THE INFLUENCE OF WORK ENVIRONMENTAL FACTORS ON MOTIVATION TO TRANSFER MANAGEMENT TRAINING: CASE STUDY OF THE LIBYAN OIL INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT
In today's workplace, employees need to improve their knowledge and skills continuously to be able to perform their jobs. Hence, leaders of organizations are seeking to apply the most effective training strategies to ensure maximum performance and profitability. In this context, it is vital to understand the factors that influence the transfer of training in organizational environment. The literature review on work environment and performance shows the importance of training transfer. Both researchers and practitioners have acknowledged that transfer of training will only occur when trainees have positive perception on the work environment. In Libya, despite the Libyan government attempts to develop training systems, no previous studies have investigated the relationship between work environment and training transfer in the oil industry. Therefore, the purpose of this research is to investigate the influence of work environmental factors on motivation to transfer training through a proposed framework that relates the employees' perceptions of work environmental factors to effective training strategies. Thus, this research will attempt to fill the gap in the existing literature by investigating training transfer in the Libyan oil industry.

Keywords: Libyan Oil Industry, Motivation to Transfer Training, Training Transfer, Work Environment.
INTRODUCTION

Despite the ambiguities surrounding transfer of training of management, the field of training research has recently undergone a major paradigm shift with the development of several integrative models designed to explain the measuring factors affecting transfer of learning and training (Holton et al, 2000). In general terms, the transfer of training refers to the process of the implementation of knowledge, skills, attitudes and other qualities acquired during a training programme to improve productivity, effectiveness and job satisfaction (Machin, 1999). In order to prevent losses associated with a decline in performance, it is essential to consider the transfer of training as a vital constituent of the training process adopted by managers and programme participants (Machin, 1999). The main purpose of the transfer of training is to enhance the return on investment from training. Therefore organisations must understand the variables associated with transfer of training, so that they can promote those which enable transfer and intervene to limit those which inhibit it (Baharim, 2008).

“Training transfer is the degree to which trainees effectively apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes gained in training context to the job” Wexley & Latham (1991 cited in Park, J, 2007, p. 13). Furthermore, transfer of training outcomes is learning. Therefore learning at work is defined as observed changes in workplace behaviour attributable to new knowledge and skills (Ivergard & Hunt, 2004). The production activities that follow a successful exploration programme involve some risks including training risks that impact on investment in the oil sector (Biltayib, 2006). Clearly, identifying these risks, their impacts and developing detailed management plans to avoid or minimise them is a vital and integral part of planning these exploration and production activities (Biltayib, 2006). A common tool used to avoid training risks is to know the factors which affect the transfer of training. There is a lack of understanding of training needs assessment and training evaluation. This inhibits human resource development initiatives; the effectiveness of training and plays a major role in determining the utility of training and development in the human resource management area. (Elangovan & Karakowsky, 1999).

The need for transfer of training is an important aspect for organizations. This is shown by a clear definition of the training aims. In this context, over the years, an extensive literature on transfer of training has developed. Most of the research relating to this issue has been on identifying how transfer of training is perceived by different interested parties and factors influence management training. The majority of the research on transfer of management training has been conducted in developed countries (the USA, the UK, Australia, and Canada) with a little only in some developing countries (Malaysia, and Nepal).
RESEARCH BACKGROUND AND THE NEED FOR A STUDY OF MODERN TRENDS IN MANAGEMENT TRAINING IN THE LIBYAN OIL INDUSTRY

