Virtual Training: Enhancing Business Proficiency in the Digital Age

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ABSTRACT

The rise of information technology has led to a transformative shift in the field of Virtual Training. The demand for company training has seen significant growth, allowing employees to receive Virtual Training simulations without the need for traditional physical training. For over a decade, businesses have increasingly relied on technology to enhance daily work processes, resulting in improved efficiency. By using technology to deliver training, companies can save on travel expenses and training time, offer flexible coaching and diverse content accessibility, and enable permanent access to training resources within the organization. Globalization has also led to a greater reliance on Virtual Training, as it allows businesses to reach large groups of people across different regions while reducing costs and increasing efficiency. Virtual Training is a preferred learning channel for many due to its global accessibility and reach. It provides the freedom to learn anytime and anywhere with just a click over the internet. The fourth industrial revolution, driven by the development of ICT, enables smart automation, decentralized control, and smart connectivity (such as the Internet of Things). To realize the vision of the "factory of the future," human workers need to be continuously trained on new and changing technology trends since human resources are the most flexible entity in the production system. Novel approaches for knowledge delivery and skill transfer are necessary to keep up with the latest technologies. Virtual Training is a promising solution to meet the challenges of coping with recent technological advancements.

Keywords: Virtual Training, HRIS, IoT

A. Introduction

Virtual Training refers to a training approach that can be effectively implemented without requiring a traditional offline training environment. Employee training is crucial for the growth of an organization, as it allows employees to acquire new skills and upgrade existing ones, which ultimately contributes to the overall improvement of the organization. In order to achieve optimal performance, organizations must provide their employees with the necessary training, which typically requires additional manpower, infrastructure, and resources. Virtual Training plays a vital role in addressing these challenges, as it provides a virtual environment for training, thereby minimizing the need for additional resources.

This approach is currently being utilized in a variety of fields, including medicine, aviation, and manufacturing. The objective of this study is to examine how employees are enhancing their skills through Virtual Training and how organizations are benefiting from this approach in a smart and effective manner.

B. A Brief Review of Extant Literature

The demand for alternative methods of learning is increasing rapidly, and many corporations have turned to electronic learning (e-learning) to create a collaborative learning environment. Virtual Training is a technique that uses technology to provide learning solutions. E-learning, according to Chen (2008), combines technology with learning, delivered using telecommunication and information technologies. The use of E-learning by employees has varying correlations with job productivity, job performance, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment. It has been determined that technology alone will not yield the desired results; corporations need to strike a balance between E-learning strategies and managerial support (Ellis and Kuznia, 2014).

Despite the growth of Virtual Training in different sectors and its perceived benefits, its efficiency will not be fully utilized if the users are not willing to accept and use the system. Successful implementation of Virtual Training depends on whether or not employees are willing to adopt and accept the technology. Therefore, it has become imperative for practitioners and policy makers to understand the factors affecting user acceptance of web-based learning systems to enhance the students' learning experience (Tarhini et al., 2014a).

Recent studies have shown that e-learning implementation is not simply a technological solution, but also a process influenced by many different factors such as social factors (Schepers and Wetzels, 2007; Tarhini et al., 2014b; 2015), individual factors (Liaw and Huang, 2011), organizational factors such as facilitating conditions (Sun and Zhang, 2006), and behavioural and cultural factors (Masoumi, 2010). Such major factors play an important role in how an information technology is developed and used (Kim and Moore, 2005).

Learning Management Systems (LMS) such as Blackboard, E-College, Sharable Content Object Reference Model (SCORM), Instructional Management Systems (IMS), and Aviation Industry Computer-Based Training Committee (AICC) would define the future of e-learning (Chen, 2008). The evolution of e-learning continued as communication and television technologies transformed learning, and the development of personal computers and the evolution of the internet drastically moved learning to the next level by adding a dynamic feature to learning. Learners could interact synchronously or asynchronously with one another in the learning process. eLearning has experienced explosive growth over the last couple of decades due to businesses' commitment to developing their training programs in eLearning technology and cultural acceptance of eLearning.

