

THE IMPACT OF SUPERVISORY SUPPORT AND EMPLOYEES'
MOTIVATION TO TRANSFER ON THE PERCEPTIONS OF TRAINING
TRANSFER IN MELAKA'S MANUFACTURING COMPANIES

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DEDICATION

To my beloved parents and siblings

Thank you for all the support and encouragement.

To my dearest supervisor Dr. Halimah Mohd. Yusof

Thank you for the guidance and advices for completing the thesis

Thank you for your encouraging words during my ups and downs.

To all participated companies

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ABSTRACT

The ability to transfer knowledge from training program has become a core issue in organizations. There are many factors that affect the process of knowledge transfer from training. Supervisory support and motivation to transfer are known as factors that influence the effectiveness of trainings. Without supervisory support and motivation to transfer, transfer of training can be hindered. However, there are inadequate and inconsistent findings from past studies on the impact of supervisory support and motivation to transfer training. For instance, past researches on motivation to transfer did not study all dimensions of Vroom's Expectancy theory, which might affect the validity of their findings. In addition, there is a dearth of research that examines the impact of supervisory support and motivation to transfer simultaneously. Therefore, this study investigated the influence of supervisory support and motivation to transfer on the perceived training transfer. Two hundred and fifty five employees in Melaka's manufacturing companies were chosen through multi-stage sampling method. This study applied a quantitative approach by using questionnaire to gather the data. Data were analyzed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 23.0. Descriptive statistics were applied to measure the level of each variables. While, Pearson Correlation was used to ascertain the relationship between the variables. Additionally, Linear Regression analysis was used to evaluate the impact of supervisory support and motivation to transfer onto the perceived training transfer. Findings indicated that supervisory support, motivation to transfer, and perceived training transfer were high among respondents. Findings also showed that supervisory support has moderate relationship with no significant impact onto perceived training transfer. However, motivation to transfer was found to have strong relationship with significant impact onto perceived training transfer. This study showed that motivation to transfer is the major predictor of perceived training transfer. This study provided some theoretical contributions in terms of providing additional dimensions to Vroom's Expectancy Theory. It is revealed that expectancy is the major dimension that affects perceived training transfer. Vroom's Expectancy Theory is proven reliable in this study. It is recommended that organizations to adopt this approach to improve employees' motivations to transfer training by implementing *cafeteria-style* benefit plans.

ABSTRAK

Keupayaan untuk memindahkan pengetahuan dari program latihan telah menjadi satu isu utama dalam organisasi. Terdapat banyak faktor yang mempengaruhi proses pemindahan pengetahuan dari latihan. Sokongan penyelia dan motivasi untuk pemindahan dikenali sebagai faktor yang mempengaruhi keberkesanan latihan. Tanpa sokongan penyelia dan motivasi untuk pemindahan, pemindahan latihan boleh terhalang. Walau bagaimana pun, terdapat dapatan kajian yang tidak mencukupi dan tidak konsisten daripada kajian lepas yang mengkaji impak sokongan penyelia dan motivasi untuk memindahkan latihan. Sebagai contoh, kajian lepas tentang motivasi untuk pemindahan tidak mengkaji semua dimensi daripada Teori Jangkaan Vroom, yang mungkin akan menjejaskan kesahan dapatan. Tambahan pula, kurangnya kajian yang mengkaji impak sokongan penyelia dan motivasi untuk pemindahan dalam masa yang sama. Oleh itu, kajian ini mengkaji kesan sokongan penyelia dan motivasi untuk pemindahan ke atas persepsi pemindahan latihan. Sebanyak dua ratus dan lima puluh lima pekerja syarikat pembuatan di Melaka dipilih melalui kaedah persampelan pelbagai peringkat. Kajian ini mengaplikasikan pendekatan kuantitatif dengan menggunakan soal-selidik untuk memperolehi data. Data dianalisis dengan menggunakan aplikasi *Statistical Package for Social Science* (SPSS) versi 23.0. Statistik deskriptif digunakan untuk mengukur tahap setiap pembolehubah. Manakala, Korelasi *Pearson* digunakan untuk mengetahui hubungan antara pembolehubah. Tambahan pula, analisis Regresi *Linear* digunakan untuk menilai impak sokongan penyelia dan motivasi pemindahan ke atas persepsi pemindahan latihan. Dapatan kajian menunjukkan bahawa sokongan penyelia, motivasi untuk pemindahan dan persepsi pemindahan latihan adalah tinggi dalam kalangan responden. Dapatan kajian juga menunjukkan bahawa sokongan penyelia mempunyai hubungan yang sederhana tanpa impak yang signifikan ke atas persepsi pemindahan latihan. Walau bagaimana pun, motivasi untuk pemindahan didapati mempunyai hubungan yang kuat dengan impak yang signifikan ke atas persepsi pemindahan latihan. Kajian ini menunjukkan bahawa motivasi untuk pemindahan adalah peramal utama kepada persepsi pemindahan latihan. Kajian ini telah memberi sumbangan teoretikal dari segi menyediakan tambahan dimensi kepada Teori Jangkaan Vroom. Ia menunjukkan bahawa jangkaan adalah dimensi utama yang mempengaruhi persepsi pemindahan latihan. Teori Jangkaan Vroom telah dibuktikan boleh dipercayai dalam kajian ini. Dicadangkan organisasi untuk menggunakan pendekatan ini bagi meningkatkan motivasi pekerja untuk memindahkan latihan dengan melakukan pelan manfaat *cafeteria-style*.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HRD	-	Human Resource Development
RM	-	Ringgit Malaysia
SDN. BHD	-	Sendirian Berhad
SPSS	-	Statistical Packages for Social Sciences
TD	-	Training and Development
VIE	-	Valence, Instrumentality, and Expectancy
VIF	-	Variance Inflation Factor