An Overview of The Libyan Oil Industry

Oil and natural gas are considered to be the most important industry, and represents the backbone of Libya's economy. The start-up of the oil industry in Libya dates back to 1956 when, Libya, granted the first contracts in this industry to foreign companies. Commercial oil was discovered in Libya 1957 and oil exporting started in 1961 and Libya became an oil exporter. In addition, in 1970, Libya was the 6th in world oil production. The Libyan oil and gas industry has been managed by National Oil Corporation (NOC) since 1968, along with smaller subsidiary companies. National Oil Corporation in Libya is responsible for discovering, oil and gas production and marketing oil and gas in the local market and international market. In addition, it's role includes help in establishing up joint projects in the field of exploration with foreign oil firms (Libyan news, 2004). Libya remains a highly attractive source for hydrocarbons given its relatively high quality crude, low cost oil recovery, proximity to European markets such as, Italy, Germany, Spain and France (John, 2007). the Libyan government has also pledged to bring Libya into the world Trade Organization (WTO). Foreign involvement in Libya was severely reduced as a result of the sanctions and embargoes emplaced upon it especially between the years of 1992 and 1999. Since the UN sanctions were lifted in 1999, the government of Libya has tried to make the country more attractive to foreign investors through a recent relaxation of foreign exchange controls. Libya government increased investment in oil and natural gas (Biltayib, 2006). This will require developing a qualified managers and employees to meet the new challenges facing the Libyan oil industry. This calls for a need to develop a strategy to enhance training programmes and support transfer of training in work environment.

The Need for Modern Trends in Management Training in The Libyan Oil Industry

In recent competitive business environments are being challenged to improve performance to ensure organizations position in the marketplace within the changing of business environments and the increasing influences of globalization (Hokoma et al, 2007; Ahmad et al, 2004). Therefore, organizations seek to development for employees’ skills within work environment (Fouche, 2006). The Libyan government has developed both education and training systems greatly because they are regarded as important for the development of life activities of the country (Alhmali et al, 2007). Also, the Libyan government stressed the improvement for the organizations effectiveness which is needed for new policies and institutional reforms, in order to enhance the quality of services, as well as the business environment (Salama et al, 2005). Hence, the Libyan economy needs to strengthen the oil industry, because the Libyan economy depend heavily on the production and exploitation of oil which impact on various fields (Yahia et al, 2008; Naama et al, 2008). Thus, the Libyan oil companies needs to give more importance to developing the human resources through preparing and developing skills, qualifications, both scientific and technical, and
widening both the social scopes of education and the vocational and professional training as well as concentrating on developing and improving the cultural and mental assets (El-Hawat, 2002; Twati, 2005). Therefore, using training programs for enhancing employees' skills is the main objective of organizations. In order to achieve the objectives for development plans, developing countries should have a better knowledge of the importance of management training and training programmes (Agnaia, 1996). These training development programmes play a major role in providing individuals with knowledge and skills and improving their managerial abilities (Agnaia, 1996). In this context, there are some empirical studies on Libya on management practice generally and management training development in particular (Agnaia, 1996). However, no previous studies have investigated the transfer of training in Libyan oil sector even though this industry is strategic in Libya’s drive for economic development (Salem, 2004). The importance of transfer training within Libyan oil environment can be attributed to a number of justifications, which represent the need for this study. Therefore the reasons why the study will be on Libyan oil industry in the following:

• First: this study will cover a lack in research in transfer of training in the Libyan oil industry environment by identifying the key variables linking both management transfer and trainees. The later will help employees transfer their learning to the job. This is particularly important in a Libyan context where there is a scarcity of contemporary research in the area.

• Second: the study is justified as it will provide human resource development managers with the methods to enhance transfer of training and thus training courses implementation for different sectors.

• Third: previous researchers studied the transfer of training focused on developed countries, but no previous studies have investigated the training transfer in Libya.

• Fourth: this study will also identify transfer of training which will include organizational culture. Because there is impact from organizational culture on transfer value (Bahawani, 2006). There is a difference between organizational culture in developed countries and organizational culture in developing countries (Twati, 2006).

