

Exploration of Human Resource Challenges Faced by the Teachers in Transferring Training

Wasilu Suleiman¹, Muhammad Adamu², Mohammed Inuwa³

¹⁺²⁺³Department of Business Administration, Bauchi State University-Gadau, P.M.B. 65, Bauchi State, Nigeria.

Correspondence: Wasilu Suleiman, Department of Business Administration, Bauchi State University-Gadau, P.M.B. 65, Bauchi State, Nigeria, E-mail: wasilusuleiman@yahoo.com

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Abstract

Organizations hope that their employees are able to learn and acquire new knowledge and skills in the events of training and effectively transferring it back to the workforce, but it is deteriorating day by day. This paper explores challenges faced by trainees in transferring training through focus group interviews. Content analysis was the procedures and techniques employed to analyze the gathered data. The findings uncover and highlighted some major challenges that hinder employees to properly transfer what they might have learned in the training session on their jobs. The ability of the management to overcome those challenges would drive workers to be them to be desirous in making persistent and intense efforts towards utilizing skills and knowledge learned in the work settings. Human resource trainers need to overcome the identified challenges on employees' training transfer in the organization.

Keywords: Training and Development Transfer of Training, Opportunity to Apply, Resistant to Change, Job Involvement.

1. Introduction

Training of workers is frequently used as a means to address underperformance and increase performance. In addition, employees need to learn interpersonal relations and the ability to handle conflicts, stress, and activities that include developing a training transfer system through which they can improve their skills and knowledge. Chowdhury (2007) asserts that the complexity of modern jobs requires workers to be properly trained than in the past. In other words, training and retraining is quite often necessary for new and existing workers in order to adapt to new skills or jobs that is rapidly and consistently changing with the influx of new technologies.

The training program may prove more effective at providing knowledge and skills which directly improve employees' performance towards work as well as productivity during the training session. Though, good or improved performance during training will not guarantee to be retained at the same level when workers return to their workplace (Bunch, 2007). Effective training programs can be able to affect the workers' attitude and behavior; it indicates that what they have learnt during the training session has positively impacted on the organizational aims and objectives. Abdullah (2009) proclaimed that for an organization to value the system of

training and development, its effectiveness must be measured and its status must be elevated. Ripley (2004) supported the argument in which stressed that effective training can be able to reflect on the workers attitude and behavior in implementing their jobs through what they learned during the training program.

Transfer of training is a vital field of study for training researchers and professionals in light of the fact that it is estimated that just a little rate of the training really brings about transfer to the job context. Baldwin and Ford (1988) approximated that only about 10 percent of training knowledge and skill experiences gained in the training environment are transferred to the job. Employees, however, may have the feeling that they will get the support and feedback in regard of their performance from the organization with a specific end goal to adequately transfer the training in Nigeria's education sector.

Nigeria's education sector organizations have been identified as one of the major contributors to the economic and national growth (Suleiman, 2013). For an organization to survive in today's competitive marketplace and rapidly changing technology era, employees themselves must be willing and able to improve their knowledge and skills so that their organization can be ahead of its competitors. Meanwhile, the organizational investments in formal training and development of their employees are tied with the expectations that this investment can reflect and foster improved competitive advantages and performance (Donovan, Hannigan, & Crowe, 2001; Adusei, Sarfo, Manukure, & Cudjoe, 2016). It is apparent that without a skilled and knowledgeable human capital the Nigeria's education sector organizations would find themselves in an unbearable situation. Some of the purpose of conducting training could be to solve the current and existing problems as well as to prepare for contingencies in the changing environment (Babintsev, Sapryka, Serkina, & Ushamirskaya (2016).

Presently, almost every organizations, departments or agencies in the Nigeria's education sector sends its new and existing employees to attend a variety of training programs that are relevant to their daily job routine, so as to increase as well as improve their knowledge, skills, competencies and upgrade their acknowledgement for the organizations in order to overcome present and future challenges in their daily jobs. Most of the organizations in this sector, however, struggle a lot for survival due to the nature of employees changing jobs, uncertainty of global economy, diversity, and culture and increasing competition from around the world (Othman & Suleiman, 2013).

