

Effects of Human Resource Training on Employee Performance: A case of One parastatal company in Zambia

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Abstract: The purpose of the study was to investigate the effect of employee training on employee performance one parastatal company in Zambia. The methodology employed a mixed-method approach, utilizing quantitative and qualitative methods to comprehensively explore the research topic. A case study was adopted comprising a sample size of 75 employees. Probability sampling, specifically simple random sampling, was utilized for respondent selection, and data were collected through questionnaires and interviews. Thematic analysis was applied to qualitative data, while Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) facilitated quantitative data analysis. Findings indicated that the company implements various training strategies, with most employees understanding strategic objectives to some extent. Training significantly impacted productivity (83.8%), job satisfaction (86.4%), and work quality (48.6%), despite hindrances such as lack of commitment and inadequate resources. Recommendations include establishing transparent evaluation systems and ensuring training relevance through needs analysis.

Key words: Employee training; Employee performance; Productivity; Job satisfaction

I. Background

The quality of an organization's human resources is critical to its survival. To boost productivity and efficiency worldwide, businesses should provide their employees with training and development opportunities to enhance the accomplishment of organizational goals. Assisting employees to become more efficient in their jobs is one of the fundamentally important aspects of people management in any organization. According to Tyson (2006), employees' motivational needs for advancement, recognition, status, and accomplishment can and should be met through job satisfaction and performance accomplishments.

Employees need to be exposed to a continuous learning atmosphere to keep themselves abreast with the organizational mission & vision. They must gain varied skills and a broader knowledge base in terms of various personal and professional attributes (Spender 2001). This may ultimately affect the organization's performance and give it a competitive advantage in its business.

In addition, Elnaga and Imra (2013) contend that effective training programs, which may also have an impact on employee motivation and commitment, are necessary for employees to acquire the desired knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to perform well on the job. They note that the majority of businesses improve employee performance through superior levels of motivation and commitment by investing in building new skills for their workforce through long-term planning. When employees notice their organization's interest in them through training programs, they put out their best efforts to fulfill corporate goals and display great performance on the job.

Politics and organizational culture are two examples of the many factors that impede task completion and optimal performance in the workplace. Some employees may be unable to complete tasks on time because they lack skills, abilities, knowledge, and competencies (Athar and Shah ;2015). Typically, employee performance is evaluated in terms of the outcomes that employees bring to their jobs. However, it can be examined in terms of behavior as well (Armstrong, 2010).

Despite the increasing need to further train employees in a technologically advancing business environment, there is still limited literature on human resource training and development issues in quasi government institutions in Zambia and this has affected the provision of quality services offered by such institutions (Marvin, 2021).

1.1 Research Problem

According to Cole (2021), employees who do not possess adequate skills and knowledge are less effective thereby hindering the organization's ability to achieve optimal results. Therefore, employee training is essential for organizational success because it enhances skills, knowledge, values, and capabilities leading to improved performance and productivity. Despite the increasing importance of training in a rapidly evolving technological landscape, there is limited research on human resource development issues in quasi-governmental institutions in Zambia thereby affecting the quality of services they provide (Marvin, 2021). Complaints about the performance of the Zambia Electricity Supply Company (THE COMPANY) have been attributed to incompetent personnel, highlighting the need for improved training (Mukape, 2022). Although there is ample research on training economics in developed nations, studies on training issues in developing countries like Zambia are scarce. Recent studies (Mubanu, 2014; Mattom and Milopowe, 2019; Kamoche, 2014) have highlighted a gap in research regarding the impact of training on employee performance within the broader field of human resource management (HRM). By conducting a detailed investigation using THE COMPANY as a case study, this research aims to address this gap by exploring the impact of employee training on performance.

1.2 Research Objectives

The objectives of this study were:

- i. To identify the human resource training strategies in place at the company
- ii. To ascertain the extent to which human resource training objectives align with the organization's strategic objectives.
- iii. To quantify the effect of employee training on various aspects of employee performance such as productivity, job satisfaction, and quality of work at the company
- iv. To identify the key factors that hinder the effectiveness of employee training programs at the company.

II. Literature Review

This chapter reviews literature pertaining to the relevance of training employees; human resource training strategies; the effect of employee training on productivity, job satisfaction and quality of work and the relationship between employee training and organizational strategic objectives.

2.1 The Relevance of Training

In any organization, training is essential to ensure that the employee skills set aligns with the market standards and dynamics. (Imran et al, 2014; Zahra et al, 2014; Otuko et al, 2013). With training, employees would be able to adapt to the constantly changing situation and manage daily work while maintaining or even improving their job performance, since training prepared employees to be ready for any huddles and reduces employee resistance to change (Khan et al., 2016; Shafini et al., 2016). Training not only promotes new knowledge, skills, and abilities but also cultivates learning behavior and prepares employees for any uncertainty that might occur. Furthermore, investment in training does not only support developing skills, but it also shows employees that they are valuable.

Strategic planning and development of personnel is an area deemed critical for an organization's effective utilization of human capital. The management's involvement in projects pertaining to the adept handling of human resources is considered paramount for organizational success. In today's technology-driven world, employees are acknowledged as vital and valuable assets, necessitating careful attention to their well-being (Lundwe, 2010). Scholars and experts unanimously emphasize the pivotal role of training and development in steering an organization's progress and fostering optimal performance.

The commitment of employees towards achieving organizational goals is integral to the development and successful execution of an organization's strategies. Notably, scholars underscore the significance of training and development to enhance the knowledge base of the workforce, acknowledging its pivotal role in organizational advancement and economic growth (Sungham, 2015). Despite the acknowledged importance of training, organizations often grapple with the perceived costliness of comprehensive development programs.

Apart from expanding the knowledge base, training instills confidence in employees, providing them with a deeper understanding of their roles and responsibilities. This confidence translates into improved performance and the generation of innovative ideas, propelling individuals towards success. Moreover, continuous training ensures that employees stay abreast of industry developments, positioning the organization as a pioneer in a dynamic and competitive landscape (Mpongore, 2013).

