

The Impact of Training Transfer Theories on the Contemporary HR Practices: Exploring the Challenges Faced by Institutions in the Kingdom of Bahrain

By

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Abstract

The kingdom of Bahrain launched Vision 2030 in 2006 with the objective of boost the national economy (Bahrain.bh, 2018). The vision was articulated to strategically boost the labour market and economic well-being through various projects. This includes vocational projects, training interventions and other prospects. This vision also aims to transform the economy from a oil and develop further in all areas of the economy through skilled labor generation. This paper has been inspired from this Vision, which is to investigate to what extent that trainers & HR practitioner/professional are qualified to implement the training transfer theories at the workplace in Bahrain. Thus, this paper discussed the importance of understanding theories of training transfer, its influential factors on trainers, and its positive impact on the H.R. practitioner/professional working in a contemporary organization. The literature review covers topics related to Holton factors (Transfer of Training, Transfer Motivation, Training Transfer Design and Transfer Climate). Face-to-face interviews were conducted with eight participants. The qualitative method is adopted as the research methodology. The study findings outline that the HR professionals need to acquire more skills and competencies to ensure effective transfer of training.

The results suggest that the HR practitioners and professionals are not well versed in the concept of training transfer and lack the competencies to transfer the learnings from the training programs effectively. Moreover, advanced 21st-century skills and capabilities are required to be developed. Overall, the research contributes towards addressing the gap of implementing the training transfer methods in the Kingdom of Bahrain across Bahrain training institutions, personnel units and HR divisions of private sector universities. It creates high quality transfer of instruction methods of training transfer in Bahraini institutes, HR of private sectors and universities through launching contemporary training techniques such as (Transfer of Motivation, Training transfer Design & Transfer of Climate). The researcher produced 'MKTTT' model. The model simulates transfer of training to deal with the contemporary challenges faced by HR practitioners/professional to the workplace. The transfer of training implements 'Holton factors' i.e., Transfer motivation, transfer design & Transfer climate in the workplace, which will eventually improve the performance of the HR contemporary organization in the 21st century, (Baldwin & Ford, 1988).

Keywords: Transfer of Training, Transfer Motivation, Training Transfer Design, Transfer Climate & Holon's Factors.

Question of the Research

To what extent do the Training centers in Bahrain implement the Training Transfer theories on HR practitioners/professional trainees and, what is needed in this regard. Moreover, are the HR practitioner efficient and qualified in transferring training at the workplace?

Literature review

This part covers and reviews the topics that are relevant to ‘Training Transfer and its influential factors, Theory of Motivation Transfer, Training Transfer Design and Transfer Climate. The literature concludes that implementing Holton’s Factors will positively influence the HR practitioner/professional performance and enable him/her to transfer the learned knowledge, skills and competencies to the organization. Finally, this will increase the quality of HR performance and will eventually improve organizational outcomes.

2.1 Transfer of Training

Training is an important component and functional process of any HR division (Mihardjo et al., 2020). Whenever there is a discussion on training, the concept of training transfer is also highlighted. The term transfer of training is referred as the “the application of training at the workplace” (Gegenfurtner et al, 2009, p.125). This concept resembles the experience of simulation at the workplace (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Typically, transfer of training is the capability of bringing the learning and knowledge gained from the training programs to the workplace and exploring ways for its implementation to improve job outcomes (Andreas et al., 2016). Training transfer has a much greater influence when considered with Holton’s Factors which makes a much more proactive influence on individual performance through bringing the learned knowledge and acquired skills to the workplace. Henceforth, the transfer of training can be seen as a healthy approach to boosting individual and organizational performance. Without the transfer of training, an organization cannot reap the fruits of the training programs

2.2 Theory of Transfer Motivation

Motivation is essential to transfer the learnings from the training responsively. Employees` should have desire to transfer the gained skills, knowledge and competencies at the workplace. The transfer of training solely relies on the drive, passion and eagerness (i.e., motivation) of the learners to transfer the acquired knowledge to the betterment of the workplace (Ahmed et al., 2016) “One of the important factors among individual characteristics is transfer motivation, to achieve maximum learning transfer” (Bhatti et al., 2014, p.59). Scholarly studies suggest that when employees acquire knowledge and skills through training interventions and apply them at the workplace, it boosts the organization's overall performance (Yamnil & Mclean, 2001; Hilko et al, 2016). Thus, individuals should have the motivation to transfer their skills and knowledge to the job and ensure its effective implementation. Equally, HR practitioners should also showcase a strong desire to transfer and apply the gained knowledge at the workplace for better organizational functioning (Sahoo & Mishra, 2017).

