Impact of Covid-19 on Training and Development

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Abstract— *This research paper explores how training and development in the field of Human Resource Management (HRM) has been impacted due to COVID-19. For this a hypothesis testing using chi-square test was conducted to understand whether skill development working from home is dependent on preference of training. Post analysis the hypothesis was tested to be affirmative viz. there is an association between the two variables mentioned above. Along with the hypothesis testing, a reliability test using Cronbach's Alpha was conducted. It proved that the couple of cases taken for testing were reliable and significant. The data collection is based on primary as well as secondary data collected by the researchers. A study through a questionnaire was administered and the analysis was inferred in the case of primary data. In the case of secondary data, data was collected from business papers and through authorized sites over the internet. The study explored to prove the alternate hypothesis, which eventually led to the null hypothesis being accepted. The data collected was from 44 sample and is a quantitative study as well as qualitative type.*

Keywords: COVID-19, Training and Development, Skill development, preference of work, work from home

INTRODUCTION

Among the various disciplines of management, Human Resource Management (HRM) plays a major role in the effectiveness of any organisation. Human Resource Management is the process which starts with the Recruitment and ends with Employee Retirement. There are many functions which are done by HRM department viz, Recruitment, Selection, Employees Induction, providing orientation, Imparting Training and Development, Performance Appraisal, Management of Compensation and benefits, Employee Motivation, maintaining good Human relations and their trade unions, ensuring employees safety, welfare and healthy measures in compliance with labour laws. Among the aforesaid functions done by HRM department, providing Training and Development to the Employees is one of the key functions of HRM. Training & Development (T&D) plays a vital role in enhancing employees' performance and increases productivity thereby results in organizational effectiveness. Organizations needs to consider the cost, time and effort involved in T&D activities as an investment rather than cost.

Training is the process for providing required skills to the employee for doing the job effectively, skilfully and qualitatively. Training of employees is not continuous, but it is periodical and given in specified time. Generally training will be given by an expert or professional in related field or job.

Development is concerned with the growth of employees in all respects. It is the process by which managers or executives acquire skills and competency in their present jobs and also capabilities for future tasks. The purpose of development is imparting advanced knowledge and competencies among the employees.

Coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) is defined as illness caused by a novel coronavirus called severe acute respiratory syndrome coronavirus 2 (SARS-CoV-2; formerly called 2019-nCoV), which was first identified amid an outbreak of respiratory illness cases in Wuhan City, Hubei Province, China.

Due to COVID-19, lockdown was imposed in March 2020 in India which led to offices being shut down and people starting to work from home. As far as training is considered, offline training and on-the-job training was not possible due to the pandemic and lockdown. This led to virtual training of not only current employees or interns, but also of new employees and interns.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To understand what kind of training is preferred by the interns and employees – On the job training or Off the job training

2. To understand whether virtual training due to COVID-19 is effective or not, and to what extent it is effective.

3. To identify which areas have been most affected due to online training due to COVID-19 – Personal

interaction, Communication, Motivation, or On the job training experience.

4. To identify which are the most faced issues due to online training in COVID-19 pandemic – Fixed timing, Network issues, or Electricity issues.

5. To know whether the interns and employees are having better skill development while working from home.

6. To know what kind of skills need improvement which can be developed through virtual means.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

Lin Grensing-Pophal (2020) described the idea that the post-COVID world will be a significantly different "new normal" relative to the pre-COVID world has become cliché, but that doesn't make it any less true. For a variety of reasons, many companies have been averse in the past to embracing remote and on-demand training solutions. One common apprehension is that these formats can't mimic the engagement of live, in-person training. But with virtually all in-person activities shuttered for months, organizations have been forced to shift training and other activities to remote and on-demand formats or else simply not have them at all. Many are realizing that the drawbacks of these formats are not as bad as they may have feared.

