

**THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN TRAINING PERFORMANCE AND
POSITIVE WORKPLACE BEHAVIOR: A CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK**

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Abstract

This conceptual paper aims to propose a framework for training performance which enhances positive workplace behaviors in an aviation organization in Thailand. The framework was developed from a systematic review of existing research works. The research question is “What is the most appropriate conceptual framework for training performance in an aviation organization in Thailand?” The framework proposed focuses on training performance in an aviation organization in Thailand which enhances positive workplace behaviors in response to current competitive challenges. The framework proposed can contribute to and extend the body of knowledge of human resource management.

Keywords; training performance, human resource management, aviation organization

1. Introduction

Economic conditions have contributed to the demise of some businesses such as Borders (bookstores) and Blockbuster (video rental). On the other hand, several business sectors have seen an increase in demand for their products and services e.g., Apple, Google, Facebook (Noe et al., 2012). As a result of increased demand for their products, many companies have been struggling to find qualified, talented, and skilled employees. Therefore, HRM within these organizations has taken steps to deal with this situation. It has been determined that closer attention needs to be given to acquiring, training and developing employees to help their organization meet competitive challenges relating to sustainability, global economic fluctuations, and emerging technology (Noe et al., 2012).

HRM demonstrates its value for the organization through its practices. Based on the idea that people are one of the critical elements in an organization’s sustainability and success, HRM relates the strategic direction of business and links between an organization’s strategies and operations (Noe et al., 2012). HRM practices include workforce planning, recruitment and selection, compensation and benefits, and training and development (Bowin, 2001; Bratton & Gold, 2012; Byars & Rue, 2008;

Conway, 2004; Noe et al, 2012). Workforce planning is described as ensuring that the right people with the right competencies are in the right jobs at the right time. Recruitment is the process of discovering plausible candidates for actual or anticipated organizational vacancies. Selection is concerned with how to place the perfect candidate to a required position. Compensation and benefits is concerned with an organization's policies on how to reward its employees such as with cash compensation and other nonmonetary rewards such as health insurance. Training is viewed as a way to enhance individual capabilities and improve team effectiveness in order for organizations to gain competitive advantage.

Private and public organizations invest a vast amount of money on training and encourage their employees to participate in learning experiences. There is both a business and personal imperative to better understand how employees learn at work and how best to design, implement, and support training activities. In the existing research works the long history of training reveals trends and contexts that have shifted over time. This shows that training plays an important role in organizations e.g., increased organizational performance and enhanced individual career mentoring (Bell et al., 2017). Thus, this conceptual paper will review and describe a framework for training performance to apply in an aviation organization.

2. Background and Significance of the Study

Commercial aviation started in the 1950s. The air travel boom begun after the Second World War (Gero, 2006). Recently, the ICAO as well as Government and independent experts in aviation organizations forecast high air traffic demand through to 2020. The 20-year forecast produced by ICAO is in terms of the aviation industry which has a long development and production timeframe for aircraft (Owen, Lee & Lim, 2009). Aviation organizations have been impacted by many factors e.g., deregulation, service quality, pricing, attractiveness of alternatives, and opportunity for alternatives (Card, 1986; Jung, Han, & Oh, 2017). Thus, aviation organizations need to manage their people to response to those factors.

Aviation organizations operate under internal and external factors. Internal factors include its system, policies, or financial supports. While, external factors include customer expectations, technology, fuel prices, safety regulations from organizations such as the International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO), International Aviation and Transportation Association (IATA) or local safety organizations such as the Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) in the United States or the European Aviation Safety Agency (EASA) in Europe. Failure to meet the assessment criteria of any safety organization has undesirable effects on airlines. HRM in aviation organizations needs to find suitable practices to encourage its employees to meet the assessment criteria of each audit organization.

