

A SYNOPSIS OF TRAINING, EMPLOYEE RETENTION AND PERFORMANCE

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ABSTRACT: *Training and development is essential to any firm that wants to retain employees and realize better performance. Current businesses are forced to establish training and development programs that assist in attaining required skills and competencies in the organization. But without competent employees, firms grapple with challenges of poor output and dismal performance. This conceptual study paper presents a synopsis of the linkage of training, employee retention and performance. Theories underpinning the study are human capital theory, social learning theory and theory of human resource management. Drawn from wide theoretical assumptions, opportunity to training is one of the greatest reasons to why workers stay in the organization. Employees need noble training opportunities to improve their performance and demand in the labour market. Training is seen as a major factor in contributing to employee improved performance and reduction of work related accidents. Various scholars have alluded to the fact that retained employees master the art of delivering excellent goods and services to consumers. There is need for establishment of better employee retention strategies to bond trained employees with the firm. The paper contributes to body of knowledge by providing a conceptual framework of the linkage of training, employee retention and performance which would be of beneficial to human resource practitioners and human resource policy makers. It further builds a model that will assist researchers in exploring employee retention as a mediating role in training and performance.*

KEYWORDS: Training, Development, Employee retention, performance.

INTRODUCTION

Employees are one of the key resources of any institution. The roles they undertake towards an organization to realize better performance cannot be undervalued. Consequently, preparing these exclusive resources with effective knowledge and skills becomes imperative in order to improve their performance. In each field, the success of any firm extremely depends on retaining better performing employees. Therefore, to keep this valued resource, institutions need to be cognizant about employee retention and performance. Some firms think that workers are in search of monetary gain from their work and disregards great importance that many workers place themselves on the in-built return on their work. Nowadays, many organizations are allocating reasonable financial resources on employee training and development with an aim of improving performance and bonding them with the institution (Fleming, 2007).

However, training and development assist employees to handle more challenging task in modern competitive market. The objective of training is for workers to internalize gain knowledge, skills, and attitudes underscored in training programs applied in daily operations. Modern institutions gain competitive advantage over other firms through retaining highly trained and performing employees.

Due to continuous changing technologies in business world, training is critical in enhancing employee performance and keeping them in organization (Weretaw, 2012). Likewise, employee training and development is seen as an essential activity in enhancing employee performance and commitment to the organization (Panagiotakopoulos, 2011). According to Vemic (2007), there is need to invest in the present workforce because the ability to match competitor in the market share depends on what kind of the employees the organization keep and their performance.

Further, training is one of the employee retention instruments if supplemented with either non-financial or financial rewards giving employees opportunity to improve their performance in the organization (Meyer, 2003). It is of great importance to keep highly skilled employees for maximum exploitation of firm profit. For institutions to improve their performance there should be a strategy of retaining highly trained employees as long as possible (Hatala & Fleming 2007). So for any organization that trails their focus on high returns, there is need of employee training and using the best retention strategies in keeping excellent (Akinyele, 2007).

Training

In this era of rapid technological change, the precondition for any firm in the world market is employee training. Training is beneficial to the organization as well as an employee. An organization with a pool of skilled human resource will realize high performance in an effective manner as compared to other rival firms in the same field. Training refers to a planned effort by an institution to enable employees learn work related competencies (Noe, 2011). These competencies are knowledge, skills; or behaviors that are critical for efficacious work performance. In essence, improving performance, employee retention and resource optimization are the real results of training and development (Newman et al., 2011). In order to effectively operationalize customer focus strategies in firms, employee training is a matter of investment (Kundu, 2000). Further, an increase in organizational performance and efficiency is an ultimate outcome of training and development. Likewise, organization ought to invest more in forming dynamic environment, fulfilling employees' desire by building organizational abilities which will allow them to be proactive to evolving new challenges (Jarventaus, 2007).

However, employees expect superior job responsibility after their training which will ultimately improve retention. Various scholars demonstrated the alleged relation between training, employee retention and performance as explained in the theory of human resource theory. In fact, constant training has significant and progressive influence on employee retention (Srinivas, 2008). Besides, training is an essential part of many HRM practices used for employee retention and development owing to diverse types of training given to employees' e.g. On-the-job training, vocational training, broad and particular training (Ranger,2002). Moreover, it performs key function in developing employee capabilities to handle various assignments with an ultimate result of performance improvement and employee retention. Training offers an opportunity to employee to upgrade his profession and improves employee involvement in firm decisions leading to reduction on employee moving out of the organization.

