THE INFLUENCE OF MOTIVATION FACTORS ON TRAINING TRANSFER

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ABSTRACT

The anticipated return on investment in training can only be achieved to the extent that skills learned during training are transferred to job performance. The significant time and money spent on training and development (T&D) do not always translate into positive outcomes in terms of productivity. The purpose of the study was to investigate motivating factors that have a significant influence on the transfer of training in the workplace. The study applied the learning transfer system inventory (LTSI) model, paying particular attention to the motivation construct and the employee's job performance. The research was conducted using 420 non-profitable organisation employees in Abia State, Nigeria. The Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) was used to analyse the data. The research hypothesis was tested using the Pearson Correlation coefficient. The result indicates a moderate correlation between motivation to transfer, transfer effort-performance expectation, and job performance. The finding also showed an insignificant positive correlation between performance-outcome expectation and employee job performance in the workplace. Therefore, the variables considered in this study have a great influence on training transfer in the workplace and thus improve employee performance positively. Therefore, employee training directly increases employee and organisational overall performance. The study recommends that organisations should continue to invest in employees' training, and their rewards should be tied to individual employees' physical outputs, contributions or performance.

Keywords: Organisation, Development, Training transfer, Performance-outcome**,** Motivation.

INTRODUCTION

The significant time and money spent on training and development (T&D) do not always translate into positive outcomes such as productivity and financial assets. Organisations are not overly concerned with learning; their primary concern is learning that enhances job performance. The influence of training transfer on performance depends on the motivation to utilise the skills and knowledge acquired (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). Thus, if a transfer is

stimulated, practised, and reflected upon, it becomes easier to achieve (Liebermann & Hoffmann, 2008). Training is valuable only to the extent that it contributes more to job performance than the provision of any other scarce resource. The high costs of T&D have driven the desire to understand the factors that encourage or hinder the utilisation of knowledge in the workplace. Therefore, understanding the factors that influence the transfer of knowledge on the job leads to an increase in employee performance (Egan, Yang, & Barlett, 2004). Thus, the anticipated return on investment in training can only be realised when training is applied in the workplace (Chiaburu & Lindsay, 2008). Training transfer can be hindered or enhanced by organisational culture and systematic factors such as work habits, organisational climate, evaluation procedures, employees' readiness for learning, and feedback techniques. The transfer of training is a crucial element in enhancing performance and achieving a competitive advantage, and therefore requires urgent attention (Weldy, 2009). Training transfer refers to the extent to which skills and knowledge acquired are applied from one context to another; it is the effective application of competencies gained by employees during training to their job performance (Liebermann et al. 2008). The substantial efforts invested in T&D interventions in public and private organisations in Nigeria and globally do not consistently lead to commensurate learning transfer due to a lack of adequate motivation. Employees' ability to complete their tasks may not be guaranteed. There is considerable evidence that a significant portion of an organisation's investment in training may not yield productive outcomes because of poor training transfer motivation and expectations (Ylvisaker, Hibbard, & Feeney, 2006). Studies have shown that only 10 to 15% of staff learning is transferred to the job (Coates 2007; Abdullah & Suring 2011). Although there are discrepancies in the average success rate of training transfer, Saks and Belcourt (2006) report up to 40% failure to transfer learning immediately after training. However, regardless of how effective the T&D intervention was, if what is learned is not transferred to relevant job performance sustained over time, the training has failed its purpose.

Most organisations consider training cost continues to depletes the bottom-line of the businesses and so avoid to allocate substantial amounts in their annual training budgets for fear of losing trained workers to competitors, although training and development as strategy can be used to attract and retain talents but may not have long term impact if trained employees are not equitably rewarded based on their work performance hence, they are bound to leave the organisation for the greener pasture.

The objective of the study was to examine the factors that influence the transfer of learning within an organisation and to note the significance of controlling the elements that enhance training initiatives to achieve the desired results that may benefit the organisation. It is well known that skills acquired during training do not guarantee an automatic transition to improved employee performance. Consequently, the researchers' aim is to investigate some uncommon or little-known factors that may affect learning transfer, using employees of non-profit organisation to support their missionary work. The selection of a non-profit organisation, particularly the Marist Brothers, was based on the observation that non-profit organisations are often overlooked in empirical studies of this nature in Nigeria, despite their substantial contributions to the economy.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Motivation to Transfer Learning

Learning is transferred only when the trainee desires to use the skills and knowledge acquired to perform the job (Collins, 2023). The motivation to transfer can be defined as "the direction, intensity, and persistence of effort toward utilising in a work setting skills and knowledge learned' (Holton & Bates, 2008). Training transfer is the extent to which trainees are motivated to use their acquired skills in performing their daily tasks. According to Holton & Bates (2008), motivation to transfer is the extent to which employees are inspired to use skills learned in training in the workplace. If training results in enhanced knowledge and relevant skills, workers' job performance will likely improve, as the skills learned in training are transferred to the job. No matter how motivated employees were before and after training, they may not transfer what they have learned if there is no motivation to transfer (Kirwan & Birchal, 2006).

