The Impact of Perceived Organisational Support, Supervisor Support And Self-Efficacy on Transfer of Training among Public Service Officers

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Abstract - **Transfer of training practice in the public sector is crucial to ensure excellent service deliverables. Return on investment, active learning, and applying new attitudes, skills, and knowledge from training can be rewarding for both parties. Despite training transfer being the most significant factor in training effectiveness, it has become one of the most critical challenges for an organisation. However, a limited number of training transfer studies were conducted in Malaysia, particularly in public service. Therefore, this study investigated the gaps in training transfer among public service officers. A cross-sectional study was conducted between April to May 2021 to examine the relationship between the variables. A total of 125 public service officers in Putrajaya were recruited. Findings revealed a significant relationship between supervisor support and self-efficacy with the transfer of training. Understanding these associations may help training policymakers to design strategies to enhance the quality of training.**

Keywords - Transfer of Training, Perceived Organizational Support, Supervisor Support, Self-Efficacy, Public Service Officers.

I. INTRODUCTION

Employee training and development are vital and critical elements in human resource development activity for every organisation. Training is an organisation's organised effort to learn job-related competencies, knowledge, and skills and alter employees' attitudes (Noe, 2020). It is a strategic tool to gain a competitive advantage and cope with today's work environment's transitional technological advancement (Kim, Park, & Kang, 2019). Improving the public sector through training and lifelong learning is also a primary focus of the government.

The Malaysian public sector is divided into federal public service and state and local governments. There are 724 public sector agencies in Malaysia, including security, health, education, defense, and transportation.

Currently, the Malaysian public sector has more than 1.7 million employees (Malaysian Productivity Corporation, 2018). Public service officers are essential in supporting and ensuring all government policies, initiatives and services are delivered to par standards (Malaysian Productivity Corporation, 2018).

Through many government initiatives, Malaysia has improved training schemes and funds for public service officers (Ho et al., 2019) to enhance their knowledge, skill, and attitude. Every year, the Malaysian government allocated at least 1% of the total remuneration budget of the ministry/state for training public service officers and RM4.4 billion for scholarship and study loan funds for young talents in 2020 (Ministry of Finance, 2019). To improve public service deliveries, RM845 million was allocated for public service officers' training and development (Ministry of Finance, 2020).

However, attending training is insufficient to improve job performance and create a positive work environment (Dirani, 2012). Training needs to be transferred to benefit both employees and the organizations (Ho et al., 2019; Noe, 2020). Transfer of training means applying newly learned knowledge and skills to the employee's job itself. For training to be practical, four training phases need to be considered: the training need analysis (TNA), training delivery, training evaluation, and training transfer (Ibrahim, Boerhannoeddin, & Bakare, 2017).

Most training program investments fail to achieve the organisations' desired results (Shah, Hanafi, Mohd, Hariri, & Rusdi, 2019). Many empirical studies showed that the skills, knowledge, and attitude learned after training courses did not fully transfer to the workplace due to many factors (Burke, Hutchins, & Saks, 2013). Even though scholars have made many research efforts on training transfer over the few decades, there are growing concerns and gaps about training transfer in the workplace (Awais Bhatti, Mohamed Battour, Pandiyan Kaliani Sundram, & Aini Othman, 2013; Ho et al., 2019).

A previous study revealed that less than 15% to 20% of knowledge and skills obtained in training are transferred and used in the workplace to perform their jobs (Faizal, Ruhaizan, and Mohd, 2015). Moreover, a recent study shows that 40% of trainees fail to share skills and knowledge learned immediately after finishing training, and 70% of trainees fail to transfer training a year after training is completed, resulting in minor improvements towards the organisation (Shen & Tang, 2018). Research suggested that only 40% of training contents are instantly transferred to the workplace, 25% after six months post-training and 15% after one year (Govaerts, Kyndt, Vreye, & Dochy, 2017).

Training transfer did not happen in the Malaysian public sector due to the training structure, wrong training intended, trainer's characteristics, and lack of mentoring and coaching (Ho et al., 2019). In some cases, training transfer activities are hindered because of unsupportive organization, supervisors, peers, and technology (Al-Eisa, Furayyan, & Alhemoud, 2009; Bhatti, Battour, Sundram, & Othman, 2013; Chiaburu & Marinova, 2005; Chiaburu, Van Dam, & Hutchins, 2010; Zumrah, 2014).