A well-designed training and development program guarantees consistent experience and foundational knowledge among employees, particularly concerning the organization's core processes and procedures. This consistency is crucial for maintaining the integrity of the organization's fundamental operations. All employees should possess a thorough understanding of the organization's expectations, policies, and procedures, encompassing aspects such as safety, privacy, and regulatory compliance. Standardized training programs provide uniform access to this essential information, offering a competitive advantage to employees over their counterparts in organizations that lack such comprehensive training initiatives (Siapgr, 2013).

Investing in training communicates to employees that they are valued contributors to the organization. Beyond the acquisition of specific skills, training opens avenues for personal and professional growth, exposing employees to facets of the industry they may not have encountered independently. This sense of value and the opportunity for development contribute to employee satisfaction and, potentially, heightened job performance (Greer, 2013).

2.2 Human Resource Training Strategies

While educational methods continue to evolve, several training approaches have been seen to be more effective and are widely utilized to support new employees, impart new skills, and improve existing ones. Greer (2003) argues that hands-on training methods, particularly in the UK, allow new or inexperienced employees to learn by observing colleagues or supervisors performing tasks and attempting to emulate their behaviour. These methods are cost-effective and less disruptive because employees are typically on the job, training is provided on the same equipment, and experience is gained using current supported standards, all while the employee is actively learning. (Greer, 2003).

A study by Mbingu (2010) in Uganda revealed that coaching is one of the most effective human resource training strategies. Coaching involves targeted guidance, quickly identifying areas of weakness, and focusing on improving them. It also facilitates the transition from theoretical learning to practical application, leveraging existing practices and trends. (Mbingu, 2010).

Furthermore, Magweze (2010) in South Africa identified mentoring as another prominent human resource training method used by telecommunications firms. This type of training focuses on attitude development, particularly for managerial staff, and is typically conducted by a senior member within the organization in a personalized, one-on-one setting. (Magweze, 2010).

According to Mpeleme and Mukambo (2015) in Botswana, Job Rotation is an effective human resource training program as it provides individuals with the opportunity to learn new tasks. Job rotation involves employees moving from one job to another at predetermined intervals to gain a comprehensive understanding of all aspects of the business and to test their abilities. (Mpeleme & Mukambo, 2015).

In Zambia, Mbaweme (2019) found that off-the-job training was identified as an effective training method in the financial sector. Off-the-job training methods are conducted away from the work environment, focus on providing instruction, emphasize learning rather than performance, and allow for freedom of expression. (Mbaweme, 2019).

Mbaweme (2019) further identified two off-the-job training methods, namely Classroom Talks and Workshops, and Simulated Training. Classroom Talks and Workshops are traditional forms of instruction that revolve around formal lecture courses and workshops, aimed at acquiring knowledge and developing theoretical and analytical skills. Simulated Training, on the other hand, involves learning on actual or simulated equipment used in the workplace but conducted off-site. This method is particularly useful when it is too costly or hazardous to train employees on-site. (Mbaweme, 2019).

2.3 Relationship between employee training and the Organizations strategic objectives.

According to Abeguki, O. O. E., Paul, S. O., Akinrole, O. O., & Ugochukwu, A. (2014), the effectiveness of workers and job satisfaction is enhanced through training processes that align with the organization's core objectives. The outcomes of training within an organization can vary depending on how it is implemented and the assessment of training needs. Dawe (2003) suggests that the success of any activity is measured by the extent to which it achieves its desired objectives. In the context of training programs, success is evaluated based on the tangible and intangible benefits that training provides to the organization. Successful training is often supported by a thorough training needs assessment, which helps identify the most appropriate training practices for the specific organizational context.

Barbazzette (2014) defines needs assessment as the primary method of gathering information related to identified organizational needs, which are then addressed through training. This highlights the essential role of a needs assessments in designing training programs that may improve employee performance while ultimately aligning to organizational strategic objectives. Natalie (2019) further emphasizes that training in any organization should align with the organization's strategic goals, such as waste reduction, process optimization, and continuous improvement. To foster a culture of continuous improvement among employees, training interventions must be carefully planned and implemented in collaboration with the organization's leadership. Simply providing training is insufficient; it must be accompanied by other initiatives to anchor behavioural changes while ensure ongoing efforts across the organization.

In Zambia, Mubelo (2019) highlights the strong relationship between employee training and company objectives such as research and development, brand marketing, and retention. To enhance brand marketing skills among employees, training initiatives should extend beyond the marketing department to involve all staff as brand ambassadors. Continuous training on brand attributes and differentiation is essential, particularly for sales staff who interact directly with customers.

2.4 The effect of employee training on productivity, job satisfaction and quality of work

Wright and Geroy (2013) conducted research in Belgium and discovered that effective training programs significantly influences employee skills, leading to improved job performance and the expansion of crucial knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary for future work, thereby enhancing overall organizational performance. Likewise, Swabo and Lenny (2013) in Sweden revealed that training has a positive effect on employee performance as it enhances their knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviours, ultimately benefiting both the employee and the organization.

In a similar study, Nassazi (2013) contends that training does the following: increases employees' morale, self-confidence, and enthusiasms; lowers production expenses since individuals have the ability to reduce waste; encourages a sense of security which in turn reduces turnover and absenteeism; increases employees' involvement in the change process by providing the capabilities necessary to adjust to new and challenging situations as well as helping the organization in improving the availability and quality of its staff. It is noteworthy to remember that individuals become more .

Swart J, Mann C., Brown S and Price A. (2005) emphasized the importance of addressing skill gaps and performance deficiencies through training interventions to improve employee performance and enhance specific skills and capabilities. They emphasized the significance of identifying employees' performance gaps and shaping their competencies to meet organizational needs, emphasizing the ongoing adaptation of employees to evolving job requirements.