LIST OF SYMBOLS

%	-	Percentage
&	-	And
r	-	Pearson Correlation
SD	-	Standard Deviation
N	-	Size of population
n	-	Size of sample
β	-	Beta
α	-	Alpha
>	-	More than
<	-	Less than

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

Training transfer has become a core issue for most of the organizations (Hussain, 2011). Most of the organizations has invested billions of dollars onto training investment, however the return of investment is still in unsatisfactory status (Hussain, 2011). Many factors are affecting the training transfer, which includes individual characteristics, training design, and working environment (Ford and Baldwin, 1988). However, in this study, supervisory support and motivation to transfer investigated because limited past studies had done on these elements. Thus, this study found out the impact of supervisory support and motivation to transfer on training transfer.

In this chapter, it starts with background of study to get a brief understanding of this study, followed by problem of statement to know about the issue, then purpose of study, research questions, research objectives, hypotheses development, conceptual framework, significance of study, scope of study, and limitation of study. Additionally, the conceptual and operational definitions of the terms in this study were explained in the end of this chapter as well.

1.2 Background of Study

In 1960, the trend of training has been started in some countries (Jehanzeb and Bashir, 2013). Most of the organizations started to put attention into training and development (Jehanzeb and Bashir, 2013). This phenomenon happened due to training has been recognized as an important role in Human Resource Development (HRD), for the purpose of preparing employees to obtain and keep update to the necessary competencies in today's organizations (Madagamage *et al.*, 2014). For the effort of developing employees, companies have invested billions of dollars on Training and Development (TD) every year (Hussain, 2011). In this huge investment, companies have their expectations on return of investment. They expected employees' skills and performance to be improved and thus increasing the profits of the organizations (Saks and Belcourt, 2006). In another word, if training transfer does not happen and employees failed to improve their performance, the investment is considered wasted (Hussain, 2011). As time goes by, training transfer has become a core problem to Human Resource Development (HRD) practitioners and researchers (Yamnil and McLean, 2001).

Transfer of training is one of the essential components because it helps workers and organization in improving their outcomes (Bhatti *et al.*, 2013). In general, training transfer is defined as the utilization of knowledge and skill back on the tasks at workplace (Burke and Hutchins, 2007). Yamnil and McLean (2001) cautioned that, if an organization wants to reach desirable extent of training transfer, it is critical to understand how to increase the occurrence of applying new knowledge from training to working context among employees.