Despite its importance, research on the extent of transfer of training programs still needs to be done. Many researchers have focused on training effectiveness for private sectors, but limited research has been conducted within government settings. Based on the synthesis of the available literature, the relationship between perceived organizational support, supervisor support, and self-efficacy with training transfer was examined.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Transfer of Training

Human capital is crucial but expensive resource and to optimize their contributions, training programs should be provided. To make training and development effective, it should be well planned and systematically implemented (Mohd, Julan, Besar, 2020). Transfer of training effectively transfers and continually applies attitude, knowledge, and skills learned through training in the workplace (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Shah et al., 2019). Transfer of training is defined as applying new skills, knowledge, and attitude in the workplace for effective work performance (Nazli et.al., 2015). This reference is consistent with Xiao's (1996) definition of training transfer as the employee competency to utilise the acquired skills in training and apply them to the job, resulting in work efficiency. Transfer of training also being defined as the process of recalling the competencies from participation in training to enable employees to perform their jobs (Na-Nan, Chaiprasit, & Pukkeeree, 2017). Based on the previous author's definitions, it can be concluded that training transfer is a science of apply in newly learned attitudes, skills, and knowledge into the workplace to improve work performance efficiency. Most previous studieonto training transfer focused on identifying the factors influencing training transfer (Liebermann & Hoffmann, 2008; Velada, Caetano, Michel, Lyons, & Kavanagh, 2007). Therefore, after reviewing all factors that influence training transfer, the researcher explores the work environment factors: the perceived organisational and supervisor support and learning characteristics factors, which are self-efficacy. These factors are the most supported, dominant, and affect training transfer processes (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Sackett, Gruys, & Ellingson, 1998; Tai, 2006).

Perceived Organizational Support

Perceived Organizational Support (POS) is vital in developing employees' positive behaviours and attitudes (Zumrah, 2014). Employees who work in an environment with high POS will increase their commitments and efforts beyond job requirements towards achieving organisational goals (Kurtessis et al., 2015). POS is the workers' belief that their organisations care about their well-being and value their contributions (Eisenberger, Huntington, Hutchison, & Sowa, 1986). Rhoades and Eisenberger (2002) define POS as how the organisation values and cares about its well-being. Employees who work in an environment with high POS will increase their commitments and efforts beyond job requirements towards achieving organisational goals (Kurtessis et al., 2015). Most employees value POS because employers meet their need for approval, esteem, affiliation, and support during peaked stress. Employers that provide good HR practices and supervision will lead to high POS. Employees will be more satisfied with their jobs, connected with the organisation, and improve loyalty and commitment (Eisenberger, Malone, & Presson, 2016).

Supervisor Support

Supervisor support is fundamental to training transfer effectiveness (Bhatti et al., 2013; Shah et al., 2019). According to Blume et al. (2010), supervisor support is one of the works eenvironment factors that are potent predictors and significantly aids in training transfer. Supervisor support refers to managers/supervisors who help and support employees in implementing nenewly earned skills, knowledge, and attitude to the job (Holton, Bates, & Ruona, 2000). High supervisor support will improve performance and promote transfer activities among trained employees (Khin & Sujinda, 2015). Support from a supervisor can be knowledge, time, feedback, emotional, and instrumental, provided either before or after the training program (Noe, 2020; Putter, 2013). Supervisors who support employees who apply the latest knowledge and skills with rewards will improve performance and efficiency (Khin & Sujinda, 2015).

Self-efficacy

Self-efficacy is one of the essential elements in trainee characteristics input from the Transfer of the Training Model developed by Baldwin and Ford (1988). Transfer of training intention and activities can be directly or indirectly influenced by employee characteristics (Nafukho, Alfred, Chakraborty, Johnson, & Cherrstrom, 2017). Previous studies confirmed that self-efficacy plays a vital role and is one of the most critical factors in the training transfer process (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010; Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Iqbal & Dastgeer, 2017). Self-efficacy is an individual's belief that they can successfully carry out and executes the course of action to perform and accomplish intentions (Schwoerer et al., 2005). Self-efficacy is also defined as one's belief organizing and completing the course of action to perform and produce given tasks (Bandura, 1997).

