

THE PERCEPTION OF EFFECTIVENESS OF TRAINING METHODS ON RETAIL EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: A PROPOSED MODEL

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Abstract: *This study investigates the impact of various training methods such as classroom training, e-learning, and on-the-job training on employee performance within the dynamic context of retail business. Recognizing human capital as a central organizational asset, Business Retailers has invested significantly in training to enhance productivity, adaptability, and service quality amid an evolving retail landscape. However, inconsistent employee performance, particularly post-pandemic, raises concerns about the effectiveness and relevance of these training initiatives. Grounded in the Blended Learning Theory, this research explores employee perceptions of different training modalities and their correlation with measurable job performance outcomes. By analyzing how these perceptions influence learning engagement and practical skill application, the study aims to identify optimal training strategies that drive performance improvement. Findings will contribute to both academic understanding and practical insights, helping Retail organizations align training delivery with workforce needs, maximize training ROI, and foster sustained employee development in a competitive retail environment.*

Keywords: *Training Methods, Retail Employee Performance, Classroom Training, E-learning, On-the-Job Training.*

Introduction

In a business, the valuable resource is humans, who may propel a company's operations by means of their aptitudes and capabilities. The hierarchy of relationship motif existed within the firm, including those with colleagues and managers, have impacted on the entire of the organization's operations (Mulyani & Rozak, 2022). Performance includes all actions taken to advance the operations of a business or organization. In determining whether a company succeeds or fails, personnel play an integral part. The corporation in this instance consistently assesses each employee's performance to ensure that they have met their responsibilities and obligations in accordance with expectations. Assess whether the organization will continue to work with employees if their work performance meets expectations using this performance evaluation, which is of the utmost significance (Aktar & Islam, 2021).

Retail business has increasingly recognized the significance that human resources serve in the modern business landscape. Since they enable the efficient use of other organizational resources, human resources are considered the key component (Zaihan et al., 2020). Employee performance remains the highest priority since it provides an essential component in determining retail shops' trajectory toward success. The strong symbiotic relationship between the success of the company and its personnel, especially regarding employee well-being, serves as the foundation for this. Achieving high performance within the workforce holds manifold benefits, both for the employees and the employers themselves. This elevated performance not only contributes to the organization's overall success but also fosters the well-being of its workforce. From the study of Sohaime (2021), it has become evident that the performance levels of employees in retail shop services have not reached their optimum potential.

Moreover, the company has contended with a pronounced decline in performance, intensified by the disruptions formed by the COVID-19 pandemic. While there has been a visible uptick in performance, it has deplorably lacked consistency. For an organization to succeed and to preserve its competitive edge throughout the modern retail sector, employee performance optimization is fundamental. The right decision-making process involved in choosing and implementing the right training techniques is crucial in this situation. Retail shops have the responsibility to be sure that its employees receive the proper training and are provided with the resources that they require to achieve success in their positions (Sern, 2019). The primary concern that merits research in the framework of the present investigation pertains to the effectiveness of different training methods, such as e-learning, classroom training, and on-the-job training, that can enhance the work performance of the workers in the company (Zaihan et al., 2020).

Retail companies conduct business in an ever-changing retail environment that is defined by shifting consumer tastes, developing technology, and heightening competition. Every Retail shop hopes to empower its staff to work more effectively and efficiently by providing them with thorough training. This is particularly relevant considering the dynamic work environment that is defined by technological advancements, changing work processes, and the corresponding need for adjustments to knowledge, skills, attitudes, and behaviors. Particularly concerning is the fact that the personnel of Retail X require training in many kinds of professional certificates and specific abilities. Management professional certifications, quality certifications, quality administration certifications, auditing and finance certifications, competency management training, specialized control of documentation training, and business software development certifications are involved but not limited to (Sern, 2019). Through observations, it may be

inferred that a sizeable fraction of the employed population has yet to complete competency-based training, indicating an imperative for a deliberate effort to eradicate this gap.

Problem Statement

With the competitive and rapidly changing nature of the retailing environment, Retail shops are always striving to enhance employee productivity, operational efficiency, and customer service. One of the key methods utilized in achieving these is investing in employee training and development programs. Training is taken to provide the employees with the required knowledge, skills, and attitudes to accomplish their duties, to prosper (Tetteh & Agyemang, 2023). adapt to technology, and cause the company However, despite the growing allocation of financial and human resources to training initiatives, Retail shops are reporting stagnant or even declining performance metrics, such as low sales conversion rates, employee disengagement, high turnover, and poor customer satisfaction.