Employee Retention

Globally, employee retention is of key concern to any institution. Most companies are ranked according to the rate of employee turnover and without doubt strive to keep workers for long to

keep excellent performance in the world of competitive market. Employee retention is the degree to which an institution is capable of retaining good performance (Khawaja et. al 2013). Shelton (2001) further asserted that employee retention is an organization capacity to keep high performing employees in the organization. Frequent in and out movement of employees has great impact on organizational performance. Minimum employee turnover shows that a firm retains their skilled and knowledgeable employees through provision of good working environment that result high employee performance (Aruna et. al., 2015). Losing employees to competitor, will negatively influence both employee and organization performance. So keeping trained employees is essential for better output. Institutions that are in need of staying above other competitors through performance require better performance management strategies to reinforce retention of high performers.

However, there are numerous factors related to employee retention that are either institutional or individual employee levels. Institutional factors may include reward, leadership style, career opportunities, training and development of skills are workplace features that have direct influence on retention (Hytter, 2007). Therefore, it can be suggested that training is an essential strategy of improving employee retention and performance. But on employee side, various studies have confirmed that as long as workers feel that they are trained and develop, they will remain in the same organization as long as possible. Failure to keep an employee leads to additional cost on; hiring new personnel as a result of high turn-over, training and ultimately reduce employee loyalty in the organization (Masbigiri, 2011). Thus, many organizations are unable to keep their skilled personnel because of weak reward management system, insufficient equipment to aide performance and lack of policy on employee development. This makes the other equipped business rival to attract competent employees from other firms (Geetha, 2011).

Firms have an obligation to offer suitable training to workers (Mullins, 2007). To improve firm performance, executives should establish retention strategies like compensation, independence and image. Likewise, elements like financial or non-financial incentives, rewards and remuneration equity needs to be taken into consideration in creating internal drive among employees to stay in the organization as long as possible. When it is performed in this manner, then employee retention will significantly influence the relationship between training and performance. Thus, simple way of holding excellent performer in the company is by improving worker's contentment (Griffin, 2008). It is in order for a company to keep qualified workers than employing since retention shows that organization always develops its workers for better performance (Ratna, 2012).

Employee performance

Performance is a multi-dimensional construct with varied measurement depending on various elements (Holton, 1995). Employee performance is normally looked at in terms of outcomes. However, it can also be looked at in terms of behavior (Armstrong 2000). Draft (1988) opined that it is institution managers' responsibility to guarantee that higher performance heights are met by the organization. This means that heads of department set preferred performance level required in specified period. Employee performance management assists the organizations to certify that their workers contribute towards making superior output. This administration procedure promotes worker's involvement in organization planning leading to role playing in the whole process hence employee motivated to aiming higher performance level. It is therefore worth noting that

company's objectives are continuously met efficiently and effectively through performance management undertakings. Previous research on employee productivity indicated that workers who always hit performance ceilings are contented with present work arrangement resulting to supreme job retention, rather than workers who are unhappy with their work (Landy, 1985).

Performance measurement provides a relationship between individual performance and institutional goals while in the process generates feedback on the exercise. Kenney et al. (1992) stated that employee's performance is measured against the performance standards set by the organization. According to Muchelle (2007), there are numerous approaches of measuring employee's capacity to successfully accomplish a task and isolate weaknesses between actual and present performance in which training will be done to bridge the shortfall. Human resource officer may either question workers

about work or observing the job pattern (Price, 2005). Analysis may also be conducted on information available internally to assist in isolating employee performance pattern and trends. Production volume based on quality is a sure performance indicator. Noe (2001) Performance appraisal informs excellent achievers of their value to organization. Muchelle (2007) asserted that performance appraisal is the main measure of performance and comprise of self-appraisal that highlights inconsistencies amongst what worker and management consider as vital performance elements and provides shared view for significant alteration of prospects. Likewise, Norton (2007) developed balance scorecard that provides executive managers a comprehensive overview of firm's performance including processes and outcome measures.

