E-LEARNING IN TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT - A NEW VISTA BEYOND THE DISTANCE BARRIER

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Abstract

In any organization, Training and Development are crucial for both individual growth and the overall development of the organization. With the advancement of technology, there has been a shift from traditional face-to-face training to e-learning. In today's scenario, the demand for e-learning has significantly increased, and the use of information technology and systems is ubiquitous in almost every company. The corporate sector requires skilled workforce, and organizations have recognized e-learning as an innovative training method. E-training, which includes e-learning and e-strategies, is now an essential component of every business, and Information Technology (IT) plays a critical role in all industries, from large corporations to small businesses. Although computer technology is widely used in business, e-learning should not replace traditional training methods. Instead, it should complement them. Combining information technology with traditional methods of training will significantly enhance the overall growth of the corporate world. This study investigates the prospects and challenges of implementing e-learning in Employee Training and Development Practices.

Key words: *Training and Development, e-learning, Skilled workforce, E-training*

INTRODUCTION:

The impact of Globalization may now be seen and felt in every organisation. It has prompted the need for e-training in all fields in order to keep up with the competition, boost production, and perform at greater levels. As firms attempt to compete in the global market, it has become increasingly vital to draw a line based on their workforce's skills, expertise, andmotivation.

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Using suitable training methodologies, such as e-training, can lead to strong, sustained, and balanced growth. This contributes to the creation of a platform for further exchange of ideas and experiences among a diverse range of industrial organizations, firms, and specialists from across the world. E-training aids in the acquisition of new knowledge or skills for the purposes of personal, organizational and societal development.

1.1 Conceptual Framework:

Every industrial organisation requires well-trained and experienced IT personnel to carry out the tasks of their discipline. Inadequate job performance, decreased productivity, or changes arising from job redesigning or a technological breakthrough necessitate training and development programmers.

1.2 Rationale of e- training:

E-learning is at the heart of the organization because it has an impact on all other divisions. ***AshutoshPande***[1] has rightly said "Training is to bring about the transformation in people's hearts and minds". Good e-learning promotes rapid learning, and online training networks can assist organizations in developing intellectual capital. Any improvement in the organization can occur only if the personnel are provided with appropriate need-based training.

A thorough and scientific e-training strategy is urgently required. The benefits of e-learninginclude:

1. Easy access to information from all sources
2. Easy access to specialists
3. Interaction in multiple forms and
4. Interaction in various temporal dimensions.
5. Opportunities for global connectedness and collaboration
6. Choosing learning approaches based on the learner's needs

1.3 Statement of Research Problem:

E-learning platforms provide interactive, effective and accessible training content to the trainees. But in most of the organizations, training all the employees at once who are working at different office locations is not possible due to internet inaccessibility, lack of institutional support and age barrier. Lack of e-training affects adversely on business performance, team morale and technological advancement. So employee training via e-learning is an important issue which requires academic scrutiny

[1]AshutoshPande, "Perspectives on Training Need Assessment, Training and Management.", 1994, New Delhi

1.4 Objectives:

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1. To identify employees working in organizations that have obtained e-training.
2. To find out what kind of training environment is provided to the employees
3. To identify the e-training opportunities available to employees working in variousorganizations.
4. To learn about the perceptions of employees who have recently received e-trainingabout the overall success of such efforts in Industrial Units.

1.5 Hypotheses:

1. **H_0.** E-Training brings overall improvement of the organisation and improvement inemployee's jobs and skills and makes them professional.
2. **H_1.** E-Training does not bring overall improvement of the organisation and improvement in employee's jobs and skills and make them professional.

2.1 REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Ford and Goldstein (2002) On the other hand, education is the process by which people develop information and understanding. Training and education might take place in the classroom, in mentorship sessions, or through apprenticeship. In an organization, the need to develop IT skills is restricted to the knowledge required to carry out day-to-day operations. A basic understanding of how to use a word processor, spreadsheet, prepare presentation slides, or create a database should be regarded essentials and fundamentals in IT training.

Goldstein and Ford (2002) Training is the process by which people acquire real abilities that they can instantly apply. The term "training" refers to a systematic approach to learning and development aimed at increasing individual, team, and organizational effectiveness.

Jeffrey Arthur (1994) highlighted numerous examples that demonstrate the importance of training in improving employees' attitudes about work and having a dedication to the task as well as the organization they represent.

Jamieson, D., and O'Mara, J. (1991) Personnel employed in an organization must consistently study and improve their abilities in order to remain competitive. Without training, many people will be unable to obtain higher-paying and more skilled positions.

