

The Relationship Training Transfer between Training Characteristic, Training Design and Work Environment

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Abstract Training transfer is refers to the trainees ability to accept what has been taught in the course of training and transfer them to actual working situation and be able to retain it for a certain period of time. The evaluation is to identify the relationship between trainee characteristics, training design and work environment towards transfer of training among employee. The findings of the study suggest trainee characteristics, training design and work environment play significant roles in the training transfer. We then offer research and suggest for future research directions.

Keywords Training Transfer, Trainee Characteristics, Training Design, Work Environment

1. Introduction

In recent years there has been an explosion of organizational interest in becoming “learning organizations,” creating corporate “universities”, and generally being more proactive in approaching education and learning. Many organizational leaders increasingly recognize that their firms’ future success will depend on the speed with which people can learn and transfer new ideas and information.

The dynamics of global competition, technological advancements, corporate restructuring, and unstable economic conditions are converging on business and making it more important than ever that organizations learn and adapt to make improvements in performance[1] added in an environment of rapid change, it is clear that an individual must be able to adapt to meet new challenges which mean changing technologies continue to alter the nature of work tasks, requiring employees to learn new knowledge and skills to perform their jobs.

In relation of that, training has long been recognized as one of the most effective strategies for organizations to update employees’ knowledge and skills improve employees’ performance and hence overall productivity[2] and prepare employees for new job requirements and career development.[3] reported that training will play a critical role in increasing workers’ adaptability and flexibility which employers have found is becoming increasingly important and it

is important for an organization to maintain a necessary competence in its employees through adequate training

In addition,[17] stated that the main goal of training was to provide, obtain and improve the needed skills in order to help organization achieve their goals and create competitive advantage by adding value to their key resources which was their employees.[17] added along with high investments in and allocation of resources to training, the need for justifying training effectiveness and documenting that employees can transfer and use the skills learnt to their work environment has accelerated and what counts in every training program was whether the trainees were able to transfer and apply the skills they learn to their job or work

Transfer of training is also viewed as an important strategy for making improvements in organizational performance and maintains a competitive advantage[18]. It is supported that transfer of training[18] and learning organization[19], are considered to be important competencies for organizations to develop in order to succeed in today’s turbulent marketplace. Furthermore, when talking about the statistic, research has shown that 40 percent of the skills acquired during the training process are immediately transferred at work, 25 percent remain for a time period of six months and only 15 percent for a year[1]

Thus, we conduct the study in order to fulfill these three objectives. First is to investigate the relationship between transfer of training and trainees characteristics. Second is to examine the relationships between transfer of training and training design. Third is to examine the relationship between transfer of training and work environment.

Definition of Terms

Training

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The International Encyclopedia of Adult Education and Training defined training as the provision that is aimed at creating intentional learning processes that contribute to improving the performance of workers in their present job.

Development

Development refers to the formal education, job experiences, relationship and assessments of personality and abilities that help employees prepare for the future.

Employee

Employees in this study refer to the all employee at public sector around Shah Alam Selangor, Malaysia.

Trainee

Trainee is defining as a person who is being taught how to do a particular job.

Human Resource Manager

Human Resource Manager is the person who responsible to manage a human resource department in an organization.

Resources

Good at findings ways of doing things and solving problems.

Workforce

Workforce is defining as all the people who work for a particular company, and organization.

Market Place

Market place is define as the workers employed in a specific project

Competitive advantages

Competitive advantages is a condition which enables the company to operate in a more efficient or otherwise higher quality manner than the companies it competes with, and which result in benefits accruing to the company.

Training Transfer

Transfer of training is generally defined as the degree to which trainees apply the knowledge, skills and attitudes gained in training to their job.

Trainee Characteristic

Trainee characteristic is a trainee's personality directly affects the training process and training transfer. It also refer to the ability of the person to learn, synthesize, and connect what he has learnt to practice and transfer the skills and knowledge to work.

Training design

Training design refer to the degree which training has been. The ability to transfer learning to the job, on the job and training instructions match job requirements. The training design factors such as stimulus variability, conditions of practice, general principles, identical elements, type of learning point, training styles and feedback[1].

Work environment

Work environment is the job factors that influence the transfer of training. Work-environment factors such as transfer climate, peer support, supervisor support[20] . Environment factors refer to various aspects in the employee's environment which either facilitate or impede effective transfer of training.