2.3 Training Transfer Design

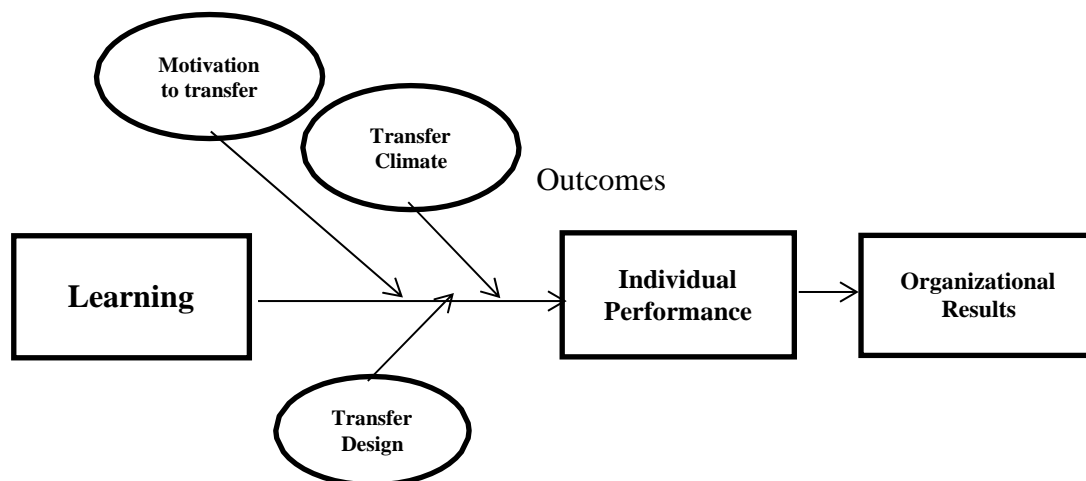
Responsive transfer of training requires a well-designed transfer of training course. “Transfer design’ refers to the degree to which training has been designed and delivered to give trainees the ability to transfer learning to the job and training should match job requirements” (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2014, p.150). In addition, “Transfer design develops an understanding about the training program and shows in a practical way how training can be

best used back on the job” (Bhatti et al., 2014, p.66). if the training design is not taken into consideration from theory to practice, it may result in the failure of the entire training effort (Yamnill & Mclean, 2001). The training transfer design should consists of activities similar to simulation whereby the learner is given a matching workplace-based knowledge, skills and competencies which it is required to implement at the workplace. For this, appropriate methods are needed to ensure the transfer of training was objectively done (Diamantidis and Chatzoglou, 2014; Bhatti et al., 2014; Yamnill & Mclean, 2001). Therefore, HR practitioners should strive to design a professional working model for training transfer in this regard.

2.4 Transfer Climate

Generally, it is essential to see the type of transfer climate when it comes to training transfer. Transfer climate refers to how conducive an organization`s climate is for transferring the knowledge, skills and competencies gained from the training events. Every organization aspiring for a healthy transfer of training should focus on developing a healthy learning transfer climate (cf. Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Hilko et al., 2016). Rouiller and Goldstein (1993) believes that "until trainees move into job contexts that have a climate that favors the use of the behaviours learnt in training, they will not be likely to use their learned skills” (Rouiller & Goldstein, 1993, p.378). Transfer climate is regarded an aspect of mediation between the behaviour of the worker and the work environment (Yamnill & Mclean, 2001; Khan & Nazir, 2017). As a result, all favourable conditions supporting acquiring and applying information and skills in the workplace will motivate and inspire the HR professional to work (Grossman & Salas, 2011). Hence, it is more probable that HR practitioners can transfer and implement the knowledge and skills to the work environment if all of the above training transfer aspects that HR practitioner learned through the training transfer are available in the working environment.