Development of Conceptual Framework

This study's conceptual framework is adapted from Baldwin and Ford's (1988) Transfer of Training model. The independent variable is trainee characteristics (self-efficacy), works environment, perceived ororganisational support, and supervisor support. Previous research showed that trainee characteristics and work environment significantly influence training transfer activities (Kodwani & Prashar, 2021; Massenberg, Spurk, & Kauffeld, 2015; Muduli & Raval, 2018; Quratulain et al., 2021). Seeing the importance of these determinants, the researcher decided to focus on these three determinants: perceived organizational support, supervisor support, and self-efficacy. In contrast, the impact of training design depends on the levels of training outputs, such as learning and retention (Dudovskiy, 2020). The dependent variable that will be reflected in the outcomes of this study is training transfer. This study has provided a better understanding of transfer determinants the public service may consider when designing training policies and training programs for effective transfer of training. Figure 2.2 depicts the conceptual framework development of this study.
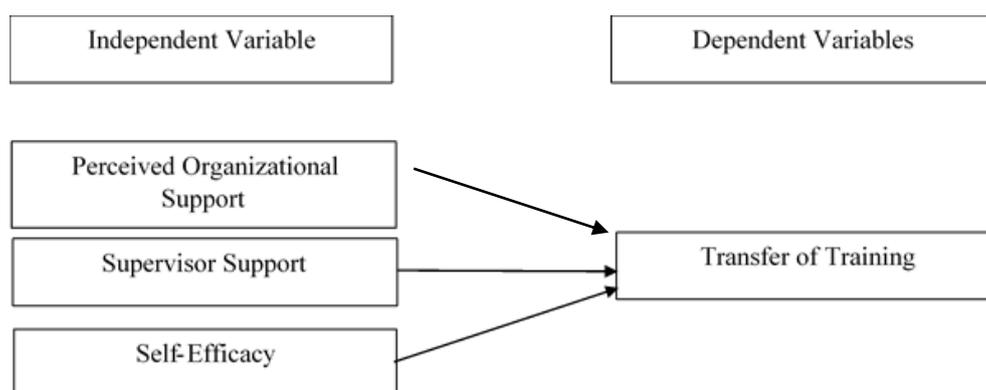
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework of the study

III. METHODOLOGY

Design, Sample and Setting

A positivist approach was used to explore the relationship between variables. The study was primarily conducted via a survey among public service officers in Putrajaya. This study's population consisted of public service officers who attended face-to-face or online training at selected public sector offices in Putrajaya in 2020. The respondents that had fulfilled exclusion criteria: first, attended training, online or face-to-face training in the year 2020, and second, meet the seven training days per year (42 hours per year) minimum required by the gazetted circular (Public Service Department, 2005) was selected as the sample for this study. The G*Power software 3.1.9.7 was used to calculate the sample size for this study, and based on the calculation, the total sample size required for this study is 119 respondents. Purposive sampling was used in selecting the respondents. This process is based on the availability and agreement of respondents to participate in the survey without the need to choose the respondents systematically.

Data Collection Procedure

A survey method was used to gather data from the respondents. The researcher approached the respondents through departments/ministry training department/division desk officers and briefed them about the inclusion criteria. The respondents were given written explanations and instructions as a guideline for a better understanding of the questionnaires.

The respondents that fulfilled the requirements were given the questionnaire to answer. The respondents needed around 5 to 10 minutes to complete answering the questionnaires. A total of 200 questionnaires were distributed via Google forms to the respondents, and there were only 125 questionnaires that we runed.

Development of Instrument

The research instrument development for this study was based on the extensive literature review by combining the existing validated measurement. The questionnaire, which consisted of five sections measuring demographic data, transfer of training, perceived organisational support, supervisor support, and self-efficacy, was used to collect the data.

The respondents were requested to complete the questions relating to their demographic backgrounds, such as gender, race, age, education level, length of services, last attended training courses, and the number of training days in 2020. A total of 12 items developed by Shad (2008) were adapted to measure the transfer of training using a seven-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to agree strongly. In measuring perceived organisational support (POS), a short version of POS developed by Eisenberger *et al*. in 1997 was adopted. Meanwhile, 18 items adapted from Shad (2008) were used to measure supervisor support. A total of eight items developed by Chen, Gully and Eden (2001) were used to measure self-efficacy. A five-point Likert scale, from strongly disagree to strongly agree was used to measure POS, supervisor support and self-efficacy.

A pre-testing was conducted to verify that the questions used as the questionnaire are free from vagueness, bias, and the respondents can understand the questions. Pre-testing is also essential to avoid poor data quality and prevent or reduce items' deletion during the measurement model evaluation (Memon, Ting, Ramayah, Chuah, & Hwa, 2017). Five (5) experts were invited for the pre-testing phase for this study to provide feedback regarding the questionnaire items. One (1) academic and training expert from Universiti Teknologi MARA

(UiTM) and four (4) public service experts from Human Capital Development Division, Public Service Department (PSD) participated in this study. A modification based on the pre-testing was used to generate the final version of the instrument for this study. Several concerns related to administration, organisation of the survey (the flow and order of the questions), and content of the questions managed to be identified during the pre-testing.

