employee empowerment, training significantly and

positively affect organizational commitment (Hanaysha, 2016). Training was also found to positively affected organizational commitment in health-care studies (Bartlett, 2001; Rawashdeh, & Tamimi, 2019).

Therefore, the researcher proposes:

Proposition 3 *There is a positive relationship between employee training and organizational commitment*

C. Discussion And Implications

In the modern business world, creativity and innovation have become the two major aspects that indicate an organization's performance. It can be said that creativity and innovation are interdependent. If an organization seeks to higher the level of employees' creativity, it should first nurture employees to be innovative; in response, if an organization aims to having innovative employees, it should first focus to improve employees' creativity. As Oldham and Cummings (1996) stated, organizational innovation and competitive advantages are the good and successful result of properly nurturing employees' creativity. Thus, organizations need training to achieve creative and innovative work environment and employees. Without training, these goal will more likely to remain an imagination.

According to Shalley et al., (2000), nurturing of employees' creativity and innovation must be supported by a creative working environment. The author emphasized that creative working environment not only contributes to better employees' wellbeing and job satisfaction, but also lower employee turnover intention. As have been discussed in previously, creativity is vital in



organizations since organizations are always faced with challenges and changes; so do its employees. The constant changes, the rapid competitive environment, and the demand to achieve advantages in such environment require organizations to be as creative as possible; therefore, without creativity, an organization cannot survive for long (Beheshtifar & Kamani-Fard, 2013).

Theoretical Implication

The theoretical implication of this study contributes to the body of knowledge on HR practices: *Employee training*, and *employee performance*, *employee creativity*, and *organizational commitment*. The main theory that the researcher used as the basis of this study is *Social Exchange Theory* while the propositions are based on the reviewed literature that is used to give clear insights on the proposed relationship. This study proposes the relationship between *employee training* and *employee performance*, *employee training* and *employee creativity*, and *employee training* and *organizational commitment* and the propositions are presented in the conceptual framework of this study

Practical Implication

This study provides practical implications as follow. First, practitioners can use the literature of this study to enhance the impact of employee training. Second, this study has discussed that *employee training* has positive impact *employee performance*, *employee creativity* and *organizational commitment*. Therefore, it is imperative for practitioners, particularly HR practitioners, to find out about how to develop good and suitable organizational trainings in order to

improve employee performance and employee creativity. Third, it is expected that by knowing what kind of training and how to apply a suitable training, the training can positively affect the organization in general; for example, employee organizational commitment. Last, it is expected that this study can be a reminder for managers on the importance of implementing well-planned and suitable training programs so as to improve employee quality and productivity in facing challenges and competitions.

Limitations and Future Research Perspective

This study does not describe in detail the parts of employee training but only generally discusses and proposes the impact of employee training. Nevertheless, this study can contribute to *employee training*, *employee development*, *employee performance*, *employee creativity*, and *employee commitment* literature.

Since this is a conceptual paper, there is a need to conduct an empirical study to test the propositions that this study developed. There is also a need to conduct a meta-analysis study to support the propositions. Further studies can also make use of more credible literature to strengthen the theories and to support the references used in this study.

D. Conclusions

Increasing competition in various sectors such as business, education, and health care require organizations to focus more on their employees by ensuring that their employees improve in performance, creativity, and commitment toward the



organization where they work. This expectation can be achieved through good and suitable employee trainings. It is the main duty of the organization, specifically the HRM leader, to design good and suitable training programs. This is a vital matter since studies have proven that employee training positively and significantly affect employee performance, employee creativity, and employee organizational commitment.

Employees cannot do the training on their own. They need the organization to support, guide, and prepare them through proper training programs. Organizations' support will act as a source of motivation for the employees to do their best for the organization. The support also shows that the organization values its employees, wishes the employees to develop and improve, and cares for the employees' well-being.

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