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THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN E-TRAINING, MOTIVATION AND JOB PERFORMANCE DURING MOVEMENT CONTROL ORDER

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A R T I C L E   I N F O

A B S T R A C T

Covid-19 pandemic which is spread almost all over the world has changed the pattern of human life, both economically and socially. As a result of Movement Control Order (MCO), organizations today are turning to online training involving staff at all levels. Although e-training is considered economical, certain methods and strategies need to be sought so that the effectiveness of e-training in enhancing employees' job performance can be achieved. This study is carried out to examine the relationship between several elements of training effectiveness and job performance. This study is cross-sectional and correlational in nature. Based on the data obtained from 140 employees in a municipal council in Malaysia, regression analysis found that there is a significant relationship between e-training efficiencies, e-training method and training motivation with job performance. The results of this study provide implication to the organization in finding ways to increase the effectiveness of the implementation of e-training.

1. Introduction

Prior to the Covid-19 outbreak, training programs in most organizations were conducted face-to-face. There is no denying that online training to some extent has also been used in conjunction with face-to-face methods. Now, after a year, there are no signs that this epidemic is coming to an end. Accordingly, it is expected that online training methods will continue to be an option. Of course, the operation of online training methods is different from face-to-face methods, especially in terms of training management itself, the need for equipment and system facilities, training motivation among participants and so on. It is important for the organization to review how online training can be improved in order to be able to add value to the knowledge and skills of employees (Amara & Atia, 2016).

Job performance evaluates whether an employee is doing a job well. Job performance, academically is studied as part of industrial and organizational psychology, also forms part of the management of human resources. Successful workers meet deadlines, provide good customer services and make sales through positive customer experiences and build the brand. Consumers believe that the organization is indifferent to their interests when workers do not work well and may seek to support elsewhere. For organizational results and progress, performance is an essential criterion. There are several ways to enhance the performance of employees, one of which is training. Training can take place in the classroom, online or by integrating both the classroom and online training. Training programs strengthened employees' understanding, skills and job behaviour and are likely to influence job performance (Amara & Atia, 2016). E-training is the delivery of training and learning through digital resources. This method is seen to be more convenient to employees or users to be trained regardless of time and place. E-training is delivered online involving the use of computers or other digital devices. E-training, virtual meeting and distance education have also become accepted in today's organisations, especially Malaysia (Ramayah, Ahmad, & Hong, 2019). Organizations have started investing in developing technology infrastructure with the rise in technology. Different benefits have been provided by the use of technology in businesses, such as low training costs and reliable content for training (Garg & Sharma, 2020). A growing number of organizations rely on e-training because of its potential to reach mass groups of people in distant locations and costs saving. For many people and individuals, e-training is regarded as the chosen learning platform due to its worldwide usability and scope. With a mouse click over the internet, e-training will take place anywhere and everywhere.

In Malaysia, since the implementation of the Movement Control Order (MCO) on March 18, 2020 as a result of the spread of Covid19 pandemic, more and more public and private organizations are turning to digital methods to improve the level of knowledge and skills of their employees. Training in any method is a form of investment for the purpose of improving the performance of employees and organizations. Although we acknowledge that training and learning process cannot be stopped or stunted due to Covid19, the extent to which e-training is able to contribute to improving employees' knowledge and performance is something that needs further investigation. The Covid-19 pandemic has also led to the isolation of many provinces and employees are allowed to work from home. This makes people work more via online in order to keep themselves productive and maintain their performance in the midst of the epidemic.

The use of e-training requires employees to quickly adapt to the new training environment and have knowledge of the related applications, stable internet access, mental strength and high level of motivation. In terms of managing the online learning software, learners who dislike and are not familiar with computers and electronic gadgets can have problems and eventually lose their interest in e-training. Previous studies have shown that low performance of workers is the negative effect of not having a favourable atmosphere and adequate organizational facilities, including proper training (Hanapi & Nordin, 2014). Even though there were studies carried out on the effectiveness of training and development, motivation and work discipline towards employee performance, a few studies were carried out concerning the use of e-training in enhancing employees' performance in the public sector. Most of the past research focus on training performance and the improvement of expertise but barely touches on the effectiveness of e-training (Donaldson & Townsend 2007). Therefore, this research aims to determine the effectiveness of e-training on employees' performance which involved employees at the public sector in Malaysia. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between e-training infrastructure, e-training efficiencies, e-training methods and training motivation and employees' performance. The results will then be presented and implications will be discussed.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Training and Employee Performance