IV. FINDINGS

Data were analysed using SPSS version 26.0. A multiple regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between variables. Table 1 presents the demographic profile of the respondents.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of the Respondents (n= 125)

DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLE	CATEGORY	FREQUENCY (N)	PERCENT (%)
Gender	Male	75	60
	Female	50	40
Age	20 - 29 years old	3	2.4
	30 - 39 years old	88	70.4
	40 - 49 years old	30	24
	More than 50 years old	4	3.2
Last Attended Training Program	Less than one month ago	30	24
	1 – 2 months ago	28	22.4
	3 – 5 months ago	17	13.6
	More than six months ago	50	40
Number of Training Participated Yearly	1 - 3 times per year	44	35.2
	4 - 6 times per year	40	32
	7 - 9 times per year	30	24
	Ten times or more per year	11	8.8
Highest Education Level	PhD.	0	0
	Master's degree	26	20.8
	Bachelor's degree	80	64
	Diploma	16	12.8
	Other Certificate	3	2.4
Length of Service Year	Less than five years	0	0
	6 - 10 years	24	19.2
	11 - 15 years	88	70.4
	16 - 20 years	9	7.2
	More than 20 years	4	3.2
Grade	Grade 28 and below	15	12
	Grade 40 and below	5	4
	Grade 41 to 48	96	76.8
	Grade 52 to 56	7	5.6
	JUSA and above	2	1.6
Department / Ministry	Public Service Department (PSD)	89	71.2
	Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovation (MOSTI)	35	28
	Department of Statistics Malaysia (DOSM)	1	0.8

This study conducted normality analysis before continuing with the correlation analysis. The purpose of running the normality test was to know the shape of the distribution. The assumptions were tested by running the descriptive statistics, and the Skewness and Kurtosis results were presented. The normality test shows that the data was generally distributed since the value of the skewness and kurtosis was ±3 for each variable (Coakes, 2013).

Reliability analysis was conducted in this study by computing Cronbach's Alpha Values for each variable. Reliability of a good measure is established by testing both consistency and stability (Sundram et al., 2016). Table 2 presented the results for Cronbach's Alpha for the dependent variable for this study.

Table 2: Cronbach's Alpha

VARIABLE	NO. OF ITEMS	CRONBACH'S ALPHA	INTERNAL CONSISTENCY
DEPENDENT VARIABLE			
Transfer of Training	12	0.960	Excellent
INDEPENDENT VARIABLE			
Perceived Organizational Support	11	0.936	Excellent
Supervisor Support	18	0.965	Excellent
Self-Efficacy	8	0.937	Excellent

Multiple regression analysis was used to measure the relationship between the variables. This multiple regression addressed which variable in a set of independent variables can be considered the best predictor or most significant factor influencing dependent variable. Table 3 shows the results of the multiple regression analysis conducted in this study.

The result shows no collinearity problem as the value of the VIF was less than ten and the tolerance value was below 1.0, given from the three independent variables. The R^2 of 0.483 implies that taken as a set, all the independent variables (perceived organisational support, supervisor support and self-efficacy) explained 48.3% of the variance dependent variable (transfer of training). Other factors explained the other 51.7% of the variance in the transfer of training. The F-test is significant at the p-value <0.05 (0.000); therefore, the linear model is valid overall value for Durbin Watson was 1.966. Overall, the regression model was statistically significant with $F (3,121) = 37.747$, $p<0.001$, $R^2 = 0.483$, as it predicts training transfer significantly.

As specified in Table 3, the result from multiple regression analysis revealed no significant relationship between perceived organisational support and transfer of training (ß=.105, p>0.05). However, the result showed that there is a significant relationship between supervisor support and transfer of training (ß=.430, p<0.05) as well as self-efficacy and transfer of training (ß=.261, p<0.05).

Table 3: Results of Multiple Regression Analysis.

Independent Variables	Standard Coefficients	t	Sig.	Collinearity Statistics	
	Beta			Tolerance	VIF
(Constant)		2.805	.006		
Perceived Organizational Support	.105	1.162	.248	.519	1.928
Supervisor Support	.430**	4.593	.000	.488	2.051
Self-Efficacy	.261	3.162	.002	.626	1.597
R Square	.483				
F	37.747				
Sig. of F Value	.000				
Durbin Watson	1.966				

Dependent variable = Transfer of Training   **p value < 0.05

V. DISCUSSION

The primary aim of this exploratory study was to identify the relationship between perceived organisational support, supervisor support and self-efficacy with the transfer of training. Supervisor support and self-efficacy strongly correlate to training transfer activities among public service officers in Putrajaya.