In 2015, the ICAO listed Thailand as a *Red Flag Country* over what it sees as Significant Safety Concerns (SSC) within the country's aviation organizations

(Prasirtsuk, 2016). This listing indicates that the state is not providing enough safety measures to ensure effective operation under ICAO standards. As a result, Thailand's airlines can continue existing services to the US, but they will not be allowed to establish new services. This affects not only the image of the country but also the competitiveness of Thai airlines because of higher insurance premiums or not being able to increase service frequency on existing routes. The *red flag* was removed in 2017 but Thai aviation organizations need to remain aware of the consequences of such a negative listing.

3. Research Question

Training has been identified as one of the human resource management practices that can enhance competitive advantage (Bartlett, 2001). Bartlett (2001) suggested that the more employees have been trained, the more they will be productive. Additionally, the quality of positive outcomes of training may relate to employee motivation to transfer. Thus, this study proposes a conceptual framework of training performance which will enhance positive workplace behaviors in an aviation organization in Thailand. The research question is "*What is the most appropriate conceptual framework of training performance in an aviation organization in Thailand?*"

4. Literature Review

This section describes the existing literature and theoretical foundations of (a) organizational commitment; (b) organizational identification; (c) training performance; (d) motivation to transfer; and (e) positive workplace behaviors. Hypotheses will be inserted into the relevant parts of the literature review.

4.1 Organizational Commitment and Organizational Identification

The psychological relationship between the individual and the organization is an important factor in organizational behavior from the social exchange perspective and the social identity perspective (Van Knippenberg, Van Dick, & Tavares, 2007). Employees may conceive of themselves in terms of their membership in the organization. Thus, the magnitude of an individual's attachment to the organization and the evaluation they make of the relationship that the organization develops with them may influence on job-related attitudes and behavior such as turnover intention and organizational citizenship behavior (Jangsiriwattana, 2017; Van Knippenberg, Van Dick, & Tavares, 2007). Understanding the psychological relationship between the individual and the organization, therefore, is of great theoretical and practical relevance for research in organizational training.

Kim (2015) proposed that employees' attitudinal constructs are antecedents of training performance. The literature showed that organizational attitudes can be performance predictors for training if the primary purpose and content of the training are directly connected to organizational efficiency, effectiveness, and wellness rather than strengthening individual job-related knowledge and skills (Kim, 2015). It focuses

on training that primarily requires the collective exertion of organizational members. Thus, employees' attitudes, including organizational commitment (OC) and organizational identification (OI), toward the organization are the predictors of training performance. OC is primarily developed by exchange-based factors between the self and the organization, whereas OI is derived from internalizing the values, attributes, and fate of the organization into one's self-image and equating collective interests with self-interest. According to Kim (2015) and Van Knippenberg, Van Dick, and Tavares (2007), OI was a stronger predictor of performance than OC because the psychological motivation for OI that contributes to training performance may differ from OC.

Based on the above review, the following hypothesis was formed.

Hypothesis 1: There is a positive relationship between OC, OI and training performance.

4.2 Training Performance and Positive Workplace behaviors

The first study on training appeared in a research journal 1918 (Bell et al., 2017). Studies in the field, along with studies on organizational development, have undergone a remarkable transformation as they are both rooted in education (Torraco, 2016). This transformation has been accompanied by a growth of knowledge in a variety of disciplines, including industrial/organizational psychology, military psychology, human factors, and cognitive psychology. These increases in knowledge have advanced our understanding of how to design and deliver training and development in an organization. As the field of training continues to evolve, the highlighted areas of training are (a) training criteria; (b) trainee characteristics; (c) training design and delivery; and (d) training in context (Bell et al., 2015). To better understand how employees learn at work, and how best to design, implement, and support training and development activities, HRM needs to refine the body of knowledge regarding training in organizations that can help guide practice (Salas, Tannenbaum, Kraiger, & Smith-Jentsch, 2012).

