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Effect of Training on Learning and Behavior of Employees: Moderating Roles of Motivation to Transfer and Self-Efficacy

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Keywords

Intellectual capital, self-efficacy, Motivation to transfer, Sustainable development, Learning and behavior

Abstract

The aim of this research paper is to measure the moderating effect of motivation to transfer and self-efficacy on learning and behavior among the employees in steel industry in India. Stratified random sampling techniques were used to collect the primary data through a questionnaire structured on 5-point Likert scale. The number of fit samples was 398 and the collected data was analyzed using SPSS Process macro-3.1. The findings of the study explain that Motivation to transfer and Self Efficacy was found to be significant moderators between learning and behavior. Both the observed variables have positive and high significance as training plays a dominant role in the HRM strategy to renew the HRM competencies needed by the organization today. Therefore, motivation to transfer is an important problem faced by professionals in developing HRM. Positive transfer motivation with a kind of self-efficacy leads to the effective application of the learned skills and knowledge requires that trainees can effectively apply what has been learned which leads to meaningful changes in performance.

Introduction

Intellectual capital is one of the significant factors to be recognized on par with the physical and financial assets in the present-day economic world. Continuous learning is highly essential in creating and maintaining sustainable development and to remain competitive (Urdan & Weggen, 2000). Training enables the employee to learn new techniques and methods work which lead to high performance and job satisfaction and minimize the labour turnover. Training also helps the employee to acquire a positive attitude towards the organization and improvise the efficiency which results in increased productivity and competitiveness in the work place (Yazdanifard et al., 2013). Training is the one of the important human resource development techniques (Ashton and Easterby-Smith, 1979) that organizations use for improving the skills of

the employees and to solute many issues like changing of employees' attitudes towards new programs, functions, and job roles of employees etc., (Chunn and Thacker, 1993). Training helps the trainees in implementing the skills and knowledge gained in selective and objective training by improving the quality of the job at the workplace. Training brings out an objective change in attitude, behavior of the employee at the workplace and facilitates in building up a team spirit to bring a good name and fame to the department and organization at large. Organisational goals and objectives can effectively be reached through formal training programmes by transferring the knowledge to the whole group of people simultaneously. Managers at all levels of the organisation can gain the competency in order to manage change in any business environment (Stewart, 1996; John, 2000). Training of employees increases job performance, efficient and potential use of human resources and reduces cost due to less labor turnover, reduced accidents and absenteeism (Helliriegel et al, 2001). Effective training results in achieving significant business results in all the fields of work relating to the organization. With the expectation of good results from employees, organizations are not hesitating to spend much amount in providing training to the employees. As of 2019, employers worldwide spent on average 1,308 U.S. dollars per worker on learning and development (Statista Research Department, 2021). Though the companies are investing considerable amounts on training of employees, management is still t reporting that it is being failured in reaping the full potential from the trained employees (Abd Rahman and Bennett, 2009; Lager and Frishammar, 2010). There are many companies that are not in a position to take decision to invest much amount on training as the outcome is usually underestimated (Tzafrir, 2005) and there will be risk in investing on the training if the employees do not have commitment towards the work. As the training involves risk and expenditure on the part of the management, there is a need to assess the training results in terms of quality and quantity. There are many models like The Kirkpatrick Model, The CIRO model, The Philips ROI model, The Brinkerhoff model, Kaufman's Model of Learning Evaluation, Anderson Model of Learning Evaluation through which training can be evaluated. Different models target different things. The Kirkpatrick Model is the most popular and widely-used training evaluation model in use today. It was developed and introduced by Don Kirkpatrick in 1959 through a series of articles (1959a, 1959b, 1960a, 1960b, 1967, 1996a) that were published in the Journal of the ASTD. Kirkpatrick's innovative model provided a way for any organization to evaluate any course or training program with ease. Kirkpatrick developed four main levels such as participants' immediate reaction (level 1) to the training itself, Participants' Learning (level 2), the changed Behaviour through training (Level 3) and the Resulted individual and organizational performance or (Level4). For the present study the second and third levels i.e Learning and Behaviour of the employees have been considered for evaluating the training impact through the moderating factors like motivation to transfer and Self efficacy.

