EPRA *International Journal of*

Multidisciplinary Research

Volume: 2   Issue: 2   February   2016

Chief Editor
Dr. A. Singaraj, M.A., M.Phil., Ph.D.
Editor
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THE STUDY ON EVALUATION OF THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LEARNING FOR TRANSFORMATION TRAINING: SPECIAL REFERENCE FROM THE WORLD VISION LANKA

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ABSTRACT

This study evaluated the effectiveness of the LFT training program of World Vision Lanka. All front line employees who were attained in first three modules of LFT training program were included in this study. LFT training aimed at developing competence of employees of World Vision Lanka, through five modules, was carried out almost two and half years. This was the first time a proper evaluation study had been done to check the effectiveness of LFT training. An analysis of questionnaire result was carried out across eight hypotheses test in order to achieve objectives of this study towards effectiveness of LFT training.

Based on the results of the descriptive study, Pearson correlation Analysis, Factor Analysis and Regression Analysis, it is clearly defined that proposed conceptual framework have been accepted and it has positively contributed to the effectiveness of LFT training program. Even though there were some negative observations and arguments, it is observed that Effectiveness of the training and resultant in the performance of the employees and organizational result. Moreover relationship within Individual characteristics, training characteristics and Organizational characteristics had both positive and significant correlated with learning, while training characteristics had its influence indirectly on Individual performance, individual and organizational characteristics indirectly and directly had its influence on Individual performance, on the other hand it was obvious that it had positive and significantly moderated by motivation to transfer between learning and individual performance. Individual performance also had positively correlated with organizational result. In addition to that it was observed a strong positive correlation exist among the individual characteristics, training characteristics and organizational characteristics.

KEYWORDS: *Human Capital, Knowledge, Skills, World Vision Lanka, Employees, Alleviation of Poverty*

1.   INTRODUCTION

Organizations in both the private and public sectors, regardless of types or nature of organization, agree that training and development is essential to the growth and development of the business (Noe, 2002). Any organization that wants to succeed, and to continue to succeed, has to

maintain workforce consisting of people who are willing to learn and develop continuously. Training and developing human capital is tremendously important in the effective management and maintenance of a skilled workforce. Training is one of the ways of improving organization's effectiveness. Training is widely understood as communication directed at a defined population for the purpose of developing skills, modifying behavior, and increasing competence. Generally, training focuses exclusively on what needs to be known (Alipour et al., 2009). While Farjad, (2012) referred training as the process of developing skills, Habits, Knowledge and attitudes in employees for the purpose of increasing effectiveness of employees in their present positions as well as preparing employees for future positions in organization.

Each year World Vision Lanka provides many hours of training for its employees to uplift their competencies. Learning for Transformation (LFT) training is one of the training models implemented for more than two and half years with huge budgets. LFT Training is widely acknowledged as an important component for Transformation of the staffs towards the community development. However, the expense and effort required to conduct such training calls for continued research on the factors that make training effective. Increasingly, Organization is demanding assurance that training can meet its stated goals of transformation of the staffs on community development, alleviation of poverty of the vulnerable community. Thus, it is critical to gain a better understanding of the factors contributing to successful training outcomes in the context to build the capacity of staffs to transform themselves and to then facilitate transformational development in the lives of others.

1.1   Statement of the problem:-

Like any investment, the investment in training should produce an effective and measurable payback. Effective training enhances the knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior of people and hence their performance. As training and development demand an expensive investment, they are often of the view that training is unnecessary because most organizations are not sure about the actual contribution of training and development toward organizational performance due to lack of evaluation. Therefore, training programs are costly in terms of money as well as of time. Hence they should be evaluated carefully to determine their effects, and to decide whether they should be improved or should be discontinued. Therefore World Vision Lanka has spent huge amount of money and more than 25 days for training the facilitators, 25 days for rolled out in the field almost two and half years. The problem is whether these training outputs are achieved or not. Just it can't say it is achieved or not, therefore we

need to analyze and evaluation to find out the effectiveness of the Learning for transformation.

1.2   Objectives of the study:-

1.   To ascertain whether individual characteristics, training characteristics and organizational characteristics are influence on the learning towards evaluation of LFT training.

2.   To identify the influence of individual characteristics, organizational characteristics and learning on individual performance towards evaluation of LFT training.