Further, Swanze and Pelgy (2021) in Italy echoed the transformative impact of successful training programs on employee competences, leading to enhanced job performance and the expansion of skills and attitudes vital for future roles, thus contributing to overall organizational success.

Pigors and Myers (1989) conducted research focusing on employee training in the development sector and found that training provides employees with the necessary skills to effectively execute job-related tasks and attain organizational goals. They noted that adequately trained employees experience greater job satisfaction, leading to reduced grievances, absenteeism, and employee turnover.

Aguinis and Kragner (2009) observed that training is associated with improvements in employee performance, which subsequently enhances overall organizational performance. They emphasized the importance of relevant training tailored to organizational needs, which serves as a motivational tool for employees, increasing their commitment to fulfilling their responsibilities. Also, aligning training with employee needs results in increased organizational efficiency and revenue generation.

Key factors that hinder the effectiveness of employee training programs

Ramachandran (2014) conducted an investigation on the feasibility of training programs for public sector employees in the UK. The results of the study revealed a significant correlation between specialized knowledge and organizational characteristics, as well as the practicality of training initiatives. Further, the study emphasized the importance of prior experiences and mentorship in shaping the effectiveness of training programs.

In a similar vein, Sanjeevkumar and Yanan (2019) conducted a survey in Bangladesh to identify the factors influencing employee readiness in blending both theoretical and observational approaches. Their research addressed various factors impacting training, including the types of training available and the unique characteristics of employees. Additionally, Nagar (2009) examined the practicality of training programs within banking institutions in Switzerland. The revelations of the study showed that planning programs are generally strong concerning the picked elements of the audit, which consolidate coach, training, and PC upheld program and establishment workplaces.

Ajlouni and Athamneh (2010) highlighted the necessity of comparing the outcomes of different training programs in India, aiming to identify strengths and weaknesses for future improvements. Petkova (2011) explored the concept of "Enhancing Training Feasibility: The Role of Managerial Fit," emphasizing the importance of aligning training programs with the motivational needs of participants. The finding of the survey uncovered that a movement of positive planning results were seen while getting ready projects fit the understudies' basic persuasive course.

Mohamed (2013) in Morocco drove the focus on the factors affecting the effective execution of getting ready framework to the public foundation. The survey uses the model 84 respondents to accumulate data. The audit revelations uncover that there is no settlement on getting ready need and needs, nonappearance of obligation and absence of resource are factor that confining the acceptability of the program in the affiliation and give appalling result.

It is also worth noting that the strategic importance of employee training and development cannot be overstated. This is because it serves as a linchpin for organizational progress, providing a competitive edge, ensuring consistency, and fostering a culture of continuous improvement. Organizations that recognize and

invest in the development of their workforce are better positioned for success in today's dynamic and competitive business environment.

III. Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This section looks at how data of the research was assembled, the research method that was employed in the study, the data collection techniques used and the target population, the sample size and sampling techniques as well as the data analysis method employed.

3.2 Research approach

The study used quantitative approaches which emphasize objective measurements and the statistical, mathematical, or numerical analysis of data collected through polls, questionnaires, and surveys, or by manipulating pre-existing statistical data using computational techniques. Jha (2008) directs that the purpose of mixed research is to attain greater knowledge and understanding of the social world. Researchers used mixed-method research that employed both qualitative and quantitative methods.

3.3 Research Strategy

The research design refers to the overall strategy that you choose to integrate the different components of the study coherently and logically. A case study strategy was adopted for the study. Case studies are based on an in-depth investigation of a single individual, group or event to explore the causes of underlying principles (O'Leary, 2010). The case can be an individual person, an event, a group, or an institution mainly. Therefore, this study took a case of the company.

3.4 Sampling frame and sample size

Johnson (2000) defines target population as a group of people with rich information about the topic under investigation. The target population was ZESCO employees from the company's head office located at Plot No.6949 Great East Road, Lusaka, Zambia. Mpanu and Ianit (2014) indicate that sample size refers to the number of participants selected from the population with common characteristics, knowhow and accessible to help in the study under investigation.

With approximately 300 employees working from ZESCO's head office (ZESCO, 2023), the researcher employed Yamane's 2009 formula to come up with the suitable sample size for the study:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + Ne^2}$$

Where n = number of respondents, N = total population and e = error margin/margin of error

Given N = 300 and e = 10%

$$\begin{aligned} n &= \frac{300}{1 + 300(0.1)^2} \\ &= \frac{300}{1 + 300(0.01)} \\ &= \frac{300}{1 + 3} \\ &= \frac{300}{4} \\ &= 75 \end{aligned}$$

Therefore, the sample consisted of 75 employees. Also, interviews were conducted with two Human Resource Officers from the Company's head office.

3.5 Sampling Technique

Sampling refers to the deliberate determination to the number of items set from the study population. According to Kothari (2004), the final test for sample design is how well it represents the characteristics of the people who support it. The purpose of the sample presentation in this study was to reduce costs, increase the number of respondents, and the faster rate of data collection. In this research, probability sampling was used and a simple random sampling technique was used to select the respondents from the company's head office.

3.6 Data Collection Instruments

Information was gathered using questionnaires and interviews. The questionnaires were used for the study to obtain quantitative data. Also, an Interview guide was used to collect qualitative data from two HR officers. Interview guides outline issues that a researcher feels are likely to be important. Participants were asked to provide answers in their own words and to raise points they believe are important, thus, each interview is likely to flow a little differently, revealing painstaking data (Creswell, 2014)

3.7 Data analysis

For quantitative data, the research will use the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences version 22.0. Thematic analysis was used to analyse qualitative data. The goal of a thematic analysis is to identify themes, that is, patterns in the data that are important or interesting, and use these themes to address the research or say something about an issue (Spradley, 2009). This is much more than simply summarising the data; a good thematic analysis interprets and makes sense of it. Therefore, data in this study was coded and grouped into

themes for analysis (Enezrty, 2014). The thematic analysis approach is unsupervised, meaning that you do not need to set up these categories in advance, do not need to train the algorithm, and therefore can easily capture the unknown unknowns, thus allowing the researcher to comprehensively explore the effect of employee training on employee performance.

