

Impact of Training on Employee Development and Other Behavioral Outcomes: A Case of Public Accountant Trainees in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

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Abstract

This study investigates the impact of training on employees' development perceptions and the influence of the said perceptions on employees' job-related attitudes and behavior in the Accountant General Office in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The current study is an effort to emphasize the importance of training and promoting the perceptions of employee development within the public sector organizations in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, in particular, and in Pakistan, in general. The study analyses the mediating effect of employees' development in the relationship of training with the organizational outcomes i.e. organizational commitment, employee motivation, job performance, turnover intentions and job satisfaction. To analyze the collected data stratified random sampling technique has been employed through statistical technique of Structural Equation Modeling (SEM). The results demonstrate that employee development perceptions have a direct and positive impact on enhancing organizational commitment, employee motivation, job performance, and job satisfaction; while, negatively affect the employees' turnover intentions. The study has practical as well as theoretical implications. The results are expected to help policy makers to rehash their policies by encompassing the approaches that facilitate the promotion of perceptions of employee development and their fruitful outcomes for the effectiveness of the organization. The study will also help researchers in strengthening their level of understanding of these relationships. Replication of the study may help to validate the hypothesized constructs and their consequent application in the organizations that share somewhat similar organizational structure.

Keywords: Training, Employees Development, AG office KPK, Correlation and Regression.

Introduction

Training and development have got extreme importance for the organizations to educate and equip its employees with modern

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techniques, tools and trends. The purpose of training and development is to improve upon the employees' existing skills, capabilities and competencies with the end to improve productivity of employees and help to reduce job dissatisfaction thereby decreasing employees' turnover intention (Huselid, 1995). Other behavioral effects include improved performance and employees' commitment.

Positive behavior affected by training and development have universality across all types of manufacturing and service industry. Training and development interventions are not only beneficial for the success of concerned organization, but also help the employees in their career progression (Khan, Aslam, & Lodhi, 2011). Training and development can be affected through different techniques like arranging workshops, off the job and on the job training. The line of separation between rapidly growing firms and slowly growing firms is repetition of training programs (Barringer et al., 2005). Keeping the importance of training and development a company needs to have sufficient budget for its training and should continuously analyze training opportunities (Tannenbaum, 2002). Training and development are indispensable for organization and employee both (Adeniyi, 1995; Ajibade, 1993; Arikewuyo, 1999). Public sector organizations are not exceptions to this indispensability.

However, generally, top management in public sector takes training as a mere formality. Management fails to realize significance of training interventions for personnel development to get competitive edge with the available resources. It does not bother about the selection of trainees and their needs and organizational requirements. In addition, neither there is proper follow up nor any concrete feedback from the trainees. Such behavior has through impact on the frequency, need and effectiveness of training. There is a need of aligning individuals' career needs with the organizations' goals. There are some instances where some public sector organizations have started realizing the significance of training for development but still unsuccessful in formulating policies to introduce the training intervention programs for their employees (Wahab, et al, 2014).

This paper attempts to analyze the direct impact of training conducted by the Account & Audit Training Institute (AATI), a public sector organization for public employees training in Peshawar, on employee development in public sector organization i.e. AG offices KPK. The study will also look into the relevance of the development needs of the workforce, core issues related with transfer of learning, and thereby finding the mediating role of employee development in training relationship with job-related attitudinal and behavioral outcomes i.e. organizational commitment, motivation, job performance, job satisfaction and employees' turnover intentions.

Literature Review

Training and employee development

Training is a systematic approach towards improving workforce skills, behaviors, attitude and knowledge necessary for effective performance. For gaining competitive edge, organizations need to promote general awareness among their labor force about the vital nature of training in the contemporary business world. To remain competitive, their skills are required to be updated (Banerji, 2013; Oribabor, 2000).

So, training is a kind of deliberately planned approach with the aim to change and alter the working behavior of the employees in a specific direction to achieve the goals of the organization and thereby provide the employees opportunities to improve their skills, knowledge and attitude. Training is also aimed at achieving organizational goals (Dhamodharan, Daniel, & Ambuli, 2010; Kadhim, Taqi, & Shuaibu, 2012). "Employee development has a dual purpose of serving both the organization and the employee in achieving mutual goals" (Rahman, 2013, p. 566). Training is very crucial as it directly affects the competencies, skills and development of employees and thereby prove a key element for the effectiveness and prosperity of the organization. Training and development interventions keep employees more satisfied and efficient in their work thereby enabling them to perform professionally (Tangthong, Trimetsoontorn, & Rojniruntikul, 2014).