Training is one of the roles of HRM in an organization. Training refers to a planned effort by the organization to facilitate learning of job-related competencies, knowledge, skills, and behaviors by the employees (Noe et al., 2012). The transformation of training in organizations has blurred the traditional distinctions between training and development (e.g., development is more future-oriented and focused on generalizable skills). Thus, it sometimes uses the terms *training and development* interchangeably (Bell et al., 2015). Considering the amount of time and money that organizations invest in training, it is necessary to consider what makes these training programs succeed (Messenberg, Schulte, & Kauffeld, 2016). They suggest that to assess the effectiveness of training, factors related to the trainee (e.g., self-efficacy, learner readiness), to the training design (e.g., content validity), and to the work environment (e.g., social support, opportunity to use) need to be considered.

Research findings support the claim that training performance influences positive outcomes as well as positive productive workplace behavior (Chiaburu & Lindsay, 2008; Gegenfurtner et al., 2009a; Machin & Fogarty, 2003; Blader, Patil., & Packer, 2017; Messenberg, Schulte, & Kauffeld, 2016).

4.3 Positive Workplace Behaviors

Social exchange theory proposed that individuals and an organization have the potential to generate high-quality relationships based on the transaction process (Cropanzano & Mitchell, 2005). These interactions are usually seen as interdependent and contingent on the actions between the parties. The exchange process is based on reciprocity and negotiated rules which are based on six exchange resources including love, status, information, money, goods, and services. Successful exchanges can cause one individual to become committed to another (Blau, 1964). Blader, Patil and Packer (2017) revealed that employees who strongly identify with their work organizations are more motivated, more loyal to their organization, and better performers as shown by in-role and extra-role performance.

Effective training levels has been perceived as an indicator of organizational care and support and corresponds with positive psychological responses such as affective commitment (Lee, 2015). Training is intended to improve performance or support learning of a specific level of knowledge and skill required to perform some aspect of a job or task. Furthermore, a match between training provision and requirements is associated with maximum behavioral and performance gains in an organization. Lee (2015) revealed that a match between actual and required job training may be associated with improved workplace behaviors. Workplace behaviors can be classified into three key dimensions: employee behaviors, including in-role organizational behaviors; organizational citizenship and counter workplace behavior. Thus, the following hypothesis is developed.

Hypothesis 2: Training performance has a positive relationship with workplace behavior.

4.4 Motivation to Transfer

Motivation to transfer is one factor in the learning transfer system. It plays an important role for training transfer because trainees with a low level of motivation to transfer might simply choose not to apply the gained skills into action. It was defined as a trainee's desire to use the knowledge and skills mastered in the training program on the job (Massenberg et al., 2016). One of the most complex phenomena studied in the social sciences is human motivation (Gegenfurtner et a., 2009). There are different forms of motivation to transfer e.g., intrinsic or extrinsic motivation, autonomous motivation, controlled motivation, instrumentality, and intentions to implement transfer. Thus, employee motivation to transfer trained knowledge and skills to the workplace arguably goes with all of the dimensions just mentioned.

There are several studies revealing that motivation to transfer is mediated by the relationship between learning and training transfer (e.g., Gegenfurtner et al, 2009; Massenberg et al., 2016). However, it may be questioned that motivation is the moderating effect (Nakagami et al., 2008). In the proposed model, the mediating and moderating role of motivation to transfer is tested. The following hypothesis is then developed.

Hypothesis 3a: Motivation to transfer mediates the relationship between training performance and positive workplace behaviors.

Hypothesis 3b: Motivation to transfer moderates the relationship between training performance and positive workplace behaviors.

5. Method

Several steps were used to develop the conceptual framework. First, a database was created consisting of all articles on training published in the Human Resource Development Quarterly, Human Resource Management, and Human Resource Management Journals. Articles included in the database were drawn from editions published during the period 2013-2018. Next, citation analysis was used, and key variables were identified. Lastly, a causal model of the relationship between variables was drawn and connected.