3.8 Ethical Considerations

The study was cleared by the university and permission was sought from the parastatal company where the researchers collected data from. The researchers followed all the ethical considerations during data collection and analysis.

IV. Findings

This Chapter shows the analyses and deliberations of the data that was obtained from the field to successfully investigate the impact of employee training on employee performance at the parastatal company. The results of the analyses are shown using different ways like graphs, themes, frequency tables, and mean.

1.1 Socio-demographic characteristics of respondents

4.2.1 Sex

The study comprised of 75 employees as well as two key informants from the Human Resource Department. Data on the sex of respondents was collected so as to know the gender balance. From a total of 75 disseminated questionnaires to employees, 74 were returned representing a 98.67% total response rate. The majority (56.76%) of participants in the study were males. Henceforth, the outcome of this research is expected to be skewed towards the males' viewpoint than the females.

Table 1: Sex of respondents

Sex	Frequency	Percentage
Female	32	56.76
Male	42	43.24
Total	74	100

Source: Field data, 2023

4.2.2 Age

Respondents were required to specify their ages from the specified choices. The results were presented in Table 4.2. The results were as follows; (16.21%) were below 30 years, (28.39%) were between 30 –40 of age, (36.49%) were between 41 –50 of age, (18.91%) were over 50 years of age.

Table 2: Age of respondents

Age	Frequency	Percentage
Below 30	12	16.21
30- 40	21	28.39
41- 50	27	36.49
Above 50	14	18.91
Total	74	100

4.2.3 Level of Education

As seen from figure 4.1, 27% of the partakers in the research were in possession of certificates as their highest level of education. Those with diplomas had 36.5% in a distribution while bachelor's degree holders were 25.7%. Finally, another distribution of those having a Master's degree were 10.8%.

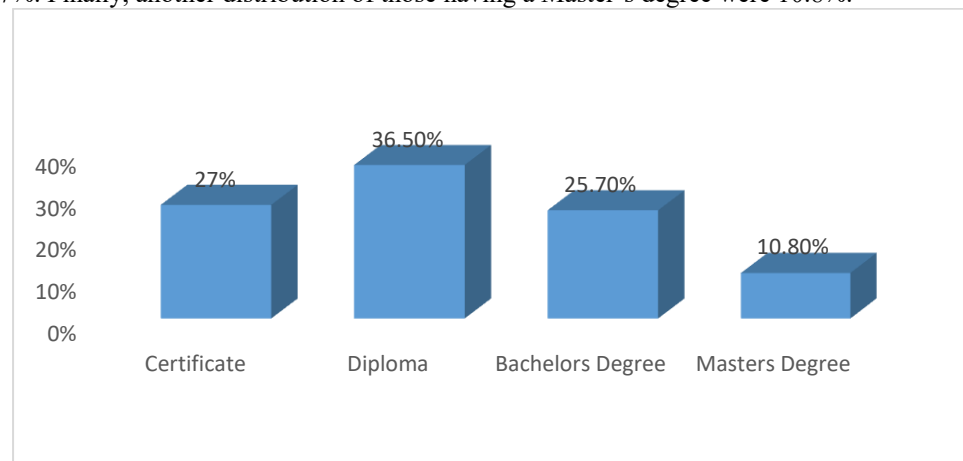


Figure 3.1: Education background

4.2.4 Management level

The majority (48.6%) of employees were in the lower management, 32.4% were in the middle management while a minor 18.9% were in the top management as displayed in figure 4.2.

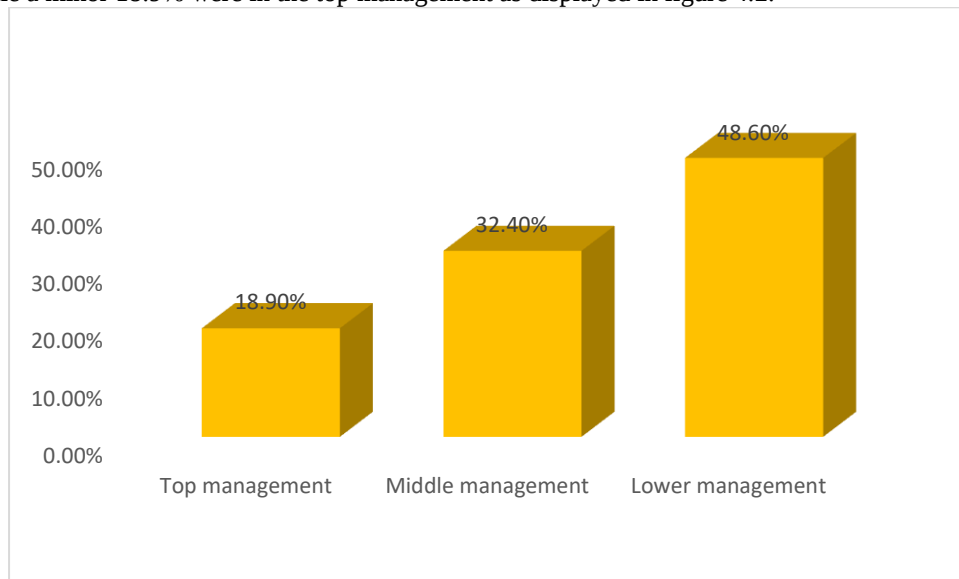


Figure 4.2: Management level

4.2.5 Working experience for the employees

The majority of employees (32.6%) had 6- 8 years of experience while a minor 14.90% had less than 2 years of experience at ZESCO as shown in figure 4.3 below.