Employee development, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and turnover intentions

Job satisfaction refer to the feeling of happiness towards a particular job environment or it is termed as the liking and disliking of that job by an individual (Spector, 1997). Job satisfaction provides extra energy and helps an employee in putting extra effort with greater dedication to achieve the organizational objectives and its overall success. This behaviour has been found nurtured by the provision of employee development opportunities and continuous training along with rewards and pay packages (Shields & Ward, 2001). While, Rowden and Conine (2003) advocate that employees are more satisfied in organizations where they have more learning opportunities and feel happy if they are paid handsomely (Lai, 2011).

It is considered a vital element of training and development that also affects organization performance (Guest, 2001). The employees having been well trained an got a lot more development opportunities, feel more satisfied regarding their jobs feel proud to achieve organizational objectives with full dedication (Jalajas & Bommer, 1999). Job satisfaction helps the employees to stick with the employer (Hatcher, 1999; Laschinger, Finegan, & Shamian, 2001).

Besides job satisfaction training and development also strengthens organizational commitment of the workforce. Employers, who provide regular training and development programs to its employees enable their employees to perform well thereby earning their commitment (Bartlett, 2001; Tansky & Cohen, 2001). It is beyond discussion that there is a stark difference between the performance of committed and non-committed employees. Committed employees can easily adapt to the changing environment of their respective organizations and are more helpful for organization in achieving their respective goals (Meyer & Allen, 1997). Commitment provide stability to employees and workforce career goals with organization's goals (Meyer & Herscovitch, 2001).

Egan, Yang, and Bartlett (2004) asserted that an organization where trainings are frequent and regular, commitment of employees increases while there is a decrease in turnover behavior. Wayne, et al. (1997) asserted that employees' development helps to minimize turnover and foster satisfaction. Eisenberger et al. (1990) contend that the provision of more development opportunities to employees discourages the trend of looking outside for jobs. Similarly, there are researchers (Eisenberger & Armeli, 2001; Griffeth, Hom & Gaertner, 2000; Huselid, 1995; Mudor & Tooksoon, 2011) who argue that successful development of the employees can reduce the turn over intention considerably.

Organizational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intentions

Organizational commitment reflects an employee's attachment with the job which affects his working behavior (Scholl, 1981). The researcher asserted that to promote commitment, employer should provide opportunities for the employees' development. Researchers (e.g., Eisenberger, et al., 1990) believe that when employers provide opportunities for improving their competencies, they would reciprocate through their commitment. Such organizational environment encourages employees to maintain their membership in the organization (Rhoades, Eisenberger, & Armeli, 2001; Wayne et al., 1997). Similarly, a plethora of research studies have proved that commitment helps in improving job satisfaction level of the employees (Porter, Steers, Boulian, 1974), and also affects performance and motivation. At the same time it helps in reducing employees' absenteeism (Farrell & Stamm, 1988). Hence, highly committed employees can perform better and so high level of motivation and helps in achieving the organization goals (Chughtai & Zafar, 2006).

In the prevailing dynamic competitive scenario, it is vital for the employees and management that to have competitive edge. To affect this there is a need of maintaining employees' commitment and satisfaction level which can be affected by continuous training and professional development of the employees (White & Bryson, 2013). There is a direct

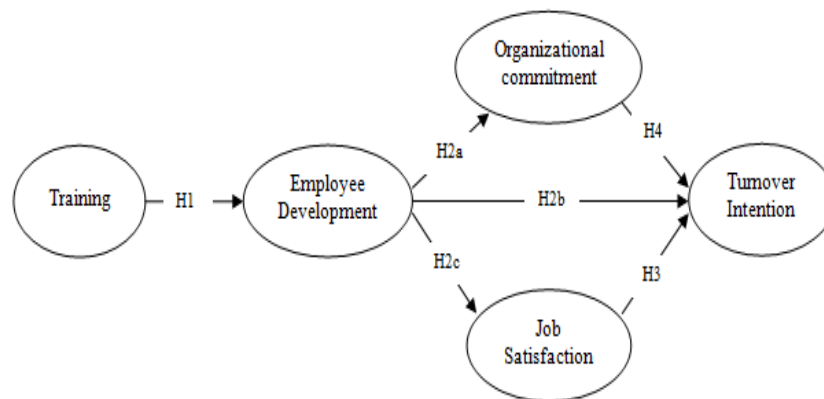
relationship between employees' satisfaction, commitment, and turnover intention (Malik, Nawab, Naeem, & Danish, 2010). Hence, satisfaction positively contributes to productivity and growth and negatively deals with turnover intention (Eisenberger et al., 1990). The provision of Incentives and benefits both in terms of financial and non- financial nature help the work force to stay with the organization (Khan et al, 2011).