Ismail *et al.* (2010) claimed that supervisory support is an influential element in the process of training transfer. Nijman *et al.* (2006) described supervisory support as the degree of the supervisor perform in the way that enhances the knowledge transfer process among employees after training. Trainees who have supportive supervisors will utilize their new knowledge onto job (Baldwin and Magjuka, 1991). In other words, if supervisor failed to provide adequate support in working

environment, training transfer will be difficult to be carried out. The quality of relationship between trainees and supervisor will affect the training transfer process (Tracey *et al.*, 2001). It is found that supervisor's feedback significantly influences the training transfer (Velada *et al.*, 2007). This indicates that supervisory support act as key element in utilizing knowledge and skills in workplace after the training.

Besides, Chiaburu and Marinova (2005) mentioned that one of the way to affect the effectiveness of transfer training is motivation to transfer. Training will not be successfully transferred when there is no motivation. Naquin and Holton (2003) explained specifically that, motivation to transfer is the desire of trainees to utilize what they had learned from training onto job. Motivation to transfer can also be defined as an aspiration to effectively use the knowledge and skills learned in training programs on the job (Gegenfurtner, 2011). Wen and Lin (2014) found that motivation to transfer has impact on training transfer. Nikandrou *et al.* (2009) argued that, motivation to transfer is one of the significant issues among individual characteristics. However, Chiaburu and Hutchins (2010) stated that, motivation to transfer have been overlooked by researchers that studied on training transfer. This indicates that motivation to transfer act as crucial factor in utilizing knowledge and skills at workplace.

In Malaysia, the planning of country development has been done comprehensively in order to reach optimum level (Zubaidah *et al.*, 2007). Hashim *et al.* (2009) mentioned that, government of Malaysia is emphasizing the development of human resource for the purpose of fulfilling the conditions of knowledge-based economy, which is also known as K-economy. This can be seen that training becomes a very critical element in the journey to reach K-economy goal. Meanwhile, transfer of training is the main concern in the end of the training process because it predicts the successfulness of a training conducted (Nijman *et al.*, 2006). If the knowledge of the training failed to be transferred onto job in workplace, the companies might encounter loss in the investment on trainings. It is reported by Human Resource Development Fund (HRDF) latest annual report (2014) that, government invested RM 45 million on training and development. If training transfer is successfully happened in workplace,

the financial effort from government will be worth to be invested onto trainings, thus improving the development of country.

In addition, manufacturing industry playing a role as an economy booster in Malaysia (Saad *et al.*, 2012). The industry is known as a major contributor to Malaysia's economy. From this statement, it can be seen that the development of manufacturing industry is very important to the development of Malaysia. In another word, if manufacturing industry is growing well, the development of country in term of economy will be growing well too. In order to have well-grown manufacturing industry, it is essential to carry out trainings onto the employees of manufacturing industry. Besides, training transfer among employees in manufacturing industry should be taken into account. This is because effective training transfer will increase the effectiveness of training (Nijman *et al.*, 2006).

In short, there are limited past studies that have been tested on the impacts of supervisory support and motivation to transfer towards transfer of training. Mixed results are shown that supervisory support has impact towards transfer of training in organization. Thus, there is a need to do further assessment on these linkages. It is significant to carry out this study to test the impacts of supervisory support and motivation to transfer on the perceptions of training transfer in Malaysia manufacturing companies.

1.3 Problem Statement

An organization will not progress if there is no competent employee to bring organization to a better position in this competitive market nowadays (Yvonne *et al.*, 2014). In order to make employees become skilled workers, organizations have been putting much effort in providing training in recent years (Hussain, 2011). Although trainings had been conducted from time to time, it seems that training transfer failed to happen. For instance, Hussain (2011) found out that only 10 percent of learned knowledge and skills are applied into the actual job context. He added, training

transfer becomes a huge problem when organizational performance is not improved. In other words, training transfer is considered as core issue for most of the companies. In addition to this issue, Burke and Hutchins (2007) discovered that, there are 40 percent of employees failed to transfer knowledge right after training, up to 70 percent of employees did not successfully transfer knowledge one year after the trainings, and only 50 percent of investments on training brought positive outcomes to companies or individual performance. From these statements, it is clearly revealed that training investment obtained a poor result. Therefore, training transfer has become a core issue for HRD team in an organization.