Performance Outcomes Expectations

Performance outcomes expectations define employee expectations that superior performance will lead to desired outcomes. "When I improve my performance, I receive positive benefits and outcomes" (Holton & Bates, 2008). Performance-outcomes expectations are expectations that trainees believe using the skills acquired during training will lead to a desired reward, e.g. promotion or financial reward (Holton & Bates, 2008). The greater this expectation, the more likely trainees will try to use the new skills and knowledge acquired to improve their job performance in the workplace.

Transfer Effort-Performance Expectation

It is a held belief by employees that their effort during training will lead to positive changes in their job performance. This factor measures the trainee's expectation that effort dedicated to training will result in superior job performance. This anticipation influences transfer of learning (Holton and Bates, 2008). This is an important motivating factor in the transfer of learned skills. In other words, trainees with a transfer effort-performance expectation mentality are more likely to actively apply what they learned, resulting in superior learning transfer. Employees or trainees who believe in this premise are likely to work harder to transfer learning to the performance of their work. This led to overall improved employee and organisational performance. In essence, the transfer effort-performance expectation acts as a connection between training and real work performance.

Training Transfer

Training transfer refers to the process of applying skills and knowledge acquired in a training program to a real job in the workplace. It is a vital characteristic of training efficiency because the application of knowledge, skills and attitudes learned in the training programme influences workplace performance. However, training transfer can be influenced by other factors such as motivation, ability, and prior experience of the trainees. Training design should be relevant, provide opportunities for trainees to practice the knowledge learned, and be fully engaged in a supportive work environment.

Conceptual framework of the study

The conceptual model of this study was adopted from the Holton model (2008) of learning transfer, which is based on the idea that the training transfer rests on training inputs, which include trainee characteristics, training design and work environment. The works concerning trainee characteristics that impact training transfer concentrated so much on the influence of trainees' motivation to learn and to transfer learning. The trainee may acquire new competences during training, but if he is not motivated to transfer, no real transfer will take place. Therefore, a trainee's ability to transfer depends on how motivated the learner is. Also, motivation to transfer will depend on the perception of the learner whether the efforts made to transfer learning will result in better performance. And the result for superior performance will be desirable. Training transfer depends on the extent to which employees or trainees are motivated to learn and apply their newly acquired skills and knowledge on the job. Motivation of trainees before, during, and after training is a vital factor in the transfer of learning (Andoh, Annan-Appia, Boampong, Jehu-Appaih, Korsah, and Owusu, 2024).

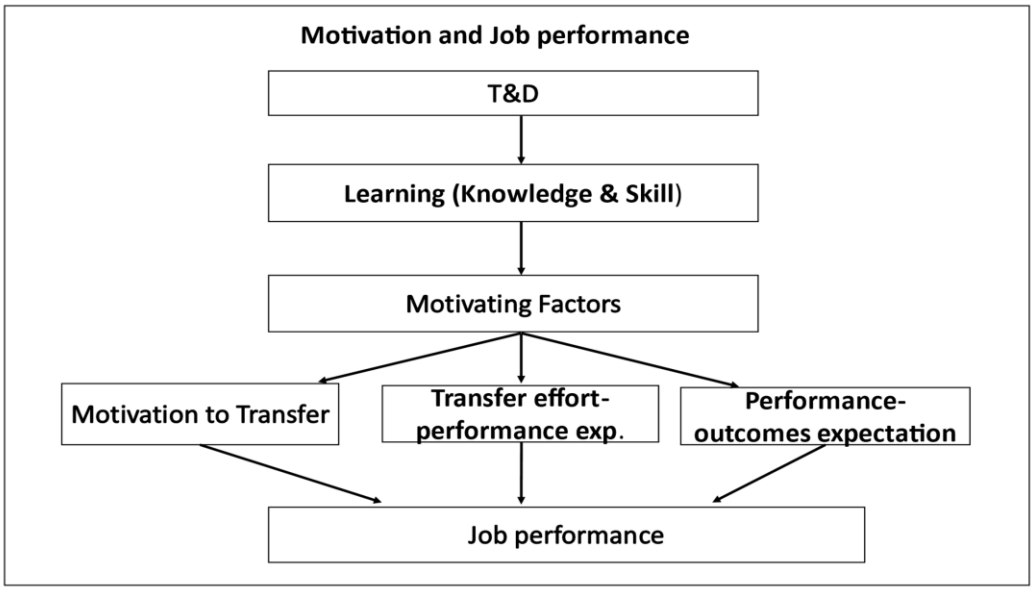


Figure 1: Motivation factors and job performance (Adapted and modified from Elwood, Holton, Reid, and Wendy, 2000)