Transfer Climate

The transfer climate refers to (perceived) characteristics of

the work environment that may facilitate or inhibit the use of trained skills[1], differing from the general work. These characteristic include manager and peer support, opportunity to use skills, and consequences for using learned capabilities.

2. Review of Literature

Define transfer of training as the degree to which trainees effectively apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained in the training context to the job.[1]

This suggests that transfer of training first requires a trainee to learn new job-related competencies[4]. By learning, we are referring to a relatively permanent change in knowledge, skills and behaviors of trainees[5]. After learning and retaining the training content, trainees should transfer the knowledge and or skills accumulated to the work context with the purpose of improving job performance over time[6]. However, it has been approximate that only about 10 per cent of all training experiences are transferred from the training environment to the job[1]. Although this is a lower-bound estimate,[5] Wexley and Latham (2002) suggest that although approximately 40 per cent of content is transferred immediately following training, the amount transferred falls to 25 per cent after 6 months and 15 per cent after 1 year. This suggests that as time passes, trainees may be unable or less motivated to maintain and use the information gained in the training program.

Although several studies have been accomplished to understand the transfer of training process, conceptual models for understanding this process are limited. Kavanagh (1998) developed a multi-level multistage process to help understand the difficulties of the transfer of training process. Specifically, the researcher suggested that training transfer is influenced by several variables at different levels of analysis for example individual, supervisor, workgroup and organization and in different stages in the training process such as pre-training, training and post-training. To date, the present literature for example Baldwin et[1] has identified three main determinants of training transfer which is training design or enabling factors, individual factors or trainee characteristics, and work environment or transfer climate.

In other words, training is useless if it cannot be translated into performance. According to Swanson (1995), for Human Resource Development to become a core business process, performance is the key. Transfer of training is a core issue with respect to linking individual adjusts to the requirements of the organizational system. Therefore, according to Swanson (1995), "if we believe that training truly makes a difference in organizational and individual performance, we must understand how to support transfer of training in organizations".

Furthermore, this indicates that much of the time and money spent in training was never fully realized, because only a small percentage of the training effectively results in permanent transferability to the workplace. As a result, understanding and improving the transfer of training process

has become a primary anxiety for training researchers and practitioners.

i. Trainee Characteristics

There are several individual characteristics that affect the transfer of training process. Some of these characteristics include motivation to learn and to transfer, personality-related factors and ability-related factors.[4]

Motivation to learn was one of four features of training characteristic. One critical determinant of training effectiveness is the trainees' level of training motivation[7]. Motivation to learn is defined as a specific desire of a trainee to learn the content of the training program[6] and to fully embrace the training experience.

Besides skill development, such trainees also have more information and knowledge about where and how the training can be used. Thus, knowledge gains from training have a positive impact on ability to transfer, which in turn have a positive effect on transfer of training. Knowledge acquisition during training is affected by various factors such as training methods, trainee ability, trainee motivation to learn, training biases, and training history. For example, if an employee had consistently used skills and techniques learned from earlier training programs, he or she is likely to have problems adapting to or learning distinctly new skills and methods of performing. This is especially true if the employee had formed scripts and schema (Abelson, 1981; Lord and Foti, 1986) concerning work behavior. This would adversely affect new knowledge acquisition, which would then lower effective transfer of training.

Situation identification: an important aspect of the transfer of training is generalization and application of the training to the actual job. This requires the identification or recognition of situations where the newly learned skills are relevant and useful, and can be applied for performance improvement.

Therefore, the ability of the trainee to identify appropriate situations for the application of learned skills is an essential element of successful transfer of training.

ii. Training Design

Training design includes learning principles, sequencing of learning material and the relevance of learning material to the job[8]. In[1]Baldwin and Ford's model, the authors highlighted the importance of training design features such as identical elements (i.e. identical stimulus and response elements in both the training and transfer settings), general principles (e.g. teaching the general rules and theoretical underpinnings in addition to the specific skills), stimulus variability (e.g. using a variety of training stimulus), and conditions of transfer (e.g. dividing training into sections, use of feedback, over-learning, etc.) for transfer.

