

THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING TOWARDS JOB SATISFACTION WITH JOB PERFORMANCE AS A MEDIATING VARIABLE AT AGRICULTURAL AGENCY: EVIDENCE FROM MALAYSIA

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to study the effectiveness of training towards job satisfaction with job performance as mediating variable. This research conducted by Qualitative approach with Path Analysis. The population of this research are 1,597 employees in Muda Agricultural Development Authority (MADA), Kedah, Malaysia. 310 sets of questionnaires distributed to respondents and 222 are collected back for analysis with SPSS. This research found that Job Satisfaction influence by Training directly or through by Job Performance, but better through by. These research findings have theoretical implications that the effectiveness og the employee's job performance after training should be through the achievement of job satisfaction first.

Training, job performance, job satisfaction, Muda Agricultural Development Authority (MADA) Malaysia.

Structure, Growth Rate, Profitability, Cash Flow and Firm Size

Introduction

Training consists of an organization's planned efforts to help employees acquire job related knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviors, with the goal of applying these on the job. A training program may range from formal classes to one-on-one mentoring, and it may take place on the job or at remote locations. No matter what its form, training can benefit the organization when it is linked to organizational needs and when it motivates employees (Noe et al., 2011: 223).

Training refers to a planned effort by a company to facilitate employees' learning of job-related competencies. These competencies include knowledge, skills, or behaviors that are critical for successful job performance. The goal of training is for employees to master the knowledge, skill, and behaviors emphasized in training programs and to apply them to their day-to-day activities (Noe, 2008: 4). It is important to put training into perspective. Training may be costly, and it should not be viewed as a cure-all for what ails the organization. Rather, judge training by its contribution to performance, where performance is a function of skills, abilities, motivation, and the opportunity to perform. Managers must also compare the value received from performance increases attributable to training with the costs that training incurred (DeCenzo & Robbins, 2010: 191).

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Training which is effective for employees may affect the increasing or declining of their performance in doing job or task. Tovey et al. (2010: 90) stated that performance, as it is referred to within the concept of performance management, relates to the carrying out of a work task, duty or objective. It is implied that it will be done to a satisfactory level. If the satisfactory level is not identified, it is impossible for the worker to reach the required standard.

The training and development play a critical role in job performance where Tovey et al. (2010: 63) state that appropriate skills and knowledge are required for a performance management system to work. Both managers and staff need to undertake training to get the most out of the process.

Spector (1997) described job satisfaction as simply how people feel about their jobs and different aspects of their jobs. According to Lawler (1990), job satisfaction refers to people's feelings about the rewards they have received on the job (Chen & Silverthorne, 2008: 574). Aziri (2011: 77) clarifies that Hoppock defined job satisfaction as any combination of psychological, physiological and environmental circumstances that cause a person truthfully to say I am satisfied with my job (Hoppock, 1935).

According to Berghe (2011: 14), job satisfaction is connected to how our personal expectations of work are in congruence with the actual outcomes. And since job satisfaction is merely an employee's attitude towards his or job, previously discussed theories regarding attitudes are applicable to job satisfaction.

The objectives of this study are: To identify the influence of training towards job performance, to identify the influence of job performance towards job satisfaction, to identify the influence of training towards job satisfaction through job performance, to identify the influence of training towards job satisfaction directly.

Literature Review

Relationship between Training and Job Performance

According to Sultana et al. (2012: 648), training is a type of activity which is planned, systematic and it results in enhanced level of skill, knowledge and competency that are necessary to perform work effectively. There exists a positive association between training and employee performance. Training generates benefits for the employee as well as for the organization by positively influencing employee performance through the development of employee knowledge, skills, ability, competencies and behavior (Appiah, 2010: 17).

Relationship between Job Performance and Job Satisfaction

According to Saari and Judge (2004: 398), the study of the relationship between job satisfaction and job performance has a controversial

history. The Hawthorne studies, conducted in the 1930s, are often credited with making researchers aware of the effects of employee attitudes on performance. Shortly after the Hawthorne studies, researchers began taking a critical look at the notion that a “happy worker is a productive worker.” Most of the earlier reviews of the literature suggested a weak and somewhat inconsistent relationship between job satisfaction and performance. A review of the literature in 1985 suggested that the statistical correlation between job satisfaction and performance was about .17 (Iaffaldano & Muchinsky, 1985). Thus, these authors concluded that the presumed relationship between job satisfaction and performance was a “management fad” and “illusory.” This study had an important impact on researchers, and in some cases on organizations, with some managers and HR practitioners concluding that the relationship between job satisfaction and performance was trivial.

