A Descriptive Quantitative Study on "Employee Perception of Stress during Training at Workplace"

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Abstract: *In this article the author discusses the employee perception of training, whether they undergo eustress or destress during the training programmes. The results suggests that employees undergo both eustress and destress during the training programmes. Consequences of eustress and destress are both positive and negative which is individualistic in nature and cannot be generalized. The sample is collected from respondents working in different sectors working in Bangalore, Mysore, Hassan, Koppal. The Study adopted a descriptive quantitative research design. Participants were administered the structured questionnaire in a five-point Likert scale. The employees were employed workers and having high educational qualification. Descriptive statistics was used for the study. Descriptive statistics was used in the study which included tabular, percentage and graphical representation. Numerous studies have been conducted on the consequences of training on individuals, teams and organisations but seldom are studies conducted on the employee's perception of stress during the training programmes. This study gives light to the organisation, managers that there are also possibilities and situations perceived by employees as stressful during training programmes and it is important to understand the stimuli causing stress to trainees and take appropriate corrective measures.*

Keywords*: Training, Perception, Stress, Distress, Eustress.*

1. INTRODUCTION:

Work-related training, as well as non-formal and informal workplace learning, are increasingly being recognized as essential components of lifelong learning and skill development. Globalization, technological development, including greater digitization, as well as demographic and climate change, are all reshaping the workplace. These have an impact on not only the development of new talents and the need for them, as well as skill imbalances, but also the ways in which people organize their work. (ILO/OECD, 2018). Training and development is an essential job in the ever-changing and fast-paced corporate world. Recent study has focused on the impact of human resource management and training strategies on organisational performance. (Manning, 2015; Jayakumar & Sulthan, 2014; Treven et al, 2015).

Training can provide a number of benefits, including increased job satisfaction among employees, as well as commitment and collective empowerment. (Voegtlin et al, 2015; Ajibade & Ayinla 2014; Sung & Choi, 2014).

As defined in this study, training is "a structured intervention aiming to improve the determinants of individual work performance" (Chiaburu &Teklab, 2005). Training is concerned with the abilities that an employee must acquire in order to increase the likelihood of the organization's overall business and academic goals and objectives being met. Employees who receive positive training may experience less anxiety or dissatisfaction, which most employees have encountered on multiple occasions during their careers (Cheng & Ho, 2001).

There is a widespread understanding among industry professionals that training is critical to an organization's success. Organizations must comprehend the many techniques of training programmes, as well as provide training to trainers, so that trainers are effective and trainees profit from the training programmes. Are all employees who are undergoing training satisfied with it? Are the methods of training that employees receive, promoting stress reduction and enhancing employee productivity? Is it possible that training is a source of occupational stress? These are the issues that must be answered.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW:
2.1 Training

The systematic development of the information, skills, and attitude that an individual requires to accomplish a certain activity or job satisfactorily is known as training (Armstrong, 2001). It is described as an employee's increasing knowledge and ability to perform a specific task (Edwin, 1984). Both old and new employees require training to keep their skills up to date and create new ones (Aswathappa, 2000).

In addition to directly equipping and updating personnel with information and skills, training also aids businesses in achieving long-term goals. Organizational training, in particular, has an impact on long-term staff retention (Huselid, 1995). Employee retention, coined in the 1970s (Mckeown, 2002), refers to keeping employees who the company wishes to retain rather than losing them to others, particularly competitors (Sue, 2001).
Huselid (1995) concluded from the studies that training improves employee abilities, which boosts production and efficiency while lowering job unhappiness.

According to an udemy research by Tess Taylor (2017), "58 percent of employees look to training to decrease stress," 52 percent of full-time employees in the United States are more stressed currently than a year ago. Furthermore, 58 percent of employees use corporate training to cope with stress.
More employers can develop an environment where stress management programmes include learning new activities. Learning as a stress reliever, on the other hand, indicates the expanding prominence of learning programmes within wellness initiatives. Employers are looking for ways to reduce employee stress in general, and an engaging learning programme.

2.2 Stress:

Low motivation and morale at work are well-known causes of poor performance, high turnover and sick leave, accidents, bad job satisfaction, low quality products and services, poor internal communication and conflicts, and so on (Schabracq and Cooper, 2000; Murphy, 1995; McHugh, 1993).
According to the British Industrial Society Survey (2001), 91% of the 492 human resource and personnel experts polled said stress was an issue in their workplace.

During difficult life events, people who have more social support tend to have better physical and mental health (Mallinckrodt and Fretz, 1988). When people are attempting to cope with organizational change, supportive and pleasant work connections have been demonstrated to be beneficial (Shaw et al., 1993).

According to Fink, George, (2010), Definition and history of stress, stress has both beneficial and harmful aspects. Stress can activate a person's body, mind, and energies in a beneficial way. When stress lasts too long, however, the body's resources are depleted, and the person develops dangerous or unfavorable stress reactions.