Literature Review

Motivation to Transfer

Motivation to Transfer is defined as the trainee's aspiration to make use of the learned knowledge and skills on the job. It is operationalized as the employee's willingness to learn and share the acquired knowledge and skills through the training programs. Neo (1986) and Holton (1996) viewed the Motivation to transfer (synonym of transfer motivation) as trainees' wish to employ skills and knowledge learned in the training programs at their workplace. Neo (1986) suggests transfer motivation mediates the relationship between learning and behavior. Motivation to transfer learning at the workplace is determined by the attitude towards the training of the employees (Noe&Wilk,1993; Seyler, Holton, Bates, Burnett&Carvalho,1998; Bates,2001; Naquin&Holton,2002). According to Ajzen's (2001) theory of planned behavior, the willingness of an individual is influenced by the

function of attitude, subjective norms and behavior control. Transfer motivation was found to be influenced by the characteristics of the individual and work environment (Burke and Hutchins, 2007). It is defined as the trainee's aspiration to make use of the learned knowledge and skills on the job. It is operationalized as the employee's willingness to learn and share the acquired knowledge and skills through the training programs.

Learning and motivation are both essential for training transfer (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009). Without learning, nothing is often transferred from training to the workplace. Without motivation, nothing is going to be transferred from learning to the workplace. However, the studies on motivation to transfer lack a uniform framework for understanding. Similarly, consistent with Expectancy Theory (Vroom, 1964) if learners' individual motives are believed to steer to strengthened performance, they're going to be more motivated. The main target in past research remains unclear in terms of motivation to transfer's moderating effect, specifically the connection between learning and behavior change. However, we will expect here that trainees who achieve learning from training are going to be likely to conduct more behavior change alongside training contents once they have high motivation to transfer, compared with when having low motivation. In other words, learning and motivation to transfer have a positive synergy effect to reinforce behavior change.

Self-Efficacy

Self-Efficacy refers to an individual's confidence in their capabilities in executing and producing specific performance. It exercises control over one's motivation, behavior and social environment. It is nothing but self-judgment of one's abilities to apply the learned skills and knowledge. Self-efficacy is a concept derived from the social cognitive theory of Albert Bandura (Bandura 1977, 1986, 1997) which refers to one's belief in their abilities to perform and execute the necessary actions to attain the result. In particular, it replicates one's confidence and capabilities to construct an individual's behavior, social environment and motivation. Especially it comprises cognitive, affective, motivational and selection processes. It is a kind of theory of motivation that influences individual success in many ways.

Self-efficacy is a broad concept and is one of the significant study areas for the last three decades. Self-efficacy focuses on the abilities of the employees and their success after the training programs. Usually, the effect of self-efficacy can be seen in two contexts namely physical task and cognitive task. It refers to an individual's confidence in their capabilities in executing and producing specific performance. It exercises control over one's motivation, behavior and social environment.

The effects of self-efficacy on transferring of knowledge are widely studied recently. Bandura, 1986) opined that Self-efficacy is people's judgments of their capabilities to arrange performances. Trainees with a high level of confidence in achieving anticipated performance and behavior change are going to be more likely to use what they need to be learned from training on the roles. Within the framework of social cognitive theory, self-efficacy is often conceptualized as relevant before, during, and after training. If a trainee's belief in his or her ability to find out and achieve training is often viewed as a prerequisite for taking advantage of coaching. Empirically, self-efficacy was shown to be positively associated with pre-training motivation (Quinones, 1995), learning in training (e.g., Colquitt, LePine, and Noe, 2000; Gist, Schwoerer, and Rosen, 1989; Gist, Stevens, and Bavetta, 1991; Martocchio, 1994; Simmering and Posey, 2009), training performance in various training programs (Gist, 1989; Gist et al., 1991; Tannenbaum et al., 1991) and post-training behavior (Latham and Frayne, 1989; Gist, 1989; Mathieu et al., 1992; Saks, 1995; Tannenbaum et al., 1991), transfer performance (Ford et al., 1998) and skill

maintenance (Stevens and Gist, 1997). Seyler et al. (1998) further found that trainees with a high level of confidence in training were more motivated to transfer the newly acquired knowledge and skills.