The Mediating Effect of Employee Development

To have competitive edge, organizations need to provide their employees platform to help them and equip with latest skills and competencies. To ensure employees performance, productivity, motivation, commitment, job satisfaction and reducing the rate of turnover organization need to formulate employees development strategies like ensuring adequate and deliberate training and coaching programs as these are directly associated with job performance (Hill & Lent, 2006). A plethora of research studies assert employees development foster improves performance of the worker and their job satisfaction (Huselid 1995; Petrescu & Simmons, 2008). Similarly, firms are equally benefitted through the organizational commitment of employees as committed employees exert high level of energy which than causes improved productivity and efficiency.

Plenty of studies view training practices, have impact on organization in more affirmative way (Bartlett, 2001). Similarly, some researchers argued that satisfied workers do well compare to the unsatisfied ones. On the whole, on the basis of the extant literature, it could be concluded that employees' development perceptions mediate the relationships between training and organizational commitment, job satisfaction, and turnover intentions.

Figure 1: Theoretical Frame Work of the Study



Research Methodology

The population of any study is vital for any research. The population of this research paper consists of employees of the Accountant General Office of KPK. Convenience sampling technique has been applied for selection of the sample. Questionnaires have been distributed among Junior Auditors, Senior Auditors, and Assistant Account Officers. A total of five hundred questionnaires distributed. The researcher received 322 filled in questionnaires. This constituted a return rate of 64%. The data collected was then analyzed through various techniques i.e. reliability analysis, correlation and confirmatory factor analysis (CFA).

Measurement of the Variables

As there was hardly any available questionnaire, therefore, questionnaire for this research was adopted from other researchers (Van Dijk, 2003; Rahman, 2012). The questions of the questionnaire were adapted and customized in such a way that these questions could best suit the nature of this study. All the variables have been constructed on 5-leckert scale.

To see if the constructs of the study along with their respective indicators could fit into the proposed model, CFA was conducted for the model (figure 2) to compare the values with the acceptable level in each case. After some deletion of some indicators fitness has been achieved. Final values are provided in table 1.

Figure 2: CFA for the Overall Measurement Model (Amos)

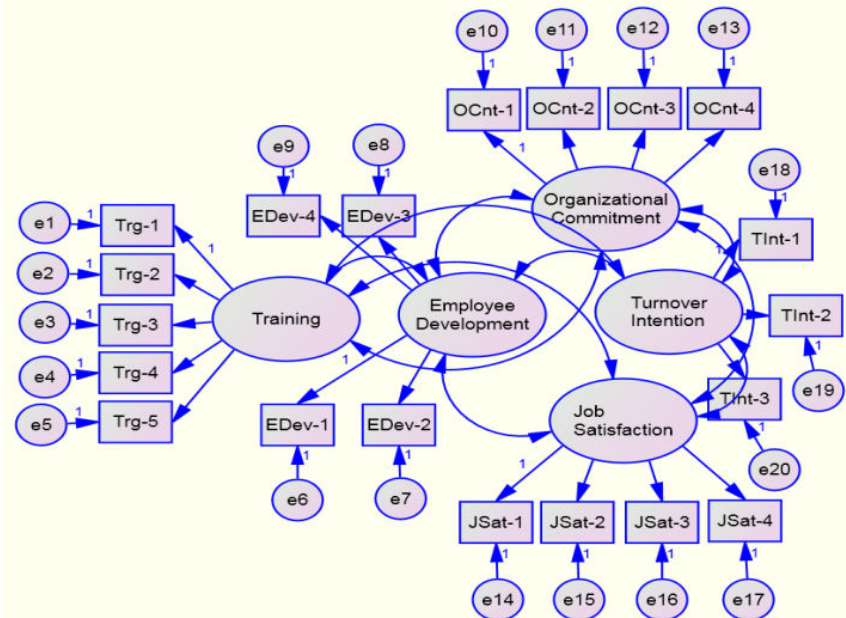


Table 1: Fit Statistics and Measurement Scale Properties (N=322)