Hilliard, Ann Toler (2015) describes blended learning as a combination of online and face-to-face activities for classroom instruction or other training modalities to help develop new knowledge and skills that can be transferred to the workplace environment. The use of blended learning is expanding globally. Blended learning is evident in professional development training and general classroom offerings for a number of educational programs across disciplines in global communities. With the limitation of funding and time constraints, more professional development training organizations, programs in departments and units at universities and colleges are infusing blended learning as another educational tool to use in the delivery of instructional and managerial services. Blended learning is a fast growing trend in traditional institutions in higher education and other organizations. An Online Learning Survey revealed that blended learning was expanding globally to the growth rate 46% or higher per year.

Snezana Jokic et al (2012) explained E-training, i.e. training of employees in corporations and SMEs through e-learning has become a commonly applied training procedure in today's world because it allows the training of employees from different departments within different locations throughout the country. Employers currently use e-learning for the introduction and retention of employees, accelerating the training time and assessing staff to new procedures or products, to connect with their supply chains and distribution, the distribution of the workforce and to close the gap in training between different companies and industries.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

The present research is based on primary data and as well as secondary data. In order to get the primary data, structured questionnaire was prepared online. The following research framework was adopted for the completion of the study. Along with primary data, secondary data which is online was used. Secondary data included data from business newspapers such as Financial Express, Economic Times, Business World and many more.

HYPOTHESIS

Primary data was collected for data analysis on the hypothesis which was framed as below:

H0: Skill development working from home is dependent on preference of training

H1: Skill development working from home is not dependent on preference of training

An exploratory approach is used to validate the research hypothesis and answer the following six questions:

1. Which type of training is preferred?

2. Effectiveness of virtual training

3. Areas in training affected due to COVID-19

4. Issues faced due to online training

5. Skill development through work from home

6. Skill improvement through virtual means

The study is quantitative as well as qualitative in nature. An exploratory approach was used in the form of a survey to understand the impact of COVID-19 on Training and Development. The target audience was that of interns as well as employees working at WisdomReady EduFin Services LLP. Most of the respondents were interns as compared to employees.

Quantitative study was done using Google Forms and was shared across all interns and employees working at WisdomReady EduFin Services LLP. The survey was conducted from 1st of August, 2020 till 11th of August, 2020. A total of 44 responses was recorded in basically two age groups viz. 18-30 and 31-40. As most of the
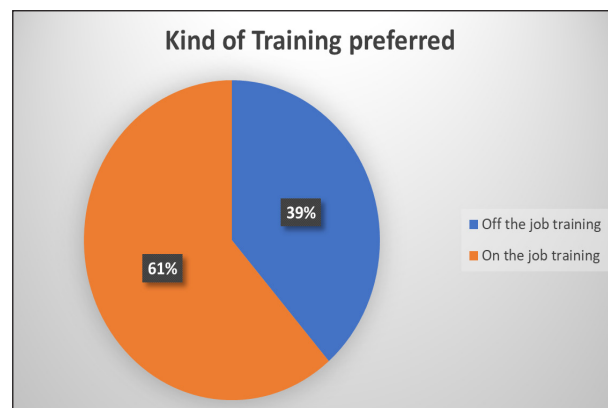
respondents were interns, it is obvious that there were more respondents in the age group 18-30 as compared to those respondents in the age group of 31-40.
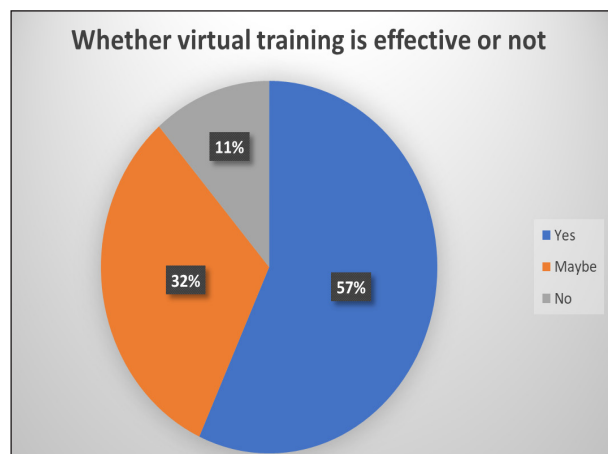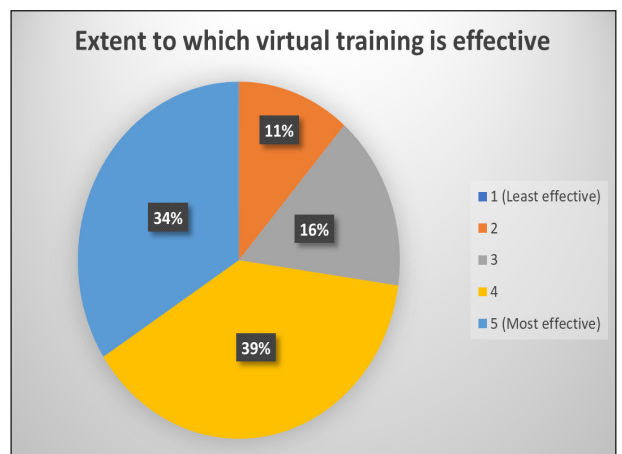
DATA ANALYSIS:

Gender wise distribution

Gender

- Male 48%
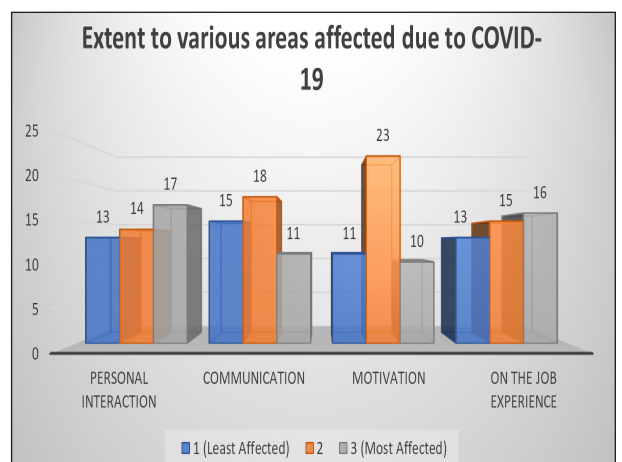- Female 52%
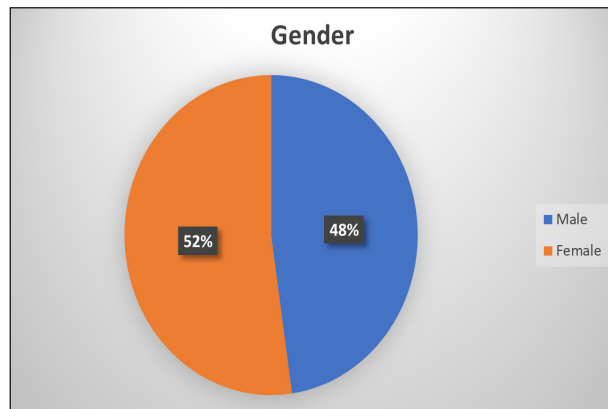
Kind or type of training preferred

Kind of Training preferred

- Off the job training 39%
- On the job training 61%

Is virtual training effective or not?