About the Industry

Rashtriya Ispat Nigam Ltd (RINL), the corporate entity of Visakhapatnam Steel Plant (VSP), which set a new milestone in overall sales turnover in 2020-21, has created another record by achieving the best monthly production in March 2021. The VSP exceeded the monthly best performance in March as it achieved its best-ever production of 5.37 lakh tonnes of crude steel, 2.27 MT of hot metal, 2.43 MT of liquid steel.

Steel demand is on the edge to record a compound annual growth rate (CAGR) of 7-7.5% between fiscals 2022 and *2025*. The Indian steel industry is highly modernized with state-of-the-art steel mills continuously upgrading the technology which is classified into three categories as major produce, main producers and secondary producers thus standing as the second- largest steel producers in the world. Indian Steel Association estimates that steel demand in India is to grow by over 7% in both 2019-20 and 2020-21. There is marked production in FY2020 and produced 87.21MT and 106.56MT of gross steel and crude steel respectively, also remarkable changes in export and import of finished steel at 5.75MT and 5.70MT in FY2020.

The steel plant of Visakhapatnam, one of the NAVARATHNA public sector undertakings has realized the importance of training to its employees at various levels and departments. The training is mainly focussed on job-related knowledge, skills thus bringing about change in the attitude and behaviour of employees working in a given job and department. This training helps the employees to unfold their inner potential and tune themselves to learn the job-related intricacies, responsibilities so that they can discharge the assigned responsibilities to the fullest potential of the employee and also helps to upgrade the skills, knowledge and technical know-how.

That is how VSP, steel plant marked a unique and autonomous department called by training and development centre. Training and development here in an umbrella under which various things and needs are addressed to up bring work force to imbibe knowledge, skills, behavioural attitude in implementing the learned things at workplace thereby enhancing performance thus getting job satisfaction and fulfilling the self-esteem as he/she has contributed his/her might to the group in particular and organization at the base.

Materials and Methods

The total manpower of the RINL is 18032 which includes both 6218 executive and 11814 non-executives working in different divisions like Works, Projects, Mines, and Others. Non-executives consist of Unskilled, Semi-skilled, and highly skilled employees. For the purpose of study Non-executive Semi-skilled and highly skilled employees working in different departments like Sinter Plant, Blast Furnace, Steel Melt Shop, CO & CCP (Coke ovens & Coal Chemical Plant), LMMM (Light & Medium Merchant Mill), WRM (Wire Rod Mill), MMSM (Medium Merchant & Structural Mill) with different designations namely technicians, charge men and foreman have been considered. As the nature of training is the same for semiskilled and highly skilled workers in the organization, Data has been collected from all the departments by following the Stratified Random Sampling technique from the population of 8397 (semi-skilled and highly skilled) workers. The sample size is calculated by using the Slovin's Formula for the Known population.

Slovin's Formula: - n = N / (1+Ne2) is used to calculate the sample size Where n is sample size N is given population size e is a margin of error It is computed as n =8397/(1+8397*0.05*0.05)=381

From the sample size calculator, it is found that the required sample size for the study is 381. To collect the primary data from the sample

respondents, a questionnaire has been prepared by using the different scales developed by different researchers such as Gegerfurtner et al (2009), Machin & Fogarty (1997) and Kirkpatrick [16] for Learning and Behaviour and tested through Confirmatory Factor Analysis for the suitability of the present work and used for the study. A total of 500 questionnaires are distributed to the sample respondents, out of which 398 filled-in questionnaires were received. The remaining 102 questionnaires were not considered due to incompleteness in filling up questionnaires, blind and biased filling up and non-return of questionnaires, etc. Hence, the researcher has considered only 398 questionnaires for data analysis. So, the sample size for the study is 398.