| Constructs and Indicators | Completely Standardized Loadings* (t-values) | Indicator Reliability | Error Variance | Construct Reliability | Variance Extracted |
|---------------------------|--|-----------------------|----------------|-----------------------|--------------------|
| Training | | | | 0.764 | 0.723 |
| T. Need Assessment | 0.831(12.25) | 0.85 | 0.23 | | |
| Training Impact | 0.853(8.93) | 0.84 | 0.25 | | |
| Career Development | 0.565(14.51) | 0.92 | 0.35 | | |
| Training & Performance | 0.820(12.68) | 0.85 | 0.37 | | |
| Training Transfer | 0.778(13.35) | 0.87 | 0.29 | | |
| Employee Development | | | | 0.771 | 0.678 |
| Capability Improvement | 0.734(12.12) | 0.67 | 0.37 | | |
| Career Goal Achievement | 0.562(13.26) | 0.78 | 0.36 | | |
| Ample Resources | 0.967(14.41) | 0.67 | 0.25 | | |
| Development perception | 0.615(9.46) | 0.73 | 0.23 | | |
| Job Satisfaction | | | | 0.844 | 0.743 |
| Conducive Environment | 0.894(11.14) | 0.77 | 0.17 | | |
| Management Relationship | 0.899(12.97) | 0.76 | 0.35 | | |
| Progress | 0.654(9.64) | 0.85 | 0.22 | | |
| Individual Satisfaction | 0.676(12.93) | 0.84 | 0.33 | | |
| Organizational Commitment | | | | 0.801 | 0.654 |
| Preferred Organization | 0.641(11.68) | 0.74 | 0.24 | | |
| Sense of Commitment | 0.853(9.11) | 0.73 | 0.33 | | |
| Maximum Efforts | 0.554(12.51) | 0.75 | 0.35 | | |
| Recommendation | 0.750(5.73) | 0.82 | 0.25 | | |
| Turnover Intentions | | | | 0.721 | 0.732 |
| Intent to Quit | 0.774 (8.49) | 0.75 | 0.34 | | |
| Intent to Hunt | 0.932 (14.95) | 0.81 | 0.37 | | |

| | | | |
|--------------|--------------|------|------|
| Plan to quit | 0.834 (8.89) | 0.79 | 0.44 |
|--------------|--------------|------|------|

Fit Statistics

Chi-square=418.604 ($df=231, p<.000$)

RMSEA =0.071

Standardized RMR = 0.060

GFI=0.78

CFI=0.83

ECVI=4.164

Note: * All *t*-values are significant at $p<05$

CFA for Structural Model

After assessing the measurement model through different tools and techniques, there is a need of assessing the structural model. In the structural model there is a dependent relationship which gives it a proper structure. This structure is the regression part of the research and that depicts the links among the latent variables. In other words, this structural model demonstrates the relations among the unobserved latent variables. According to Beaubien, (1999) structural model specifies as to which latent variable(s) affect(s) changes in the values of other latent variables in the model. Figure 3 presents the theoretical structural model. Fit statistics for this model are: Chi-square= 424.565 ($df = 235, p<.000$), RMSEA = 0.059, Standardized RMR = 0.077, GFI=0.815, CFI=0.848 and ECVI=4.131. All these values demonstrate that the theoretical model achieved an acceptable fit to the data. Comparison between the measurement model and structural model is give in table 2.

Figure 3: CFA for the Structural Model (Amos)

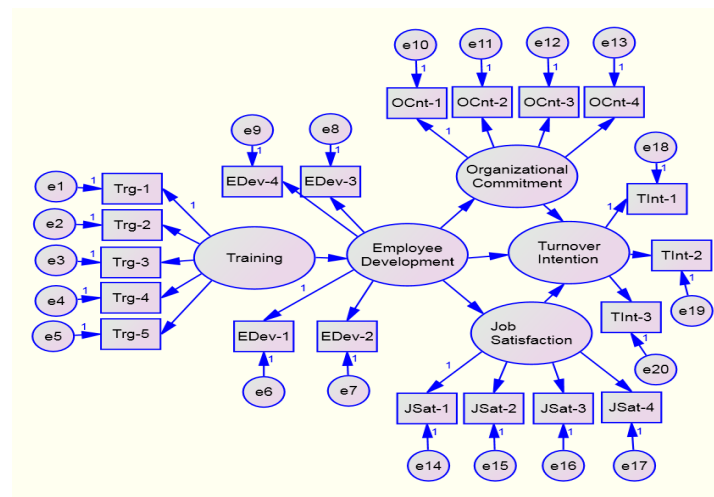


Table 2: Goodness-of-Fit for the Models

| Model | Chi-Square* | Df | RMSEA | Standardized RMR | GFI | CFI |
|-------------------|-------------|-----|-------|------------------|-------|-------|
| Measurement Model | 418.604 | 231 | 0.071 | 0.060 | 0.784 | 0.825 |
| Theoretical Model | 424.565 | 235 | 0.077 | 0.059 | 0.815 | 0.848 |

Correlation Analysis

Table 3: Correlation Matrix

| Variables | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
|---------------------------|-------|------|------|------|------|
| Training | 1.00 | | | | |
| Employee Development | 0.61 | 1.00 | | | |
| Job Satisfaction | 0.65 | 0.57 | 1.00 | | |
| Organizational Commitment | 0.24 | 0.26 | 0.06 | 1.00 | |
| Turnover Intentions | -0.24 | -0.5 | -0.4 | -0.1 | 1.00 |

The above table shows the results of correlation. These results indicate that training is significantly positively correlated with employee development, job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and negatively correlated with turnover intention. Similarly employee development showing negative correlation with turnover intention and significant positive correlation with the rest of variables.