• Fifth: little research has addressed the issue of the employees' perception of the work environment variables in developing countries, but no previous studies have investigated transfer of training in Libyan work environment. Moreover no studies have investigated both, Libyan work environment and organizational culture for Libyan employees (Twati, 2005)

THE STUDY’S CONTRIBUTION TO KNOWLEDGE

This study will make a number of contributions in transfer of training research. First, it will be the first empirical study in the Libyan oil industry to test and investigate the influence of work environment factors on trainees’ motivation to transfer of training. Second, this study will add to the body knowledge related to the Libyan oil industry and provide an in-depth analysis of organizational culture in Libyan work
environment. Third, the present study attempts to add value and fill in the current gap in training transfer in the Libyan oil industry.

**RESEARCH AIMS AND OBJECTIVES**

The study aims to contribute to the understanding and solving of the strategic issues related to training transfer in Libyan oil industry. Thus, this research will study the influence of work environmental factors, which underpin trainees' motivation to transfer training. In order to achieve this aim, the following objectives are formulated:

- To examine the transfer of training and different trends in work environmental factors through curriculum, models and practices.
- To investigate the role of work environmental factors in the transfer of training to the Libyan oil industry.
- To measure practitioners’ perception of the relative importance for the effectiveness and influence of those factors on motivation for the transfer of training.
- To develop a framework for the transfer of training in the oil industry in Libya.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

The aim of this study is to seek an understanding of the nature of the factors which underpin trainees’ to transfer what they have learned into their every day jobs. In order to achieve the main aim of the study, a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods will be used. Thus, the research design is as follows:

**Research Design**

The quantitative approach will be used to collect and analyse any numerical data and statistical test. The qualitative approach will be used to examine and reflect on employee’s perceptions and expectations of transfer of training. For that, focus groups will be used to gather data relating to the feeling and opinions of employees and managers who have attending the training programmes in oil industry. This stage will help in the design of the questionnaires and interviews needed for the second stage of the study.

**Data Collection and Analysis**

This study will use both, questionnaires and interviews in the data collection process. The questionnaires will be used to ask the participants about their feelings and perceptions on transfer of training. Given the results obtained from the questionnaires, semi-structured interviews will be used to achieve the second and third objective of study and try to develop an effective framework for the transfer of training in the Libyan oil industry. Following Young Sup (2007), this study will use SPSS software
to analysis the collected data. The results will be discussed and the findings will be presented to validate this research objective

THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK FOR TRANSFER OF RAINING

Among the important models of transfer of training and related work environmental factors, Holton et al (2000) established a Learning Transfer System Inventory: Conceptual Model in the following points:

- Secondary influences, including performance self-efficacy, Learner readiness.
- Motivation, including Motivation to transfer transfer effort, performance.
- Environment, including Feedback, peer support, supervisor support, openness to change, personal outcomes positive, personal outcomes negative and supervisor sanctions.
- Outcomes, including, learning within individual performance and learning within organization performance
- Ability, including content validity transfer design Personal capacity for transfer opportunity to use.

According to the study framework, the influence of work environmental factors on motivation to transfer management training. In this context, the study theoretical framework in the following:

1) Training and transfer of training
2) Motivation for the transfer of training
3) Work environmental factors and trainee's motivation

Training and Transfer of Training

In order to survive and obtain advantages in any work environment, companies need to be able to innovate and assimilate new knowledge. Knowledge has therefore become an increasingly important asset for most firms (Handy, 2008). Therefore training is one of important methods to obtaining knowledge and skills. Outcomes of training have historically been a critical topic of investigation in human resource development (HRD) and adult education research (Holton et al., 2003). The aim of training is creating learning processes that contribute to improving the performance of workers in their current job (Baharim, 2008).

In this context, in an HRD environment, training is often defined as a planned learning experience designed to bring about permanent change in an individual characteristic, knowledge, attitudes, or skills (Campbell et al., 1970). Tziner el al., (1991) provided another definition that links the acquisition of knowledge and skills gained through training to an application in the workplace and noted that the fundamental purpose of training is to help people develop skills and abilities which, when applied at work, will enhance their average job performance in their present job.