This paradox raises a critical concern: Are the training methods used by Retail shops perceived by employees as effective and relevant to their job roles? Recent literature underscores that employee perception of training plays a pivotal role in shaping behavioural outcomes. When employees perceive training as relevant, engaging, and applicable to their roles, they are more likely to internalize learning and apply it on the job (Alawamleh et al., 2019). Conversely, when training is seen as generic, outdated, or disconnected from day-to-day responsibilities, its practical impact diminishes (Almazrouei & Zacca, 2023). Further, the diversity of training methods ranging from traditional classroom learning to e-learning, simulations, and on-the-job coaching adds another layer of complexity. While some employees may prefer digital learning for its flexibility, others may value face-to-face interaction for its engagement and immediate feedback. Organizations rarely assess which training modality resonates best with their employees, leading to misaligned training strategies that yield limited improvements in performance (Bresk, 2023).

In the context of retail - where success depends heavily on frontline employees' efficiency, communication skills, and adaptability as this misalignment has direct implications for business outcomes. The retail sector is characterized by high employee turnover and low formal education levels in many regions, making the delivery and perception of training particularly critical. Yet empirical evidence on how retail employees perceive these training methods and how these perceptions translate into performance remains sparse. Thus, this study seeks to critically examine the relationship between the perception of training methods and retail employee performance. The project paper will explore the types of training methods commonly used in Retail shops. Further to that how employees perceive the relevance, quality, and impact of these training programs and lastly the extent to which these perceptions correlate with measurable job performance outcomes. The findings of this study will contribute to both academic understanding and practical insights, enabling retail businesses to optimize training strategies, increase employee engagement, and maximize the return on training investment.

Literature Review

Concept of Retail Employee Performance

The term "retail employee performance" is used to describe how successfully personnel in the retail industry complete their duties and responsibilities. It's a wide concept that includes not only sales figures but everything that affects a store's bottom line (Al-Hamdan et al., 2020). Employees' ability to boost revenue via upselling and cross-selling activities. How proficient

workers deliver first-rate service and guarantee happy clients. How quickly and accurately employees do tasks like replenishing stock and running the cash register. Because they know their products inside and out, they can provide excellent recommendations. A team's ability to build rapport with customers in a manner that keeps them coming back. Compliance with the established dress code, attendance policy, and ethical standards: The term "cooperation" is used to describe an employee's willingness and capacity to work with others towards a common goal (Falola et al., 2019). The concept of success in retail goes much beyond quantitative indicators. It's a comprehensive assessment of employees' contributions to the success of the business since it considers both quantitative and qualitative indicators. Related to the study's overarching question "How do different training methods affect the performance of retail employees at Retail shops?" is the concept of "transfer learning." For this reason, accurate retail performance data is necessary for study. Researchers may utilize a combination of objective and subjective measurements (such as customer feedback and management ratings) to capture the nuanced nature of employee performance (Putwain, & Wood, 2023). This is a critical Dependent Variable (DV) since the success of retail businesses depends on the efforts of their retail staff. A company's sales, customer satisfaction, and loyalty might all increase if it prioritized performance. However, poor performance may cost you in terms of both money and reputational damage. A company must know how to train its personnel to perform at peak levels to compete in today's competitive retail economy.

Concept of Training Performance

In this research, the training tactics used by retail organizations serve as Independent Variables (IVs), and emphasis is given to the ways in which these strategies affect the productivity of retail workers. Instruction received in a traditional setting, education received online, and experience gained on the job are all included in this category (Jain & Sharma, 2019). Workers are required to attend predetermined sessions at a training facility or classroom to participate in traditional or in-person training, which is also frequently referred to as classroom training. During these sessions, workers get instruction and guidance from trainers. The technique often includes components such as classroom lectures, student presentations, and small group discussions. The typical approach to advancing one's career is to participate in instruction that takes place in a classroom environment. It is a secure environment in which employees may get the same information from their teachers and converse with their colleagues (Nagar, 2019). The workers in each retail job get classroom education to teach them the essentials of their roles. There is a possibility that the agenda will include discussions on product knowledge, service strategy, and core values held by the company. Workers who get training while they are really doing their tasks can acquire both information and competence more quickly. This method often entails gaining information via hands-on experience, either with the assistance of competent superiors or peers. Workers get practical experience in real-world work environments by participating in OJT programs (Patro et al., 2015). It is particularly effective for tasks that need a high level of hands-on knowledge, such as operating a cash register, stocking shelves, or responding to queries from consumers. Employees learn by executing their jobs and receiving immediate feedback and guidance from teammates with greater experience. Because of the significant implications on employee productivity, training methodologies are of utmost importance in the retail industry (Pillai et al., 2020). It is essential for companies like Retail X to have a solid understanding of the benefits and drawbacks of the many training methods that are available, as well as how these factors influence the performance of retail personnel.