Results and Discussion

Instrument Test Results

Reliability analysis has been conducted for testing the instrument. Factor loadings for all the items are meeting the minimum requirement of >.50 and values range between 0.71 and 0.82 which shows the strength of the loadings. The CR value and AVE values are greater than the standard values i.e. 0.8 and 0.5 respectively. Hence, it is concluded that there is no reliability issue and also no convergent validity issue based on the threshold values

Table 1: Reliability Analysis

Factors	Items	Loadings	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability (CR)	Average Variance Extracted (AVE)
Learning (L)	L1	0.765	0.923	0.919	0.559
	L2	0.773			
	L3	0.713			
	L4	0.777			
	L5	0.759			
	L6	0.722			
	L7	0.767			
	L8	0.733			
	L9	0.717			
Behavior (B)	BE1	0.744	0.846	0.887	0.566
	BE2	0.717			
	BE3	0.764			
	BE4	0.730			
	BE5	0.782			
	BE6	0.777			
Self Efficacy (SE)	SE1	0.822	0.758	0.831	0.621
	SE2	0.763			
	SE3	0.777			
Motivation To Transfer (MTT)	MTT1	0.804	0.759	0.863	0.612
	MTT2	0.770			
	MTT3	0.763			
	MTT4	0.793			

Table 2: Model Fit Results

	Saturated Model	Estimated Model
SRMR	0.056	0.055
NFI	0.917	0.915

The threshold Standard Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) and Normed Fit Index (NFI) values should be 0.9 respectively. From table 2 it is observed that the estimated model possesses a good and satisfactory fit for the present study. Based on the results of CFA, it is concluded that the Scale adopted for conducting the present study is suitable and apt.

Hypothesis

$H_{0:}$ Motivation to transfer and Self-efficacy do not moderate the relationship between Learning and Behaviour levels of the employees

Table 3: Interaction effect of Motivation to Transfer and Self-Efficacy on Learning and Behaviour

Y : BEHAVIOR
X : LEARNING
W : MOTIVATION TO TRANSFER
Z : SELF EFFICACY
Sample Size: 398

Table 3 (a): Outcome Variable: Behaviour Model Summary

Model Summary						
R	R-sq	MSE	F	df1	df2	p
.8643	.7470	.1060	231.4989	5.0000	392.0000	.0000

Table 3 (b)

	coeff	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Constant	4.0314	.0179	225.5695	.0000	3.9962	4.0665
LEARNING	.2355	.0458	5.1415	.0000	.1455	.3256
MOTIVATI	.5361	.0453	11.8371	.0000	.4470	.6251
Int_1	-.1128	.0480	-2.3517	.0192	-.2071	-.0185
SELFEFFI	.0933	.0394	2.3651	.0185	.0157	.1708
Int_2	.0752	.0659	1.1421	.0254	-.0543	.2047
Product terms key:						
Int_1 :	BEHAVIOUR x	MOTIVATION TO TRANSFER				
Int_2 :	BEHAVIOUR x	SELF EFFICACY				
Test(s) of highest order unconditional interaction(s):						
	R2-chng	F	df1	df2	p	
X*W	.0036	5.5306	1.0000	392.0000	.0192	
X*Z	.0008	1.3043	1.0000	392.0000	.0254	
BOTH	.0063	4.8812	2.0000	392.0000	.0081	

It is resulted that both the interaction terms were statistically significant (b= -.112, .075 s.e.= .048, .065 p= .0192, .025) in the model, indicating that Motivation to Transfer and Self Efficacy was a significant moderator between the Learning and Behavior. However, the value-added is that it contains an index of the R-square change due to the moderation effect. The R-square change was .0036 and .0008 individually and together shows .0063 R-square change, indicating the interaction effect accounted for 0.6% added variation in Behavior. The effect of Learning on Behavior was positive and significant (b=.235, s.e.= .045, p=.0000), conditional on Motivation to Transfer and Self Efficacy = 0; and the effect of Motivation to Transfer (b=.536, s.e.= .045, p=.0000) and Self Efficacy on Behavior was significant (b=.093, s.e.=.039, p=.0185), conditional on Learning = 0.