Training goals and materials should be content valid, or closely relevant to the transfer task[10]. According to Yaw[11], trainers should keep the responses trainees make consistent from the training environment to the job to ensure transfer. Trainees must see a close relationship between training content and work tasks to transfer these skills to the workplace. Training should be evaluated according to its

contributions to organizational performance needs. Therefore, only conduct training that is supported by the environment in which the trainees work.

Most executives assume that new skills, knowledge and attitudes will be developed during a traditional program (Caudron, 2000). This training will be aligned with business strategies and employees will transfer what they have learned to their jobs. However, these assumptions do not always happen without effective tools for transfer. Enhancing performance on the job is the real purpose of training.

The design and delivery of training programmes are believed to exert significant influence on trainees' learning and transfer outcomes, and several specific training-characteristics have been proposed as affecting training effectiveness. Although empirical results for several of the suggested training characteristics are lacking, Machin and Fogarty (2003) indicate the presence of empirical evidence for the influence of identical elements, general principles, varied practice, over-learning, relapse prevention, goal-setting, self management cues and management support.

It is argued that the two fields could benefit from understanding each other and that the broader training field could benefit from a more holistic view of barriers that can ultimately impact training effectiveness[1]. Such a view is in concert with other authors such as Kirwan and Burchell (2006) and Vedula et al. (2007), who have recently began investigating the linkage between training design, individual characteristics and work environment of transfer of training. Although Vedula et al. (2007) did establish that training design and individual characteristics were significant for transfer, they noted less support for the proposition that supervisor support contributed to transfer. As argued by these researchers, that latter finding was unexpected and, thus, requires additional research .

However, as stressed by Burke and Hutchins[12] the training input of training design "is the factor where quantitative research is needed to establish or cement preliminary or case-based findings" as some elements (e.g. the importance of needs analysis) have received limited systematic investigation. On a more positive note, Burke and Hutchins[13]concluded that training instructional design methods including those previously discussed (e.g. goal setting, self-management, relapse prevention) all show promise.

Regarding their content, the transfer design reflects both practical preparation of transfer and the perceived relevancy of the training programmed (content validity), whereas intervention fulfillment refers to the extent to which the training meets expectations and needs[14] .

iii. Work Environment

Often during and after training program, participants or trainees are excited about the new knowledge[15][16]. Baldwin and Ford[1] define transfer of training as the degree to which trainees effectively apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained in the training context to the job. The present research examined there is a relationship between three

factors of transfer of training includes training design, individual characteristic and work environment .Velada and Caetano[4]reported transfer of training requires a trainee to learn new job related competencies.

The researcher has demonstrated that training efforts are unlikely to result in positive changes in job performance unless the newly trained competencies are transferred into the work environment[1]. Only 10 percent of the knowledge gain and experiences in the training is transferred to a job[1].

Thus, based on the discussion, we offer the following hypotheses:

H1: Relationship between trainee characteristic and transfer of training

H2: Relationship between transfer of training and training design.

H3: Relationship between transfer of training and work environment

3. Methodology

A. The Sample

The sample of the study consists of employee working in public sector in Selangor, Malaysia. The population frame have been identified was 160 employees for all departments at public sector around Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia.

Sampling was the act, process, or technique of selecting a suitable sample, or a representative part of pollution for the purpose of determining parameters or characteristics of the whole population. The sampling technique that will be used in this study was simple random sampling. A simple random technique was techniques ensure that each member of the population has an equal chance of being selected for the sample. A simple random sample was free from sampling bias. A total of 70 questionnaires were distributed and 60 responses were received, yielding a response rate of 90%.

B. The Instrument

The instrument used for data collection was a survey questionnaire. The survey instrument used for this study comprised of 4 sections. The first section dealt with the respondent’s profile and demographic background. The second section asked about the respondent’s trainee’s characteristics. The third section is about the training design. The last section required the respondents to answer items related to work environment and transfer of training. The items on trainee characteristic, training design and work environment were measured as likert scale, ranging from 1 as strongly disagree to 5 as strongly agree.

Below is the table of Data Analysis

Research Objective (RO)

- i. Investigate the relationship between transfer of training and trainee characteristics
- ii. Investigate the relationship between transfer of training and training design
- iii. Investigate the relationship between transfer of training and work environment.