3.   To determine the effectiveness of LFT Training in improving performance of the employee and organizational results.

4.   Identify the relationship among the training characteristics, individual characteristics, organizational characteristics, learning, and motivation to transfer, individual performance and organizational result.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW
2.1   Training:-

Poongavanam and Ramachandran (2014), described training is a process of learning an order of made a rule behavior, it is the practice of knowledge, gives people consciousness of rules, procedures to guide their behavior and it helps in taking about positive transformation in the knowledge, skills and attitudes of workers. Training, in the most very simple statements of McClelland (2002), is an operation that changes groups of person's behavior, increased productivity is often said to be the most important reason for training but it is only one of the paybacks and training is most important not only to increase productivity but also to encourage and stimulate workers by letting them have knowledge of how important their jobs are and giving them all the information they need to perform those jobs. As described by Devi and Shaik (2012); Divyaranjani and Rajasekar (2014), an effective training program is one that addresses training needs provides training according to training purposes, research in training and development has produced many outcomes and in the last ten-year stage, training evaluation has been the main focus for many studies and evaluation of the effectiveness is demarcated as the power to producing a desired effect. Therefore next section will discusses more about evaluating the effective training.

2.2   Evaluating the Effective training:-

Training evaluation is a measurement way of doing that looks at the degree to which training programs meet the goals proposed. The evaluation measures used be dependent on those goals and can include evaluation of training characteristics, individual characteristics,

organizational characteristics, learning, individual performance and organizational performance. Specifically, measures self-efficacy, post training attitude and transfer evaluation measures (Alvarez et al, 2004).Alvarez et al., (2004), training evaluation is a methodological method for measuring learning outcomes. Training effectiveness is a theoretical method for getting rightly those outcomes. Because training evaluation focuses solely on learning outcomes, it provides a micro view of training results. Conversely, training effectiveness focuses on the learning system as a whole, thus providing a macro view of training outcomes. Evaluation seeks to discover the benefits of training to individuals in the form of learning and boosted on-the-job performance. Effectiveness seeks to help the organization by coming to a decision about why individuals learned or did not learn. At last, evaluation results indicates what happened as an outcome of the training intervention. Effectiveness findings tell us why those results happened and so help experts with developing recommendation for better training. Mollahoseini and Farjad (2012), remarked there may not be a strong link between training evaluation and training effectiveness though companies that assess training programs are more likely to discover a greater degree of effectiveness from the trainings on condition that because of the fact that there was evaluation.

2.3   Training Evaluation Models:-

Training evaluation is the measure of a training program's success or unsuccessful with regard to training characteristics, individual characteristics, organizational characteristics, learning, individual performance, motivation to transfer and organizational performance. The evaluation techniques used to assess these are dependent on the evaluation model selected. Kirkpatrick's (1956), four dimensional model, Tannenbaum et al., (1993) model, Holton, (1996), Conceptual evaluation model are major model for training evaluation. Kirkpatrick's model builds on four level measuring evaluation. Emotional reaction and knowledge learnt are key ideas in evaluating training efficiency. In an expansion of Kirkpatrick's typology Tannenbaum et al., (1993) partition behavior into two categories: (1) Training Performance, and (2) Transfer Behavior. While a comprehensive conceptual models of training effectiveness introduced by Holton's (1996) but reactions were not reflected a main result of training. But Phillips (1996) model is only relevant if the assessment build on return on investment (Harshit, (2012). Hence all above model were talked about the training evaluation.

2.4   Training Effectiveness Models:-

Salas et al., (2001), explained training effectiveness is the study of the individual characteristics, training characteristics and organizational characteristics that impact the training process before, during, and after training. Training needs analysis is recognized as one of the first important before contributions to training effectiveness, complete needs an observation takes into account the individual variances of learners, the organization climate and objectives and the qualities of the work (s) to be learned. At last training cannot be working well unless it meets the individual, organizational, and work needs as taken to be by needs observations. Karim et al., (2012); Devi and Shaik (2012) also mentioned 4 steps of training process, such as Identifying Training Needs, Plan and Design Training, Delivering Training, Evaluating Training Outcomes.