Some global companies use both Learning Management Systems (LMS) and a virtual corporate university platform to train stakeholders to ensure that employees are knowledgeable with updated skills and information. With the use of such systems, corporations can create and track individual training schedules. On the other hand, virtual corporate universities are more effective than LMS because they enable collaborative learning, facilitate the development of social training programs, allow interactive training, and support mobile learning. Bonk (2009) noted the emergence and increased use of online and blended learning, collaborative technology, digital books, open-source software, and wireless and mobile learning. These learning trends in technology continue to transform Virtual Training, enabling access to learning materials from mobile phones and computers. Virtual Training will be a driving force in business for educating and training employees in the workforce.

The success of Virtual Training depends on how organizations support and train employees to use learning technologies. Other contributing forces enabling the use of Virtual Training include senior management commitment, user-friendly and effective courses, corporate investment in human capital, and organizational culture supporting innovations and changes (Schweizer, 2004). According to Honey (2000), 90% of users indicated that Virtual Training had been useful to them, and some 81% of providers and 66% of employers agreed that Virtual Training would bring "huge advances" in an organization's capacity to develop business.

With rapidly changing learning technologies, Virtual training implementation is not simply just purchasing sophisticated learning management systems. It also requires training employees properly to use the new technologies. As Virtual training is a growing international business, it is critical for employees to be updated to provide an effective and efficient working environment (Newton, & Doonga, 2007). The key driver to rapid Virtual training growth is the knowledge economy and workers, and the key weakness is the corporation not aligning corporate business objectives to Virtual training to track performance and profitability. Top and Gider (2013) attempted to explain the relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. What they found was that there was a significant and positive relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment (Top & Gider, 2013). Kuznia (2006) argues that employees who receive proper training tend to show higher levels of organizational commitment and are willing to go the extra mile to support their teams and accept group goals. Ozturan and Kutlu (2010) examined employee satisfaction with corporate eLearning programs using regression analysis to determine the influence of gender, age, work experience, education level, job level, and eLearning interactivity level of the employees. When the predictor variables were tested using regression analysis, they were determined to be

statistically significant, with job level having the highest maximum impact on employee satisfaction. Yap, Holmes, Hannan, and Cukier (2010) investigated the relationship between training and the effectiveness of organizational commitment and satisfaction and they revealed that employees who perceived training to be effective were more committed to their organizations than those who saw training as ineffective. The contributing factors to employees' satisfaction and commitment include physical environment, internal support, job level, training level, organizational support, and learning flow. Therefore, management should be privy to these factors and ensure that they are considered carefully so that the full benefits of eLearning and Virtual training are realized.

C. Research Objective

The objective of this work is to explore whether Virtual Training empowers people with their skill and also impacts business performance in different sectors.

D. Methodology

The methodology used for this paper is descriptive research. Data are collected from published research papers, articles and other materials from different journals available both online and offline. EBSCO database is also used for data collection.

E. Findings and Analysis

A training program allows employees to strengthen the skills that each employee needs to improve. A development program brings all employees to a higher level so that they all have similar skills and knowledge. This helps to reduce any weak links within the company which relies heavily on human resources to complete basic work tasks. We know the success of any physical training from different journal articles, books and other published materials. Now literature study further reveals that the use of Virtual Training has been proven to be cost-effective because of its global reach, collaboration tools and social learning. With shrinking corporate budgets, the Virtual Training platform seems to be the preferred learning method over traditional ones because it provides an adaptable and engaging learning experience for employees in every organization. All organizations use Virtual Training for training new recruits, for leadership and management development and for continuing professional education. Virtual Training is also being employed for client training, sales training and partner training. With 24/7 access to materials from a click of a PC or tablet, employees can access and track their assessment and course completion rates. According to Chen (2008):