Figure: 1: *Holton Factors Affecting Transfer of Training model*



Sources: Adapted from (Yamnill and Mclean, 2001, p.196)

Conclusion

The experience at the job is implemented through the transfer of training and its influencing elements, it is concluded. The ability to transfer newly acquired skills and competencies to the workplace environment will help modern organizations perform better in the long run if the HR practitioner is fully equipped with all training transfer theories and the

important elements (Gegenfurtner et al, 2009; Bhatti et al, 2014; Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Transfer Motivation, Transfer Design, and Transfer Climate are the variables that affect the effectiveness of the transfer process that the HR practitioner applies after participating in a simulation. In order to transmit and integrate what they learned in the simulation in the workplace and provide the organization with the most possible advantage, an HR practitioner with experience must be upbeat and have a strong drive for change (Bhatti et al., 2014). Similar simulated instruction methodologies, learning principles, self-management techniques, and relapse prevention tactics should be included in the transfer design.

Lastly, the transfer climate is the presence of all favorable elements that promote acquiring and applying information and skills and motivate and inspire employees to work (Grossman & Salas, 2011). Using Holton's Variables that Affect Transfer of Training will therefore have a good impact on performance and make it possible for HR practitioners to transmit the knowledge, skills, and competencies they have learned to the organization. As a result, HR performance will be of higher quality, eventually leading to better organizational results.

Methodology

The qualitative method is considered the research methodology based on the research aim. Thus, collecting the data from the participants was through interactive face-to-face by using techniques of interviews. The selected sample includes (HR practitioners of private sector and HR of universities and trainers). All are relevant to the research area (Saunders et al., 2007). This was through visits to the concerned training centers, HR departments of the private sector & HR universities in Bahrain. Qualitative content analysis was implemented to analyses the data (Lee & lings, 2008).

3.1 Sampling

HR practitioners and trainers purposively have been chosen among employees are working in the field of HRM, private /academic and training. Two training centers, two organizations and one academic organization have been selected at group level. The sample included eight candidates, three trainers and five HR practitioners (Saunders et al., 2007).

Figure: 2:

Position	Gender	Age	Experience	Total
HR practitioner	Male	27-40	6-10	2
HR practitioner	Female	30-40	6-10	3
Trainer	Male	38-60	10 & above	2
Trainer	Female	40-55	10 & above	1
Total sample				8

2.3 Analysis and coding scheme

Qualitative content analysis was implemented and a coding scheme (schedule) has been created where the researcher was enabled to set the main key words, codes and specifications of each code. Four codes were abstracted carefully from the aim of the paper and the literature review. Eight interviewees were attended face-to-face interviews, i.e., five HR practitioners & professionals and three trainers. All have been selected purposively from three organizations (Academic, institute & company).

Figure: 3:

Codes	Specifications
Code (1): Training transfer by HR practitioner to the workplace	How HR practitioner can deliver the training transfer Specifications: 1- Experience of simulation 2- Quality of transfer training techniques 3- Authentic learning environment
Code (2): Theory of Transfer Motivation	HR practitioner desire to transfer the to the workplace. Specifications: 1- Transfer what leaned into practice on job 2- positive motivation and interest to transfer skills. Methods help to transfer what trainees learnt in the training transfer design
Code (3): Training Transfer design	Specifications: 1- design of training 2- Models or theories 3- understanding about the training program Perceiving that the work environment as either motivating or hindering. Specifications:
Code (4): Transfer Climate	1- Sense of imperative, obliged and enthusiastic to work productively in a favourable environment 2- Availability of all positive factors that facilitate the learning and implementation of skills and knowledge available in the work climate

