

ACADEMIC STAFF TRAINING TRANSFER AND ITS IMPACT ON ORGANIZATIONAL PERFORMANCE

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Abstract

Purpose: This study investigates the effect of training transfer to organizational performance through collaboration among academic staff. It provides a clear understanding of specific training transfer concepts and processes during their engagement in the university activities. Several issues affecting training transfer from the learning environment to impact the performance of academic staff were reported.

Methodology: A semi-structured interview among four academic staffs through a purposive sampling method. The qualitative analysis had been transcribed and coded. The data gained from the interviews were themed for the purpose of the analysis.

Main findings: The findings suggest that there should be training, honest communication, knowledge management, creating the right environment, identifying collaborative leaders, and making collaboration a natural part of the workflow. This was motivated by the increasing need to improve worker's skills through training which encompasses a significant aspect of the modern organization. It is concluded that deciphered training to improve specific task requirements. Therefore, monitoring training transfer provides organizations the opportunity to improve specific work environments and academician's performance. It is recommended that training transfer and collaboration need to be an important aspect of the organizational process to improve performance outcomes.

Implications/Applications: This research is important for academic staff at the Faculty of leadership and management at (USIM) who participated in the research to enhance organizational performance. Therefore, it has provided insights to other academic staff to imitate and the authorities to create a room for achievement for the organization.

Keywords: Academic Staff, Training Transfer, Organizational Performance, Work Environment.

INTRODUCTION

Academic staff training transfer represents an active way to enhance the performance of the entire organization. The need for training transfer becomes increasingly important as the modern educational environment changes to a highly competitive internationally (Okechukwu, 2017). This realm of worldwide educational institutions needs to preserve skilled and vastly effective academia to sustain the growing organizational share (Hargie et al., 2017). However, the performance of academia requires a certain level of knowledge and competence to effectively function in most levels of organizational services (Dobre, 2013). Therefore, the situation within the educational sector requires a quick resolution to effectively and efficiently facilitate operating conditions. The competency level of academic staff and the leadership capabilities stands as a set tool to propel organizational activities and services to a higher level of performance to secure a competent and effective staff.

A study by the "American Society of Training and Development" (ASTD, 2010) estimated in 2009 that about 88.6 billion dollars were spent on internal training functions such as salaries and internal development costs while 45.6 billion dollars were used to settle external costs comprising workshops, external training events for vendors. Organizational leadership has over the years, continued to examine closely the huge amount of resources used to equip academic staff for a specific role to enhance organizational performance through training (Almzary et al., 2015). This implies that the transfer of knowledge and skill acquired through training depicts a means of determining the actual value provided by training.

To ensure that every form of training meets the intended need, studies have indicated a concern to examine the investment towards training based on their improvement of organizational performance specifically; the level of productivity, profit, safety, effectiveness, market share, and competitiveness (Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014). Therefore, academic staff training opportunities afforded by organizations should be evaluated based on their impact towards increasing organizational performance. In addition to increasing the performance of organizations, a form of quality performance indicators that specifically contributes in enhancing the performance of the organization must be put in place to drive all factors supporting member of staff training (Iveta, 2012).

The rationale of the study and research questions

The need to study the impact of training transfer to organizational performance is because academic staff performance determines the achievement accomplished by the organization. Thus, this paper addresses the question "How did training transfer impact organizational performance through collaboration? The answers to this question are reflected in various

segments of this paper that demonstrated the effectiveness of training transfer in enhancing levels of organization services through collaboration. Training transfer was considered appropriate in addressing organizational performances because it depicts the level of information and skills an employee receives from a certain form of a training program such as classroom training that is often used to improve specific job-related performance (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). This is essential because the individual uses information acquired from the training program to directly or indirectly improve academic performance in the organization

LITERATURE REVIEW

TRAINING TRANSFER IN THE INSTITUTION

Training transfer encompasses the cognitive learning process as well as factors that impact the training process and the transfer of skills and performance (Burke & Hutchins, 2007). However, the impact of training transfer is an understudied area of research (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Holton, 1996, 2005; Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001), and little is known about training transfer impact on organizational performance. However, among the factors that have been shown to significantly impact on training and its transfer include the organizational environment, transfer climate as well as work environment (Bates & Khasawneh, 2005; Hawley & Barnard, 2005; Burke & Hutchins, 2007). Burke and Hutchins (2007) categorized these factors into three as primary factors constituting: learning characteristics, intervention design, and delivery, and work environment influences.