Human resource is an important asset of any institution that when managed well, the required standard is achieved easily. Employees with high standard of performance will efficiently improve annual organizational output. Consequently, employee performance is related to skill gap training and the period an employee stays with the organization. As the employer retain high performance employees in the system, efficiency and improved productivity is realized. Further, the growth or fall of any business firm will be determined by the efficient employee performance at given time.

THEORIES UNDERPINNING THE STUDY

Numerous theories of training and development have been postulated by various authors. However, this study adopted human capital theory, social learning theory and theory of human resource management.

The Human Capital Theory

This theory established that an investment on human resource through training improves both firm and employee performance (Becker, 1964). He asserted that training offered by employer is focused on enhancing employee performance and retaining employees in the organization. Even though the earning of certain training can be achieved through continuous association with training institution, overall training enhances both employee and firm performance. The theory put emphasis on individual knowledge, skills gathered in learning and training effectively improves employee performance (Becker, 1993). For that reason, organizations with a pool of specialized trained workers will always have higher performance than other firms. It is evident that

organization with better training program is a strategy of retaining best performance (Becker, 1964).

Human capital postulation did not clearly validate the relationship existing between training and employee performance, but gave an in direct linkage. The technical know-how exemplified in employees largely gives high performance and if there is proper performance system, employees will stay longer with the organization. Similarly, organizations invest on employee training to enhance individual performance and possibly retain them (Roberts; 2008). According to Garcia (2005), policy designed for training and development anchored on this theory has a substantial impact on firm and employee performance. This theory assumed that planned education and training increases learning that result to an increase on individual employee and firm performance as well as revenue (Indradevi, 2010). Human capital theory established that organization placing their financial support on training and development programs increases workers' lifespan income, retention, commitment and performance.

Besides, this theory offers basic validation for huge communal expenses on learning in both emerging and industrialized countries (Fagerlind et.al., 1997). The theory emphasizes the way training improves production and efficacy of employees by improving intellectual level of individual competency which is a result of inherent capability and asset in people.

However, human capital postulation is oversimplified in analyzing workers output and its assumption that education is a driving force on employee performance is misplaced. It is rather a complementary of various factors. Many organizations overrated benefits from improved training and disregard other factors like performance management, employment agreement, retention and pay for performance in which their presence is motivating employee to higher performance (Levin et. al., 1994). Firm performance is widely seen as job features instead of employees but properly trained employees perform towards the organization objectives. For continuous higher performance, retention of these valuable resources must be ensured (Spence 1973). Lastly, (Smith, 2010) asserted that learning might merely be a market indicator to prospective performance of an employee since it is difficult for an organization to establish performance characteristics of an employee.

Social Learning Theory

This supposition was established to explain and give prediction on individual learning through observing. Observation learning is regulated by careful listening, retaining and performing (Bandura, 1977). Several people improve their performance through interacting and doing the same assignment together. Frequent socialization of the employees in the organization increases worker's commitment that result to employee longer stay with the employers. The theory further asserted that training conducted by the same peers in work environment, improves employee retention and performance.

Organizations with well-established team work may conduct training easily through copying each other hence enhances employee performance. This hypothesis is used to promote individual performance and solving social welfare that might erupt in the organization. According to Bandura (1977), organizing training through social grouping at the workplace, improves employee

performance and commitment to the organization. Employees experiencing stable social welfare, learn by copying the best skills and stay with the team as long as the interest is covered.

This theory justify that training processes and group performance are linked to one another. For steady employee performance there is either group training or retention of skilled workers in the organization (Bandura, 1977). Moreover, training and development is ensured by establishing pay for performance program with sound management. The theory is found on an impression that being close to one another improves individual performance and retention with the organization. However, social learning theory with its primary notion that frequent relations to poor performance raises chances of an employee to dismal performance (Siegel, 2006). This means that training might instill wrong knowledge to promising employee contributing poorly on performance that is difficult to retain. There is likelihood that young employees will internalize bad performance they see from other peers and equally affect their performance (McCormick, 2006).

Finally, this theory did not openly exhibit that training and development enhances employee performance and retention but suggested that it may act as an enticement to employees for better performance. Nevertheless, the concept assists in creating connection between training and employee performance resulting to retention.