From the theoretical viewpoint, therefore, the Social Cognitive Learning Theory of Bandura (1986) mentioned that it is adherents to stress motivational functions of future training activities. He thinks that motivation improves performance not for the reason that it automatically reinforces past behavior but for the reason that it motivates people in anticipation. Generally, people expect the likely outcome of their respective behaviors, set objectives for themselves and make decisions for their future as they view them (Bigge & Shermis, 2004). Yet, the theory is partial in terms of individual factors of trainee characteristics and factors of work environment in training transfer. Existing empirical literature on the transfer of training uncovers that most studies have by and large centered around recognizing the direct relationship of the earlier established three factors that influence the transfer of training and brought to light inconsistent findings (Chiou, Lee, & Purnomo, 2010; Pham, Segers, & Gijsselaers, 2013; Romanova, Maznichenko, & Neskromnyh, 2016; Tziner, Fisher, Senior, & Weisberg, 2007). There seems exist a dearth of comprehensive studies that explore the challenges faced by employees in transferring training in a real work setting.

Another issue of concern is related methodological issue where the understudy area is quantitatively investigated (Bin & Yusof, 2012; Holladay & Quiñones, 2003; Hussain, 2010). Additionally, there is lack of well adopted, adapted, and validated quantitative research instrument to measure the effect of transfer of training

from the Nigerian perspective. This is due to the lack of in-depth research attention paid to the concept of transfer of training in Nigerian context. However, research instruments that are not accurately adopted, well adapted and properly validated could lead to bias (Cresswell, 2008). Human resource practitioners and trainers have less or little information and awareness about the some selected factors of trainee characteristics and selected factors of work environment in employees’ transfer motivation of KSA learned from the training program (Ng, 2014). Based on this reasons, there is a scarcity of research about what challenges are faced by employees in transferring training to their daily jobs? Thus, the researchers found it necessary to advance the discovery of the challenges faced by workers in transferring training.

2. Method

The nature of social science shows that scientists approach their subjects via implicit or explicit assumptions about the nature of social world and the ways in which they may be investigated (Burrell & Morgan, 1979). However, the word is being treated as being personal, much softer and of more subjective quality. The ontological premise of the subjectivist dimension is that the world is assumed to be asubjective reality. Though, realism has been described in a number of ways, it holds that reality is dependent on the cognitive structures of observers (Gill & Johnson, 1991). Epistemologically, this approach is considered to account for knowledge that is descriptive (Burrell& Morgan, 1979). This research would provide descriptions of the research topic. Moreover, it employs focus group interview through of semi-structured questions for collecting data on workers of State Universal Basic Education Board, Bauchi state-Nigeria (herein after referred to as “SUBEB”). The questions asked include: What are the challenges faced in transferring training? Purposive sampling technique was utilized. Purposive or judgmental sampling focuses on selecting information-rich cases (informant that possess the right information) whose study illuminates the objectives of the study (Patton, 2002). This allows the researcher to choose a specific group of informants who were able to give the right information on the issues under investigation. Thus collected data was analyzed through relational content analysis.

3. Findings and Discussion

Ten focus groups were organized, each of which consisted about six supervisors and employees as informants. However, after 42 informants (seventh groups) were engaged and examined the collected data thus far, the researcher realized that he had reached saturation point. The researcher transcribed all the unprocessed data from voice recorder data and other notes taking from and/or during the interview session (Ahmad & Usop2011). Table 1 below described the result of the challenges faced by trainee in transferring training.

Table 1: The Result of the Challenges Faced by Trainee in Transferring Training

	Findings	Focus Groups
Challenges Faced by Trainee in Transferring Training	Lack of opportunity to apply	1,3,5,6,7
	Resistant to change	2,3,4,6,7
	Lack of job involvement	1,2,3,5,6
	Lack of resources and facilities	1,4,5,6,7
	Lack of reinforcement on training	2,3
	Lack of perceived relevance of training	4,5

Source: Field survey

From the result of the qualitative data some themes have been uncovered as regards to the challenges faced by trainee in transferring training. The key factors with paramount importance according to the views of the majority of the informants were lack of opportunity to apply, resistant to change, lack of job involvement, and

lack of resources and facilities. Moreover, some informants (less frequency) are with the opinion that lack of perceived relevance of training and lack of reinforcement on training are also part of the possible challenges faced by trainee in transferring training.