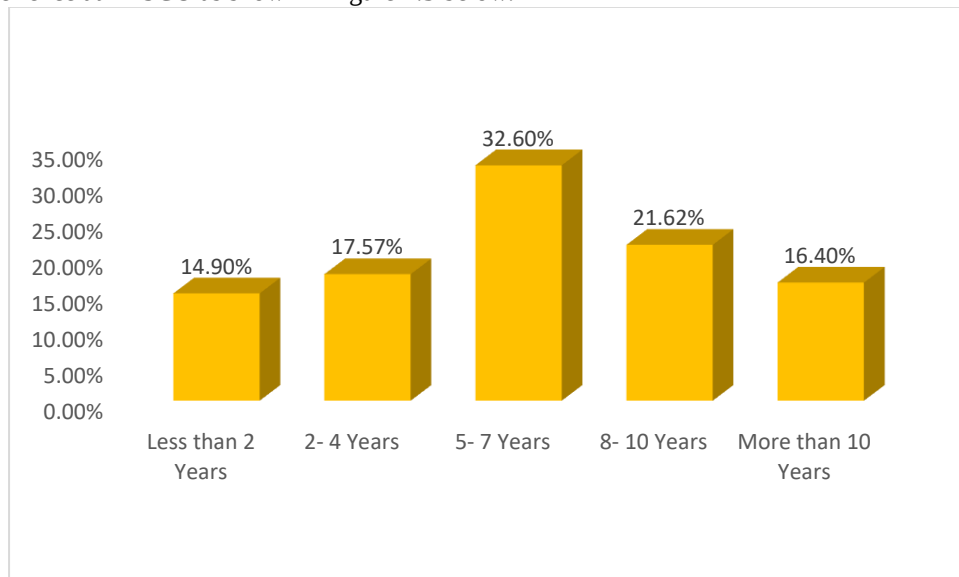


Figure 4.3: Work experience

4.3 The human resource training strategies employed by the company

2.

Participants were asked to indicate the most notable human resource training strategies that the company has employed and the findings were as shown in figure 4.4. Instructor-Led Learning (100%) and Coaching (100%). Other identified human resource training strategies included; eLearning (59.5%), On-the-Job Training (32.4%), Job shadowing (45.9%), Roleplaying (45.9%), Simulation Training (73%); Collaborative Training (35.10%) and Cross- Training (25.6%). A minor proportion of employees (13.5%) also identified Peer-to-Peer Learning as one of the human resource training strategies that ZESCO has employed.

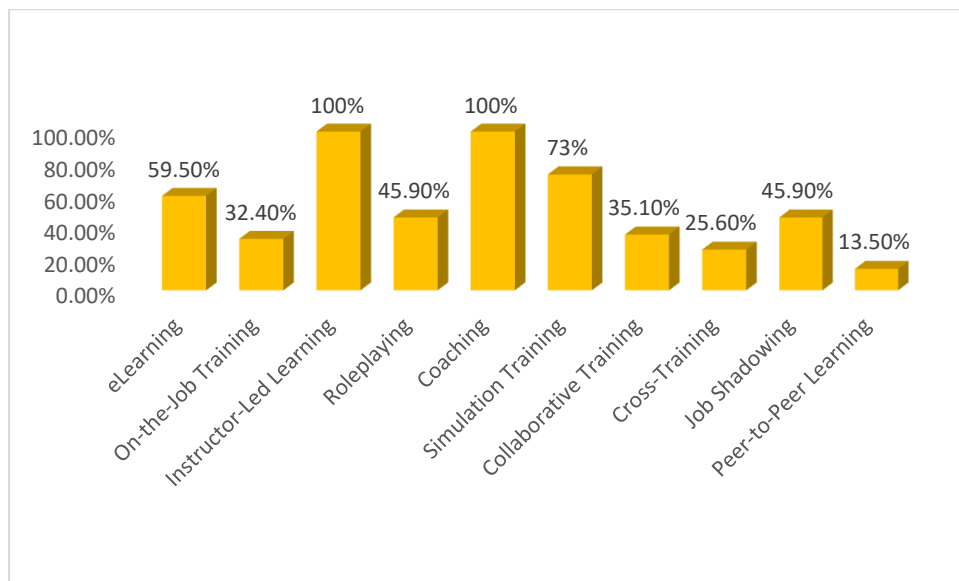


Figure 4.4: The human resource training strategies

In-depth interviews with two Human Resource Officers from the Company's head office also revealed that Collaborative training, Coaching, Cross training and On-the-Job Training were some of the major human resource training strategies that ZESCO was employing to improve employee performance.

"Collaborative training is used for employees to share their knowledge and expertise, teaching and learning from one another at the same time. This technique helps enhance the overall training experience for employees by capitalizing on their skills, ideas, and knowledge," stated one of the key informants (Respondent 1)

"We are also trying to create training videos for employees to enable them to digest information in an easy-to-understand format that is easier to retain, and that employees will be able to go back and watch at any time," he added

Another key informant (Respondent 2) stated:

"Cross-training is one of the main the human resource training strategies that ZESCO has implemented and it involves teaching an employee hired to perform one job function the skills to perform new job functions. This allows the employees to offer support in the time of need instead of having to outsource work."

"Employees find cross-training beneficial for their personal growth as it makes them learn new skills to enhance their value within the organization, or switch to a role that they feel is more aligned with their career aspirations," she added.

Regarding On-the-Job Training, the key informant (Respondent 1) said:

"On-the-job training enables active participation for ZESCO employees by allowing them to learn in the flow of work. It is one of the most effective employee training methods to teach a new software application or process via in-app and on-screen walkthroughs and guides that help users navigate different application features and tasks. The end goal of on-the-job training is faster user adoption of new tools or newly released features."

3.

4.4 The strategic objectives of the company and employees' perception of the extent to which these objectives are aligned with employee training programs

Interviews with two key informants revealed that the company's strategic objectives were centered around five strategic focus areas namely: Customer Satisfaction, Financial Sustainability, Expanded Infrastructure, Effective Maintenance, and Optimized Human Capital.

