7CO04 BUSINESS RESEARCH

IN PEOPLE PRACTICE

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Task 1

Task 1.1 Terms of reference

This study is aimed at exploring the impact of training and development on employee performance. A special focus is kept on employee performance in the IT sector of Saudi Arabia. The purpose of this research work is to know the way training and development initiatives help improve employee performance in an organization. Training and development are the methods of providing opportunities to the employees to develop their skills and knowledge in which they are poor (Rodriguez and Walters, 2017). To improve productivity and earn profit training and development should be prioritized by the organization. Therefore, this study is about exploring the factors related to training and development to increase employee performance. To carry out this study, the resources such as different types of literature on employee training and development, performance improvement, data collection tools, participants, and financial resources would be required. Moreover, the support of the supervisor and study participants would be of high value to complete the research.

Gantt chart

Research steps	Week 1	Week 2	Week 3	Week 4	Week 5	Week 6	Week 6	Week 7	Week 8
Seek approval of research topic	█								
Selecting research methodology		█							
Preparing proposal for approval		█							
Data collection			█						
Literature review			█	█					
Data analysis and interpretation					█				
Conclusion and recommendation						█			
Preparing abstract							█		
Proofreading and printing								█	
Final submission									█

Table 1: Gantt chart showing research timeline

(Source: Self-created)

Task 1.2 Literature Review

Training and development as career development opportunities for employees

Training and development are purposed at meeting the skill gaps of the employees in the organization. These are aimed to develop the required skills and knowledge to fulfil the organizational goals and aims. As highlighted by Kossivi, Xu, and Kalgora (2016), the employees are also helpful by attending the training and development organized by the organization by improving their career growth opportunities. It is analyzed that the employees just enrol themselves in the continuous training and development process to learn continuously. As supported by Younas *et al.* (2018), training and development help in providing autonomy, better abilities to perform tasks, and increased social support. These all make a positive impact on boosting confidence among employees after receiving skill development training. Therefore, they tend to build up trust and loyalty to their organizations. Moreover, this builds enough capabilities among them which support them to remain in the same organization and develop their career (Al Mamun and Hasan, 2017). This, in turn, is also helpful for organizations as they can have talented employees for a long time. Thereby, they can achieve greater organizational performance with greater profits.

Training and development for employee promotion

Training and development approaches help in strengthening employee skills and knowledge. Therefore, the performance of the employees grows by keeping them attended to the processes of coaching, mentoring, leadership mentoring, and others. According to Nwaeke and Obiekwe (2017), the organizations design the L&D activities for the employees after analyzing their learning gap and knowledge set. To fulfil organizational goals the organizations design effective training processes. It is analyzed that organizations can retain top talents in the organization by providing them promotions and better career opportunities. The experienced and skilled employees of the organization can be promoted to senior posts to handle the complex duties (Haryono, Supardi, and Udin, 2020). This, in turn, helps motivate the employees and bring in better performance and productivity from them. The employees' skills and knowledge can be sharpened and new skills can be acquired that can support the improvement of employees to become better leaders (Al Karim, 2019). However, it is the responsibility of the organizations to ensure that their employees can perform at their peak and provide the desired benefits to the organization.

Training and development support employees to become good leaders

Organizations always want to develop their employee base for future leadership roles. It is one of their duties to develop their future leaders who can manage the organizational work

properly. However, as defined by Anderson (2017), training and development encourage employees to move forward to success and develop their efficiencies and capabilities. The training and development processes can help individuals in ways to set goals for their careers and create opportunities. Moreover, through training and development approaches the employees can receive feedback based on their performance.

This is analyzed to improve employees' performances and provide them opportunities to achieve success in their careers (Beer, Finnström, and Schrader, 2016). Continuous training sessions are targeted for employees to develop their skills and knowledge which is absent in them. Moreover, the employees can have a better overview of their strengths and weaknesses their capabilities during the training and development processes. Thereby, the employees can meet their knowledge and skill demand through continuous learning and developing leadership skills. Additionally, the employees can get proper organizational perspectives regarding the organizational demands from the employees (Popli and Rizvi, 2016). This helps in designing their skill development program accordingly and achieving the goals.