The findings revealed no significant relationship between perceived organizational support and transfer of training. In their findings, Eisenberger et al. (1986) discussed that employer need to show appreciation towards employees' exceptional work or good conduct and reward them for fostering a positive attitude, morale, and productivity. An organization that acknowledges its employee's contributions and is not supportive will hinder any training transfer activities (Homklin, Takahashi, & Techakanont, 2013). Moreover, lack of appreciation, reward, and moral support causing avert because among employees to apply and transfer of training (Shah et al., 2019).

Based on previous studies, most of the significant and positive outcomes of perceived organisational support studies were done in western countries and private organisations. Support from organisations in rewards programs, career development opportunities, acknowledgement of exceptional work, and encouraging working autonomy can easily be visible to employees (Zumrah, 2014). From the researcher's experience as a public service officer, perceived organisational support from top management in government agencies is hard to establish and it even felt the employees have layers of management levels in organisation (hierarchical). There is an issue, especially in large central agencies such as the Public Service Department and the Ministry of Science, Technology, and Innovations. Lack organisational support makes employees the public service feel that there is no need to improve performance or produce better attitudes. Reward programs are not by mmeritbut rotationally rewarded to keep other employees motivated.

The findings reported that supervisor support has a significant relationship with a transfer of training. These can be due to solid support from supervisors and top management by accelerating employee training transfer activities. Most scholars agree that supervisor support significantly impacts the transfer of training activities (Suzana Kasim & Ali, 2011; Nafukho et al., 2017; Shah et al., 2019; Salleh et al., 2018).

Some studies suggested that supervisor support only plays a more significant impact on training transfer among non-technical trainees. Another study on technical training transfer found that supervisor support has a slight positive influence lower than peer support and content validity (Richter & Kauffeld, 2020; Seiberling & Kauffeld, 2017). Nevertheless, it reflects differences in the public service context as most of the training are generic and technical for most of the business services. This is supported by Seiberling and Kauffeld (2017), that the supervisor support factor is only significant in non-technical training transfer. In the public sectors contribute significantly to proposing training programs to their employees to improve service deliveries in the public service, it can be concluded that supervisor support has a significant relationship with the transfer of training among public service officers in Parcel, C, Putrajaya.

Base on the regression result, there is a significant and positive relationship between self-efficacy and transfer of training. This finding is supported by Chen, Gully, and Eden (2001) and Allred, Harrison, and O'Connell (2013). Their studies concluded that self-efficacy is a significant factor in the transfer of organizational training act organisations study is also their study setting of public organisations and populates them as the respondents. Previous studies also confirmed that self-efficacy plays a vital role and is one of the most critical factors in the training transfer process (Blume et al., 2010). This study's findings also support the general rule derived from the Social Learning Theory that ta trainee who possesses a high degree of self-efficacy and receive favorable support from the supervisor will produce a positive attitude towards training transfer. Therefore, it can be concluded that self-efficacy has a significant relationship with the transfer of training among public service officers in Parcel, C, Putrajaya.

VI. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY, RECOMMENDATIONS AND CONCLUSION

This study has limitations in several aspects. The sample was limited to public service officers in Putrajaya only. Therefore, the generalisability of these results is subject to certain restrictions, whereby it did not consider the target group's situation in other states. Thus, future studies should bridge the gap of this limitation. This study was conducted during the COVID-19 pandemic, when the researchers must take high precautions as social distancing is a must during data collection. The researchers revised the data collection methods from physical questionnaires to online surveys via Google Form using an online survey method helps the researcher get the minimum number needed, leading to biased data and low response rates. Moreover, it is recommended that future researchers could investigate other factors that influence training transfer such as work engagement and training simulation.

The respective policymakers/training providers can consider several recommendations, such as providing a training roadmap and conducting a training need analysis. Training Roadmap will create talent pools and improve employees' motivation to know that their future is appropriately planned. Training need analysis

(TNA) should be conducted at every department to ensure the right people gets the proper training at the right time.

The findings of this study are helpful for a better understanding of training transfer among public service officers to develop new policies, which will alleviate the perceived crisis in service delivery. Training transfer measures are critical in planning the training delivery capacity to meet the organisation's needs and employees. The findings help the Human Capital Development Division, Public Service Department policymakers to revisit and realign the policies with current training needs and employers' trends to avoid losses in government training funds. This research will benefit all the training program providers, such as the ministries or state offices.

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