"ZESCO has formulated five Strategic Objectives which, will guide the 2022-2031 Strategic Plan, these are to; achieve customer satisfaction, win customer confidence and loyalty; be a financially sustainable organisation that balances the needs of its stakeholders; expand the Generation, Transmission and Distribution systems guided by an Integrated Resource Plan; have an effective maintenance regime for Generation, Transmission and Distribution systems; and to align human capital to business objectives," narrated one of the key informants (Respondent 2)

When asked if they understood the company's strategic objectives, some respondents (27%) expressed ignorance regarding these strategic objectives while another 16% were undecided. However, the majority (57%) indicated that they did understand company's strategic objectives as shown in figure 4.5.

4.



Figure 3. 5:company'S strategic objectives

A Likert scale was employed to lay down the extent of disagreement or agreement with the subsequent statements as presented in table 4.5

1-Strongly Agree 2-Agree 3-Neutral 4-Disagree 5-Strongly Disagree

The numbers inside braces denote proportions

Table 4.3: Strategic objectives of ZESCO and employees' perception

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
ZESCO's strategic objectives are aligned with employee training programs		44 (59.5)	6 (8.1)	24(32.4)	
Employees attend the trainings that fit departments' needs with the alignment of the organization objective.		32 (43)	11 (14.9)	30 (41.9)	
The strategic objective of the organization is clear and accessible for the employees		27 (36.5)	4(5.4)	32 (43)	11 (14.9)
The effectiveness of training programs is properly evaluated in terms of improvements in employees' performance.		11 (14.9)	12(16.2)	40(55.4)	11 (14.9)

The majority of respondents (59.5%) agreed with the assertion that ZESCO's strategic objectives are aligned with employee training programs, 32.4% disagreed while a minor 8.1% remained neutral. Furthermore, the bulk of participants (43%) agreed with the assertion that employees attend the trainings that fit departments' needs with the alignment of the organization objective. However, 41.9% disagreed with this claim while a minor 11.9% were undecided. The majority of partakers in the study (43%) disagreed with the assertion that the strategic objectives of ZESCO are clear and accessible for the employees, another 14.9% strongly disagreed while 36.5% agreed with the assertion. Most of the respondents (55.4%) disagreed with the claim that the effectiveness of training programs was properly evaluated in terms of improvements in employees' performance, 14.9% agreed with this assertion while 16.2% were undecided as shown in table 4.3.

Respondents were further asked to state the extent to which ZESCO's strategic objectives are aligned with employee training programs and the results were as shown in figure 4.6; Great extent (18.9%), Moderate extent (45.9%), Little extent (27%) and No extent (8.1%).

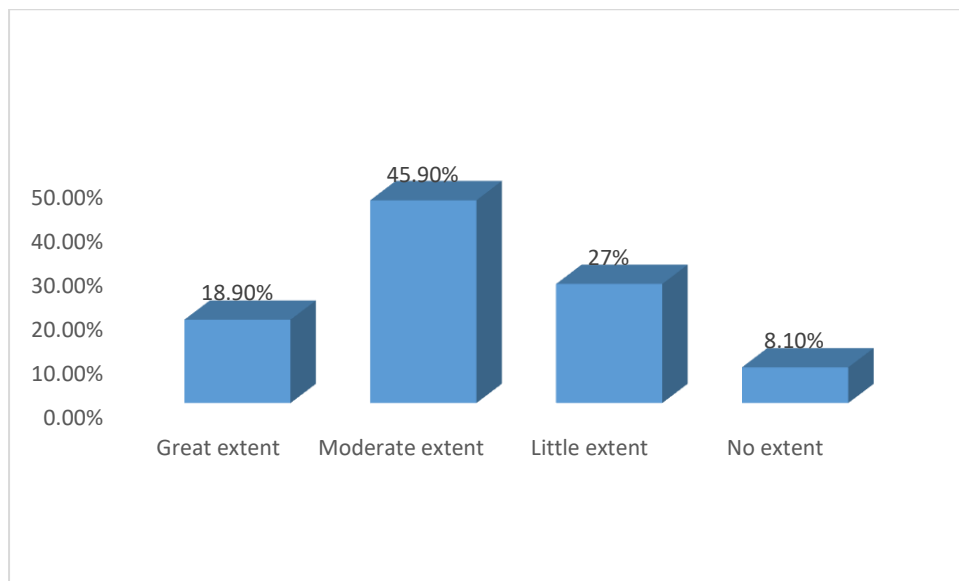


Figure 4.6: Strategic objectives and employee training programs

4.5 The effect of employee training on various aspects of employee performance such as productivity, job satisfaction, and quality of work at the company

Table 4.4: The effect of employee training on various aspects of employee performance

	1	2	3	4	5
I can say that training practice of the organization helped me to become more productive at work	-	60 (83.8)	14 (18.9)	-	-
I have become more confident and efficient in performing work related tasks after receiving the trainings.	16 (21.6)	44(59.5)	-	14 (18.9)	-
In my opinion training helps me to increase job satisfaction	64 (86.4)	10(13.5)	-	-	-
Because of the good training practices of the organization, my work quality has improved	19 (21.6)	36 (48.6)	11 (14.9)	8 (10.8)	-
The trainings motivate me to enhance my job performance	16 (21.6)	34 (45.9)	10 (13.5)	14 18.9)	-

The majority of respondents (83.8%) agreed with the assertion that training practice of the organization helped the to become more productive at work. Also, the bulk of participants in the study (59.5%) agreed with the assertion that they had become more confident and efficient in performing work related tasks after receiving the trainings, another 21.6% agreed while a minor (18.9%) disagreed. The majority of respondents (86.4%) strongly agreed with the assertion that training helped them to increase job satisfaction. Also, the bulk of respondents (48.6%) agreed with the claim that because of the good training practices of the organization, their work quality had improved, another 21.6% strongly agreed with this claim, 14.9% were undecided while a minor (10.8%) disagreed. Lastly, the majority of respondents (45.9%) agreed with the assertion that the trainings motivated the to enhance their job performance, 21.6% strongly agreed with the claim while a minor 13.5% remained neutral as shown in table 4.4.