Concept of Classroom Training

Classroom training is referred to an instructor-led or traditional is a relatively structured learning environment in which a trainer or instructor delivers information to the participants face-to-face within a classroom environment. The method of training is revolutionary and widely used throughout multiple sectors, particularly in the corporate and educational environments, because of its structured approach and direct engagement. At the bottom, classroom training focuses on immediate feedback, interaction and hands-on learning experiences. As per Alan et al., (2022) work, classroom training offers an instruction model which combines multiple learning dimensions consisting of psychomotor, cognitive and affective elements which are required for extensive skill development. Classroom training is specifically advantageous in the domain of disciplines which need direct engagement including teamwork or practical skills, in which learners benefit from monitoring and possibly interacting with their trainers and peers in real-time. Wagner et al. (2021) identifies that the traditional classroom setting offers focused learning which improves cognitive load management, learner engagement and motivation. The environment provides the learning opportunity for the learners to clarify concepts, present concerns or questions, and receive instant feedback, which is relatively important in developing extensive understanding. Classroom training also supports a structured curriculum delivery, offering the trainers the ability to complete the learning objectives in a step-by-step format, assuring clarity and consistency. Shi et al. (2020) possibly explored the role of social interactions within the classroom training, reporting that the setting adequately promotes discussion and collaboration, aspects which are often restricted in the self-paced or digital formats. By means of structured group discussions and activities, learners may share the insights, challenge the ideas and integrate solve problems which participate in knowledge execution and retention. The classroom environment as well allows the instructors to customize their teaching methods and possibly adjust to the evolving needs of class, offering a relatively adaptable and flexible learning experience overall. Alternatively, contemporary adaptations of classroom training including the 'flipped classroom' model, leverage the pre-class learning activities to optimize the in-class interaction. Learners in this scenario prepare beforehand, offering the classroom time to be utilized for explanation, problem-solving and execution other than lecture-based instruction. Moreover, Wagner et al. (2021) has explored this classroom training approach by developing active learning and extending student engagement.

Concept of E-Learning

E-learning, often known as electronic learning, is a technique of offering training to workers that takes place completely online. E-learning allows workers to access digital copies of materials, modules, and assessments on their own time and at their own pace using any computer, tablet, or smartphone (Baum & Devine, 2020). Using this method, employees can access the training materials whenever and wherever it is most convenient for them. E-learning is distinguished by several characteristics, two of which are its adaptability and accessibility. Employees have the flexibility to learn at their own pace and on their own timetables since training materials may be accessed whenever it is most convenient for them to do so. When doing e-learning, it is common practice to include various forms of multimedia content, such as videos, quizzes, and interactive simulations, to provide the student with more engaging and engaging experience. The accessibility and adaptability of e-learning dictates it apart from the typical training methods. As per Kuloglu et al. (2022), e-learning environments develop opportunities for self-directed learning, offering the individuals to possibly manage the pace and timing of their related educational activities. Autonomy is a substantial factor in improving learner engagement and motivation as the employees are not limited by physical locations or

fixed training hours. One of the major advantages of e-learning is its multimedia integration which consists of quizzes, videos, interactive simulations and infographics, elements which specifically cater to multiple learning styles. As the research by Khan et al. (2020) possibly suggests that the use of multimedia in the e-learning improves retention through leveraging both auditory and visual channels, which is known as the principle of Cognitive Theory of Multimedia learning. As the instructional videos may help in simplifying complicated concepts along with interactive simulations offering hands-on experience in a relatively virtual setting, offering the learners the ability to refine and practice skills within a risk-free environment. Moreover, the use of assessments and quizzes cultivated within the modules as well allow the employees to test their understanding in the meantime, reinforcing their information by means of instant feedback. Furthermore, e-learning is highly scalable, presenting it to be ideal for companies with geographically large and dispersed workforces. Similarly, Jiang et al. (2021) identified that e-learning allows continuous content delivery throughout different audiences and locations, decreasing the costs linked with traditional training methods such as on-site facilitators and travel. Stability on the other hand, assures us that all the employees can receive the same high-quality training, which is particularly valuable in industries with massive compliance as per regulatory standards. The analytical abilities of the e-learning platforms also play an important role in observing and improving the learning outcomes. As per Hendy (2021), contemporary e-learning platforms are highly equipped with analytics tools which follow the organizations to observe employee engagement, employee progress and the accomplishment rates. The insights allow the companies to refine training programs and possibly support the employees based on their innovative learning needs. For example, personalized learning paths can be made using such insights, customizing content for the individual employees based on their performance which develops a more effective and targeted learning experience.