Theory of Human Resource Management

The theory advanced by Guest (1987). It established that human resource policies influence both employee training and performance. Guest theory is of relevance because of it highlighted the linkage between employee training, performance and retention by use of human resource management strategies. Guest recognized that employee training is of key concern to individual performance and directly connect workers with firm overall productivity. The model suggested that employee training and development might commit an employee with the organization hence result to longer stay with the employer. Guest (1987) further asserted that more often, human resource practices like training, pay for performance, equitable pay etc. leads to employee retention and increase on performance. The theory established that training and development is a component within Human Resource Management bundles that positively influences both employee and firm's performance.

The theory justifies that continuous implementation of proper training programs improve one's ability to perform. Likewise, employees with the required skills and competencies usually tend to stick with the organization as long as there is feeling of interest neglect by the management (Guest,1987). However, this hypothesis didn't clearly demonstrate the effect of training and development on firm performance. The risk associated with this theory is that organization with poor training programs will affect employee performance and eventually leads to release of non-performance.

Training, Employee retention and Performance

Organizations with high employee turnover loose skill, competency and financial resource used while someone undergo training. The degree and impact of losing an experienced employee is a serious managing concern that affects production of valued goods in the market. Training is one of the elements a firm uses to transfer specific skills to identified staff to retain excellent performance

(Meyer, 2003). Highly trained employees will efficiently perform assigned work and will be bonded with organization as strategy of retaining him. Furthermore, employee training and development enhances workers' loyalty, work specialization, retention and performance (Saint, 1992). In spite of several challenges experienced with a number of firms in business industry, training has been sought as the link to better performance and result to employee retention (Njanja et al., 2013).

However, the significant relationship between training, employee retention and performance might not be underrated (Meyer et al 2003). Training improves workers' loyalty through expression of backing, giving workers ideas of handling pressure brought by work demand and challenges, serve as a motivation to be with the company and building caring culture. Equally, the level of labour turnover influences both employee and organization performance, therefore employee retention is considered of greatest importance worldwide (Ayodo, 2014). Nowadays, global market competition is a strategy for organizations to drastically increase employee performance and improving retention is seeking to optimize human resource through an inclusive training programmes. Reduced employee movement confirms that a firm is keeping its trained employees through provisional of good environment, which improves individual employee performance (Ayodo, 2014). Opportunity to employee training is one of the greatest reasons to why workers stay in the organization. Employees need noble training opportunities to improve their performance and demand in the labour market. The predictable perception is that if organization makes employee marketable, then there is high risk of leaving the employer. But nowadays, firms have realized that continuous training of employees improves individual performance and the likelihood of staying longer with the same employer. Truly, as soon as training stops, employee turnover starts influencing performance (Chew 2004).

Moreover, training is one of the determinants of employee retention and performance (Huselid, 1995). Training as human resource practice, has a positive correlation to retention because it locks employee in the job. So the only strategy for an organization to completely increase employee retention and performance is seeking to optimize their workforce through intense training (wan, 2007). Better outcomes come from the training content and the ability of the learner to concentrate at the training process. Finally, employee performance relies on highly trained employees who have learnt the system through staying longer with the firm (Barrett, 2001).

Imram (2015) examined the influence of training and development on employee's performance in Pakistan banks. He established that training positively improves employee performance by increasing mass production of valued goods. The researcher further mentioned that firms needs to provide either competitive financial or non-financial rewards to retain the best performing employees in the organization. This means that effective training is linked to employee longer stay in the organization and performance.

Bhartiya (2014) studied the effect of training and development on worker's performance in India. His study found training as an essential factor in improving both employee and firm's performance. So there is distinct role played by training on individual performance, retention and injuries in workplace. Employee performance remains an ultimate result of training with strong connection to each other.

Naeem et al (2014), explored an investigation on workers learning and impact on employee performance and retention in USA. Based on theoretical review and discussion from various scholars, it was evident that planned training enhances both employee and firm performance. Further, establishment of proper performance management with reinforced equitable pay system leads to employee retention.

A conceptual study on training and development program benefits to employees and organizations explored by Khawajah, (2013) in Saudi Arabia asserted that effective training programs augmented with proper reward system assist companies to keep as long as possible highly trained and performance employees. Drawn from the various discussions by scholars, employee retention and performance are achieved through effective training programs.

Ekwe et. al., (2014) explored effect of training and development on firm effectiveness in Nigeria. The investigation found that investing on employees through planned training programs increases both employee and firm performance. Firms that empower employees with specialized skills and ensure career development will always improve employee performance.