Relationship between Training with Job Performance through Job Satisfaction

After going through training, employees will acquire new skills and knowledge. The application of the skills and knowledge may enhance their performance in completing task and job given. As employees have good performance in completing their job, they will have satisfied with their job as well. Judge et al (2001: 378) state that, like expectancy theorist, Locke (1970) viewed satisfaction as resulting from performance, but in this case satisfaction was viewed as a function of goal-directed behavior and value attainment.

Buckley and Caple (2004) suggested the categories of job satisfaction that can have an impact that comes from training. One is intrinsic that may come from performing task well or being able to apply the skills learnt, it infuses a sense of being developed and having an increased competence whereas extrinsic job satisfaction comes from extra earning that comes from improved job performance, the ability to perform the task, applying the skills and improved job performance stem from the learning that comes from training (Latif et al., 164).

Relationship between Training towards Job Satisfaction Directly

Training is related to the skills deemed necessary by the management of an organization that must be acquired by the members of that organization, in order to improve the probability of achievement of its goals. Training offered to employees, may help them reduce their anxiety or frustration, brought on by work demands, that they are not familiar with, and they are lacking the skills to handle effectively (Chen et al., 2004). Employees feeling less than competent to do a task, are more likely to leave the field (Chen et al., 2004), or if they choose to stay, their productivity would be suboptimal (Kanelopoulos and Akrivos, 2006).

The larger the gap between the skills required and those possessed by the employees, the greater the lack of job satisfaction of the employees and the turnover intentions. Although there has been no direct link in the literature

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between training and job satisfaction, Rowden (2002) and Rowden and Conine (2005), propose that training may be used as a tool to increase job satisfaction. Rowden and Conine (2005), argues that trained employees will better satisfy the needs of their customers. Tsai et al. (2007) found that employees committed to learning showed a higher level of job satisfaction with a positive effect on their performance. Job satisfaction has been defined as “pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from an appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (Locke, 1976: 1300). Following Rowden’s thinking it would be safe to assume that, employees that perceive their training beneficial will be more satisfied than those who get no training or training of no value (Elnaga & Imran, 2013: 139).

With this theoretical framework, it helps to determine the problem areas, contents considerations, research questions that need to be addressed, and the methodology or way in which researcher plan to find an answer to the research question.

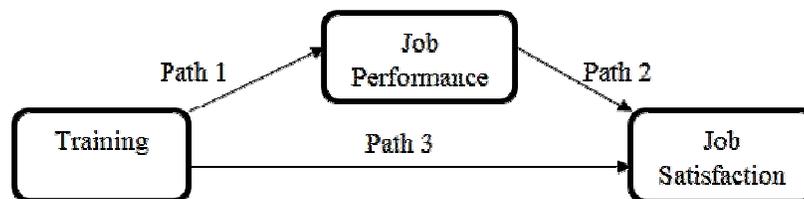


Figure1: Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework above shows the relationship between training (independent variable), job performance (mediating variable) and job satisfaction (dependent variable). Independent variable is a variable that will be manipulated or changed to measure its impact on dependent variable. Dependent variable is a variable that may change in the response to change in other variable, whereas mediating variable is a variable that located between the independent variable and dependents variable which explains the relationship between them.

From this research, the research questions and research objectives will be describe the effectiveness of training towards job performance and job satisfaction based on the hypotheses below:

H1: There is relationship between training and job performance.

H2: There is relationship between job performance and job satisfaction.

H3: There is relationship between training and job satisfaction through job performance.

H4: There is relationship between training and job satisfaction directly.

Research Method

Quantitative research is usually associated with a deductive approach, where the focus is on using data to test theory. However, it may also incorporate an inductive approach, where data are used to develop theory. Quantitative research examines relationships between variables, which are measured numerically and analyzed using a range of statistical techniques. It often incorporates controls to ensure the validity of data, as in an experimental design. Because data are collected in a standard manner, it is important to ensure that questions are expressed clearly so they are understood in the same way. This methodology often uses probability sampling techniques to ensure generalizability. The researcher is seen as independent from those being researched, who are usually called respondents (Saunders et. al, 2012: 162-163).

Path analysis, first developed in the 1920s, is a method for examining causal patterns among a set of variables. Researchers use path analysis most frequently to analyze data relative to a prespecified causal model. With path analysis, researchers conduct a series of regressions to analyze influences on dependent variables within the model. Frequently, dependent variables serve as independent variables for later regressions within the model. In some models, but not all, there is one ultimate dependent variable of interest to the researcher. A regression is conducted for each dependent variable and effects are calculated across regressions for cumulative effects (Stage et al., 2004:5).

The population in this research is the employees in Muda Agricultural Development Authority (MADA), Kedah. Total of employees in MADA is 1,597 (Source: Kompleks Latihan MADA). MADA frequently organizes appropriate training to the employees such as technical training, management and others. Thus, survey then will be distributed among the employees of MADA to study the effectiveness of training towards job performance among them.