Training and development for boosting employee motivation and capabilities

Training and development is an efficient approach to build up the skills and knowledge of the employees and meet up the skill gaps. When the employees are empowered with the required skills and knowledge they tend to perform better in their job roles (Aima, Adam, and Ali, 2017). Thereby, it enables the employees to handle more complex tasks and accomplish them with developed skills and knowledge. This, in turn, motivates the employees to accomplish more complicated and challenging tasks (Niati, Siregar, and Prayoga, 2021). This improves the trust of the employers in the employees and gradually leads to employee empowerment. Thereby, motivated employees can help in growing the organization successfully and achieve a competitive advantage in the job market (Paais and Pattiruhu, 2020). Loyal and empowered employees can work for their employees by understanding the organizational goals and missions effectively.

Task 1.3 Research question
Research aim

This study aims to explore the impact of training and development on the improvement of employee performance focusing on the IT sector of Saudi Arabia.

Research questions

The research questions of this study are as follows.

RQ1: How does training and development help provide an opportunity for the employees to achieve a career growth option?

RQ2: What is the impact of training and development on providing promotions to the employees in the organization?

RQ3: How does training and development help in keeping employees motivated and strengthen their capabilities?

RQ4: How do training and development help the employees to become good leaders in the future?

Task 2

Task 2.1 Differences between primary and secondary data

Primary data: Primary data is collected from first-hand sources by the researchers to conduct a study. The main sources are considered for gathering the required data for completing a study (Johnston, 2017). To collect primary data, the researchers need to use the methods such as surveys, interviews, observations, experimentation, questionnaire, and others. The primary data collected from the primary sources can provide the raw information left for the researchers to be interpreted (Martins, da Cunha, and Serra, 2018).

Secondary data: Secondary data is collected from secondary sources. It can be from the research work from another researcher's work, reports, journals, and other sources (Ellram and Tate, 2016). The second-hand sources can be government publications, internal records of a company, websites, books, and others. The secondary data are not raw information like primary data but they are the ones that were used before by other researchers to interpret study results (Williams and Shepherd, 2017).

Task 2.2 Justification of the choice of research method for data collection

The data collection method helps in choosing the right tool to collect all the relevant data regarding research work. It enables the researchers to go deep into the issue and find the actual problem to solve it properly (Hammersley, 2018). Two types of research methods for data collection can be observed to carry out a particular research study.

*Quantitative method:*Quantitative method of data collection is about collecting numerical or statistical data about an issue. By collecting the quantitative data the extent of the problem can be known. It helps in providing detailed data insights with numerical figures (Bilgin, 2017). The methods of collecting quantitative data can be a survey, questionnaires, longitudinal studies, and others. Controlled observations can be conducted to collect numerical values about an issue. In the case of conducting quantitative data collection method small sample group cannot be taken (Cadena-Iñiguez *et al.* 2017).

This method works efficiently when there is a large sample group present and data can be collected by survey and any other method. The accuracy rate of the data collection is greater in this process which provides an objective view. Fewer variables are involved in collecting quantitative data in the research (Furlan, 2017). On the other hand, in the quantitative research method, a false focus can be kept on the numbers which can limit the statistical

relationships and development of themes to analyze the collected data. Therefore, the information and quantitative research can be misleading to the researchers.

Qualitative method: Qualitative research method is another form of research method in which open-ended processes are used for collecting the required data for the study. Qualitative research is about finding in-depth detail about an issue and using the information for interpreting results (Hammersley, 2018). Qualitative research can be multi-method in focus which covers naturalistic and interpretative approaches regarding the subject matter. This research method does not collect numerical data for having a better understanding of the concepts, experiences, or opinions. Interviews, observations, textual or visual analytical concepts, and other methods are used for collecting qualitative data (Cadena-Iñiguez *et al.* 2017). Moreover, different secondary sources can also be used for gathering data for conducting the qualitative study.

The advantages of qualitative research are that it tries to collect as much data as possible even if the sample size is small. The qualitative method is a more flexible approach as the study participants are provided with the opportunity to explain themselves broadly which is not possible in the case quantitative data collection method (Furlan, 2017). Moreover, the quantitative research method focuses on collecting the data based on a closed question survey which is not present in the qualitative research method. Though it can be done with small sample size in-detail information can be gathered to conduct the study and interpret the results. However, understanding the perceptions and views of the study participants can be done easily with the qualitative method approach (Cadena-Iñiguez *et al.* 2017).