E-training has similarities with e-learning especially from the technology applied as well as delivery methods. The basis that distinguishes the two is in terms of the time period involved. E-training usually involves a much shorter period of time compared to e-learning. This is because e-training is designed to enable participants to achieve specific training objectives (Ramayah, Ahmad & Hong, 2012). Training has a strong connection with the success of employees who are involved with it. Previous studies have discovered a significant relationship between the training effectiveness and employees' success in carrying out various tasks (e.g., Jha, 2016; Anitha & Kumar, 2016). Through training, employees become competent in their employment and are able to produce better performance. Employees' success can be expressed in quality improvements, ease of use of advanced technologies and highly motivated employees. According to Hassan, Hassan and Yen (2020), employees' performance includes the tasks and actions conducted by the employees that suit the organizational goals. These goals are implemented and performed to meet those personal goals accomplished and to achieve the organization's vision and mission for which they worked. Employees' performance refers to the expertise, talents and willingness of workers to do a job safely and successfully in order to boost the ability of good work experience in order to deliver better work. Information and technology skills are very important in e-training for the employees to perform the job in an effective way (Anitha & Kumar, 2016; Nauman et al. 2020).

2.2 E-Training Infrastructure

The technology acceptance model (TAM) (Davis 1989) is a theory of information systems that models how a technology is adopted and used by users. The perceived utility of the training program or a specific scheme would increase job efficiency. E-training facilities or infrastructure are the key practices of management in the current economic situation whereby it contributes to expertise, capabilities, higher understanding, positive attitudes, and employees' actions resulting in business profitability (Kalyanamitra, Saengchai, & Jermsittiparsert, 2020). E-training infrastructure is cloud-based computing and storage resources for the training events because it is useful and helpful to organise the online training as a medium for the application of training (Kamal, Aghbari & Atteia, 2016). Additionally, e-training infrastructure or facilities need to function well and flexible according to the organization's learning and training needs such as computers, Wi-fi, broad band connecting, video conferencing and other devices (EL Hajjar, & Alkhanaizi, 2018). E-training infrastructures and facilities allow employees to develop their skills and positively affect their performance (e.g., Jha, 2016; Tangthong, Trimetsoontorn & Rojniruntikul, 2014). Generally, employee success can be caused by two factors, which are internal factors and external factors which are the environment or infrastructure.

2.3 E-Training Efficiencies

E-training efficiency is the capability of the organization and trainers to organize and execute training courses of action to successfully impart skills and knowledge during training (Paul, 2020). Sharma and Sharma (2016) state that in order to ensure e-training efficiencies, the trainers play the vital role in conducting e-training. Additionally, according to Madagamage, Warnakulasooriya and Wickramasuriya (2014), e-training efficiency is one of the factors that influence e-training effectiveness because the trainees will feel satisfied when the trainers are able to provide excellent and efficient training. The study conducted by Kamal et al. (2016) measured e-training efficiencies as a unidimensional construct. Measurement of e-training efficiencies is made by using an 8-item scale which, among others, looks at e-training efficiencies

in the context of a trainer's knowledge competence which includes aspects of ICT, content, planning, organizing, and e-assessment of e-training.

E-training efficiencies is the most influential aspect that affects employees' performance and training effectiveness because it is the attitude, behaviour, skill and knowledge of the trainers itself during the training in order to achieve the goals of the organization and maintain employees' productivity as well as the brand image of the company itself (Khalid, Eldakak & Puteh, 2017). The trainer should also provide feedback, recognize achievement and keep a positive relationship with the trainees so that the interest of e-training can be sustained, and improvement of e-training efficiencies can be achieved (Paul, 2020).

2.4 E-training Methods

E-training incorporates the multimedia form of instructional delivery, learning via the internet and Web-Based Training (WBT) (Dada, Alkali, & Oyewola, 2019). There are also several types of e-training and methods of development. It includes Web-based Learning, Webinars and Virtual Classrooms, Video-based Learning and Mobile Learning. Generally, training can improve task efficiency, establish job interests, satisfy employees and strengthens the commitment to the organization leading to employee's performance (Anitha & Kumar 2016). The use of e-training also requires knowledge related to information and communication technology (ICT). The importance of ICT skills on job performance has been emphasized by previous studies (e.g., Oyovwe-Tinuoye et al. 2021). E-training methods can be conducted either synchronous or asynchronous. Synchronous e-training requires the simultaneous participation where both the trainer and trainees take place in real time even though both of them are physically separated. Meanwhile, asynchronous e-training does not require simultaneous participation where the training is conducted with time delay as well as the trainer and trainees are physically separated from each other. So that the trainees not only can learn in any place and time but also can learn at their own convenience (Dada, Alkali, & Oyewola, 2019).