Stress can be classified into two sorts based on its influence on the body, mind, and performance: 1. Eu-stress- Eu-stress is defined as the maximum level of stress a person can tolerate. This stress has a favorable outcome. Eu-stress might help you get excited about your job. It might be able to elicit qualities and capabilities that aren't readily apparent. It encourages people to try new things. Stress that is effectively quantified can lead to success. 2. Distress- An excessive amount of tension is defined as distress. This level of stress is hazardous to the individual's health. Distress can have a harmful impact on an individual's health and mind. Such tension has negative consequences such as depression, heart attack, and so on.

Positive stress, also known as eustress, has the following characteristics: high motivation, focuses energy, is short-term, is viewed as within our coping capacities, feels exciting, and improves performance. Prof. Sivasubramanian is a professor at the University of Tamil Nadu (2016). Given the knowledge gained from the literature that stress can be caused by internal or external factors, as well as specific situations, it is critical for academicians and organizations to gain insight into the direction in which employees become stressed (positive or negative) as a result of training in the workplace.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS:
- To investigate the *employee's perception on Training* they receive.
- To investigate employee's perception of *Eustress* during Training.
- To investigate employee's perception of *Destress* during Training.

3.1. Purpose of the Study:
Studies have been conducted on training, eustress and destress and its relationship with organizations effectiveness and employee's effectiveness, whereas, perception from the point of view of trainees on the eustress and distress undergone during the training programme hasn't been taken up for investigation. Through this paper, we intend to conduct an authentic study to understand the employee's perception of Training they undergo, whether training is perceived by employees as a job- stressor be it positive (Eustress) or negative (Destress).

4. RESEARCH METHODS:

5.1 Research Design

The responses are received from places like Bangalore, Mysore, Hassan, Koppal. Study adopted a descriptive quantitative research design. Descriptive design is used when the objective is a systematic description of facts and characteristics of a given population or sample of the population or area of interest are factual and accurate (Kothari, 2008). The quantitative survey allows the researcher to quantify, relate and justify opinions and attitudes of a greater number of respondents. Descriptive research can be either quantitative or qualitative. It can involve collections of quantitative information that can be tabulated along a continuum in numerical form, or it can describe categories of information such as gender or patterns of interaction.

5.2 Sample Size:

A total of 100 participants, 60 male and 40 female participants were comprised for the sample of the present study. The convenience sampling technique is used to collect data from employees.

5.3 Material:

The primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire included 34 closed ended questions by researcher. Primary data was collected through direct communication with the respondents i.e., through the use of questionnaires. However, secondary data was taken from sources included journals, Websites.

5.4 Procedure:

Initially informed consent was taken from each participant. After rapport formation participants were administered the questionnaire. The employees were employed workers and having high educational qualification.

5.5 Data Analysis:

Descriptive statistics was used for the study. Descriptive statistics was used in the study which included tabular, percentage and graphical representation.

6. FINDINGS:

Sl. No	Training	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	*I am aware about my company's training policy*	9.9%	30.9%	3.7%	45.7%	9.9%
2	*I am happy with the type of training I have been provided by my company*	3.8%	30%	11.2%	50%	5%
3	*I am happy with the frequency in which I receive training*	20%	32.5%	2.5%	38.7%	6.3%
4	*I am happy with the duration of the Training*	10.1%	39.2%	19%	26.6%	5.1%
5	*The training took place at a suitable time for me*	6.3%	40%	8.8%	37.5%	7.5%
6	*The training programme motivated me and made me interested to learn more*	2.5%	41.8%	12.7%	34.2%	8.9%
7	*I have felt like taking leave during the training period*	9%	39.7%	3.8%	35.9%	11.5%
8	*I have felt like quitting Training mid-way and continue with my regular office work*	10.3%	33.3%	11.5%	34.6%	10.3%
9	*I have felt to quit the job due to frequent Training programmes I am asked to attend.*	12.7%	43%	22.8%	8.9%	12.7%

Sl. No	Eustress	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	*I have felt that stress improves inter-personal relationship with my colleagues during the training*	26%	29.9%	19.5%	22.1%	2.6%
2	*I have felt that being under stress made me perform better during the training*	6.5%	74%	10.4%	9.1%	-

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3	*I have felt motivated by stress during the training*	14.3%	37.7%	26%	22.1%	-
4	*I have felt that being under pressure made me more productive during the training*	27.6%	30.3%	14.5%	26.3%	1.3%
5	*I have felt that being under pressure made me think more clearly and focused during the training.*	19.5%	48.1%	2.6%	13%	16.9%