Findings

Code (1) Training transfer: Participant 1 only cited one quality, "confidence," along with some underlying implications regarding the ability of employees to address difficulties through dialogue. It is acknowledged that the trainee's performance only slightly improved after the course, indicating that the participant did not learn many new abilities and was unable to apply their training in the workplace. Theoretical knowledge and abilities, such as communication abilities, were gained by participant 2. It is acknowledged that the participant's performance improvement fell short of the training transfer described in the literature. Participant (3) discussed knowledge and confidence, indicating that just a limited amount of theoretical information and one quality—"confidence"—had been acquired. It is acknowledged that the training has a minimal impact on the trainee's performance and that this impact is insufficient to allow an HR professional to use what they have learned in the workplace. No knowledge of training transfer, according to participant number 4. Participant number five claimed to have no knowledge of training transfer. Participant 6 received a negative review because it was ill-prepared for the course. Participant 7 was unprepared because he didn't have the necessary tool, as he mentioned. In the case of participant (8), there were no set criteria and procedures, which raised some questions about how the absence of such standards would affect students' motivation to study.

Code (2) Transfer of Motivation: Participant (1) provided the training using role plays that were somewhat realistic. The trainer did not mention the course's objectives for transfer of learning, nor did he speak about the plan or design for transfer motivation. Participant (2) displays the use of conventional training. Participant (3) exhibits the best use of conventional

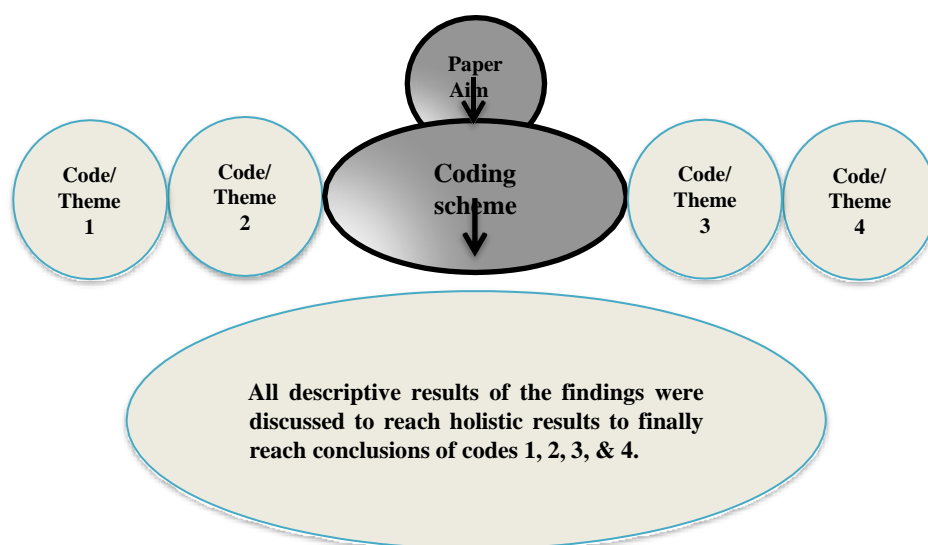
training. It appears that the course did not meet the participant's expectations or fulfill them. Participant (4) said no idea about transfer motivation. Participant (5) said dose not know anything about transfer motivation. Participant (6) used his coaching skills to deliver training, but did not mention anything about adhering to the transfer motivation or a related plan. This means that skills and competences of trainers and trainees may not be adequately delivered if the trainer depends on his own skills only. Participant (7) It's not necessary to adhere to the ideas, models, or textbooks. Yet, the trainer seems not to have produced a plan based on the objectives of transfer training on the one hand, and not having a plan design to expand the skills and information that should be supplied to the trainees on the other side. Participant (8) did not respond to the question, indicating that, based on the course objectives and plan, the participant did not have a clear vision for imparting information and skills to the trainees.

Code (3) Training Transfer Design: Participant (1) reflected the use of classical instruction in part. No application was made by participant (2). Neither conventional nor alternative. Only two traditional applications were cited by participant #3, indicating the scope of traditional practice. Participant (4) the answer was no idea at all about training transfer design. Participant (5) no answer. Participant (6) suggested a very fundamental teaching strategy. He did not, however, propose any models, theories, or any cutting-edge training approaches. Participant (7) discussed the conventional training tools. Nevertheless, neither designs, ideas, models, nor any recent or contemporary training approaches were discussed. Participant 8 does not understand the transfer designs, theories, and training models well.