Concept/Construct

H1: There is a relationship between trainee characteristic and the transfer of training.

H2: There is a relationship between training design and the transfer of training

H3: There is a relationship between work environment and the transfer of training

Measurement	Scale	Statistics
Section B: (Question 7-17)	Interval	Correlate
(Question 18-28)	Interval	Correlate
(Question 29-39)	Interval	Correlate

Results and Discussion

Section A: Demographic Data

Section A is designed to collect the demographic background of respondent such as name of training attended, working department, respondent's gender, respondent's age, respondent's level of education, and respondent's working experience.

Table 4.2. Respondent Working Department (n=60)

Working Department	Frequency	Percent
Sek.Pengurusan Sekolah	10	16.7
Sek.Pengurusan Akademik	10	16.7
Bhg.Baitulmal	10	16.7
Bhg.Teknologi Maklumat	10	16.7
Bhg.Khidmat Pengurusan	10	16.7
Unit Pengurusan Majlis & Protokol	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0

Table 4.2 shows the percentage of the respondent working department. The frequency and the percent of the respondent working department is the same (16.7%, n=10).

Table 4.3. Respondent’s Gender (n=60)

Respondent's gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	30	50.0
Female	30	50.0
Total	60	100.0

Table 4.3 illustrate the same frequency and percent between male and female, 50% (n=30) of the respondent were male, and 50% (n=30) is female.

Table 4.4. Respondent’s Age (n=60)

Respondent's age	Frequency	Percent
21-30 years old	30	50.0
31-40 years old	30	50.0
Total	60	100.0

Table 4.4 shows the percentage of respondent’s age. The frequency and percent for the respondent’s age is same between 21-30 years old and 31-40 years old (50%, n=30).

Table 4.1. Name of Training Attended

Training Attended	Frequency	Percent
Microsoft Word and Excel 2007	17	28.3
Aplikasi Internet : Laman Sesawang	9	15.0
Pembangunan Kendiri	8	13.3
Pembangunan Modal Insan	3	5.0
Pengurusan Masa	4	6.7
Microsoft Access 2007	5	8.3
Team Building	4	6.7
Kemahiran Komunikasi	10	16.7
Total	60	100.0

Table 4.5. Respondent’s level of education (n=60)

Respondent's level of education	Frequency	Percent
Certificate	10	16.7
Diploma	30	50.0
Degree	20	33.3
Total	60	100.0

Table 4.5 shows the percentage of respondent’s level of education. The majority of respondent (50%, n=50) were a diploma holders followed by degree holders (33%, n=20).

Table 4.6. Respondent’s working experience (n=60)

Respondent's working experience	Frequency	Percent
Less than 5 years	10	16.7
5-10 years	50	83.3
Total	60	100.0

Table 4.6 shows the percentage of respondent’s working experience. The majority of respondent (83%, n=50) were respondents that worked 5-10 years followed by respondents who worked less than 5 years (16%, n=10).

Table 4.7. Correlations between transfers of training and trainee characteristics

		Mean Trainee Characteristics	Mean Transfer of Training
Mean Trainee Characteristics	Pearson Correlation	1	.899(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	60	60
Mean Transfer of Training	Pearson Correlation	.899(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	60	60

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Section B: Trainee Characteristics

Research Question 1: Is there any relationship between transfer of training and trainee characteristics?

In order to find out if there was any relationship between trainee characteristics and transfer of training, a Pearson’s correlation test was administered. This test was also conducted to find out how much one variable influenced the other as displayed in Table 4.7, figure 4.1. It was found that these two variables had a significant positive relationship (r=0.899). According to Salkind (2007), the correlation coefficient of 0.899 reflects a very strong relationship between variables as display in Table 4.8. This result also confirmed with hypothesis 1 which stated as H1. There is relationship between trainee characteristics and the transfer of training. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Table 4.8. Pearson Correlation Coefficient and Interpretation

Correlation between	Are said to be
.8 and 1.0	Very strong
.6 and .8	Strong
.4 and .6	Moderate
.2 and .4	Weak
.0 and .2	Very Weak