The Concept on Job Training

On Job Training (OJT) is a practical training method in which employees gain skills and knowledge directly within the work environment under the possibly guidance of seniors, mentors or supervisors. The training type in consideration is carried out within the regular workflow, offering the employees the opportunity to learn along with carrying out their job responsibilities. As the immersive nature of OJT possibly makes it specifically effective for skills set development, as the employees may instantly execute their learning within the real-world scenarios, improving both confidence and competency. OJT is specifically valuable because of its hands-on learning approach. It differs from a typical training course which may depend widely on theoretical knowledge, as OJT offers employees practical and interactive learning experience. As per Hendy (2021), OJT offers new hires to retrieve and adopt the job-specific skills instantly as they grow to engage with the actual tasks and utilize equipment followed by tools relevant to such roles. The instant exposure towards job duties allows the employees to possibly understand the demands of their designations from the outset, participating to extensive productivity and adaptation. A substantial benefit of OJT is related to its adaptability. Mentors or trainers may personalize the learning experience as per the needs and learning speed of each trainee, possibly developing a supportive environment which improves employee retention and satisfaction. The personalized guidance in consideration has been identified by Dessler (2019), offer the trainees to possibly ask questions and receive feedback, acknowledging the skills gaps. Furthermore, as the trainers continue to remain involved within their regular duties, there is found to be less disturbance within the operational tasks of the organization, presenting OJT as a cost-effective method of training. OJT is compensated as a 'shadowing' phase, in which trainers monitor the seasoned employees carrying out the tasks before slowly taking accountability on themselves. The following phased

approach lowers risks, specifically in the industries in which errors can be relatively hazardous or costly such as healthcare or manufacturing. Employees retrieve confidence as they grow confidence over the transition from monitoring to practice assuring that they are prepared to carry out their tasks in an independent manner. Nevertheless, OTJ has its own limitations. It depends marginally on the patience and capabilities of the trainers and if structurization is not carried out adequately, it may also result in inefficient learning experiences. Regardless of these challenges, OJT continues to widely be used and possibly valued for its direct execution, ability to shrink the learning curve and forward adaptability.

The Relationship between Classroom Training and Employee Performance

The relationship between classroom training and employee performance is a crucial interest area for the organizations aiming to improve workforce effectiveness. Classroom training is a typical form of instructor-led and structured learning, providing the employees with the opportunity to gain knowledge and skills within a controlled environment. Nguyen et al. (2020) states that this setting provides for direct interaction between the employees and trainers, allowing instant feedback, hands-on experience and clarification of concepts each of which participates to a robust understanding of the job-related tasks followed by expectations. Astuti et al. (2020) states that relatively structured training programs rectify competency and confidence of employees, resulting to improved job performance. As when the employees feel knowledgeable and prepared, they are more inclined towards fulfilling their assigned responsibilities with confidence, directly participating to elevated productivity and decreased error rates. Shi et al. (2022) stated that classroom training develops collaboration amongst the employees as the group discussions and exercises promote knowledge sharing and peer learning, furthermore, improving performance by means of a supportive culture of learning. Furthermore, classroom training allows the trainers to adapt to their teaching styles to achieve the different learning needs of the employees, offering a targeted approach which improves retention and engagement. Darkwa and Antwi (2021) identified that the interactive elements in the classroom training including simulations, and role-playing offer the employees to practice is real-life scenarios, possibly preparing them to handle the workplace challenges in an effective manner. Regardless of the evolving growth of online training methods, classroom training continues to remain valuable for the improvement of performance, specifically in the roles needing direct customer interaction, hands-on skills or teamwork. Organizations which invest in frequent classroom training sessions are more inclined towards reviewing improvements in employee performance, as the related approach amalgamates practical application with theoretical knowledge in a relatively productive and capable workforce.

Hypothesis 1 (H1): Classroom Training positively affects retail employee performance in Retail X.