Sampling technique in this research is referring to the technique developed by Krejcie and Morgan (1970). The sample consists of employees in Muda Agricultural Development Authority (MADA) out of overall employees to define their response on the effectiveness of training towards the performance and satisfaction of their job. So sample for this research are 310.

The Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) is used for the statistical analysis. The responses and information collected from the survey will be tested using statistical techniques such as frequency distribution and descriptive statistics, correlation analysis by using the reliability test.

Data Analysis And Discussion

The survey questionnaires were distributed to the employees of MADA randomly. The sample size of this research based on the Krejcie Table is 310 respondents. About 310 sets of questionnaires were sent through

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MADA, and 222 questionnaires were successfully completed and returned. Then, the response rate is 71.61%.

Results from SPSS analysis shows that over 222 respondents, most of the respondents are male at 121 respondents (54.5%), while 101 respondents are female (45.5%). The frequencies of respondents' age between 18 until 25 years old are 25 respondents (11.3%), 26 until 35 years old are 98 respondents (44.1%), 36 until 45 years old are 85 respondents (38.3%), 46 until 55 years old are 14 respondents (6.3%) and no respondents above 55 years old. The analysis result of the frequency of an employee attend training course in a year is 151 respondents (68.0%) attend training course less than 20 times. The rest are 59 respondents (26.6%) attend training about 21 to 30 times, 11 respondents (5.0%) attend training about 31 to 40 times and 1 respondent (0.5%) attend training about 41 times and more. Hence, result shows that most of the respondents only attend training course less than 20 times.

The analysis of respondent by their educational level result shows most of the respondents completed their SPM where 106 respondents (47.7%) answered. Meanwhile 84 respondents (37.8%) completed their Diploma, 31 respondents (14.0%) completed their Degree, 1 respondent completed until Master and no respondent answered PhD and others. The job positions of the respondents who participated in this research, result shows 1 respondent (0.5%) from upper management, 30 respondents (13.5%) from middle management, 58 respondents (26.1%) from lower management, and 80 respondents (36.0%) from administrative staff and 53 respondents (23.9%) from support staff.

Correlations of Research

Correlation coefficient indicates the strength of linear relationship between two ranked or numerical variables. Value approaching +1 shows a positive correlation, whereas value approaching -1 shows a negative correlation. The coefficient value between training and job performance is

0.474. It shows the relationship between training and job performance is moderately positive relationship. In other hand, the coefficient value between training and job satisfaction is 0.467. This also shows a moderate positive relationship between training and job satisfaction. Meanwhile, the coefficient value between job performance and job satisfaction is 0.558. Hence, the relationship between job performance and job satisfaction is also moderately positive.

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Table 1: Pearson Correlation between two variables

		Training	Job Performance	Job Satisfaction
Training	Pearson Correlation	1	.474**	.467**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000	.000
	N	222	222	222
Job Performance	Pearson Correlation	.474**	1	.558**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000		.000
	N	222	222	222
Job Satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	.467**	.558**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	
	N	222	222	222

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
(Source: Data analysis of SPSS)

Path Analysis

Training towards Job Performance

The Correlation value between training and job performance is 0.474. Hence, there is low correlation and low relationship between training and job performance. The significance level between these variables is 0.000. Thus, the hypothesis between training towards job performance is accepted.

H₀: There is no relationship between training and job performance.

H₁: **There is relationship between training and job performance.**

It means there is a relationship between training and job performance. But the relationship is weak because the correlation is low. The result is in line with Appiah (2010) and Jagero et al (2012). As stated by Appiah (2010:17), training generates benefits for the employee as well as for the organization by positively influencing employee performance through the development of employee knowledge, skills, ability, competencies and behavior. It may conclusively be stated that on the job training to a big extent leads to an improved employee's performance but still it is not the sole factor that leads to good performance rather it is a combination of factors and the rest of the factors are those that were suggested. So the link, influence or effect of on the job training on employee performance is very big (Jagero et al., 2012: 119).

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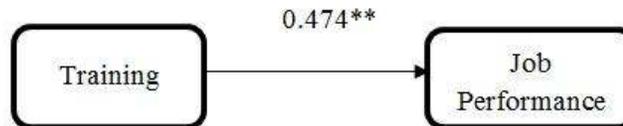


Figure 2: Path of Training towards Job Performance

Job Performance towards Job Satisfaction

This relationship shows the Correlation value of 0.558. Since the result is above 0.5, it explains the linear relationship between job performance and job satisfaction is a moderate correlation. Hence, there is a relationship between job performance and job satisfaction. The significant result is 0.000. So, the hypothesis of this path is accepted.

H₀: There is no relationship between training and job satisfaction.