This study about understanding the impact of training and development approaches on employee performance can be conducted with a qualitative research method. In this study, it is decided to consider a small sample size population to collect the data. Only the managers of the IT sector of Saudi Arabia would be considered for the data collection process. 4 managers will be chosen for the data collection process and therefore, the qualitative study would be feasible for carrying out this research. Moreover, the data collection process can be conducted easily with lesser cost. The researchers can collect in-detail answers to all of the questions asked to the participants and thereby develop an enriched study. Moreover, the researchers can understand the possible attitudes of the study sample and develop the research results.

Additionally, this process would help in developing different themes and patterns from the answers received from the participants. Therefore, the researchers can identify the data results by identifying the patterns of the issues and leading to generate particular research findings (Wilson, Mandich, and Magalhães 2016). Moreover, human experiences can be included in this research process to achieve good research finding and achieving better results. Additionally, a definite focus can be generated on a particular industry by having the opinions and views of the study sample. In this study, the 4 managers from the IT sector of Saudi Arabia would be interviewed with open-ended questions so that they can shed light on the issues extensively.

Task 2.3 Ethical issues

Ethical considerations are the guidelines provided to the researchers while conducting a research study. It sets out the limitations for the researchers to conduct the research processes. The researchers need to maintain honesty, integrity, and confidentiality while conducting the research study (Lustgarten and Elhai, 2018). This study would be conducted by talking interviews with the managers from the IT sector of Saudi Arabia. Therefore, the researchers need to be careful about the confidentiality of the participants during the data collection process. Informed consent should be received before the start of the interview process. Moreover, the rules of the GDPR act need to be maintained throughout the research study. The Anonymous data collection process would be maintained and the focus should be kept only on the research questions. No personal questions would be asked to the participants that can dissatisfy the participants and are irrelevant to the research questions. The researchers need to provide the flexibility to the participants to withdraw their participation if they feel anything wrong.

Task 3

Task 3.1 Costs of different options for collecting and analyzing data

Costs for collecting data during the interview process

To conduct an interview, the researcher needs to design an open-ended questionnaire, select a data collection tool, a transcript converter, and others.

Factors	Cost
Reaching participants by social media platform	*$50*
Data storage in the Google cloud platform	*$0.05 per GB*
Designing questionnaire	*0*
Using Google Meet for conducting an interview	*0*
Transcript converter (OTranscribe)	*0*
Data analysis by the thematic analysis process	*0*
Total	*$50.05*

Costs for collecting data by survey

To conduct a survey, the researcher needs to reach the participants, prepare questionnaires, distribute them, and then analyze the data.

Factors	Cost
Reaching participants by social media platform	*$80*
Storing data in the Google cloud platform	*$0.05 per GB*
Preparing questionnaire using Google form	*$0.05 per GB*
Distributing the questionnaire via email to the participants	*0*
Data analysis using MS Excel analytical tool	*0*
Total	*$81*

The two data collection methods can be used for collecting primary data from the research participants. Between these two processes, the interview method is more cost-efficient, and therefore, this data collection and analysis method will be chosen for this study.

Task 3.2 Data analysis and interpretation

Interview transcript

Question 1	What is your opinion about the career growth of the employees by placing them on continuous training and development method?
Manager 1	I think the employees of our organization quite benefited by improving their skills with our L&D sessions and achieving career growth.
Manager 2	In our organization, we see visible growth in the skills and knowledge of the employees that lead them to achieve higher job positions. The capability growth rate among the employees after attending training is about approximately 10%.
Manager 3	We used to see growth in skills and knowledge of the employees after training but recently we have observed that the employees are not growing well and the reason was backdated training method.
Manager 4	Recently the L&D team of our organization is not performing well which is hugely disrupting the employee growth process.