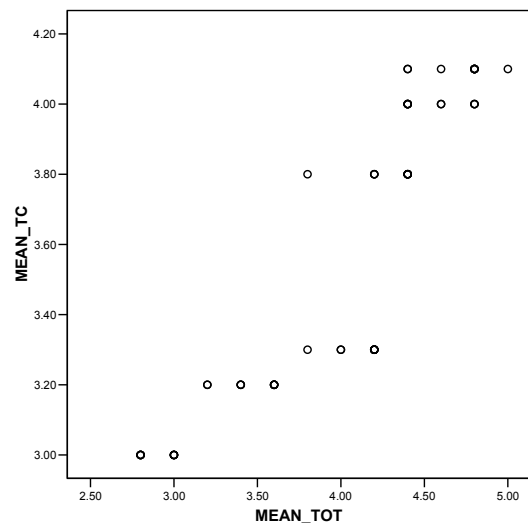


Figure 4.1. Correlations between transfers of training and trainee characteristics

Section C: Training Design

Research Question 2: Is there any relationship between transfer of training and training design?

In order to find out if there was any relationship between training design and transfer of training, a Pearson’s correlation test was administered. This test was also conducted to find out how much one variable influenced the other as displayed in Table 4.9, figure 4.2. It was found that these two variables had a significant positive relationship ($r=0.926$). According to Salkind (2007), the correlation coefficient of 0.926 reflects a very strong relationship between variables as display in Table 4.8. This result also confirmed with hypothesis 2 which stated as H2. There is relationship between training design and the transfer of training. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Table 4.9. Correlations between transfers of training and training design

		Mean Training Design	Mean Transfer of Training
Mean Training Design	Pearson Correlation	1	.926(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	60	60
Mean Transfer of Training	Pearson Correlation	.926(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	60	60

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

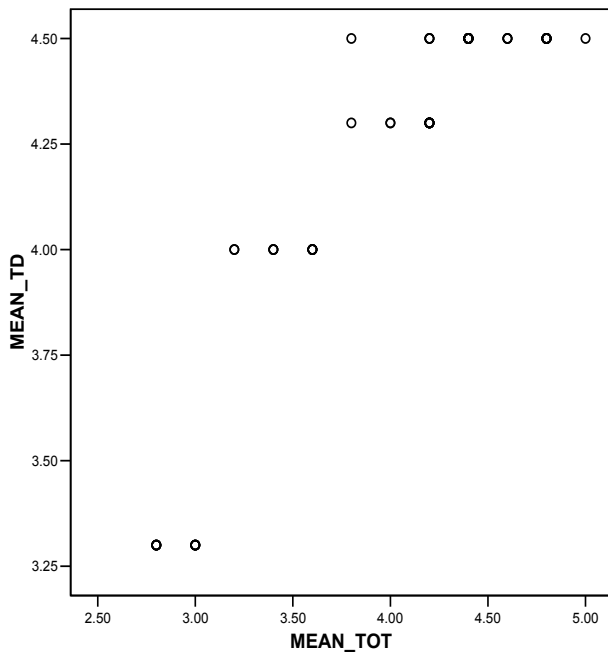


Figure 4.2. Correlations between transfers of training and training design

Section D: Work Environment

Research Question 3: Is there any relationship between transfer of training and work environment?

In order to find out if there was any relationship between work environment and transfer of training, a Pearson’s correlation test was administered. This test was also conducted

to find out how much one variable influenced the other as displayed in Table 4.10, figure 4.3. It was found that these two variables had a significant positive relationship ($r=0.964$). According to Salkind (2007), the correlation coefficient of 0.964 reflects a very strong relationship between variables as display in Table 4.8. This result also confirmed with hypothesis 3 which stated as H3. There is relationship between work environment and the transfer of training. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is accepted.

Table 4.10. Correlations between transfers of training and training design

		Mean Work Environment	Mean Transfer of Training
Mean Work Environment	Pearson Correlation	1	.964(**)
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
	N	60	60
Mean Transfer of Training	Pearson Correlation	.964(**)	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
	N	60	60