H₁: There is relationship between training and job satisfaction.

It shows that when the job performance of employees is increase, it will influence their satisfaction towards job. Thus, it is in line with Saari and Judge (2004), where studies from Judge, Thoresen, Bono, and Patton (2001) found the average correlation between job satisfaction and job performance is a higher .30.

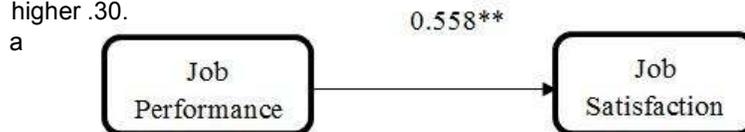


Figure 3: Path of Job Performance towards Job Satisfaction Training towards Job Satisfaction through Job Performance

The Correlation value of this path is 0.604. Since the result is above 0.5, it explains the multiple relationships between training and job satisfaction with job performance as moderating variable shows a moderate correlation. There is a relationship between training and job satisfaction through job performance. The significant results shows 0.000 which the hypothesis is accepted.

H₀: There is no relationship between training and job satisfaction through job performance.

H₁: There is relationship between training and job satisfaction through job performance.

This relationship defines after employees undergo training, a better knowledge or skill learnt could influence their job performance. Resulting from the increasing performance towards their works, employees become more satisfied with their work. The result is in line with Buckley and Caple (2004), where their research explains the job satisfaction comes from improved job performance, the ability of employee to perform task, apply skills and improved job performance from learning that comes from training.

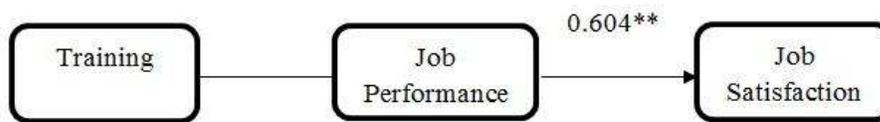


Figure 4: Path on Training towards Job Satisfaction through Job Performance

Training towards Job Satisfaction Directly

This path results in the Correlation value is 0.467. Since its value is lower than 0.5, it indicates the linear relationship between training and job satisfaction is a low correlation. There is low relationship between the effectiveness of training directly towards employees' job satisfaction directly. The significance level is also 0.000. It means that training as independent variable has given influence towards job satisfaction directly. Hence, the hypothesis is accepted.

H₀: There is no relationship between training and job satisfaction directly.

H₁: There is relationship between training and job satisfaction directly.

It is in line with Siebern-Thomas (2005), where job satisfaction is tended to be higher where there was access to training at the workplace.

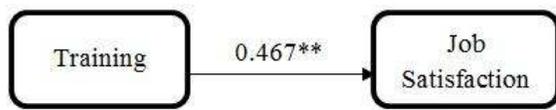


Figure 5: Path of Training towards Job Satisfaction directly

Overall Path Analysis

From the Figure 6 above, it shows the Correlation value for each of path between variables. Beta value for linear path between training and job performance is 0.474, linear path between job performance and job satisfaction is 0.558 and linear path between training and job satisfaction is 0.467. Whereas, multiple path between training, job performance and job satisfaction is 0.604. Analysis from SPSS shows the significant value for all hypotheses is 0.000. Thus, this path analysis confirms the job performance serves as a mediating variable between the effectiveness of training towards job satisfaction in relations to organizational commitment. The hypothesis accepted also proves that the increasing of job satisfaction among employees is also can be affected directly through training.

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Figure 6: Overall path analysis

Conclusion

The focus of this research objective which is to identify the effectiveness of training towards job satisfaction with job performance as mediating variable. Methods in this research by using quantitative research design which examines relationships between variables, which are measured numerically and analyzed using a range of statistical techniques. It often incorporates controls to ensure the validity of data, as in an experimental design. The population in this research is the employees in Muda Agricultural Development Authority (MADA), Kedah. Thus, survey questionnaires been distributed among MADA employees. The questionnaires completed had been collected and analyzed by using Statistical Package of Social Science (SPSS) software. The results then show the relationship of training towards job performance and job satisfaction.

The data analyzed and findings of the path analysis support the hypothesis H1 that training has influence towards job performance; hypothesis H2 that job performance has influence towards job satisfaction, H3 that training has influence towards job satisfaction through job performance as mediating variable and hypothesis H4 that training has influence towards job satisfaction directly.

As the entire hypothesis accepted, it shows that training has a vital role within organization to build the competencies of employees. It also prepares employees with knowledge and skills that need to be learned by employees to hold a stable position in future. With a lot of benefits gain from training, employees will perform more well while completing job hence resulting a satisfaction towards their job. Thus, training is important because it is a good investment for organization towards its employees.

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