4.6 The key factors that hinder the effectiveness of employee training programmes

Asked to identify the key factors that hinder the effectiveness of employee training programs at ZESCO, the following hindrances were revealed by respondents as shown in figure 4.7: Lack of employee commitment (32.4%); Lack of company commitment (52.9%); Inadequate resources (45.9%); Lack of training technology (51.4%); Lack of agreement on training needs and priorities (32.4%); Training style and environment (24.3%); Lack of open-mindedness of trainer (24.3%); Emotional intelligence (25.7%) and; Lack of audio-visual aids (54.1%).

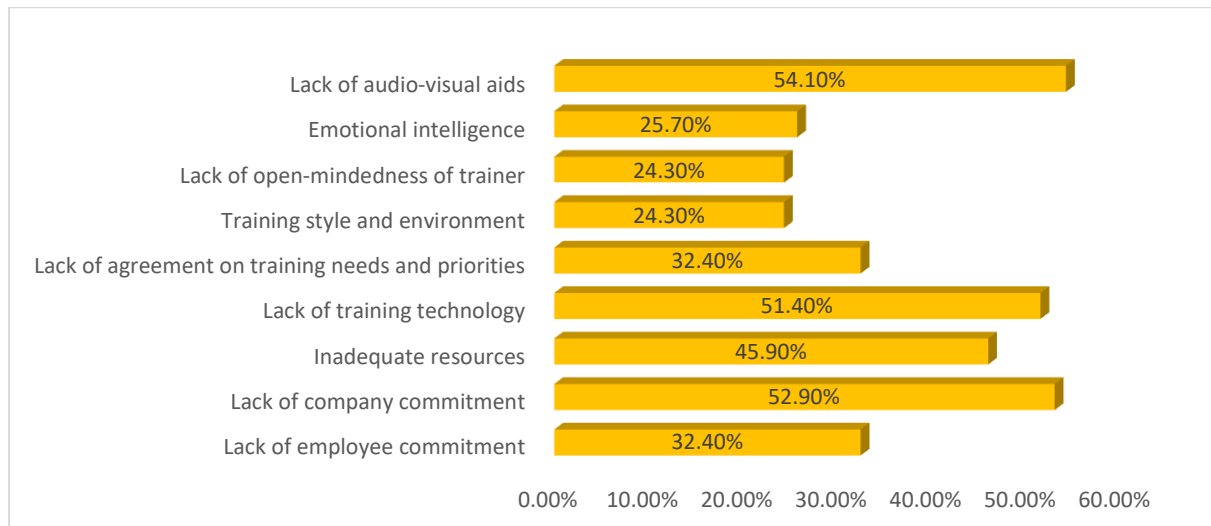


Figure 4.7: Factors that hinder the effectiveness of employee training programs

The two key informants identified several factors that hindered the effectiveness of employee training programs, among the notable ones were; inadequate resources, political interference, lack of audio-visual aids, Resistance to change as well as lack of focus and goals.

“Through experience, I have noticed that audio-visual support to the learning process has facilitated the grasp of an idea much better. Audio visual aids is highly ranked in the public sector, something that we have not fully utilized,” narrated one of the key informants (Respondent 1)

Another key informant (Respondent) narrated:

“There is a lack of focus and resistance to change when it comes to employees who have been in the organization for a long time, most of these employees see training functions such as workshops as business as usual.”

“Political interference and inadequate resources are the other fundamental challenges hindering’ the effectiveness of employee training programmes. Institutions ...should be run independently so that only suitably qualified individuals are hired for particular tasks, such employees are easier to train due to a good academic background. Also, inadequate resources make it challenging for the institution to purchase learning aids that would make training stress free,” she added.

V. Discussion of Findings

5.1 This section of the research shows the summary of findings arising from the survey conducted by the researcher to investigate the impact of employee training on employee performance using one parastatal company as a case study.

5.2 The human resource training strategies employed by the company

The first objective of this study sought to identify the human resource training strategies that the company has employed. The study established that the company had several human resource training strategies, these include; Instructor-Led Learning, Coaching, eLearning, On-the-Job Training, Job shadowing, Roleplaying, Simulation Training, and Collaborative Training. Others were cross-training and Peer-to-Peer Learning. Similarly, according to Greer (2003), on-the-job training methods allows new or inexperienced employees learn through observing peers or managers performing the job and trying to imitate their behavior. These methods do not cost much and are less disruptive as employees are always on the job, training is given on the same machines and experience would be on already approved standards, and above all the trainee is learning while earning (Greer, 2003).

Additionally, Mbingu (2010) revealed that coaching is one of the most effective human resource training strategies. Coaching is a one-to-one training. It helps in quickly identifying the weak areas and tries to focus on them. It also offers the benefit of transferring theory learning to practice. The biggest problem is that it perpetrates the existing practices and styles (Mbingu, 2010). The findings are also consistent with Magweze (2010) who identified Instructor-Led Learning, Coaching, eLearning, On-the-Job Training as prominent human resource training strategy used by telecommunication firms in South Africa.

5.3 The strategic objectives of the company employees’ perception on the extent to which these objections are aligned with employee training programs

The second objective of this study sought to determine the strategic objectives of the company and employees’ perception on the extent to which these objections are aligned with employee training programs.