Code (4) Transfer of Climate: The first participant felt at ease in the learning environment. The participant discussed the fundamental elements present in any traditional training context, indicating that the learning environment was conventional in its underlying meaning. Together with Participant, Participant (2) also provided excellent feedback. Participant #3 made it quite evident that the institute's learning atmosphere lacked preparation. Despite the forceful atmosphere at the hotel, it might not be a great place to learn. Participant (4) no answer. Participant (5) no answer.

Discussion

Figure 4:



Theme 1: Training transfer to the workplace: The reactions of both (HR practitioners & Trainers) are not up to the level that makes HR practitioners proficient in transferring training to his/her job. In order to effectively transmit training to the workplace, HR practitioners and trainers need to develop more skills and competencies. The ability to apply the skills and competencies the student learns while performing his work is stressed in the literature as transfer of training. (Andreas et al., 2016). It is the transfer of the learned skills to their workplace in a way that improves their work performance and benefits the organization's overall achievement so that they "can enjoy the fruits of their training activities" (Bhatti et al, 2014, p.51). It appears that trainers fell short of providing the training transfer effectively, most likely as a result of the trainers' inability to develop an efficient design and planning and their lack of familiarity with training transfer theories and models. On the other hand, it was evident that HR practitioners and professionals had not been given any instructions or training about transfer training and were unaware of this issue. As a result, they require thorough training in this area.

Theme 2: The trainee's desire to transfer motivation to the workplace after the training. People have positive motivation and enthusiasm in transferring their skills and knowledge to the workplace, which helps the business achieve its plans to the highest standard. Although they are aware of the significance of the beneficial influence on the business, it appears that trainers and HR practitioners/professionals are not sufficiently informed on the motivation behind training. Thus, trainers, HR practitioners & professionals should pay attention to the huge requirements of skills and competences of possessing transfer motivation to fulfil the requirements that enable HR practitioner/professional to create positive and motivated environment in his/her department. Thus, an HR practitioner learner must genuinely desire change to transfer and use what they have learned in the workplace and maximize the benefits for the business.

Theme 3: Methods help to transfer what trainees learnt in the training transfer design:

It is evident that trainers lacked vision in their theories and models about the design of training transfers, which prevented HR practitioners and professionals from learning the knowledge and abilities necessary to plan transfer training in the workplace. To build a clear vision of the training transfer design, trainers should set goals and criterion that assists with transfer design. Additionally, it should include the traditional functions and current abilities stated in the literature study above to insure the correct transfer of training to the workplace to fulfill the transfer design goals (Velada et al., 2007). According to the literature, trainers should have used models and theories that included tactics, approaches, and procedures when carrying out training since doing so is essential for obtaining higher-quality training results, which may be attained by creating an appropriate training environment. Similar simulated instruction approaches, learning theories, self-management techniques, and relapse prevention tactics should be incorporated into training transfer design.

Theme 4: Judging the workplace as either motivating or restrictive: Participants' responses suggested that the learning environment, whether in institutions or organizations, is at a minimum. The literature demonstrates that creating an appropriate training environment is essential for getting higher-quality training results. This indicates that the environments at training facilities and organizations are not set up per current training transfer standards. This shows a glaring deficit in both training organizations and centers.

Transfer climate is therefore viewed as a component of mediating between employee behavior and the workplace (Yamhill and Mclean, 20011; Khan & Nazir, 2017).

As a result, all favorable conditions supporting acquiring and applying information and skills in the workplace will motivate and inspire the HR professional to work (Grossman & Salas, 2011). Therefore, it is likely that HR practitioners will be able to transfer and integrate the information and abilities to the workplace if all of the aforementioned training transfer aspects that they learned are present in the working environment

MKTTT simulates transfer of training to deal with the contemporary challenges faced by HR practitioners/professional to the workplace. The transfer of training implements ‘Holton factors’ i.e., Transfer motivation, transfer design & Transfer climate in the workplace, which will eventually improve the performance of the HR contemporary organization in the 21st century, (Gegenfurtner et al, 2009; Bhatti et al, 2014; Baldwin & Ford, 1988).