Sl. No	**Destress**	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	*I have felt tired for no good reason during the training.*	16.9%	24.7 %	19.5 %	29.9 %	16.9 %
2	*I have felt so nervous that nothing could calm me down during the training.*	11.7 %	36.4 %	11.7 %	32.5 %	7.8 %
3	*I have felt I am not the right fit/match for this job during the training.*	1.3%	20.8%	18.2%	45.5 %	14.3 %
4	*I have felt like Quitting the job during the training.*	14.3%	29.9%	23.4 %	23.4 %	9.1 %
5	*I have felt that I am in the wrong profession during the training.*	14.3%	42.9%	16.9%	13%	13%

7. ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATION:
7.1 Employee Perception of Training:

- **Awareness of Training Policy**: Working without being aware of the company HR training policies can be highly detrimental to the productivity of the employees and company. Hence the study suggests, the HR department should give awareness to the employees during the induction programme and other training programmes on training policies.
- **Happiness about the training programme**: 55% of the employees are happy with the type of training which is good news for the company, HR department and to their career progression. This is a reflection of the appropriateness of training being given to the employees.
- **Frequency of the Training Programme**: Its alarming that 52.5% i.e half of the sample population aren't happy with the frequency of the training programmes in the company. Project teams and HR teams must consult each other before nominating individual or group for a training programme.
- **Duration of the Training programme**: Close of 50% of the sample population aren't happy with the duration of the training programmes. New methodologies, hybrid systems of training programme may be planned by infusing sufficient resources into the organization ecosystem.
- **Time of the Training programme**: The project team and the HR team will have to sit-together and plan so that the ongoing projects deliveries aren't affected due to training timings. Organizations should conduct a micro environment study to see how competitors are planning and managing such training programmes and if feasible, the organizations have to learn from competitors.
- **Motivation to attend the Training programme**: Project team and HR team have to introspect and make the training programmes much more learner centric, market the training programmes better and finally importantly bring in a behavioral change in some of the employees. Success stories of post training work performances of employees in the organization may be shared to extrinsically motivate trainees so that they get an inner urge to attend intrinsically in due course.
- **Absenteeism during Training**: 47% of the trainees want to avail leave during the training period. This is a distressing development for which corrective measures must be taken-up soon. A background check has to be made about such trainees to know the frequency of leaves availed in the current organization and previous organizations. If trainees with bad previous leaves track record have to be immediately served a notice and be given time to improve their behavior.

- **Wanting to quit Training half-way**: 44% of the trainees perceive to quit training mid-way. Regular engagement with the employees taking inputs and feedback both by the project team and the HR team with the employees is very important. Programme managers must recognize the needs of the employees and communicate them with the HR team. Learner's attitude, aptitude and intelligence (cognitive and emotional) have to be understood for measures to be taken to curb the issue.
- **Wanting to quit Training because of the frequency of Training**: All employees are valuable assets and knowledge banks of the company hence; efforts have to be taken to find out the possible issues employees are facing during the training and corrective action have to be taken.

7.2 Employee Perception of Eustress during Training
- **Stress and inter-personal relationship during training**: While training involves stress, the same stress facilitates trainees to know other participant trainees well and exchange views and comfort/console/cajole each other to move forward. Stress also facilitates in improving interrelationship is a significant finding of this study.
- **High Performance under stress during training***: 80% of the employees opine they can't perform well during a stressful situation. Hence it's imperative the training programmes should be planned and monitored to ensure the participants aren't undergoing stress.
- **Motivated by stress during the training:** More real-life simulation exercises have to be confronted by trainees so that they are prepared enough emotionally, mentally to face the stressful situations and resolve challenges effectively. Project and HR teams have to identify factors which motivates and demotivates employees during the training programmes at workplace.
- **High productivity during training**: HR and Project teams have to conduct more simulation exercises, making the trainees undergo real life stressful circumstances not affecting their performance.
- When employees perceive their productivity has increased during the training even under pressure is a direct reflection of the efficacy of the training programme.
- **Clarity of thought and focus under pressure during the training.** To improve the efficacy of the employees, the HR team should plan and implement training programmes to prepare employees to manage pressure and work efficiently and effectively.

7.3 Employee Perception of Destress during Training:
- **Tired for reasons unknown during training**: 47% of the employees perceive to be destressed for no reason during the training. This implies either there is a problem in the attitude of employees towards work or the training programme isn't planned in a way which supports employee welfare.
- **Nervousness during training**: 40% of the trainees do feel distressed or have perceived themselves to be nervous during the training programme. A personality assessment of such trainees and counselling have to be conducted to understand the reasons for such negative emotions during training programme.
- **Perception of not the right match/fit for the job:** A deeper level analysis has to be made at the organization level to learn the reasons why certain employees do feel highly distressed during training which pushes them to decide to lose confidence in themselves by thinking they are unfit for the job.
- **Feeling of Quitting the job during the training:** It's important for the project and HR team to test the job applicants or even experienced employee's psychology and motivation and intrinsic zeal to work. Talent acquisition and retention should be the top priority of the organization.
- *Perception of being in the wrong profession:* Awareness of being a mis-fit to the job during the training programme, means the organization has to go through the recruitment process all over again.

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