Primarily, these factors are considered during training and are required to improve academic staff performance which is central training effectiveness (Byham, et al., 1976; Burke & Baldwin, 1999; Kirwan & Birchall, 2006; Saks & Belcourt, 2006; Subedi, 2006). Hawley and Barnard (2005), mentioned that most prior research on training transfer factors that influences academic staff as the trainee (Nazli et al., 2015). Organizational support and peer support are the two most influential factors that affect training transfer. The study demonstrated that organizational environment specifically influences posed by managers and supervisors directly impact training transfer among academic staff (Madagamage et al., 2014; Tannenbaum, 1997; Yamnill & McLean, 2001; Gaudine & Saks, 2004; Bates & Khasawneh, 2005; Hawley & Barnard, 2005; Burke & Hutchins, 2007). It then implies that training transfer impacts organizational performance through directives provided by higher-skilled academicians such as supervisors and managers. This knowledge is vital to strengthen research that confines to understanding how training transfer improves organizational performance.

However, a successful training transfer effectively impacts positive change in the performance (Yamnill & McLean, 2001; Yamnill & McLean, 2005). Therefore, the improvement training transfer provides and determines whether the training program necessarily does not improve the organizational settings through the change it reflected in the workplace. This is because the result of training is often explained in the context of organizational performance (Gaudine & Saks, 2004). Thus, the indicator of effective training transfer could be explained by measurable performance improvement (Velada et al., 2007; Antle et al., 2009). This is because training transfer depicts the application of knowledge transferred in a demonstrable way by the trainee and this can be observed through organizational performance. Therefore, asserted that training transfer reflects a clear understanding of the impact of how learning works (Senge, 1990; Senge et al., 1999). However, lists of training transfer principles are provided in Table 1.

Table 1: List of training transfer principles

Elements	Principles
Identical elements	Training transfer is improved to become an identical stimulus and response elements in the training transfer settings.
General principles	Training transfer is facilitated during when trainees received training on application skills and theoretical principles that underlies the training program.
Stimulus variability	Positive training transfer is enhanced through a variety of relevant related training stimuli.
Conditions of practice	Conditions of practice encompasses a number of specifically designed issues such as massed/distributed training, whole/ part training, feedback, and over learning.

Source: Adapted from (Baldwin & Ford 1988)

Form of Training Transfer

Academic staff undergoes the process of learning in the work environment to improve their teaching outcome. These factors encompass all the transfer elements that support transfer for each academia in the higher institution which have been examined by empirical studies (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Jelsma et al., 1990; Gick & Holyoak, 1983; Patrick, 1992; Gielen, 1996; Tannenbaum & Yukl, 1992; Zuljan & Vogrinc, 2010). There are debates on the mechanism of training transfer interaction during the learning and transfer processes (Colquitt et al., 2000; Antonacopoulou, 2001 & Mancy, 1999). However, notable forms of training transfer that are used for training transfer are shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Different Forms of Transfer

Form of Training Transfer	Explanation
Positive transfer	The extent to which trainees have acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes, which can be applied effectively in work practice.
	Previously acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes facilitate the learning of new knowledge, skills, and attitudes
Negative transfer	The extent to which an undesired effect occurs after following a course. Previously acquired knowledge, skills, and attitudes hinder the learning of new knowledge, skills, and attitudes
Far transfer	Transfer when the initial learning task and the subsequent tasks to be learned differ substantially
Near transfer	Transfer when the initial learning task and the subsequent tasks to be learned differ only slightly or not at all
Low-road transfer	A transfer based on intensive and varied training, and occurring by means of automatic use of acquired knowledge and skills in a new context
High-road transfer	A transfer based on consciously abstracting of already acquired knowledge and skills from one context to another
General transfer	The trainee acquired certain working methods, knowledge, and skills which can be used in tasks other than the original learning task
Specific transfer	The learning task is so specific that no transfer can be expected to other tasks
Horizontal transfer	Transfer from one task to another
Vertical transfer	Transfer within a certain task with growing expertise

Source: Adapted from ([Barnard et al., 2001](#))

TRAINING TRANSFER FOR ACADEMIC STAFF

Academic staff need motivations to transfer acquired knowledge and skills that are motivated by the competitive edge it provides in enhancing the performance of organizations. Studies described motivation to transfer training as a direction for persistence effort towards utilizing knowledge and skills learned in the workplace ([Kasim & Ali, 2011](#); [Devos et al., 2007](#); [Velada et al., 2009](#)). Essentially, training transfer provides a level of influence to learn and is closely related to organizational directed outcomes.

Training transfer depicts a form of enabler or motivation directed toward equipping academic staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to improve specific job aspects to generally improve organizational performance ([Holton, 1996](#); [Tannenbaum, 1997](#); [Colquitt et al., 2000](#)). The outcome of training transfer is the basis of innovation and is considered necessary to support organizational practices especially in the present days, where technology has taken over most organizational services ([Sung & Choi, 2014](#); [Lim & Morris, 2006](#)).