Table 4: Conditional Effects of the Focal Predictor

Focal predictor: Learning (x)
Mod var: Motivation to Transfer (w)
Mod var: Self- Efficacy(Z)

Conditional effects of the focal predictor at values of the moderator(s)

MOTIVATI	SELFEFFI	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
-.6685	-.5906	.2665	.0466	5.7214	.0000	.1749	.3581
-.6685	.0000	.3109	.0550	5.6546	.0000	.2028	.4190
-.6685	.5906	.3553	.0831	4.2770	.0000	.1920	.5187
.0000	-.5906	.1911	.0588	3.2492	.0013	.0755	.3067
.0000	.0000	.2355	.0458	5.1415	.0000	.1455	.3256
.0000	.5906	.2799	.0613	4.5635	.0000	.1593	.4005
.6685	-.5906	.1157	.0825	1.4026	.1615	-.0465	.2779
.6685	.0000	.1601	.0568	2.8177	.0051	.0484	.2718
.6685	.5906	.2045	.0518	3.9515	.0001	.1028	.3063

Since the interaction term in the model was statistically significant, the tests of simple slopes, which test the relationship between Learning (X) and Behavior (Y) at five levels of the moderator Motivation to Transfer (W) and Self Efficacy (Z), have been conducted for better interpreting the nature of the moderated relationship between Learning and Behavior.

The conditional effects of the focal predictor at the values of the moderator are shown in table 5.32c. At -1 sd (i.e., at -.6685 & -.5906) on the centered Motivation to Transfer and Self Efficacy variables (representing low MT &SE), the relationship between Learning and Behavior was significant (b= .266, s.e.=.046, p=.0000). Similarly, at the mean (i.e., at 0) on the centered moderator variable (representing medium MT &SE), the relationship was positive and significant (b=.235, s.e.=.045, p=.0000). Finally, at +1sd (i.e., +.6685 & .5906) on the centered MT &SE (represent high MT &SE the relationship was positive and significant (b=.204, s.e.=.052, p=.0001).

The table 5 represents the slope between the Learning (X) and Behavior (Y) of the Motivation to Transfer (W) and Self Efficacy (Z) moderator variables. It indicates the significant conditional effect including the lower class intervals and upper-class intervals.

Table 5 Slope between the Learning (X) and Behavior (Y) of the Motivation to Transfer (W) and Self Efficacy (Z) moderator variables

LEARNING	MOTIVATI	SELFEFFI	BEHAVIOU
-.6100	-.6685	-.5906	3.4554
.0000	-.6685	-.5906	3.6179
.6100	-.6685	-.5906	3.7805
-.6100	-.6685	.0000	3.4834
.0000	-.6685	.0000	3.6730
.6100	-.6685	.0000	3.8626
-.6100	-.6685	.5906	3.5113
.0000	-.6685	.5906	3.7281
.6100	-.6685	.5906	3.9448
-.6100	.0000	-.5906	3.8597
.0000	.0000	-.5906	3.9763
.6100	.0000	-.5906	4.0928
-.6100	.0000	.0000	3.8877
.0000	.0000	.0000	4.0314
.6100	.0000	.0000	4.1750
-.6100	.0000	.5906	3.9157
.0000	.0000	.5906	4.0864
.6100	.0000	.5906	4.2572
-.6100	.6685	-.5906	4.2641
.0000	.6685	-.5906	4.3346
.6100	.6685	-.5906	4.4052
-.6100	.6685	.0000	4.2920
.0000	.6685	.0000	4.3897
.6100	.6685	.0000	4.4874
-.6100	.6685	.5906	4.3200
.0000	.6685	.5906	4.4448
.6100	.6685		