Meanwhile, training has recently gained special attention through webinar apps. A webinar seminar is an Internet-supplied lecture or workshop where teachers and learners can interact with both audio and video and send text messages. In addition, via the Internet, each participant will interact with other participants. The teacher will therefore give students the opportunity to hold a conference and give a speech (Baghaei, Rasouli, Rahmani, Mohammadpour, Jafarizadeh, 2012).

Given the current need for the municipal council to improve its services, the use of the current training methods should add knowledge and skills among the employees. It is necessary to use effective and efficient e-training methods that enable the extensive training of skills required by employees as soon as possible. Previous studies have supported the relationship between the training method and job performance (e.g., Fattah & El Abdel-Hamid, 2020; Rahmati & Khadivzadeh, 2020).

2.5 Training Motivation

Motivation is the ability to exert high levels of efforts towards organizational objectives, influenced by the capacity to meet certain individual needs (Robbins & Judge, 2007). Motivation will influence people to do their work so that they can make full efforts to achieve something. Motivation can improve output on the basis of expectation theory by instilling strong trust that doing the job would lead to task achievement in order to obtain the incentive provided by individual actions (Robbins & Judge, 2007). Basically, the expectation principle postulates that humans will take some action to accomplish an objective that they find important and see what

they do to help them achieve the goal. If a person has an expectation, he or she will therefore strive to fulfil it to improve his or her individual performance (Robbins & Judge, 2007). Several previous studies have shown that motivation plays an important role in sustaining and enhancing individual performance, and thus has a positive impact on individual performance (e.g., Nguyen et al. 2020; Moon, Hur & Hyun, 2019; Mardanov, 2020; Anwar & Budi, 2018).

Research Hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between e-training infrastructure and job performance.
Hypothesis 2: There is a positive relationship between e-training efficiencies and job performance.
Hypothesis 3: There is a positive relationship between e-training method and employees' performance.

Hypothesis 4: There is a positive relationship between training motivation and job performance.

3. Estimation Method

3.1 Participants

This study is correlational and cross-sectional with a quantitative method (Gravetter & Forzano, 2009) designed to achieve the aim of this study, which is to examine the relationship between independent variables which are e-training infrastructure, e-training efficiencies, e-training methods, training motivation and the dependent variable which is employee performance. The population of this study consists of 220 staff working with three branches of a municipal council in the northern region of peninsular Malaysia. This municipal council is committed to be contemporary and looking forward to the development of its management systems and services in order to provide professional and first-class services for local residents. The efforts to increase the training and learning quality are stepped up, supported and enhanced in order to improve the quality of training and learning process, especially during MCO. This study covered the period of September 2020 until February 2021. For a population of 220, a sample size of 140 employees is required (Krejcie & Morgan, 1970). Participants for the study of 140 people came from all levels of management and departments.

3.2 Procedure

Approval to conduct this study was obtained from the supervisor to the first author who underwent practical training at the municipality. The process of gathering data for this research was conducted using email (Google forms) personally to selected subjects. Based on the sampling frame of 220 employees, systematic sampling technique was used to collect the data from a sample of 140 employees (Sekaran & Baugie, 2010). To ensure that the participants have enough time to answer in a comfortable situation, the respondents were given five working days to answer the questionnaire. Clear instructions accompanied the email, and the contact details of the researchers are also included in the questionnaire form so that the respondents may ask if there are any inquiries about any clarifications that need to be explained further. The objectives of this study have also been clearly stated in the questionnaire. Participation is voluntary and researchers have ensured that confidentiality is fully preserved.

3.3. Measures

The total number of items in the questionnaire was 45 items, whereby six items were used to tap the demographic information of gender, age, tenure, level of education, race, department and marital status. A total of 39 items were used to measure the independent and dependent variables. The scale of e-training infrastructure (7 items), e-training efficiency (8 items), e-training method (6 items), job performance (12 items) was adapted from Baldwin and Ford (1988) and Thomson (2008) as cited in Kamal et al. (2016). Five items to measure training motivation were adapted from Dvsvik and Kuras (2012). Examples of statement include "Necessary communication services such as internet are available in the organization" (e-training infrastructure); "Trainers have competent knowledge in training concepts, information communication technology" (e-training efficiencies); "Trainers use visual electronic applications during e-training" (e-training method): "The online training course is very exciting" (training motivation) and "I feel that I perform my tasks in a way that exceeds my superiors' expectations" (employee performance). Items were measured using a 5-point Likert Scale ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Cronbach's alpha reported by Kamal et al. (2016) are as follow: Training infrastructure (0.71), training efficiencies (0.74), training method (0.72) and job performance (0.78).