Training effectiveness has three sets of qualities. (Richard & Rachel, (2012); Baldwin & Ford (1988), giving an idea of three wide groups in their model that has in it the qualities of the learners, the design of the training, and the work environment. Same as Alvarez et al., (2004); Tannenbaum et al., (1993) also described three characteristics for training effectiveness such as individual characteristics, organizational or situational characteristics and training characteristics. Hence in summery Individual or learner characteristics, organizational or situational characteristics or work environment and training design are three areas identified.

Individual or learner characteristics contain personality traits, attitudes, abilities, demographics, experience, expectations, self-efficacy, goal orientation, and motivation (Alvarez et al., (2004); Tannenbaum et al., (1993); Richard and Rachel (2012). Organizational and situational or work environment characteristics are organization's climate for learning, history, policies, trainee selection technique, and trainee notification process (Alvarez et al., 2004), support provided by co-worker and managers but also opportunities to put what is learned in training to use once back on the job (Richard and Rachel, 2012), for the post training evaluation; transfer climate, superiors or peers support, resource availability, work load, organizational culture, opportunity to practices are vital factors as indicated by Tannenbaum et al., (1993). Training design is comprised of principles of learning, sequencing of the training, and the content of the training method and learners (Richard and Rachel, 2012). Training characteristics also contains aspects of the training program such as instructional style, practice, and feedback (Tannenbaum et al., 1993).

2.5   Integrated Model of evaluating the training effectiveness:-

A comprehensive update of all the variables to contribute to training effectiveness has not been done for several years. As a result of the Alvarez et al., (2004), the articles was reviewed the

past decade of research on training evaluation and effectiveness and summarize those findings with an integrated model of training evaluation and effectiveness (IMTEE). Hence this research adopted the name as integrated model of evaluating the training effectiveness and illustrating the distinction between training evaluation and training effectiveness.

As described by Holton (1996), two types of training evaluation outcomes or impact have been considered in this integrated model, such as Primary and Secondary influences on training effectiveness. The following sections explain how primary and secondary influence was categorized as well as evaluation measures proposed by the combined works of Kirkpatrick (1976); Holton (1996); Tannenbaum et al., (1993). Hence, Primary influences are Reaction, Learning/Cognitive learning, Individual performance (Attitude Change/Post training attitude, training performance, Transfer Behavior) and results or organizational effectiveness. Secondary influences are Individual characteristics, training characteristics, organizational characteristics and motivation to transfer

3. EMPIRICAL STUDIES IN TRAINING EVALUATION

3.1 Individual Characteristics:-
Individual characteristics includes cognitive ability (task specific ability), personality traits, attitudes, demographics, experience, expectations, self-efficacy (physical self-efficacy, cognitive self-efficacy and task specific self-efficacy), goal orientation, and motivation to learn do in fact broadly predict learning outcomes. (Baldwin and Ford 1988; Alvarez el al 2010; Richard & Rachel, 2012; Tannenbaum et al., 1993). Noe, (1986), Albert Leung, 2006, Colquitt, et al, 2000; also found exploration, job involvement, organizational commitment, career /Job attitude, intent to remain.

3.2 Training Characteristics:-
Baldwin and Ford's (1988), Richard and Rachel, (2012) Training (design) characteristics is included of principles of learning, sequencing of the training, and the content of the training. involvement of potential trainees, training method/process, use of training principles, training content, instructor characteristics, use of technology (Tannenbaum et al., (1993) instructional style, practice, and feedback also were identified as training characteristics.

3.3 Organizational characteristics:-
Organizational characteristics include climate factors such as supervisory or peer support, constraints and opportunity to perform learned behaviors on the job, accountability (Baldwin and Ford 1988; and Albert Leung, 2006). Colquitt et al., (2000), resource availability (time, equipment), workload, Job security, authority/autonomy, organizational Culture (openness to innovation/risk taking) (Tannenbaum et al., 1993).

3.4 Learning:-
Learning is a function of the following: training content, method, and process; trainees' motivation to learn; and trainee ability. Training and ability may interact in determining learning. Training performance is a function of training content and method, learning, and trainee ability (Tannenbaum et, al 1993). Conceptualization of learning, Colquitt et al., 2000 has examine the behavior change and results components of Kirkpatrick's (1976) model in the form of transfer of training and job performance, therefore analyzer four areas in learning outcomes such as declarative knowledge, skill acquisition, post training self-efficacy and reaction.