6. Conceptual Framework

Based on the above literature review, the conceptual framework has been developed to describe the relationship among all the variables.

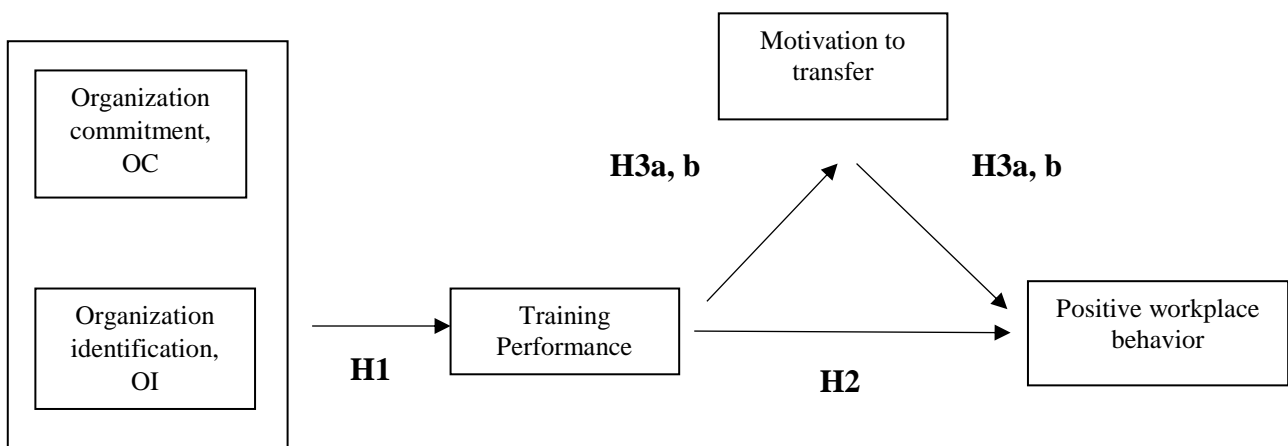


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework of the Relationship between Training Performance and Positive Workplace Behaviors

7. Discussion, Conclusion, Implications and Future Research

This proposed model illustrates that the antecedents of training performance i.e. organizational commitment (OC) and organization identification (OI) will predict the

level of training performance which impacts on employee's positive workplace behaviors. Previous research work shows a dominant role played by OI (Kim, 2015) which conveys the extent to which employees perceive themselves as belonging to the organization and feel a shared interest and fate with the organization. However, OC must also be carefully analyzed. Additionally, motivation to transfer may either play a mediating or moderating role that can increase the magnitude of the relationship between training performance and positive workplace behaviors (Gegenfurtner et al, 2009; Massenberg et al., 2016).

In conclusion, training performance has a strong relationship with employee's positive workplace behaviors. These behaviors are needed in response to the critical situation being faced by the aviation organization in Thailand being studied. Therefore, improvements in key employee behaviors which ultimately lead to productivity is presumably the main objective of organizational training performance. The primary managerial implication of this proposed model may be that organizations should place a priority on training needs analysis because an individual's attitude, such as his or her commitment and identification, maximises the outcomes of training. Employees may consciously or unconsciously perceive that training performance will lead to expected outcomes such as acquiring a job, professional knowledge and skills, or a greater chance of monetary rewards or promotion.

This paper has been conceptually developed from existing literature. The reliability and validity of the model needs to be tested in the aviation context in Thailand. Thus, future research should be concerned with data collection, data analysis, data interpretation, result discussion, and implementation. Finally, it should be noted that HRM is one of many organizational processes that can assist in the development and maintenance employee productivity. However, the relationship between training and an employee's positive workplace behaviors proposed in this study should not result in HRM professionals believing that training alone has a relationship with an employee's positive workplace behavior. This proposed model highlights that HRM is one component of a complex set of management practices that together influence the positive workplace behaviors of employees.

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