Whether virtual training is effective or not

- Yes 57%
- Maybe 32%
- No 11%

The extent to which virtual training is effective

Extent to which virtual training is effective

- 1 (Least effective) 11%
- 2
- 3 16%
- 4 39%
- 5 (Most effective) 34%

Extent to areas affected due to virtual training during COVID-19

Extent to various areas affected due to COVID-19

	1 (Least Affected)	2	3 (Most Affected)
PERSONAL INTERACTION	13	14	17
COMMUNICATION	15	18	11
MOTIVATION	11	23	10
ON THE JOB EXPERIENCE	13	15	16

Extent to issues faced most due to virtual training during COVID-19

Extent of issues faced most duing online training

	1 (Least)	2	3 (Most)
FIXED TIMING	12	24	8
NETWORK ISSUES	9	16	19
ELECTRICITY ISSUES	7	17	37
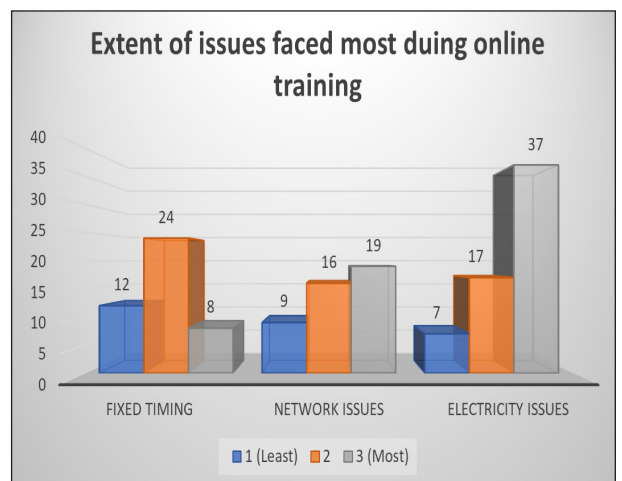
Is there better skill development working from home
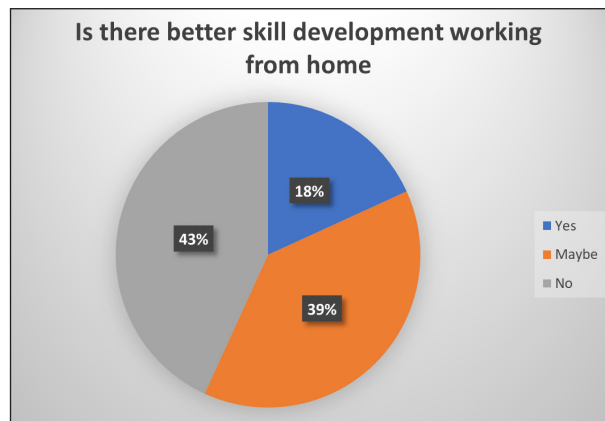
Chi-Square Test

Status	O	E	O-E	O-E^2	O-E^2/E
On the job training and Yes	6	4.909091	1.090909	1.190083	0.242424
On the job training and Maybe	12	10.43182	1.568182	2.459194	0.23574
On the job training and No	9	11.65909	-2.65909	7.070764	0.606459
Off the job training and Yes	2	3.090909	-1.09091	1.190083	0.385027
Off the job training and Maybe	5	6.568182	-1.56818	2.459194	0.37441
Off the job traing and No	10	7.340909	2.659091	7.070764	0.9632
Total					2.80726

H0: Better skill development through work from home is dependent on preference of training

H1: Better skill development through work from home is not dependent on preference of training

DF 2

LoS 5%

p-value 0.833

Chi-square value 2.807

0.833<2.807

H0 is accepted

Reliability with Cronbach's Alpha:

Cases	Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Value
Areas of training affected due to COVID-19	0.7944
Issues faced due to Online training	0.7019

In the view of the above, we conclude that the data is significantly reliable and can be used for final analysis.

DATA INTERPRETATION:

Analysis of Survey Details

➢ As this report is on the study of impact of COVID-19 on Training and Development, one important point to be analysed was which kind of training is preferred among the respondents. From the analysis it is understood that 27 out of 44 respondents viz. 61% prefer On-the job training. This is because on the job training gives you more exposure to the actual experiences needed to do the job than off-the job and online training.

➢ Another point to be noted that as during COVID-19 period viz. basically related to the lockdown period to be precise, as training was to be made online or virtual, an opinion on the effectiveness of virtual training was taken where 57% agreed to the fact that virtual training is effective, 32% were not sure and rest 11% disagreed completely that virtual training is effective.