3.4 Analysis

The raw data was analyzed using the Version 20 of Statistical Method for Social Sciences (SPSS). The Cronbach's alpha is used to assess the reliability of the measurements used in this research. Descriptive statistics of frequency and percentages were used to present sample characteristics. To explain the basic features of the data in a sample, analysis of means, standard deviation and correlations were used. Hypothesis testing is a method of inferential statistics that allows us, based on a representative sample, to draw conclusions about an entire population. Regression was used in this analysis to determine whether to accept or reject study hypotheses.

4.0 Findings

Table 1 Sample characteristics

With the cooperation provided by the management, all the 140 subjects from 14 departments participated in this study. As can be seen in Table 1, overall, 63 respondents (45%) are males, while female respondents are represented by 77 people or 55%. Unmarried respondents are 52 people or 37.1% while married respondents are 77 people or 55%. Single parents are represented by 7.9%. The majority of respondents are Malay (132 people or 94.3%) while the rest are Chinese, Indians and others. In terms of academic qualifications, respondents received education at the level of Sijil Pelajaran Malaysia up to the master's level. On average, the age of the respondents were 37.82 years with an average experience of 13.12 years.

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

Table 2 provides descriptive statistics for all the study variables. All the variables were measured using a 5-point Likert scale from 1 (strongly disagree) until 5 (strongly agree). As can be seen, the means for all the variables were above the mid-point of 3 (4.02 to 4.08), which means that the majority of respondents indicated that they agreed or strongly agreed with the statements. In general, respondents agreed that the elements of e-training, namely e-training infrastructure, e-training efficiency, e-training method are good, they have the required level of motivation, and they also show good work performance. The maximum value of 5 for all study variables indicates that a number of respondents fully agree with the statements that measure the study variables. Basically, the respondents agreed that, and the values of SD (.45 to .61) indicated that the scores were closed to the means for all the variables.

Table 3 Reliability Analysis

Cronbach's alpha is a measure used to assess the reliability. According to Nunnally (1978) Cronbach alpha should be greater than 0.70. As indicates in Table 3, the alpha values for all variables are above 0.70.

Table 4 Correlation Analysis

Correlation analysis is a statistical measurement tool used to study the intensity of a relationship between two continuous, numerically calculated variables (e.g., height and weight). This unique method of analysis is useful when a researcher needs to decide if there are potential ties between variables (Sekaran & Baugie, 2010). The findings of the correlation analysis are summarized in Table 4. As can be seen, infrastructure (r = .47, p< .01), efficiencies (r = .48, p< .01), methods (r = .52, p< .01), and motivation (r = .47, p< .01) are positively and significantly correlated to results. Correlational research findings provide initial evidence for the hypotheses of the report.

Table 5 Multiple Regression Analysis

Regression analysis is a collection of statistical processes in statistical modelling to estimate the relationships between a dependent variable and one or more independent variables (Sekaran & Baugie, 2010). Linear regression is the most common method of regression analysis. Multiple regressions were performed to test the research hypothesis (Sekaran & Baugie, 2010) where job performance is a dependent variable, while e-training infrastructure, e-training quality, e-training process and motivation for training are independent variables. The result of multiple regressions is presented in Table 4. As can be seen, the whole model explained 13% of the variance in the performance. Three of the independent variables were significant predictors of job performance which are methods (β= .32, p< .01), motivation (β= .23, p< .01) and efficiencies (β= .18, p< .05.

Infrastructure (β= .06, n.s.) was not significantly related to performance. Hence, H2, H3, H4 were supported.

4. Results and Discussion

Training is one of an organization's most valuable tasks because of its potential to develop individual strength and efficiency, which could ultimately contribute to the achievement of organizational objectives. This study is carried out to examine the influence of e-training methods, e-training efficiencies, e-training infrastructure and training motivation on the performance of employees. Based on multiple regression analyses, this study provides evidence of the relationship between e-training efficiencies, e-training method and training motivation on employees' performance. These findings are consistent with previous studies (e.g., Khalid et al., 2017; Moon, Hur & Hyun, 2019; Fattah & El Abdel-Hamid, 2020). However, this research failed to find support for the relationship between e-training infrastructure and employees' performance. The results of the study showing that e-training infrastructure does not have a significant relationship with job performance are inconsistent with the results of previous studies (e.g., Kamal et al. 2016). It is possible to speculate that some respondents have undergone e-training using mobile phones. Although the use of mobile phones makes it easier for them to follow the training on the go, it may be less effective in terms of knowledge transfer and, consequently, less effective in improving job performance.