"Seventy-four percent of organizations surveyed used synchronous learning. The reason for its high usage is that in recent years technology has advanced dramatically allowing for a more seamlessly integrated online training approach. Synchronous learning coupled with technology allows for greater interaction between instructors and learners including the opportunity to develop ideas, solve complex problems, and develop critical thinking skills. This type of creative thinking produces a competitive advantage for companies who desire to develop these strategic types of skills within their employees. (p. 3)"

Virtual training trends continue to be positive as learning is easily delivered to people as opposed to people finding it. At the same time, without motivation from top management, these trends will not be implemented as part of a virtual training strategy. Newton and Donga (2007) provide employers' views and rationale for companies' involvement in eLearning. These include increased employee knowledge, efficiency and productivity, ease of implementation, time-flexible savings and cost savings. Other benefits of eTraining are the ability to provide eTraining anywhere, anytime and to anyone; just-in-time training; personalized training leading to higher student retention; effective delivery compliance training; greater collaboration and interactivity; a better system for tracking employee performance and progress; and customized and personalized training options.

With rapidly changing learning technologies, implementing virtual training is not just about purchasing sophisticated learning management systems. It also requires proper training of employees to use new technologies.

Ozturan and Kutlu (2010) investigated employee satisfaction with corporate eTraining or Virtual Training programs using regression analysis to determine the effect of gender, age, work experience, education level, employment level, and employee interactivity level. When the predictor variables were tested using regression analysis, they were determined to be statistically significant, with job level having the highest maximum impact on employee satisfaction. It means that employees are also satisfied with virtual training. We are now in an era of technological advancement where it is a smarter choice for any organization.

There is a clear need to invest in employees to improve their competencies due to the changing demand for skills in the modern system environment (Ninan et al., 2019). The need for training and development in the IoT era is essential for digital fluency, technological savvy and data analytics. These are skills and abilities that previous generations of manufacturing workers simply did not need, and for which future generations may not be fully prepared. Operationally demanding companies have entered a new wave of automation and digitization. This will have a big impact on the skills they need to stay competitive. Manufacturers should actively invest in their workforce through retraining efforts and upskilling current

employees to manage automated processes or take on "creative" jobs that are less likely to be replaced by automation. Additionally, as automated tasks are gradually introduced, concurrent training of existing workers with the incremental skills needed for higher-level jobs (eg, data analysis, process improvement) can help mitigate the perceived threat of automation. Management and human resources should play an active role in this process, identifying high-potential employees with the education and training to match higher-skilled positions and identifying those individuals most likely to remain with the company for the long term.

The transition to the automation revolution was accelerated by the COVID-19 pandemic. Companies are emerging from the crisis into a world of physical distancing in the workplace and major changes in customer behavior and preferences. Recovery forces organizations to redesign their operations for the next normal. Manufacturing companies are rebuilding their supply chains and their production lines. Service organizations are adapting to emphasize digital customer journeys and contactless operations. These changes will have a significant impact on the skills and ability requirements of the workforce, from the dramatic increase in home and remote work to the need for shop floor workers to master new tools and newly pressing health and safety requirements.

In this age, the virtual learning environment provides exactly what clients need through a website that provides courses, content, videos and access to experts (including referral tools). Employees learn through coaching and facilitation. They can draw on learning opportunities and navigate and access them from within and outside the company. External training is available through any online resource. Training professionals are experts inside and outside the organization who excel in their field. Virtual training in the IoT era is demonstrable and uses case studies and experiential learning.

F. Conclusion

In conclusion, Virtual Training remains a critical tool for learning and training in many organizations. The evolution of technology, particularly the various learning management system (LMS) platforms, is enabling the effective implementation of Virtual Training in the current context. It is crucial to recognize the significance of Virtual Training not only in financial terms but also from a human perspective, particularly with regard to employee satisfaction. By leveraging Virtual Training, businesses can become more sustainable and profitable, enhancing their engineering and operations capabilities, and optimizing their asset, production, and supply chain performance.

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