Goldstein (1992 cited in Handy, 2008) provided a definition that related training to individual performance which is, arguably, a more apt descriptor of HRD objectives.
He defined training as the systematic acquisition of attitudes, concepts, knowledge, roles or skills that result in improved performance at work. Generally, it has been found that most workplace training definitions in the international literature emphasise the current job as the focus. The understanding that employees learn both formally from training programs, and informally from their environment recognizes the contextual environment of the training program (Rein, 1997).

The previous definitions included both training and application for training. Therefore, the definitions involved a strong link between training and transfer of training. Transfer of training consists of two elements: general or specific transfer. On this view, general transfer refers to the application of learned knowledge and skills to a higher level or to a more complex work situation. It occurs when a trainee has understood the general skills or concepts and generalised their application. The transfer occurs when the trainee can apply what has been learned in the training environment to work Cormier and Hagman (1987 cited in Handy, 2008).

The application of these skills has also been described as an ongoing exercise rather than a once-off task. In this sense, transfer of training has been described as the maintenance of skills, knowledge and attitudes over a certain period of time (Baldwin & Ford 1988). There are a distinction between near transfer and far transfer in a training context. In transfer context, near transfer occurs when trainees apply what was acquired in training to situations very similar to those in which they were trained. Far transfer, in contrast, occurs when trainees apply the training to different situations from the ones in which they were trained (Laker, 1990). Transfer of training is generally defined as the degree to which trainees apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes gained in training to their job (Wexley & Latham 1991; Tannenbaum & Yukl 1992; Ford & Weissbein 1997). Transfer of training needs to be considered as a multidimensional construct because different researchers view transfer of training differently, attributing a variety of features to its definition. For example, Wexley and Latham (1991) suggest that transfer can be measured as a positive, negative or a zero. Positive transfer occurs when learning in the training situation results in better performance on the job. This reflects the general assumption behind most definitions of transfer of training. Negative transfer occurs when learning in the training situation results in poorer performance on the job. Zero transfer, not surprisingly, occurs when learning in the training situation has no effect on the job performance. Training that results in negative or zero transfer is either detrimental or of no value to an organization from a cost/benefit perspective (Wagner & Campbell, 1994). Thus, organizations leaders must establish strategies, which can enhance the transfer of training in workplace. These strategies must include the relationship between training programs, and workplace situations.

**Motivation for The Transfer of Training**

Many researchers have acknowledged that transfer of training will occur when the trainees have the motivation or desire to use the skills in the workplace (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Noe. 1986; Wexley & Latham, 1991).Baldwin and Magjuka (1991) tested a model of motivation and its influence on transfer. Their study hypothesize that trainees will have greater intentions to transfer training to the job when they receive information about the training program, recognized that they would be accountable for their learning by their supervisor, and perceived a program as mandatory. During the study they asked trainees to comment on their training program and the extent of
using what they learned in the job (Baldwin & Magjuka, 1991). Baldwin and Magjuka’s (1991) concluded that trainees interpret these actions as management’s encouragement for transfer and that trainees reported greater intentions to transfer learning to the workplace.

Naquin and Holton (2003) also examined the role of motivation. Their study focused on motivational influences that leads to improved work outcomes from training, the authors suggest that motivation should encompass both motivation to learn and motivation to perform using that learning.

**Work Environmental Factors and Trainees’ Motivation**

Although trainees may be able to apply the knowledge and skills from training program place to workplace, there are variables of the work environment that may impact on their abilities to transfer these skills. Noe (1986) argued that environmental favorability is an important factor influencing the subsequent transfer of training. The study included both situational or task constraints and the perceived social support for training. Work environment may motivate trainees' to transfer their skills to the job, and may be discouraged trainees' to transfer what they learned (Tannenbaum & Yukl, 1992). There exist a number of variables involved in the training situation upon which the effectiveness of training may be contingent, many of which may lie outside the actual experience of the training (Clarke, 2002). Hence, transfer of training is complex and includes many factors that impact in many parts in work in organizations. However, significantly less has been done to understand how transfer-related factors present themselves in organizations and how these factors can be effectively changed or managed (Holton et al., 2003). A review of the literature included factors that most affect transfer of training can be classified into two categories: factors related to the work system and people-related factors (Handy, 2008). Some researchers (Baldwin et al., 1991; Holton et al. 2001) have defined work environment factors also motivation in transfer of training. Measuring these factors separately makes it easier to delineate the specific factors in the work environment that impact transfer (Handy, 2008).