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

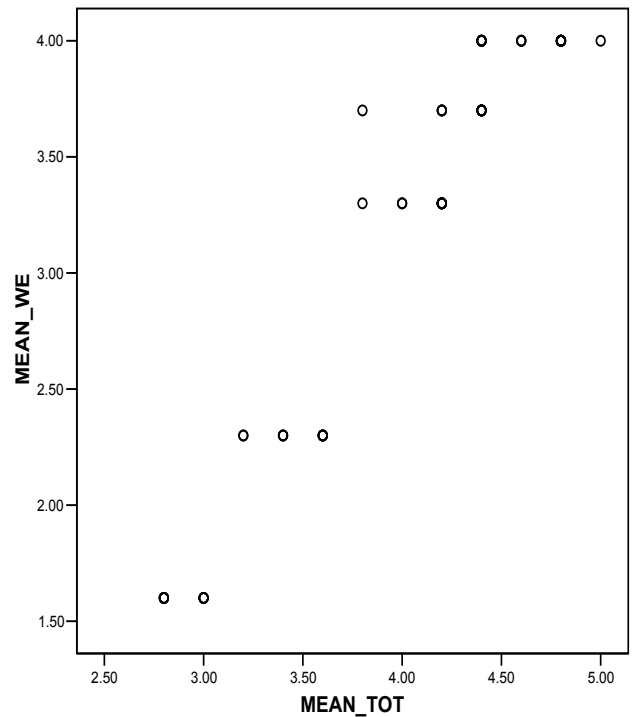


Figure 4.3. Correlations between transfers of training and work environment

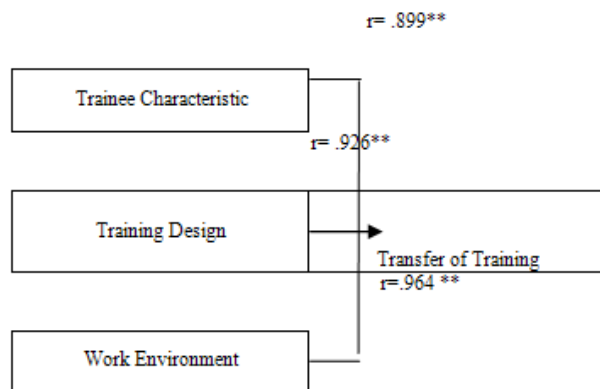
The results show that many of the respondents are attended (28.3%) computer literature skill training compare with other training. It also shows that the respondent gender is 50% male and the remaining is female. Many of respondents academic background is diploma holder (50%).

In order to find out if there was any relationship between trainee characteristics and transfer of training, a Pearson’s correlation test was administered. It was found that these two variables had a significant positive relationship ($r=0.899$).

According to Salkind (2007), the correlation coefficient of 0.899 reflects a very strong relationship between variables. This result also confirmed with hypothesis 1 which stated as H1. There is relationship between trainee characteristics and the transfer of training. Therefore, hypothesis 1 is accepted.

Hypothesis (H2) also showed that these two variables had a significant positive relationship ($r=0.926$). This result also confirmed with hypothesis 2 which stated as H2. There is relationship between training design and the transfer of training. Therefore, hypothesis 2 is accepted.

Hypothesis (H3) is supported by test was also found that these two variables had a significant positive relationship ($r=0.964$). This result also confirmed with hypothesis 3 which stated as H3. There is relationship between work environment and the transfer of training. Therefore, hypothesis 3 is accepted.



4. Conclusions

This study was conducted to identify the relationship between trainee characteristic, training design, and work environment towards the transfer of training among public sector employee around Shah Alam, Selangor, Malaysia. This chapter provides the conclusion and recommendations based on the findings of this study.

Baldwin and Ford[1] summarize three criteria that influence the training transfer, which are trainee characteristics, training design and work environment. Transfer of training is considered successful if the trainee can apply and shared what they have learned from the training program to their colleagues in an organization. This study shows training transfer was significantly correlated and was influenced by the trainee characteristic, training design and work environment.

Based on the research finding, the manager should ensure the content of the training program is related to the staff duties to help them easy to apply what they learn on the job. The manager also needs to sets the training objective clearly to encourage staff to practice what they learn in the training. The important things the manager should also monitor their capability and progress once the staff have attended the training.

Lastly, the future researcher should underpin other issues concerns such the impact of transfer of training toward job performance and sample of questionnaire should distribute to various level of position in organization to measure the whole of the organization. Taken as a whole, it was believed that the results take value to the researchers, not just because it validated most of the hypothesis but taking other issues for researchers to investigate further.

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