Theoretical Review

Expectancy theory (or expectancy theory of motivation) by Victor H. Vroom 1964) suggests that a person will behave in a particular way because he is motivated to choose that specific behaviour over others because of what he anticipates the outcome of that selected behaviour will be. Thus, the person's motivation to act or not to act is a function of his expected outcomes, and it depends on how desirable is the outcome. This theory was adopted for this study

because, if an individual who underwent training and was able to acquire new skills and knowledge. The effort to put the skills and knowledge into his job performance in the workplace will depend on what depend on the expectation that the effort will increase his performance and increase in performance will lead to promotion, reward or recommendation from the authorities. Therefore, if he expects that putting the new skill into practice to perform his job, will to something desirable, there is a likelihood that transfer learning will take place in anticipation for a better reward.

Empirical Review

Motivation to transfer and job performance

Jansen, De Jong, Cornelissen, and Brabander (2023) studied the relationship between motivation to learn and transfer of learning among 514 workers in the judiciary sector. The researcher found that motivation transfer predicts transfer intention and learning transfer over time. De Jong, Jansen, Cornelissen, and Peetsma's (2023) study among 1317 respondents indicates that motivation to learn and anticipation to use newly acquired competencies are motivators to transfer learning. Weissbein, Huang, Ford, and Schmidt (2011) investigated 91 respondents who participated in "interpersonal negotiation training" before training. The result of the study indicates that motivation to learn influences the use of competencies acquired from training.

According to Holton and Bates (2008), motivation to transfer is the extent to which workers are inspired to use the new skills learned during training in the workplace. Kim, Park, and Kang (2019) studied the effect of motivation to learn and training transfer in the organisation. The researcher discovered that motivation to learn positively influenced motivation to transfer learning to job performance. The study was carried out among 420 respondents. Therefore, motivating employees to learn and to transfer learning is essential to successful training interventions.

H_0: There is no statistically significant relationship between motivation to transfer and perceived training transfer on job performance.

Performance-Outcomes Expectations and Job Performance

Performance-Outcomes expectations assume that positive changes in job performance will lead to valued outcomes and will encourage trainees to transfer learning on the job (Channel, 2021). Performance expectation is an important factor that imparts training effectiveness and employee performance (Ali, 2021). The newly acquired competence skills and knowledge will enhance trainees' performance in the workplace (Ali, 2021). This will be possible if employees feel that putting into practice their new knowledge in the performance of their duties will lead to a desirable outcome. This assumption will invariably motivate them to use the new skills and knowledge in the workplace. According to Holton & Bates (2008), "performance outcomes expectation" is one of the motivating factors, which reflects how far workers believe that using the new skills and knowledge they acquired in training will lead to positive rewards from the management. These findings confirm the claim that the greater the perception that training transfer will lead to greater rewards, the more likely workers are to use the newly acquired

competencies in their everyday tasks. A trainee's belief that training will lead to better outcomes, such as promotion or financial reward, will enhance the trainee's motivation to learn and apply the learning in the workplace (Ali, 2021).

H0: There is no statistically significant correlation between Performance outcomes expectation and training transfer and perceived training transfer on the job performance.

Transfer Effort-Performance Expectations and Job Performance.

Transfer Effort-Performance Expectation and Job Performance is the trainee's acceptance or confidence that energy devoted to transferring new skills and knowledge in the workplace will lead to superior job performance (Channel 2021). The effort made in training will benefit the organisation when the newly acquired skill is applied on the job (Mehner, Rothenbusch, and Kauffeld, 2023). Faizal Amin Nur, Ruhizan, and Bekri (2015) established that transfer effort-performance can improve job performance. Openness to change on the part of individual employees before and after training is important in transferring the knowledge acquired during training (Abozed, Melaine, and Saci 2010). The following hypothesis was formulated following the conclusions drawn from the literature review: H0: There is no statistically significant correlation between effort-performance expectation and job performance.

METHODOLOGY

The methodology helps investigators to clarify and evaluate methods, indicating their limitations and ascertaining their suppositions and values**.** In any research study, one of the essential tasks is to choose a specific research design to be used. A suitable and simple framework for the research method and strategies required to address the research question for this study was formulated. The researchers used questionnaires to collect data from non-profit organisation in Abia State. The questionnaire was distributed with the help of some staff members of the organisation. Considerable time was spent administering the questionnaire and excluding those who might claim not to have received any training within one year of this study. The total population of the employees was 500; therefore, the census method was used because of the small sample size. Out of the 500 respondents, 420 employees completed the questionnaire and returned it successfully.