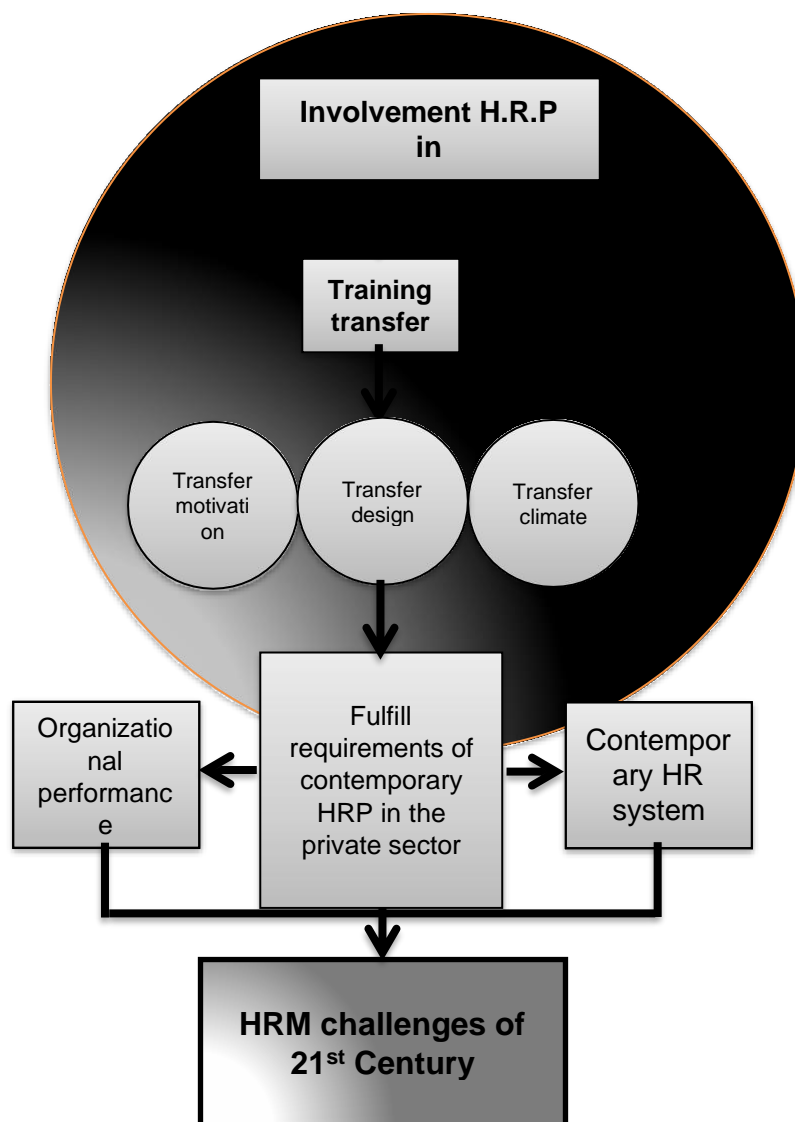


Figure 5: Mohd Kashami Transfer Training Theories (MKTTT)

Research Contribution

The outcome addresses the gap of implementing training transfer methods in Bahrain training institutes, HR departments of the private sector and HR department of universities. The outcome creates high quality transfer of instruction methods of training transfer for

Bahraini institutes, HR of private sectors and HR of universities through launching contemporary techniques such as (Transfer of Motivation, Training transfer Design & Transfer of Climate). Results show that Bahraini training centres are not providing or instructing the HR practitioners/ professionals trainees of the latest techniques of training transfer that will enable them to transfer whatever been learnt to the workplace. This means, training centres failed of delivering new contemporary models & theories related to Transfer Training Transfer of Motivation, Training transfer Design & Transfer of Climate. Thus, the utilization of Holton's factors can influence transfer of training. This enables HR professionals to transfer learning and knowledge gained to the organization which eventually organizational outcomes.

Conclusion

It is concluded that the HR practitioner/professional should be highly skilful at technique of training transfer that learnt about motivation transfer, training transfer design & Climate transfer to be able to transferring it to the workplace in a professional method. Acquiring such important skills & competences, will create a highly qualified HR practitioner/professional able to meet the contemporary challenges of HRM in the 21st century.

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