Hypothesis Testing

The current study has six hypotheses. These hypotheses have been tested by employing structural equation modeling (SEM) through Amos. To find out the impact of independent variable (training) on the dependent variables (employee development, organizational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intention), path analysis through SEM was conducted. Relationships among these variables were hypothesized. These hypothesized relationships were analyzed in two ways; a test of the overall path model and individual tests. Model estimation procedures for simultaneous equations were used to test the hypothesized model. The summary results of the hypotheses testing are presented in the table (Table 4).

Hypothesis 1: The training intervention has positive impact on development of employees

Hypothesis 1 was aimed at testing the impact of training on employee development. Since the standardized path coefficient of 0.35 and the t-value of 6.25 happened to be significant ($p=0.000$), the hypothesis has been supported by the data.

Hypothesis2a: Employee development has positive significant impact on organizational commitment.

Hypothesis 2a was aimed at testing the impact of employee development on organizational commitment. Since the standardized path coefficient of 0.14 and the t-value of 3.25 happened to be significant ($p=0.000$), the hypothesis has been supported by the data.

Hypothesis2b: Employee development is negatively related to employee turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 2b was aimed at testing the impact of employee development on turnover intention. Since the standardized path coefficient of -0.28 and the t-value of -3.89 happened to be significant ($p=0.000$), the hypothesis has been supported by the data.

Hypothesis2c: Employee development has positive significant impact on job satisfaction.

Hypothesis 2c was aimed at testing the impact of employee development on job satisfaction. Since the standardized path coefficient of 0.58 and the t-value of 7.98 happened to be significant ($p=0.000$), the hypothesis has been supported by the data.

Hypothesis3: Job satisfaction is negatively related to employee turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 3 was aimed at testing the impact of job satisfaction on turnover intention. Since the standardized path coefficient of -0.24 and the t-value of 2.90 happened to be significant ($p=0.000$), the hypothesis has been supported by the data.

Hypothesis 4: Organizational commitment is negatively related to employee turnover intentions.

Hypothesis 4 was aimed at testing the impact of organizational commitment on turnover intention. Since the standardized path coefficient of -0.34 and the t-value of 4.08 happened to be significant ($p=0.000$), the hypothesis has been supported by the data.

Table 4: Summary of Hypotheses Testing

| Hypotheses | Results |
|---|-----------|
| H1 The training intervention has positive impact on development of employees. | Supported |

| | | |
|-----|--|-----------|
| H2a | Employee development has positive significant impact on organizational commitment. | Supported |
| H2b | Employee development is negatively related to employee turnover intentions. | Supported |
| H2c | Employee development has positive significant impact on job satisfaction. | Supported |
| H3 | Job satisfaction is negatively related to employee turnover intentions. | Supported |
| H4 | Organizational commitment is negatively related to employee turnover intentions. | Supported |

Research Conclusion

The main objective of the study was to investigate or assess the impact of training on employee development and also then the impact of this on the other variables (organizational commitment, job satisfaction and turnover intention). The subject study was carried out on a sample of 322 respondents from AG office Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The findings revealed that perceptions of employee development have greater influence in improving the job related attitudes and behaviors by providing affective reactions. The results revealed that perceptions of employee development brings about constructive changes in organizational commitment, and increased job satisfaction; while, reduces employees' turnover intentions.

The research model evidenced that the conceptual model show a kind of interdependence relationship instead of linear and simple relationship. This study portrayed and evidenced that development of employees is vital for affecting employee behavior. The training plays a key role and seems mandatory to cope up with the dynamic of the business world in improving the job related skills, capabilities, learning and competencies for their enhancing job performance, which in turn improve job satisfaction, motivation and commitment thereby materializing the organizational goals. In this way, the study may be a key to all policy makers responsible for policy formulation in public sector organization and may be a wakeup call to revisit their strategies regarding training as per the demand of dynamic market, which demand more professional excellence. It is also recommended that organization culture may be used as moderator in similar researches in future.

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