3.1 Opportunity to Apply

Opportunity to apply the knowledge, skills, and abilities learned in the training program can play a vital role of employees' encouragement factor that influences their level of transfer of training. Additionally, the employees' ability to motivate and encourage the utilization of training KSAs onto their jobs has accordingly been recommended to be a powerful device of improving transfer of training (Tellers–rogers, Pasztor, & Kleinpeter, 2003). However, the negative factor of lack of opportunity to apply training KSAs has attracted a reasonable frequency, as many informants feel that they were not given the chance to apply what was learned in the training on the job. This negative reaction can be in various forms, such as brain drain, sufficient time, delegation of responsibilities, and job rotation. For instance, informant of focus group 3 highlighted:

“Most of our colleagues demonstrate negative reactions concerning anything that is new or contrary to the traditional or olden days teaching approach. The easily said to you, are you trying to condemn all that we have been delivering for past decades. They don't give us a chance to apply new knowledge”

While informants of focus group 6 mentioned:

“Ahh...you know by the nature of our job, a teacher is expected to complete his lesson period within 40 minutes, so the timing is not enough to apply all that is learned in the training program”.

3.2 Change

Change is considered to be a strategic function of human capital management that is concentrated on developing employees' level of competencies in order to overcome employee's daily job routine and short-term problems (Mani, John, Ping, & Ismail, 2006). Thus, training transfer can be considered as effective if it can change the employees KSAs after they attended a training program. On the contrary, the informant of this study revealed that there still huge elements of resistant to change in the organization. This resistant to change can be in various degrees, e.g. influx of new technologies and computer fever. The study also revealed that resistant to change is among the most frequent challenges face by trainee in transferring training. As illustrated by the informants of focus group 2:

“Quite sure the facilitators of the training programs are coming up with new knowledge and skills most especially on the issues of technology nowadays. For instance, they brought about this paperless of a thing to us, but to be frank with you; we are still writing lessons notes, lesson plans in our hard books”.

3.3 Job Involvement

Employee commitment is thought to be an imperative component since it enhances a cordial atmosphere in an organization, making the whole workforce eagerly to cooperate with a specific end goals so to accomplish individual employees' and in addition organizational objectives (Jessica, 2010). Employee commitment is one of the fundamental factors that lead and determines the success of an organization in today's contemporary business world. In this era of increased global competition and persistent technological advancements, it becomes a necessity for organizations to have skilled, consistent, and committed HR in order to maintain its competitive market positions in the world. Nevertheless, a good number of the informant of this study disclosed that there are some employees who act negatively towards job involvement in transferring training. This negative action can be in different forms, e.g. personal interest, job redundancy. As in the view of the informants of focus group 5:

“Well... at times the management doesn't allocate classes to some teachers out of personal interest. Although, my school has large number of staff, some doesn't even have classes to teach, talkless of applying new knowledge on their jobs”.

3.4 Resources and Facilities

Providing employees with the needed resources and facilities will assist in transferring training. It further allows the employees to practice the newly acquired and learned skills and knowledge and guide them to apply such competencies efficiently and effectively in their organizations (Madi, Abdullah, Ismail, & Baroto2012). Resources and facilities can serve as a motivational factor to employees for the accomplishment of their goals and making their daily operations easier as well as increasing the employees personal job satisfactions.

Nonetheless, the nagative factor of lack of resources and facilities to utilize training KSAs is one of the challenges that attracted a high frequency, as many informants feel that they were not provided with the relevant, up-to-date, and adequate resources and facilities to apply what had been learned in the training on the job. This negative reaction can be in various forms, such as lack of sophisticated equipment, prevalence of brain drain. The informant of focus group 1 shared this:

“There are calls from every angle of the country for the teachers to train their pupils/students with the relevant tools and equipment, but the problem here in Nigeria is that the resources and facilities are limited to few members of staff. Look at my school, I can tell you that the computer and internet facilities are obsolete and inadequate at the same time. Period....thanks”

3.5 Reinforcement on Training

Trainee naturally needs additional or direct reinforcement directly from the organization to influence training goal orientation. The reinforcement could be in form of incentives and other rewards in the organizational setting that are tied with the training transfer (Van der locht, Van Dam, & Chiaburu., 2013). In essence, there is need for organizations to continuously educate their employees, anytime and anywhere. Organizational support in form of positive reinforcement and encouragement of employees self-satisfaction strengthen their commitment to partake in training activities and motivate them to concentrate while the training is on-going and later transfer it to the job (Nijman, Nijhof, Wognum, & Veldkamp, 2006). Oppositely, the supervisors and employees of SUBEB mentioned that there is lack of reinforcement on training in their organization. This lack of reinforcement on training could be in form of support, incentives, encouragements, and rewards. As emphasized by the informants of focus group 2:

“We used to hear about different packages of training rewards and incentives from our friends and associates who are working with the private sector or some agencies of the federal government, but for us working in the local and state government there is nothing...nothing. They are not even making the process of our monthly earnings easier. In fact, there is less opportunities for personal job satisfaction”.