Measuring instrument

The Learning Transfer System Inventory (LTSI) measuring instrument was used for the study. It was originally published in 2000 by Elwood, Holton, Reid, and Wendy, and the revised version was published by Reid, Holton III & Hatala (2012). It provides a thorough definition of the motivation factors that influence the transfer of training in an organisation. The LTSI was the first empirically tested tool that disclosed the validity of all factors that influence training transfer. The LSTI has been authenticated as a reliable tool that diagnoses motivation factors affecting training transfer. It has been used to investigate known potential transfer problems and their impact on workers' performance after the training. The factor definitions contained in the LTSI demonstrated construct validity based on factor analysis with a database of more than 8,000 respondents from 20 different countries in Europe and Asia, representing a wide variety

of industries, jobs, company types, and levels of employees (Holton 2000). This is the only authoritative validated measuring instrument of training transfer.

Data analysis

Pearson correlation was used to explore whether motivation to transfer learning, and performance-outcomes expectations, can influence job performance, Transfer Effort-Performance Expectation, and Job performance. The preliminary analysis was performed to ensure no violation of the assumptions of normality and linearity. Also, no significant violations of assumptions, especially no significant outliers, were found.

Result of the Findings

A total of 420 staff members of the organisation were used. A Pearson correlation analysis was carried out to identify the interrelations between variables and explore the strength of the relationship between two continuous variables (Pallant, 2010). This study examined the relationship between motivation factors, including motivation to transfer, transfer effort, performance expectations, and performance outcome expectations, and job performance, as outlined in Table 3. A "p" value of less than 0.05 was considered statistically significant. The result indicates a moderate positive significant relationship between motivations to transfer, r = .352, n = 420, p<.000, transfer effort-performance expectation r = .341, n = 420, p < .000, and job performance. It also discovered a small, positive, significant correlation between performance outcomes expectation and training transfer on the job, r = .214, n = 420, p < .000.

Table 3: Motivation to transfer and training transfer

	Correlations Motivation Scales			
	1	2	3	4
Motivation to Transfer 1	1			
Transfer Effort-Performance Expectation 2	.461** .000	1		
Performance Outcomes Expectation 3	.274** .000	.518** .000	1	
Job Performance 4	.352** .000	.341** .000	.214** .000	1

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: Authors' data analysis

Discussion of the Results

The transfer effort-performance expectation and performance-outcome expectation were found to have a positive influence on job performance. The results obtained in this study were consistent with the findings in the previous studies (Mehner, Rothenbusch, and Kauffeld, 2023). Faizal Amin Nur, Ruhizan, and Bekri (2015). In other studies, these factors were found to have an impact on training transfer by the same margin as was discovered in this study. Overall, the result showed that motivation to transfer, transfer effort-performance expectation, and performance-outcome expectation in a private non-profit organisation have the same degree of influence on trainee job performance as in public organisations. The finding indicates that T&D initiatives in organisations increase capacity building and employee job performance for both public and private organisations. Thus, this study has highlighted the importance of understanding that there is still a need to motivate trainees to learn and to transfer learning on the job to increase performance. Unfortunately, some organisations do not have enough information about what should be included in or excluded from training programmes, usually designed by public institutions outside the organisation sponsoring the training. A common complaint among trainees was that they were not properly prepared for the training; when this happens, it becomes difficult to transfer learning. Therefore, it is essential to note that it is always important for trainees to be well prepared to know the importance of transferring new skills on the job. This study has highlighted the need to understand that, factors that influence learning transfer are not company-specific.

The results of this study served as a diagnosis of what happened in the organisation and the state of the learning transfer system in public and private organisations in Nigeria. This will help management to identify potential barriers and take action to rectify them before future training takes place. The result of this study is groundbreaking in the sense that not much work has been carried out in non-profit organisations.

Recommendations for future research

There is a need that employees should be motivated further to induce them to transfer what they have learned to their jobs. Organisations need to establish what outcomes employees find most attractive or unattractive to inspire them to learn new knowledge and transform their behaviours. It is strongly recommended that further research be conducted to determine other factors in the organisations not discussed in this study that may promote training transfer. As Leimbach and Maringka (2010) found, the effect of training can be improved by up to 186% if all of the learning transfer methods are effectively applied. Furthermore, future research on similar topics should consider a much wider scope to include other organisations in different parts of Nigeria.

Contribution to knowledge

The findings of this study are groundbreaking in that there has been limited research in this area among privately owned non-profit organisations in Nigeria, in general, and in Abia State, in particular, according to the available literature.

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