The study established that the company has formulated five strategic objectives which, will guide the 2022-2031 Strategic Plan, these are to; achieve customer satisfaction, win customer confidence and loyalty; be a financially sustainable organisation that balances the needs of its stakeholders; expand the Generation, Transmission and Distribution systems guided by an Integrated Resource Plan; have an effective maintenance regime for Generation, Transmission and Distribution systems; and to align human capital to business objectives. Despite the fact that the majority of employees (57%) understood company's strategic objectives, a significant proportion (27%) expressed ignorance regarding these strategic objectives while another 16% were unsure. However, the majority of respondents (59.5%) agreed with the assertion that the company's strategic objectives are aligned with employee training programs. Furthermore, the bulk of participants (43%) agreed with the assertion that employees attend the trainings that fit departments' needs with the alignment of the organization's objective. The majority of partakers in the study (43%) disagreed with the assertion that the strategic objectives of the company are clear and accessible for the employees. Most of the respondents (55.4%) disagreed with the claim that the effectiveness of training programs was properly evaluated in terms of improvements in employees' performance. Respondents were further asked to state the extent to which the company's strategic objectives are aligned with employee training programs and the majority (45.9%) indicated that the company's strategic objectives were to a moderate extent aligned with employee training programs.

This is consistent with Abeguki et al (2014) who revealed that employee effectiveness, production, and job satisfaction on the job performance is supported by the training process which is centered on the organization's strategic objectives. In the process of practicing training in the organization may come with two results which depend on the way it is practiced and need assessment of the training in the organization.

According to Dawe (2003), success in any activity is measured to the extent to which the activity achieves its desired objective whereas in a training program success is measured on the tangible and intangible benefit that training provides to the organization. In any organization successful training is supported contributed with training need assessment whereby the process of assessing the need for training raises the appropriate training to be practiced in the required environment.

5.4 The effect of employee training on various aspects of employee performance such as productivity, job satisfaction, and quality of work

Furthermore, the researcher sought to quantify the effect of employee training on various aspects of employee performance such as productivity, job satisfaction, and quality of work at the company. The majority of respondents (83.8%) agreed with the assertion that training practices of the organization helped the to become more productive at work. Also, the bulk of participants in the study (59.5%) agreed with the assertion that they had become more confident and efficient in performing work-related tasks after receiving the training. The majority of respondents (86.4%) strongly agreed with the assertion that training helped them to increase job satisfaction. Also, the bulk of respondents (48.6%) agreed with the claim that because of the good training practices of the organization, their work quality had improved. Lastly, the majority of respondents (45.9%) agreed with the assertion that the trainings motivated the to enhance their job performance.

The findings of this study are consistent with Pigors and Myers (2019) who established that through training the employee competencies are developed and enable them to implement the job related work efficiently, and achieve firm objectives in a competitive manner. Further still, dissatisfaction complaints, absenteeism and turnover can be greatly reduced when employees are so well trained that can experience the direct satisfaction associated with the sense of achievement and knowledge that they are developing their inherent capabilities (Pigors and Myers, 2019).

Furthermore, Aguinis and Kraigner (2009) established that training was linked to changes of employee performance in the organization that result in job performance through related training which influences the improvement of the employee in performing their work whereby the unrelated job training may result in poor performance since it does not address the need of training in the organization. It also acts as a motivational tool to the employees in the organization and influences in the increasing of morale of the employees in performing their responsibilities in the organization.

5.4 The key factors that hinder the effectiveness of employee training programmes

Finally, the researcher also sought to identify the key factors that hinder the effectiveness of employee training programs at the company. Response from respondents revealed several key factors that hinder the effectiveness of employee training programs at the company, among these were; lack of employee commitment, lack of company commitment, inadequate resources, lack of training technology, lack of agreement on training needs and priorities, training style and environment and lack of open-mindedness of trainer. Other hindrances included emotional intelligence, lack of audio-visual aids as well as political interference.

This is consistent with Mohamed (2013) whose study revealed that lack of agreement on training needs and priorities, lack of commitment, and shortage of funds are the factors that limit the sustainability of the program in the organization and provide poor results. Similarly, Mndeme (2019) revealed that several factors hinder the

successful implementation of employee training programs, among them training assessment, the attitude of the officers on training program, and inadequate funding for training program.

VI. Conclusion and recommendation

1. Conclusion

The purpose of the study was to investigate the impact of employee training on employee performance at the company. The study concluded that employee training had a significant impact on employee performance at the company. Based on the correlation value of 0.817, the null hypothesis that there is no any significant relationship between employee training and productivity was rejected. Furthermore, based on the correlation value of 0.719, the null hypothesis that there was no any significant relationship between employee training and quality of work of the company employees was rejected. In addition, many respondents (83.8%) agreed with the assertion that training practice of the organization helped them to become more productive at work. Also, the bulk of participants in the study (59.5%) agreed with the assertion that they had become more confident and efficient in performing work related tasks after receiving the training. The majority of respondents (86.4%) strongly agreed with the assertion that training helped them to increase job satisfaction. Lastly, the bulk of respondents (48.6%) agreed with the claim that because of the good training practices of the organization, their work quality had improved. However, it was established that the strategic objectives of the company were not clear and accessible for the employees. Also, most of the respondents (55.4%) were of the view that the effectiveness of training programs was not properly evaluated in terms of improvements in employees' performance.

2. Recommendations

- I. Parastatal companies should develop a sound training and development process where the performance of employees is evaluated through transparent systems. Training must be based on need-based analysis and returns should be collected statistically. It should be a continuous process as it helps reduce costs in the long run.
- II. The management of parastatal companies and the Boards should see training objectives, design, delivery methods, implementation, and evaluation as a continuous process for organizational development and survival and also for effective employee performance.
- III. In this study, some respondents replied that the topic covered during the training were not relevant to them. Thus, the organization should have to ensure that the training offered to employees should be relevant to their needs. In order to achieve this, training needs analysis should be conducted to ascertain the possible gaps.
- IV. The training provided by the company should be designed based on the needs of the individuals, with the alignments of the strategic objective of the organization and the selection for training should be based on the proper need assessment, this helps the organization to identify whether the employees are comfortable with their job and their workplace and to check how the employees deliver quality service. So that the organization has to see the information gathered during the needs assessment before designing the training.
- V. The organization should use training techniques (training delivery methods) according to the type and categories which are suitable for different categories of employees in the organization like managerial and non-managerial, technical, administrative, skilled, unskilled, senior and junior, and so on.

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