Since it is expected that the training will continue via online, part of the strategy to improve the work performance of employees is to focus on e-training efficiencies, e-training method and training motivation. In terms of e-training efficiencies, emphasis on several aspects such as the selection of capable trainers, effective planning and delivery as well as appropriate training content. Similarly, elements of e-training methods that should be emphasized include diversity of applications and platform. Improving the performance of staff attending training can also be enhanced with a focus on the motivational aspects of staff selected to attend training. Based on the multiple regression analyses, there is a significant relationship between employee motivation and employee performance. This result was supported by Oren et al. (2013) whereby they mentioned that motivation is closely related to the emergence of a tendency to work and perform well to achieve goals.

By looking at the results at multiple regression analyses, e-training methods was positively significant with the effectiveness of e-training on employees' performance. It is recommended that the municipal council use a variety of methods in conducting e-training. For example, they can use mobile learning. It is because, when it comes to e-learning or e-training, the accessibility plays a crucial role. The use of mobile leaning will enable employees to access the needed information at the comfort of their homes, especially during MCO. Mobile learning places corporate training in the staff's hands, giving them the ability to relate to it as and when they choose. Thus, it will increase their performance because they are satisfied with the training, they joined. It is necessary to mention some of the shortcomings of this study. This study is cross-sectional and correlational in nature. Data was only collected from three branches of the municipal council. The small sample size is also one of the disadvantages that limit the ability of this study to make a generalization. However, we must not forget that studies conducted to find methods that benefit employees and organizations, for example, in terms of improving work performance in a chaotic environment as what we are all facing now should be encouraged so that we can offer alternatives for organizational survival. In the current work environment and operations of the organization, with constraints in terms of profit reduction as well as the need to find operating methods or strategies that can sustain the organization, investments made in the form of online training should be seen as an opportunity that is not only economical but is able to

bring appropriate returns similar to face-to-face training methods that we are familiar with. In order to obtain a more systematic approach to research on the effects of training approaches on performance, prospective studies should also add more variables including mediating variables.

Table 1 Sample characteristics

Variables	Categories	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	63	45.0
	Female	77	55.0
Status	Single	52	37.1
	Married	77	55.0
	Single Parent	11	7.9
Races	Malay	132	94.3
	Chinese	4	2.9
	Indian	3	2.1
	Others	1	0.7
Qualification	SPM	30	21.4
	STPM	4	2.9
	Certificate	9	6.4
	Diploma	45	32.1
	Degree	42	30.0
	Master	10	7.1
Department	Management Services Department	20	14.3
	Treasury Department	6	4.3
	Department of Urban Development Planning	10	7.1
	Engineering Department	17	12.1
	Department of Environmental Health	10	7.1
	Department of Building Control	8	5.7
	Landscape Department	6	4.3
	Department of Valuation and Property Management	3	2.1
	Department of Law and Enforcement	7	5.0
	Department of Corporate and Human Resources	19	13.6
	Internal Audit Unit	3	2.1
	Acquisition Unit	7	5.0
	One Stop Centre Unit	12	8.6
	Information Technology Unit	12	8.6

Table 2 Descriptive Statistics

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	SD
Infrastructure	140	2.63	5.00	4.07	.47
Efficiencies	140	2.75	5.00	4.08	.45
Methods	140	1.33	5.00	4.02	.58
Motivation	140	1.00	5.00	4.07	.61
Performance	140	2.42	5.00	4.04	.48

Table 3 Reliability Analysis

Variable	No of Items	Cronbach Alpha
Infrastructure	8	.702
Efficiencies	8	.718
Methods	6	.772
Motivation	5	.729
Performance	12	.794

Table 4 Correlation Analysis

		1	2	3	4	5
1.	Infrastructure	-				
2.	Efficiencies	.66**	-			
3.	Methods	.54**	.47**	-		
4.	Motivation	.51**	.48**	.38**	-	
5.	Performance	.47**	.48**	.52**	.47**	-

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level

Table 5 Multiple Regression Analysis

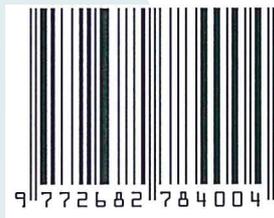| Variable	β	Sig.
Infrastructure	.06	.56
Efficiencies	.18	.04
Methods	.32	.00
Motivation	.23	.00
Adjusted R Square	.13	
F Test	21.52**	

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