➢ When we continue from the above point about effectiveness of virtual training, the extent to which virtual training was asked for to be analysed. From the results, it is understood that 73% of the respondents feel more and more affirmation towards the effectiveness of virtual training whereas, only 16% are neutral and only 11% are slightly hesitant towards accepting the fact that virtual training is effective. No respondent agrees that virtual training is not at all effective or least effective to be precise. This shows that virtual training is not only the need of the hour today, but also widely accepted to the fact that it is effective.

➢ Next thing that needed analysis was the areas affected in training and development due to COVID-19. For this, four areas of training and development was taken into consideration. They were Personal interaction, Communication, Motivation, and On-the-job experience. The extent to which these areas have been affected was analysed. From the data collected, it is understood that the most affected area in training and development due to COVID-19 is Personal interaction, and closely next is On-the-job experience. This has to be true because personal interaction gives a feeling of belongingness for both the trainer and the trainee or employee. On-the-job experience or training makes the trainee or employee more to-be job-fit. The least affected area out of the

four is communication. This is quite obvious as be it an online or virtual training or be it on-the-job training, communication is going to be maintained for smooth functioning of any organisation.

➢ Now coming to the issues faced in online training due to COVID-19 were categorized into three areas viz. Fixed Timing, Network issues, and Electricity issues. From the survey data it is understood that most of the respondents face electricity issues and network issues the most. This leads to disturbance in training and becomes futile and ineffective in the long run. Least faced issue out of the three is fixed timing. Even- though timing of in-office and work from home timing are the same, due to flexibility in the comfort of one's own space at home has not been an issue whatsoever. Due to this flexibility in workspace irrespective of fixed timing, it has not affected online training as it is a part of your job.

➢ Coming to whether there is better skill development of employees and/trainees working from home, 43% were against the fact that there is better skill development working from home and 39% of the respondents are not sure of the same. This shows how skill development cannot work much when it comes to a work-from-home culture. There are few reasons to actually be precise. They are - lack of proper resources needed for a work culture when we compare against a work-from-home culture and a work-from-office culture. Next reason is that there is no proper personal interaction and motivation too. Another reason can be that there is a difference in mindset or psychological change in the minds of the people due difference in an office environment and a homely environment. A homely environment makes the employee/trainee/intern interest to work fall drastically as there are various distractions from all corners.

Analysis of Chi-Square Test

➢ The null hypothesis by default was taken as Better skill development through work from home is dependent on preference of training, and alternate as Better skill development through work from home is not dependent on preference of training

➢ It is a dependence or association-based test

➢ Skill development happens can happen in office mode or in online or virtual mode. Through the charts it was understood that work from home online training was taken negatively.

Analysis of Cronbach's Alpha

To test the internal consistency of the data, Cronbach's alpha value was computed. Items considered for reliability were questions under each section of issues of COVID-19 on Training and Development questionnaire. High values of Cronbach's alpha indicate high internal consistency of multiple items measuring each construct, thus suggesting high reliability of the individual construct. The reliability coefficients of more than the cut-off value 0.7 is recommended as acceptable.

CONCLUSION:

This dissertation studied how COVID-19 has affected Training and Development of interns and employees working at WisdomReady EduFin Services LLP. Preferences of whether On-the-job training or Off-the-job training is effective was taken into consideration and it could be concluded that 61% of them prefer On-the-job training. Personal interaction is the most affected area in Training and Development as interaction among people for better psychological feel is missing due to COVID-19. Electricity issues and network issues are most faced issues by the respondents as people are working from different parts of the country and some of the respondents as they stay in villages face electricity issues and network issues more often than not.

Overall it can be concluded that On-the-job training is most effective as people are missing the interaction and socializing part and are also getting irritated due to electricity and network issues which is not leading to required Training and Development of interns and employees.

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