3.6 Relevance of Trainin

Training of both new and existing employees is necessary in order to adapt them with new KSAs. Although, the primary objective of training is to provide, obtain, and enhance the fundamental aptitudes keeping in mind the end goals that help the organizations in attaining their objectives (Nikandrou, Brinia, & Bereri, 2009). Since the main reason behind training is performance improvement, regardless of how excellent the training program is, it is lacking if it is not perceived to be relevant by the trainee themselves. Training program is considered to be ineffective if the targeted members of employees are deterred from acquiring or gaining access to it. Additionally, the informants of this study uncovered that some training program are perceived to be irrelevant to

their daily jobs. These training irrelevancies could be in form of facilitator exposure, training content, and the training locations. As unveil by the informants of focus group 5:

“Some facilitators are inexperienced, one can simply understand this from their delivery approach.....hmn... i don't know, but it seems that some facilitators are equipped with the required knowledge of the study area while some are actually not”.

While informants of focus group 4 mentioned:

“Most the training venues are located in no near distances, so we have to board a means of transport. Though, Bauchi state is big, and my local government is Gamawa”.

These findings, however, are in accordance with the idea of Bandura's social cognitive learning theory(1986). The Social cognitive learning theory postulated that observational learning serves as incentive or motivation for translating and transferring learning into performance. As we are all aware a knowledge that has been learned observationally remains dormant until the person has a reason to utilize the knowledge. Also, it further portrays an expectation in human beings that if they act like a model that has been considered as a reinforced for some actions, they will be reinforced accordingly. That is to say, one function develops an expectation in human beings that if they act in certain manner, time, and situation they are likely to be reinforced. Conversely, the motivational processes create a motive for making the best use of what has been learned. In this way, the finding of this study has supported that the Bandura's theory has taken a wider views of employees of SUBEB.

In additions, these finding ware in line with many past empirical studies such as Brinkerhoff and Montesino (1995) who stated that the organization's ability to provide encouragement and support such as guidance on how to use training KSAs on the job, encouragement to attend training program, and sufficient time and opportunities to apply training would motivate employees to apply training knowledge and skills onto the job. That is, the capacity of the organization to give support, for example, encouragement to go to training, direction on the best way to apply training skills and knowledge, and sufficient time and opportunities to apply training had the ability to motivate employees to apply training program onto the job.

Holton (1996) created the LTSI which shows and considered 16 elements, which are prone to impact on the transfer of training in the employees' workplace. Akhtar, Ali, Sadaqat, & Hafeez, (2011) reported a positive relationship between training programs and motivation of employee which make them to be more involved in their present jobs and subsequently results in better job productivity and job performance for both organizations as well as employees. They argued that any organization who wants to gain and attain long-term results must invest heavily on training programs so as to make their employees to abreast the up to date development based on changes on the corporate work environment.

Elloy, Everette, and Flynn (1995) disclosed that job involvement is related to employee situational variables in their work environment. Facticeau, et al. (1995) found that the variation in employee motivation level is significantly explained by job involvement of individuals. While study of Hafer and Martin (2006) revealed that the variable of job satisfaction had a significant effect on employee job involvement. Farotimi (2010) uncovered that employees with good job involvement demonstrates good job satisfaction and job involvement for the benefits of both the organization and employees. Employees who believed that the conducted training program was beneficial in developing the skills and techniques that are related directly to employees' jobs were more likely to transfer knowledge (Tsvetkova, 2016).Burke and Hutchins (2007) concurred that training is affected by factors that are closely related to the training such as trainee perceptions of the relevance of the content of the training and expectations that the newly acquired knowledge and skills can be applied back on the job. Training

is mostly considered to be effective by trainee perceptions of the relevance or irrelevance of the organized training program and their perceptions of having opportunities to transfer learning on the job (Foxon, 1997). Finally, all these identified challenges faced by the trainee leads to some certain degrees of difficulties in transferring training in an organization. Graphical representation of the challenges faced by the trainee in transferring training is demonstrated in figure 1 below:

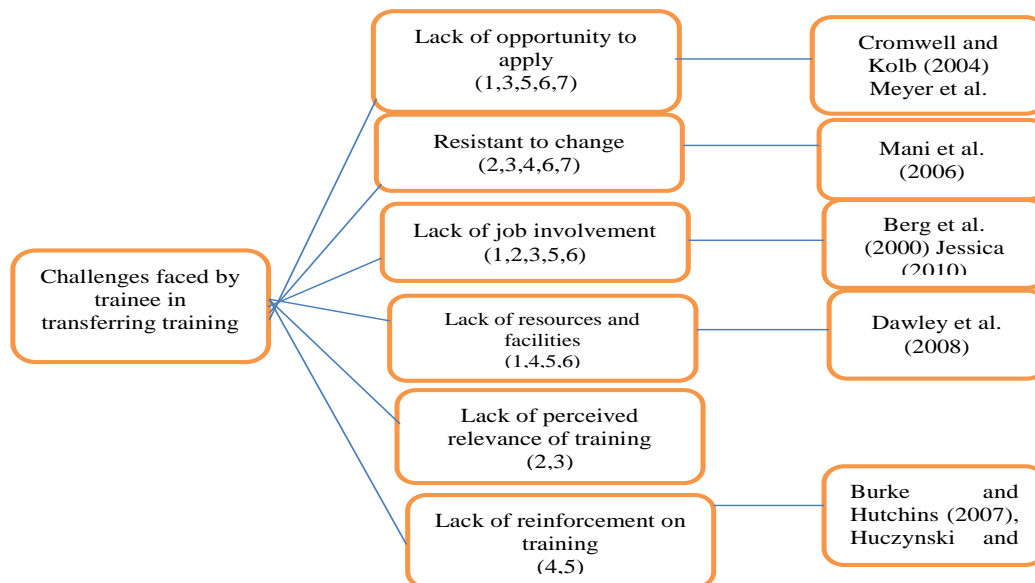


Figure: Challenges Faced by Trainee in Transferring Training

Source: Field survey

4. Conclusion and Recommendation for Future Studies

From the organizational point of view, to some extent they provide necessary interventions such as organizational commitment and job involvement, supervisor support, and peer support to employees, but, from the employees point of view they faced some challenges in transferring training which limited the effectiveness of such interventions. These challenges includes lack of opportunity to apply, resistant to change, lack of job involvement, lack of resources and facilities, lack of perceived relevance of training, and lack of reinforcement on training. These constraints may affect employees transfer motivational level if the organization failed to acknowledge their shortcomings in dealing with transfer of training issues. The number of staff working under SUBEB, Bauchi State, Nigeria is huge. In these circumstances it is going to be difficult to tackle all the challenges faced by large number of employees. Though, organizations who actively involved in training programs could perceived that it almost impossible to entertain and fulfil every employee’s issues. In effect, these challenges may influence the entire effectiveness of selected factors of trainee characteristics and selected factors of work environment in the organization, which interchangeably might have direct impact on the employees transfer motivation level and transfer of training.

Addressing the challenges faced by trainee in transferring training is an element in improving transfer of training. The human resource practitioners can make considerable efforts in overcoming or minimizing the occurrence of such challenges by enhancing employees’ perceptions of the concept of training transfer system.

By creating a fair training transfer system, the human resource practitioners of SUBEB, Bauchi State, Nigeria can address or minimize the tendency of the employees to engage in negative transfer of training. For example, rewarding teachers who diligently transfer their training KSAs on their jobs and punish those who failed to transfer training on their jobs or behave in ways and manners that are not consistent with stated norms and values of the organization. However, training transfer system that was tailored based on employees perceived equitable distribution might motivate them to attend and transfer the training KSAs.

The findings the current study have validated and extended the Bandura's theory by describing that when selected factors of trainee characteristics and selected factors of work environment are imitated, observed, and modelled by employees would lead to high transfer of training through the mechanism of transfer motivation. Thus, this study has essentially improved the boundary of knowledge by providing empirical evidence about the power of transfer motivation to mediate significantly between selected factors of trainee characteristics and selected factors of work environment in transferring training. That is to say, it is vital for human resource practitioners to comprehend the positive influencing power of selected factors of trainee characteristics and selected factors of work environment on employees' positive training transfer motivation and transfer of training. The study, however, highlighted some of the challenges that faced employees while trying to utilize the KSAs learned in the training programs. This indicates a broad limitation in providing a way forward on dealing with those challenges. Consequently, future researchers should propose a coping strategy to handle these challenges.

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