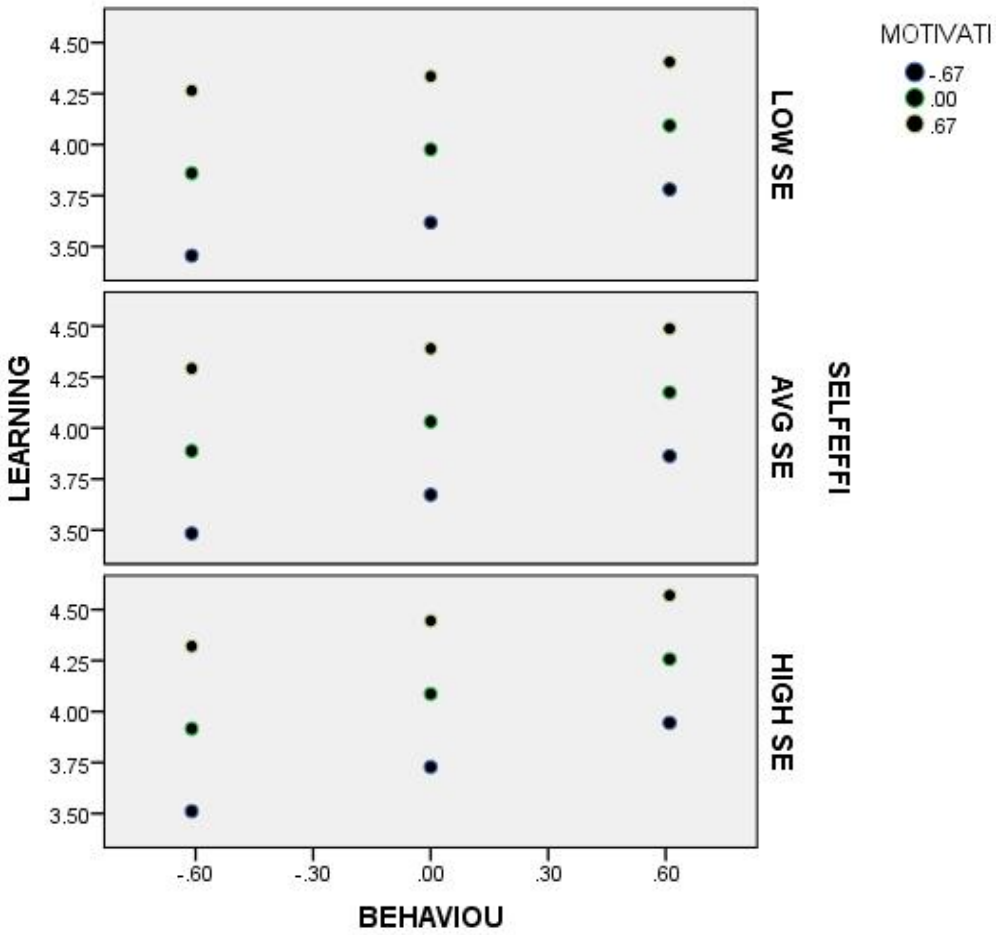

Figure 1 - Interaction Plot

The interaction plot fig.1 represents the low, medium and high levels of Motivation to Transfer and Self Efficacy towards the Learning and Behavior levels of the employees. Three of the levels are parallel but not exactly parallel. Respondents with a low level of Motivation to Transfer, increasing Self Efficacy leads to an increase in Behavior levels of the employees. The slope effects at a low level, mean level and high level of the moderators were also significant.

Conclusion

The study aimed to examine the moderating effect of motivation to transfer and self-efficacy on the learning and behavior levels of the employees. The study results show that motivation to transfer and self-efficacy was found to be significant moderators in between learning and behavior. Both the observed variables have positive and high significance though added interaction effect is less. Though trainees are succeeded in learning from training programs they may not be performing much as per the expectations i.e change in their behavior due to lack of motivation and workload of the employees. Organizations should take care at least in the long run to improve the effectiveness of the employees. There is a similarity between the findings of this study and the previous research literature reviewed.

Future Scope

The present study has certain limitations and future research may be focused on to examine semi-skilled and highly skilled workers. As the study is restricted to measure the moderation effect, further studies may focus on the mediation effect of motivation to transfer and self-efficacy between learning and work attitude and moderation effect of demographic variables in this relationship

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