Question 2	What is your opinion about employee motivation by placing them in training and development programs?
Manager 1	I have seen that employees feel a lot more confident after attending the training sessions as their skills are developed.
Manager 2	Employees do feel motivated but even after attending training when they do not get any tangible or non-tangible benefit, their motivation does not last long.
Manager 3	Some employees are not even hopeful about the L&D sessions arranged for them and they are observed to face no positive impact after training.
Manager 4	The responses from employees regarding training are positive and they seek to learn new updated skills to get higher positions in the organization.

Question 3	What do you think about the role of training and development in employee promotion?
Manager 1	I have seen that employees are better when they are trained extensively for higher job roles.
Manager 2	Continuous training of the employees develops their skill set and knowledge which in the later professional life helps in performing well.
Manager 3	We have received positive feedback from the managers for their employees after the training sessions, which have promoted them to higher positions.
Manager 4	Employees often receive a higher position in the organization after attending continuous training and development methods.

Question 4	How do the training and development processes impact on leadership qualities of the employees?
Manager 1	In our organization, we focus on providing leadership skill training to the employees so that they can handle challenging tasks.
Manager 2	Leadership skill training for the employees is effective in our workplace we also consider it as a process of succession planning.
Manager 3	We have seen visible improvement among the employees regarding their leadership qualities.
Manager 4	We have not observed any significant changes regarding the leadership skills among our employees after training and this may be due to keeping lack of focus on the development of leadership skills.

Question 5	How encouraged do your employees feel to attend training and development programs in your organization?
Manager 1	There is a group of employees who look over training and development approaches to be fruitful and other group does not even care about it.
Manager 2	In our recent survey, the employees have highlighted that the poor teaching approach of the trainers demotivates them to attend sessions.
Manager 3	I can highlight that employees of our organization prefer a continuous mentoring system rather than attending one L&D session at a time.
Manager 4	I have seen that employees feel energized when they receive any tangible or intangible benefits or positive feedback from their seniors after attending training.

Analysis and interpretation

Employee performance improvement by training and development

Training and development in the organizational setting needs to be conducted after focusing on related factors like training needs assessment and skill development assessment. It is observed from the interview of the managers that the teaching capabilities of trainers, training systems, tools, and other factors play major roles in improving employee performance. The 2nd manager highlighted that "*In our organization, we see visible growth of skills and knowledge of the employees that lead them to achieve higher job positions*". This statement is

supported by the study of Kossivi, Xu, and Kalgora (2016), as keeping employees on continuous training can help in their career growth.

Moreover, their performance is improved which positively impacts organizational performance. On the other hand, some of the managers during the interview highlighted the motivation and encouragement of the employees to attend training sessions depends on the extent of achieving benefits. As mentioned by Haryono, Supardi, and Udin (2020), employees when receiving any type of achievement after training they get interested in this method. However, the employees should be treated well and they must receive feedback on their performance after attending the training to support them for continuous improvement of skills and knowledge.

Task 3.3 Findings

The study findings highlighted the importance of training and development for the improvement of employee performance. In this case, it can be mentioned that the employees get motivated when they see any tangible or intangible benefits received after attending training. Moreover, the ancillary factors to training and development are also needed to be focused on well to increase the effectiveness of the training process (Al Karim, 2019). The teaching method of trainers, employee needs, updated tools and processes of training, learning need analysis of the employees, and others should be focused on. However, it is also observed that to motivate the employees about the training and development process, the managers must provide their feedback (Anderson, 2017). It helps in highlighting their strengths and weaknesses and thereby they can take a further approach to make improvements in their performances. Moreover, the employers should focus on the continuous mentoring process of the employees whereby they can present in the continuous development of their skills.

Task 4

Task 4.1 Conclusions from the project

After conducting the study, it can be concluded that training and development are effective for improved performance. However, in this case, the employers should focus on other methods relevant to training to make the process effective. From the opinions of the managers, it is found that the in some organizations they used to observe visible benefits from the end of the employees. However, they have also seen a negative impact on the training process when the tools are not updated enough. Moreover, the employees need to be motivated and encouraged properly with tangible and intangible benefits. It provides them with an overview of the effectiveness of skill development and this, in turn, benefits the organization as well. It can be concluded that employers must take feedback from the employees about their requirements and thereby design the training process.