Kum (2014), researched on the influence of training and development on worker performance in South Africa. The research summarized that organization which perceives proper managing of employees as a resource, take learning as chance to improve employee output. Kum opined that employees are valuable resource of the organization that needs continuous update of their skills and knowledge for an improved daily performance.

Mlingi (2012) studied the correlation between on job learning and employee performances in Tanzania. The findings showed that on-job learning is associated with an increase on employee performance and might leads to retention of good employees.

Tukuni-mulongo (2016), investigated the impact of on-job training on employees' performance in Kenya. The study established that firms with continuous application of on job training methods improve worker's performance. Further, learning and career advancement are regularly used to bridge the shortfall between present performance and projected future output.

Sirtney (2015), conducted study on perceived impact of training and development on workers' retention in Kenya. The research showed that training result to worker's retention and performance. It leads to competency based reward, nurture career growth and advancement, enhance job commitment and improve worker's involvement.

From the highlighted studies, there is a relationship between training, employee retention and performance. Organizations that continuously train their employees improve the available human resource competencies and consequently enhance retention and performance.

CONCLUSION

Globalization has made the organization to recruit, retain inspired, competent and committed workers for realization of long term goals. Therefore, organizations that properly implement training programs will retain competent employees with ability of high performance. On the other hand, training and development improves employee commitment, nurture professionalism and take full advantage of job opportunity for uppermost position, creating the organization of choice. To continuously remain relevant in a market crowded with stiff competition, organization make an initiative of retaining developed and talented employees to achieve better results.

Universally, it is challenging to retain highly skilled and competent personnel due to poor reward management system and constant environmental changes. But keeping these skilled human resources, allows for efficient and effective performance of an individual at work place. This can be realized through constant upgrade of new skills and knowledge of employees. Many employees will stay longer with one organization when their interests are appreciated with the management. This can be realized through establishing retention strategies that is beneficial to both employees and employers. The strategies can either be financial or non- financial reward fairly distributed amongst employees. Similarly, firms with poor retention strategies always incur extra cost on recruiting new staff, training and development due to high turnover rate. Consequently, companies with the best retention strategies minimize cost on recruitment and advancement, maintain steady rise on performance and keep a pool of talented workforce.

However, Human resource management has a role in ensuring culture of excellent performance is maintained through an establishment of policy on training and development. This produces a team of excellent performance in the organization in readiness to ever technical changes in the labor market. Likewise, effective human resource management practices incorporate training and development as a continuous process to impact required skills and competencies needed in work performance. Additionally, training and development minimizes labour turnover, enhances work productivity, work fulfilment and organizational output.

From the above literature, there is significant linkage between training, employee retention and performance. The three variables augment each other for the long term benefit of the organization. Training provides employees with competencies required for high performance and will help retain them in the organization. Organization with reduced employee movement confirms that a firm is keeping its trained employees through provisional of good environment, resulting to an improved employee performance. Therefore, employees will stay longer with the same organization that they feel recognize their efforts through clear outlined reward systems.

Recommendation

Several firms have come to the comprehension of the relationship of training, employee retention and performance. Their interdependencies might not be ignored for work efficiency. Organizations that want to remain on top of its competitors through high performance must take training and retention of best performance as major factors in accomplishing organizational strategic goals. There is need to establish effective training programs in the institution for better training results. In

fact, continuous employee training ensures that there is enough supply of workforce that is technically and socially skilled for career growth and development. The right employee training improves individual performance. The process needs to be supported with policy on resource mobilization for continuous training.

From the aforementioned studies, training relates to employee retention by creating workers' loyalty resulting to employee staying longer with one organization. Firms with high labor turn-over reduce employees' commitment within the organization leading to dismal performance hence firm's insolvency. Organization that has an established performance management system assesses and monitors performance for improvement. This performance is measured against a pre-determined weighted scale showing high and low levels. There is need for establishment of better employee retention strategies to bond trained employees with the firm. Furthermore, properly trained employees are result oriented and continuously realize performance improvement. There is need to conduct training need assessment in the organization to isolate strength and weakness of the employees' performance.

Finally, the paper contributes to body of knowledge by providing a conceptual framework of the linkage of training, employee retention and performance which would be of beneficial to human resource practitioners and human resource policy makers. It further builds a model that will assist researchers in exploring employee retention as a mediating role in training and performance.

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