**RESEARCH FRAMEWORK**

The purpose of this study is to examine a proposed framework of training transfer, which relates the trainees’ expectation for importance of the work environment factors to transfer of training within organizational work. Specifically, the research involved the following relationships: 1) the role of the work environment factors in the context of transfer, dependence on trainees' perceive 2) the role of the work environment factors in the trainees’ motivations to transfer, dependence on trainees’ perceive 3) whether trainees' perceive that transfer was achieved, in post-training and 4) whether trainees' perceive their job performance improving when they transferred their newly learned knowledge and skills. The research includes framework which will apply on Libyan oil industry. Moreover, this framework derived from model of Holton et al, (2000), which included many factors which impact on training transfer generally. The authors’ framework is involved Learning Transfer Systems Inventory (LTSI). Holton et al (2000) model considers five influences: (1) secondary influences, (2) motivation, (3) environment, (4) outcomes, and (5) ability. The LTSI model, displays the complete transfer system, which are all factors in the person, training, and organization that
influence transfer of training to job performance (Holton et al., 2000). But the research framework included the seven factors for work environment from Holton et al (2000) model (feedback, peer support, supervisor support, openness to change, personal outcomes positive, personal outcomes negative, and supervisor sanctions). Moreover, the research framework added organizational culture in work environment, because, Holton et al (2000) model, applied in developed countries and the research framework will apply in developing country (Libya). In this context, work environment in developed countries are different from non-developed cultures, such as Arabic culture, specifically Libyan culture. Adopting implementation model in transfer of training in a different culture context will occasionally work in opposition to the organization’s needs. Furthermore, the work environmental factors may influence the motivation to transfer. This relationship may be influenced by the suggested importance of the work environment factors including organizational culture.

![Proposed Framework: Work Environmental Factors](image)

Motivation to transfer is the intention of the trained employee to apply the newly learned knowledge and skills mastered in the training program back to the work environment (Seyler et al 1998 cited in Handy, 2008). The seven work environmental factors and organizational factor are suggested to influence the motivation to transfer. However, the perceived importance of the work environmental factors is suggested to influence this relationship between the work environment factors and motivation to transfer. Based on previous research specific to the work environment factors, the
selected seven work environment factors are feedback, peer support, supervisor support, openness to change, personal outcomes positive, personal outcomes negative, and supervisor sanctions.

DISCUSSION

This research demonstrates the influence of work environmental factors on motivation to transfer of training. Thus, the research included framework which involved seven factors for work environment: Feedback, peer support, supervisor support, and openness to change, personal outcomes positive, personal outcomes negative and supervisor sanctions, “within organizational culture. The review of the literature is undertaken at 3 levels:

- A review of the literature on “training and transfer of training. This suggests that the aim of training is to contribute to the improvement of workers’ performance in their job, through the skills development. Furthermore, the maintenance of skills, knowledge and attitudes over a certain period of time and transfer skills from training program to workplace are the main aims for transfer of training.

- The literature review on “motivation for the transfer of training. It indicates that transfer of training will occur when the trainees have the motivation to use the skills in the workplace and when the trainees desire to use the skills which they have learned from training programme to the job. In this context, there are supportive motivation and unsupportive motivation. Supportive motivation lead to increased training transfer and unsupportive motivation lead to decreasing transfer of training

- The literature review on work environment. It stresses that supportive environment lead to support for training transfer and unsupportive environment lead to decreasing for transfer of training. Therefore within the research can be measured to what extent the importance of work environmental factors on motivation to transfer of training in the Libyan oil industry.
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