Learning outcome can include changes in knowledge, skills and attitudes. Some training events will highlight knowledge, some will highlight skills, some will highlight attitudes and some will highlight multiple learning outcomes (Harshit, 2012; Jain, 2012; Richard et al., 2012; Sachdeva, 2014; CIPD, 2005; Venkattakumar & Sontakki, 2012; Wei-Tao Tai, 2004). While Kraiger, et al (1993) attempted to improve the precision of the Kirkpatrick model by building upon Kirkpatrick's (1976) split of learning outcomes: skill-based or behaviorally based learning, cognitive learning, and affective learning, finally learning have been identified as knowledge, skill and attitudes and under the knowledge declarative knowledge (subject learning), procedural knowledge, strategic knowledge.

3.5 Individual performance:-
According to the Tannenbaum et al., (1993), model Attitude change, Training Performance and Transfer Performance are representing in this model as individual performance. Similarly in Colquitt, et al, 2000, model Declarative Knowledge, skill acquisition and transfer also representing as individual performance.Learning has been one of the major emphases of many management training programs since more successful trainees would likely feel better able to perform and more motivated to individual performance (Baldwin & Ford, (1988); Holton, 1996; Tannenbaum, et al., 1993].

3.6 Organizational result:-
Individual performance indicates how the individuals have transferred the learned skills back to the workplace, and whether individual performance has been improved accordingly. In this model organizational result is included from the Holton, (1996) model. Holton, (1996) indicated that independent of learning and individual performance outcome influenced on organizational result. Holton, (1996) also mentioned that higher motivation to transfer lead to higher organizational result from individual performance. Organizational payoffs can be determined by measuring transfer performance and results Alvarez et al., (2010).Organizational benefits of transfer

performance may include increased efficiency morale, and quantity or quality of outputs (Holton, 1996; Kirkpatrick, 1976; Kraiger, 2002; Tannenbaum et al., 1993. Kirkpatrick also mentioned reduced costs, reduction in turnover, improved human relation, fewer grievances. Improved organizational performance in terms of productivity, efficiency, effectiveness, and customer satisfaction could be the ultimate objective and the most desired training outcome in an organization (Albert Leung, 2006).

## 3.7 Motivational to transfer:-
In addition to above characteristics in this model motivational factors also incorporated to understand the influential factor. Pre-training motivation (motivation to learn) and post-training motivation (motivation to transfer). Motivation to transfer is believed to moderate the relationship between learning and individual performance (Noe, 1986). Motivation to transfer which has indicates more research consideration because of its importance from a management perspective, is the trainee's desire to eventually transfer the learned skills back to the performance in work place after the training. Both variables are dependent on individual characteristics and organizational factors. (Wen and Lin, 2014). Noe, (1996) also explained the motivation to transfer as a moderating relationship with learning and behavior change (individual performance).

4. CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK
The Conceptual Framework provided in figure 1 that is the research was reviewed in terms of the effects of training characteristics, individual characteristics, and organizational characteristics on either learning or individual performance and together with motivation to transfer on organizational performance. Conceptual framework has been developed based the literature review in to two focuses, such as evaluation – primary influence (L, IP and OR) and effectiveness – secondary influence (IC, TC, OC and MOT)