However, training transfer serves as a means academic staff use to improve returns on investment ([Rafiei & Davari, 2015](#); [Holton, 1996](#); [2005](#); [Bates & Holton, 2004](#); [Machin, 2002](#)). Training transfer has a key connection to academician's performance ([Bashir & Long, 2015](#); [Holton, 2005](#); [Hawley & Barnard, 2005](#)). This is because the transfer of knowledge is largely used to put academic ability and knowledge into shape for an enhanced performance ([Mansour et al., 2017](#); [Pidd, 2004](#)).

A study by [Holton \(2005\)](#) used the theoretical relationship between training and transfer to improve work ethic and referred to it as a fundamental shift combining learning and transfer into a new construct ([Holton, 2005](#)). [Long et al. \(2014\)](#) added that academic staff perceived training to be useful elements to foster learning. The result supported training and development, organizational development, career development, and performance management ([Long et al., 2014](#)). The rationale provides greater emphasis on the relationship learning to improve work-related outcomes ([Naquin & Holton, 2002, p. 358](#)) and as an indicator for effective transfer of skills ([Noe & Schmitt, 1986](#); [Baldwin & Ford, 1988](#); [Brinkerhoff & Montesino, 1995](#); [Saks & Ashforth, 1997](#); [Tannenbaum, 1997](#); [Colquitt et al., 2000](#); [Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001](#); [Shoobridge, 2002](#); [Herold et al., 2002](#); [Lim & Morris, 2006](#)). This depicted that training transfer fundamentally represents a core component of organization performance indicators ([Naquin & Holton, 2002](#); [Park & Jacobs, 2008](#); [Long et al., 2014](#)).

WORKING ENVIRONMENT

Work setting is primarily important to organizational performance ([Noe & Schmitt, 1986](#)) and is explained in most contexts within organizational culture directly depicting the level of training transfer. The work environment is an organizational factor that shapes training transfer as well as the content of the daily job ([Colquitt et al., 2000, p. 681](#)). For instance, an academic staff who underwent a certain specific training program within the work environment performs better than those who were not trained.

Thus, training transfer impacts how academicians perform their job functions and generally improves organizational performance. Consequently, environmental-based controls that directly or indirectly impact training transfer stands to impose significant levels of influence upon the trainee. Four elements of consequences such as positive reinforcement, negative reinforcement, punishment, and extinction are synonymous with the work environment (Colquitt et al., 2000). Positive reinforcement encompasses actions that are designed to align trainees to correctly use the skills acquired through training (Machin, 2002). Negative reinforcements reflect punishment as well as actions that reinforce training by punishment, among which includes supervisor disciplinary measures to an employee for failing to apply the process taught during training (Thayer & Teachout, 1995; Machin, 1999).

The training transfer environment directly influences learning effectiveness. Training transfer climate depicts situations that facilitate or disrupt the transfer of knowledge of skills learned from training into specific job situations (Wen & Lin, 2014). Transfer training climate explains a set of conditions denoting interplay existing between the organization and academicians either by encouraging or discouraging them to use acquired knowledge, skills, and abilities in their job environment (Melvin et al., 2015). The training transfer climate encompasses work environment factors comprising work system factors and people factors (Hawley & Barnard, 2005). Work system factors are elements of the organization 's culture that indirectly or directly influences training transfer (Lim & Morris, 2006). Martins and Nunes (2016) in a study found that managers openly reinforce learning by providing necessary learning tools to complement academicians' newly acquired knowledge and skills.

Training transfer climate is a determinant of training effectiveness. Brown and McCracken (2008) in a study found that the transfer of skills among 137 managers that participated in a management education and development training was affected by the time allocated for the training session, organizational perception, and how to transform knowledge acquired in meeting organizational training goals. Deduction from managers training transfer issues are presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Academic Staff Issues in Transfer

Training transfer issues	Explanations
Lack of Time	Respondents were too swamped by other responsibilities to have time to give feedback or had too many staff to have time to give feedback.
Unsupportive	Respondents 'organization did not understand the benefits or
Organizational	Respondents had trouble speaking with authority due to
Culture	Lack of official leadership in the job description (i.e., unofficial management).
Staff Issues	The unwillingness of staff and co-worker employees to be receptive to feedback.
Personal Habits and Effort	Respondents found that they subconsciously revert to former mindsets and their own lack of personal effort at times was a barrier.
Continuous Change	Respondents found constant change within the organization made it difficult as they were not consistently dealing with the same staff members.
Union Rules	Respondents are limited by union rules. (e.g. feedback is the outside job description, or is someone else 's job, or is considered a form of discipline, etc.)
Time Gap	Respondents were not able to use the workshop skills for a long period afterward, due to organizational scheduling of performance reviews or personal leave.
Academia	Respondents were not geographically close to academicians
Geographical	
Location	

Source: Adapted from (Brown & McCracken, 2008)

METHODOLOGY

This is a case study based on the interviews conducted with four experienced senior academic staff who have been directly involved with training for more than six years in their respective field of specializations. The participants comprise three males and one female academician with different expertise in leadership and training, da'wa and Islamic management, communication, and counselling respectively. The participants were interviewed for about 30 minutes using the semi-structured interview methods. A purposive sampling technique was used. The semi-structured interview protocol was applied to prompt responses from each participant. The purpose is to understand the perceived opinion among academic staff towards training transfer and collaboration to organizational performance. The criteria for selection include (a) the individual must be academic staff in a higher institution of learning (b) the individual must have worked for at least three years and above.