3.0 MATERIALS AND METHODOLOGY

The data collection process included approaching respondents from large scale industrial organizations and personally collecting completed questionnaires from 64 IT skilled respondents, 40 of whom were Administrative staff employees and the remaining 24 were Managers. The 64 duly completed questionnaires were processed for tabulation.

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3.1 Statistical Analysis:

The chi-square test for attribute independence was employed to evaluate hypotheses. The null hypothesis in this methodology is that the two attributes under evaluation are independent of one another. The formula for calculating chi-square statistics is:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \frac{(O-E)^2}{E}$$

Where O stands for observed frequency and E stands for expected frequency. This is compared to the tabular value of the chi-square distribution with degrees of freedom (r-1) (c- 1). Where 'r' represents the number of rows in the contingency table and 'c' represents the number of columns in the contingency table. When the computed value exceeds the tabular value, the null hypothesis is rejected; otherwise, the null hypothesis is accepted.

3.2 Age –wise classification:

For perception analysis, age is a significant indicator. Offering training to administrative personnel and managers has proven to improve the efficiency of organisational activity. The age of the personnel determines the success of the e-training course. From an early age, the ability to grasp, follow-up, concentrate, and be interested is normally strong. Yet, all employees must receive e-training. As a result, age is a significant factor in determining the staff's contribution to skill acquisition. Table 3.2 shows a classification of sample respondents depending on the age at which the employees are interested in adopting e-training. The data in this table show that 45% of administrative workers and 42% of managers were between the ages of 25 and 35, indicating a keen interest.

Table 3.2
Age-Wise Classification of e- Trained Respondents

Age	Administrative Staff	Percent	Managers	Percent
25-35	18	45%	10	42%
35-45	12	30%	8	33%
45-55	8	20%	5	21%
>55	2	5%	1	4%
Total	40	100	24	100

Source: survey data
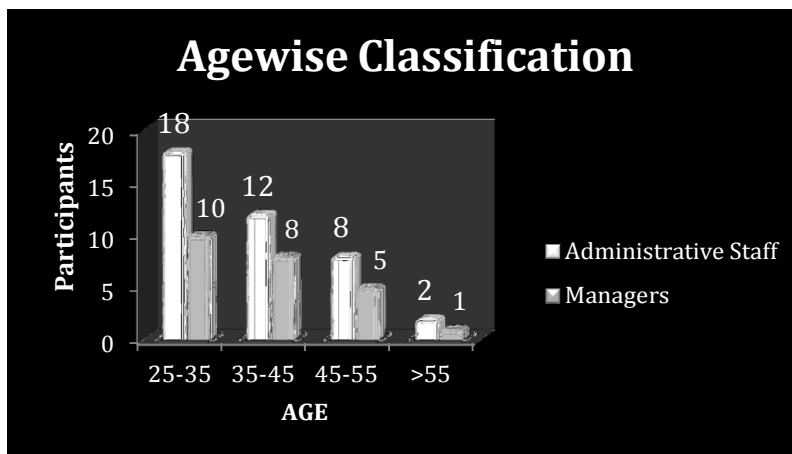
3.3 Training Effectiveness:

Table 3.3 reveals that the maximum percentage of e-trained personnel is of the opinion that the e- training was excellent and it was very effective. This is depicted with the helpof a Pie chart.
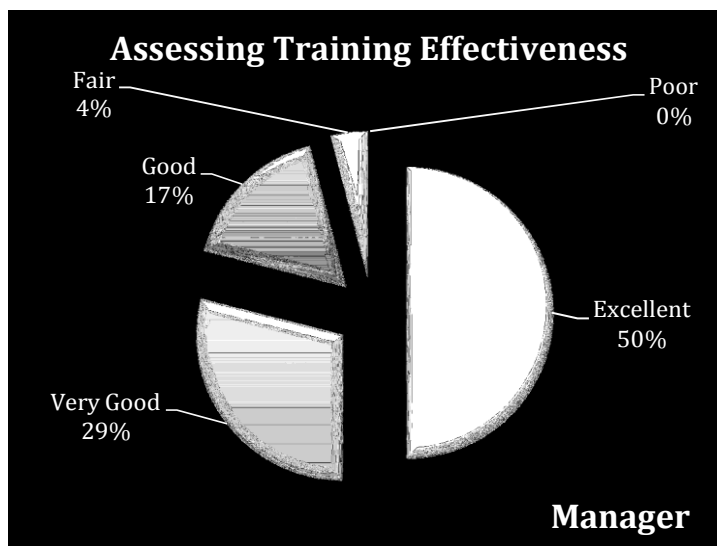
Table 3.3