Moreover, the tools and technologies of the training method should be updated regularly to increase the effectiveness of the process. The employers must replace the traditional training processes with advanced tools and technologies to make improvements in the L&D session. It also helps in better understanding the employees when their training is influenced by technological approaches. It is also observed from the interview of the managers that there is a group of employees who are enthusiastic to attend training sessions and the other group is not interested at all. In this case, the employers must try to know the reason for the discouragement of the employees to attend training and take initiative to remove that.

The employees must be convinced about the effectiveness of training so that they can be motivated to attend one. Moreover, the employers must look over the teaching style and patterns of the trainers during the L&D sessions that can keep the employees engaged throughout the training session. These factors may increase the effectiveness of the training and development approach to achieve benefits by the organizations and employees. However, this study was depended on the opinions of the managers of IT sector of Saudi Arabia. In the future, quantitative analysis with a larger sample size can be conducted to strengthen the study findings.

Task 4.2 Recommendations

After going through the study, some faults have been identified and to improve them, a few recommendations can be suggested. Employers should consider ***providing feedback*** to employees after they attend training and development programs. It helps in providing them

with a highlight of the benefits of attending training in the organization. Moreover, employers can also consider providing ***increment or performance-based incentives*** after training and measuring their knowledge level. It is one of the forms of tangible benefits provided to the employees. This is analyzed to motivate the employees as they can measure the extent of effectiveness of attending training and become interested to attend more. Moreover, employers should invest in ***technological approaches*** to training tools to improve the effectiveness of the training process. Advanced technological tools should be used for replacing traditional training methods to increase their impact on employee performance.

Cost-benefit analysis

Recommendation 1: Providing feedback to employees after training

Costs		Benefits	
Variable	**Value**	**Variable**	**Value**
Assessing employee knowledge development	$200	Improved individual profit by improving performance	$250
Providing feedback through software	$50	Reducing the rate of task failure	$300
Total	$250	Total	$550

Recommendation 2: Providing increments based on training

Costs		Benefits	
Variable	**Value**	**Variable**	**Value**
Providing financial benefit	$300	Improved organizational profit	$350
Assessing the performance level of the employees	$150	Improved employee retention reducing recruitment cost	$200
Total	$450	Total	$550

Recommendation 3: Including technological approaches in the training method

Costs		Benefits	
Variable	**Value**	**Variable**	**Value**
Implementing advanced training technologies	$400	Improved profit percentage with improved employee performance	$450

Hiring trainers	$300	Improved employee retention reducing recruitment cost	$350
Total	$700	Total	$800

The above cost-benefit analysis of the proposed recommendations shows that the benefits for every suggestion are greater than their costs. This indicates that considering these recommendations organizations can be profitable in the long run. The cost-benefit ratios for the recommendations are 5:11, 9:11, and 7:8 respectively. The employers should be careful about these factors to be included within the training and development programs of the employees in order to achieve greater performance benefits from these.

Task 4.3 Reflective analysis

This research was conducted on the topic of exploring the training and development impact on improving employee performance. Before starting the research I divided the tasks according to the timeline and tried finishing the tasks within the designated timescales. However, the research process was not as easy as I thought before starting the work. It took a strong concentration, extensive research work, and taking participants' opinions, and others to complete the study. During the literature review, I observed some interesting and important factors about training and development programs in the organization.

Moreover, its impacts on the improvement of employee performances were also observed. Thereafter, when I took interviews with the participants and analyzed the data. I identified some similarities in both of them and also achieved some additional information. The interview helped enriched my research as well as learning as I received real-life experience with the managers. Additionally, I also learned the way of conducting cost-benefit analysis in which I was weak which benefited my skill development. While conducting this research I have observed that there are few sources that must be reviewed in order to achieve detailed knowledge about a factor. I have gone through several pieces of literature in order to understand the importance of training and development to improve employee performance.

I have also developed my research skills by attending this study. My supervisor was very helpful and kind by providing constant support for the successful development of my research work. Moreover, this was the first time I conducted an interview of the participants. I realized that communication skill is very important in order to conduct interview and analysis of the data. I made use of the qualitative data properly and identified patterns in the

participant responses. I am little poor at analyzing data but with the guidance of my supervisor I made it successful. However, I developed my knowledge about the people practice issues regarding training and development which I can use in my future career development.

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