The Relationship between E-learning and Employee Performance

The relationship between employee performance and e-learning in the contemporary timeline is rapidly relevant within the digital workplace in which accessibility and flexibility is preferred. E-learning is explained by self-paced and online modules providing a relatively convenient way for the employees to gain and upgrade their skills without disturbing their work regimes. The learning model allows the employees to retrieve videos, training materials, videos and simulations on their own time, promoting consistent skill developing and improving job performance. A major benefit of e-learning relates to its adaptability towards multiple learning styles and paces, offering the employees the ability to engage with the content as required. Porras-Salazar et al., 21 (2021) found that e-learning improves knowledge retention as the

employees may revisit complicated topics again, possibly reinforcing their understanding before executing it to their roles. The flexibility contributes to extended empowerment and engagement, as the employees can control their journey of learning throughout, which has been exhibited to rectify performance by means of extensive knowledge, innovation and application. Furthermore, e-learning platforms offer data-driven insights, allowing the managers to track progress individually of every employee and highlight improvement areas. Naveed et al. (2023) reports that such analytics allow targeted support and customized feedback which are both important for extending the influence of training on employee performance.

Hypothesis 2 (H2): E-Learning positively affects retail employee performance in Retail X

The Relationship of on-the-job training and employee performance

OJT is an important factor in improving employee performance as it directly allows the employees with technical knowledge and skills needed for their roles. It differs from a typical training program, as it takes place within the actual work surrounding, allowing the employees to learn in real-time and execute new skills instantly. The OJT method offers the employees the ability to engage in real tasks, developing an extensive understanding of job functions, expectations and processes (Niati et al., 2021). The relationship between employee performance and OJT is based on employee productivity and skills acquisition. As employees who receive relevant and structured OJT are more inclined towards adapting rapidly towards their responsibilities, feel more empowered and exhibit higher efficiency on job. The method as well engages consistent learning and developing, coinciding the employees with organizational goals and overall standards (Zhou et al., 2020). Moreover, OJT develops a supportive culture of learning in which employees may receive feedback instantly from peers and supervisors, improving their problem-solving adaptability and abilities. An effective OJT rectifies employee morale, improves job satisfaction, decreases employee turnover, resulting in an improved organizational performance and productive workforce (Iis et al., 2022). Therefore, investing in the OJT programs can be a strategic approach for the companies targeting maximized performance and developing a competent and skilled workforce.

Hypothesis 3 (H3): On-the-Job Training positively affects retail employee performance in Retail X.

Blended Theory

According to the Blended Theory, which offers the framework for the study of organizational behavior and blended, higher worker effort occurs when workers have faith that their efforts will be rewarded. It is an effective theory which combines the different training types thus to evaluate therefore amalgamates different training types with regards to their effect on the retail employee performance. Blended Learning Theory effectively combines traditional face-to-face instruction with digital resources to enhance education in various fields. By utilizing the strengths of both methods, it significantly improves knowledge retention, increases engagement, and enhances the application of practical skills, leading to a more dynamic and effective learning experience. Blended learning, as articulated by Graham (2006), represents a pedagogical approach that synthesizes face-to-face instruction with online learning modalities to enhance educational outcomes. This framework is underpinned by constructivist and behaviorist theories, promoting active engagement and reinforcement of knowledge. It offers the flexibility of self-directed digital resources while facilitating synchronous interactions that enrich the learning experience. In the retail industry, the adoption of blended learning methodologies in employee training is becoming more prevalent, enhancing skill sets and

sustaining operational efficiency. This multifaceted approach integrates traditional classroom instruction with e-learning modules, OJT, and simulation exercises. Such a comprehensive training framework enables employees to acquire a robust theoretical foundation while simultaneously honing practical skills necessary for real-world application. Empirical research indicates that blended learning methodologies significantly enhance retail employee performance by fostering increased productivity, superior customer service, and elevated job satisfaction. The integration of various instructional modalities facilitates the development of employee competencies and boosts engagement levels during training processes, thereby optimizing the overall effectiveness of skill acquisition and retention.

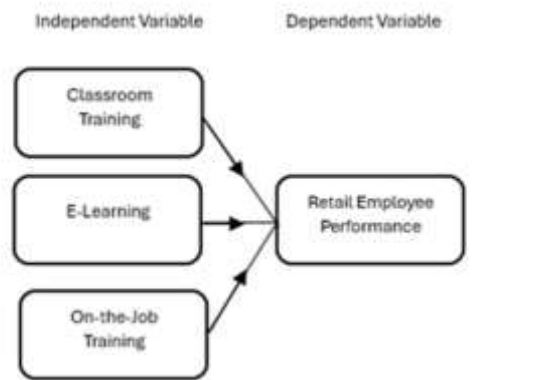


Figure 1: A Proposed Model Framework

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