Figure 1 .Integrated evaluation of training effectiveness model

Training Effectiveness – secondary influence

Training Evaluation – primary influence
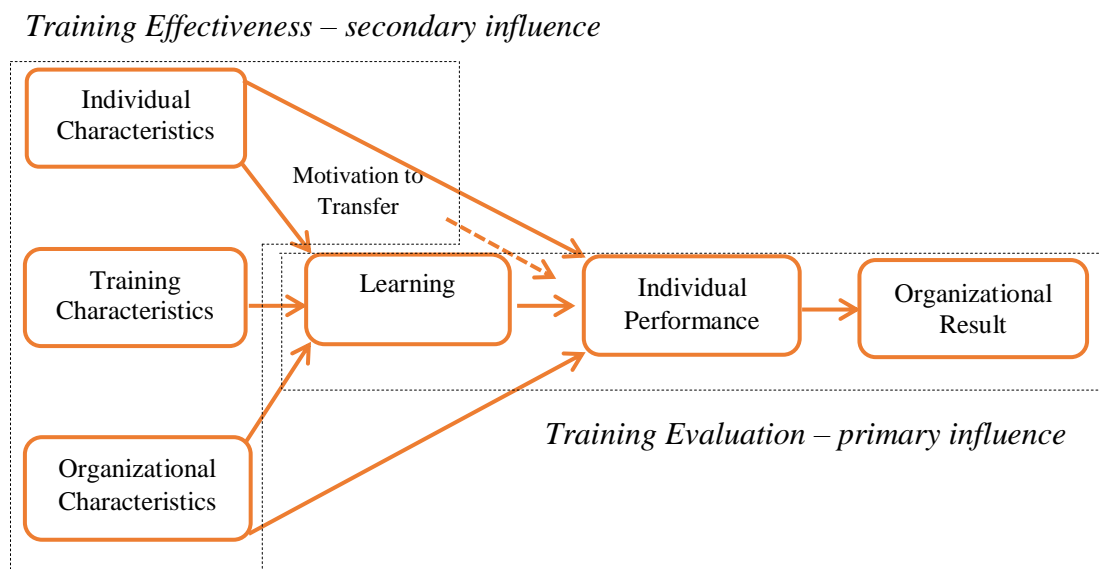
5. HYPOTHESIS DEVELOPMENT

        The theoretical framework presented above will be used to develop the testable hypothesis for the study. This section will explain the relationship among the variable based on the above conceptual framework, such as relationship between individual characteristics, training characteristics, organizational characteristic and learning, all four with individual performance and finally individual performance and organizational result. Therefore, the hypothesis presented in this study will be tested to evaluate the Learning for

Transformation training effectiveness. Following section will explain in details.

H1: An individual characteristic has a positive influence on the evaluation of learning of training effectiveness.

H2: Training characteristics has a positive influence on the evaluation of learning of training effectiveness.

H3: Organizational characteristics have a positive influence on the evaluation of learning of training effectiveness.

H4: An individual characteristic has a positive influence on individual performance.

H5: An organizational characteristic has a positive influence on individual performance.

H7: Individual performance has a positive influence on organizational result.

H8: There is a moderating influence by motivation to transfer between learning and individual performance.

6. METHODOLOGY

A total of 238 questionnaires were sent among the front line staffs who have participated at least in first three 3 modules of LFT training program. Online Questionnaire (Google form) had been distributed among the front line staff out of 119 fully filled in questionnaires were received. Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) version 19.0 was religiously used for the statistical analyses.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Even though there were some negative observations and arguments, it is observed that Effectiveness of the training and its resultant in the performance of the employees and organizational result. Moreover relationship within individual characteristics, training characteristics and organizational characteristics had positive significantly correlated with learning, in other words all three characteristics had influenced learning, while training characteristics had influence indirectly on Individual performance, individual and organizational characteristics were do indirectly and directly influenced on individual performance, on the other hand motivation to transfer had moderating influenced between learning and individual performance, it shows positive and significant relationship. Individual performance also positively correlated with organizational result. In addition to that it was observed a strong positive correlation among the individual characteristics, training characteristics and organizational characteristics.

Finally, based on results of the initial descriptive study, Pearson correlation Analysis, Factor Analysis and Regression Analysis, it is clearly defined that proposed conceptual framework can be accepted and it has positively contributed to the effectiveness of the LFT training program. According to the regression analysis individual characteristics, training characteristics and organizational characteristics were statistically significant with learning. R square, equals 0.821, (R2=0.821), individual characteristics, training characteristics and organizational characteristics has strongly effect the learning. 82.1% of observed change in learning measured.

Learning, individual and organizational characteristics are statistically significant with Individual performance. R square, equals 0.856, (R2=0.856), learning, individual and organizational characteristics have strongly effected the individual performance. 85.6% of observed change in individual performance measured. Learning is statistically significant with individual performance. R square, equals 0.802, (R2=0.802), the learning has strongly effected the individual performance. 80.2% of observed change individual performance measured.

Individual performance is statistically significant with organizational result. R square, equals 0.690, (R2=0.690), the individual performance has strongly effected the organizational result. 69% of observed change in organizational result measured. Moderating effect by motivation to transfer was statistically significant between individual performance and learning. R square, equals 0.814, (R2=0.814), the motivation to transfer has strongly moderating effect between individual performance and learning. 81.4% of observed change in individual performance measured.

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