Trustworthiness and Confirmability

Several issues can threaten the validity of the research. First, the level of honesty of the participant might limit the application of the results of this study. The potential of response bias, which is the conscious or unconscious manipulation of verbal responses or behaviour, is another threat. The trustworthiness and confirmability of the data obtained was done by sending the verbatim transcription of the interviews data to the participants for review. After cross-checking the replies, participants confirmed that the transcriptions were accurate. Besides, an inter-rater validity technique was also applied to validate the accuracy of the selected themes. It is interested in understanding the consistency of raters' judgement about the relative levels of performance. The kappa inter-rater reliability test gives 85.1% reliability from two raters confirming the adequacy and consistency of the emerging themes.

DATA ANALYSIS

The qualitative data analysis process started with a complete transcription of all verbatim responses from the participants. The first process was to document all statements that were relevant to the experience and group them in high-level categories. In the second step, each statement was clustered according to the research question by coding in order to determine the main idea and the frequency of occurrence of each main idea. Next, each statement was tested to determine whether it could be abstracted as a theme or it contained an element necessary to the understanding of the participants' experience. The last step was the modification of a data analysis method in which data are coded into the main idea from which all statements would be clustered into labelled thematic groups. Themes were then validated by reviewing the complete participant's transcription to determine whether the themes explicitly expressed or were easily compatible.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The finding showed that academic staffs needs a supporting organizational atmosphere for training and collaboration among colleagues. They are required to have a good attitude towards their working environment with having a clear guidance of knowledge sharing among trainees. This view is in line with [Grossman and Salas \(2011\)](#) they found that initially it is difficult to figure out the real problem facing training transfer with regards to Baldwin and Ford's model. However, from what they have discovered among factors contributing were behavioral modelling, error management, realistic training environment, transfer climate, support, and the work environment. The four participants seemed to share similar opinions emphasizing communication effectiveness as a tool to drive collaboration and training among academicians. They believed that encouraging academic staff through strong communication will improve training and as a result performance will excel. This finding was supported by [Bevins and Price \(2014\)](#) who conducted action research among academic staff and teachers in promoting collaboration and communication. They suggested that working together is very important by adopting one of these approaches namely; client-supplier and facilitating approach.

One of the participants emphasizes on developing an organically creative and collaborative environment, especially in a working world that relies on individual productivity can be rather challenging. To build teams that feel truly comfortable working together. Although his views were seen to be objective to his personal experience during his teaching period among academic staff. [Mabaso \(2017\)](#) added that the organizations need to finance their academics for their expertise, knowledge and their ability to enable productivity as a result of their performance to the organization.

The information obtained from the other participants indicated that there should be more training transfer, building an honest communication, knowledge management, creating the right working environment, identifying a collaborative leader and making collaboration a natural part of the workflow in the organization. Since most of the participants are well-experienced academicians.

CONCLUSION

The emerge themes from the data suggested that academic staff training is a very important criteria for a successful organization to fulfil the required performance. Therefore, collaboration after training among academic staff is required for a notable training transfer from the perspectives of the supervisors. The knowledge gained by the academic staff will affect changes in the workplace and strengthens their understanding and improves organizational performance. Therefore, this study emphasizes the importance of training transfer among academic staff perspectives to provide a better understanding of perceived factors as influential to effectively facilitate the transfer process. Acknowledging the factors that were coded from the data, new training programs will be insights on training transfer. This will provide the organization with the vision to leverage training resources in a more effective way among different academic staff. It is concluded that academic staff training and collaboration in the organization requires attention from all sectors to fulfil the task entrusted upon the academicians.

LIMITATION AND STUDY FORWARD

This research is confined to the qualitative methodology through a purposive selection of its participants. Therefore, a

quantitative analysis might be utilized to confirm the results of the qualitative analysis that was limited to only four academic staff in the faculty of leadership and management (USIM).

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AUTHORS CONTRIBUTION

Dr. Ibrahim Fahad Sulaiman is the main author of this article. I wrote the abstract, introduction, some parts of the literature review, transcribing for the interview, discussion, conclusion, and references.

Dr. Najib Sheikh Abdisamad contributed to some parts of the literature review.

Mr. Owolabi Sunday Oluwatosin, wrote the finding and proof-reading of the article.

Dr. Ahmed Abdul Malik reviewed the transcribed interview and methodology.

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