Assessing Training Effectiveness

Effectiveness	Administrative staff	Percent	Managers	Percent
Excellent	18	45%	12	50%
Very Good	12	30%	7	29%
Good	8	20%	4	17%
Fair	2	5%	1	4%
Poor	-	0%	-	0%
Total	40	100	24	100

Source: survey Data

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Figure 3.3(a)

Assessing Training Effectiveness

Fair 5%
Poor 0%
Good 20%
Excellent 45%
Very Good 30%

Figure 3.3(b)

Assessing Training Effectiveness

Fair 4%
Poor 0%
Good 17%
Excellent 50%
Very Good 29%

Manager

3.4 Usefulness of e-training to the respondent's job

It was observed from Table 3.4 that employees of both the categories seem to be unanimous in opining that the e-training is really useful for their job and skill improvement. The percentages of employees in both the categories giving this opinion are 58% and 55% respectively

Table 3.4

Usefulness of e-training to the Respondent's Job

Training Effectiveness	Managers	Training Effectiveness	Administrative Staff	Percent
Most Useful	14	58%	22	55%
Somewhat	10	42%	18	45%

Source: survey data

Figure 3.4

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3.4 Chi-Square Values of e- training in enhancement of job related Skills

Table 3.4

Chi-Square Values of e-training in Enhancement of Job Related Skills

Opinions	Manager	Percent	Administrative Staff	Percent
Most useful	14	58%	22	55%
Somewhat	10	42%	18	45%
Total	24	100	40	100

Source: Survey Data

H_0. E-Training brings institutional change and improvement in employee's jobs skills and makes them professional.

CHI -Square Calculation   = 0.06772488

Degree of Freedom   = 1

The Level of Significance   = 5 %

Critical Value (Table Value) K   =

3.8414595 chi-square < Table Value
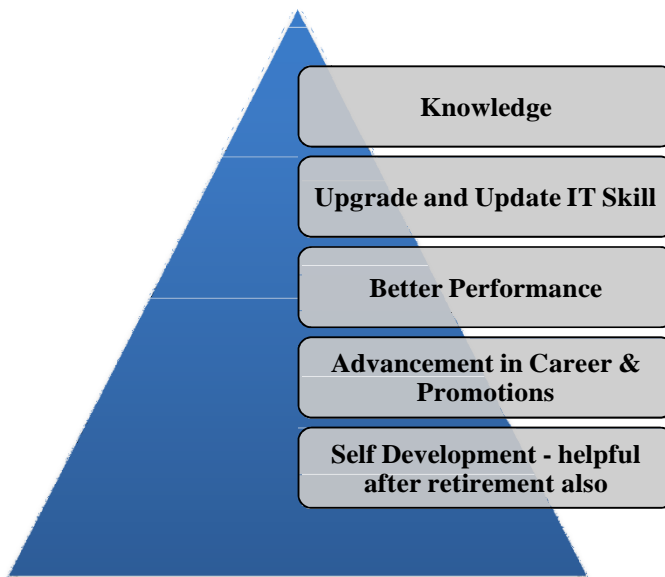
H_0 is accepted.

This shows that there is a close relationship between e- training and skill enhancement which is useful for respondents' job to become professionals in their work area.

3.5 Areas of improvement after undergoing e- training:

Employees are happy with a quick access to up-to-date-information and over all development.

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Flowchart: 3.5

Areas of improvement after undergoing e- training:

Knowledge

Upgrade and Update IT Skill

Better Performance

Advancement in Career & Promotions

Self Development - helpful after retirement also

4.0 FINDINGS / INFERENCE:

1. Created Interactive training environment through new electronic techniques
2. The knowledge and experience gained through e-training helped the personnel to be efficient in an organisation
3. E-Training needs to be identified based on training needs assessment
4. The finding shows that the tips provided during e- training are quite useful.
5. Easy to disseminate the information to a large number of trainees
6. Quick Access to up-to-date information

5.0 SUGGESTIONS:

1. Work related e-learning training is required to impart to all categories of employees inorder to improve their efficiency
2. After attending the training programme it is essential to evaluate the programme forfurther improvement
3. It is necessary to assign exemplary staff to train/coach the employees

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6.0 CONCLUSION:

The study aims to bring out the short-comings existing in e-training in an organization and thus provide a solution to overcome these deficiencies by using the right techniques. It also highlights the salient good feature that exists in the process of empowering the workforce through e-training will go a long way to improve the overall growth of the organisation.

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