There are several factors that can influence the training transfer process. One of the factor is environmental factor which includes supervisory support. According to Bhatti *et al.* (2013), supervisor acts an important role in training transfer. They stated, if supervisor does not support subordinates during the training transfer process, the process might be a failure. Supervisory support has been recognized by several scholars as a crucial element in the process of training transfer (Baldwin and Ford, 1988; Clark *et al.*, 1993; Clarke, 2002; Gielen, 1996). Scaduto *et al.* (2008) suggested that, employees should have supervisory support throughout the training transfer process to enhance training transfer. Abdullah (2009) has reported supervisory support issue in Malaysia manufacturing sector. He mentioned that, supervisors in Malaysia manufacturing firms did not encourage their employees to utilize learned knowledge after trainings. In another word, lacking of supervisory support in training transfer process seems to be an issue in the Malaysia manufacturing sector (Baluch *et al.* 2013, Abdullah, 2009). As a consequence, they are unable to apply the new knowledge from training to their workplace. Therefore, it can be seen that supervisory support is important in influencing training transfer process. However, most of the past studies focused on training design and overlooked supervisory support (Ng, 2001; Saprin, 2003; Rahim, 2003; Bhatti *et al.*, 2010; and Tajudin *et al.*, 2014). In other words, supervisory support has received limited attention in training transfer research. There is a need to exert more effort to obtain fuller understanding on the impact of supervisory support towards training transfer (Cheng and Ho, 2001; Burke and Hutchins, 2007). Furthermore, there are mixed findings found in the past studies on supervisory support and training transfer. There are some studies found out that there

is linkage between supervisory support (Maung and Chemsripong, 2014a; Awortwi-Tandoh, 2013; Hua *et al.*, 2011; Ismail *et al.*, 2010) but there are also studies found out there is weak or no linkage between the variables (Maung and Chemsripong, 2014b; Ng, 2013; Manju and Suresh, 2011). Hence, there is a need to make further assessment onto the impact of supervisory support on training transfer. In addition, Velada *et al.* (2007) argued that different organizational context might have different supervisory support impacts towards training transfer. They recommended future researchers to examine the generalizability of result in different organizational context. In addition to that, research of supervisory support in training transfer is critically lacking in manufacturing context, compared to other contexts in Malaysia. Thus, there is a need to investigate the supervisory support variable in this research to assess the impact of supervisory support on employees' perception onto training transfer in manufacturing industry.

Besides focusing on the supervisory support, individual factor is also able to bring impact towards training transfer process. One of the important element in individual factor is motivation to transfer. Gegenfurtner *et al.* (2009) found out that motivation to transfer plays a vital role in training transfer. Motivation to transfer is defined as a planned objective and passion of employees to utilize the information, skill, and abilities that had obtained from training programmes at workplace (Hussain, 2011). Nijman *et al.* (2006) has investigated that motivation to transfer is one of the key component to affect the training transfer process. Grossman and Salas (2011) claimed that there is a linkage between motivation to transfer and training transfer. Therefore, motivation to transfer is included in this research to carry out investigation onto Malaysia manufacturing sector. This is because Abdullah (2009) claimed that, the employees of manufacturing firms in Malaysia is not motivated to utilize their learned knowledge at workplace. She added, employees' unenthusiastic attitude in training transfer process is one of the challenge in Malaysia manufacturing firms. It can be seen that motivation to transfer is playing a vital role in the process of training transfer. However, past researchers claimed that there are limited empirical studies on the impact of motivation to transfer on training transfer (Egan *et al.*, 2004; Bhatti and Kaur, 2009; Chiaburu *et al.*, 2010; Grossman and Salas, 2011). Past studies focused more on the variables of training design and self-efficacy (Bhatti *et al.*, 2014; Bhatti

and Kaur, 2010; Suzana *et al.*, 2011; Russ-Eft, 2002; Lim, 2000). Inconsistent results are found from the past studies. It is found that, not all studies mentioned that there is a linkage between motivation to transfer and training transfer. Thus, in order to increase the consistency of result, there is a need to study the linkage in this study. Furthermore, past studies on motivation to transfer did not study all the dimensions in the Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory. Chiaburu and Lindsay (2008) mentioned that the dimension of instrumentality was left out by researchers. They emphasized that the omission of Instrumentality is serious. Thus, this study is going to include all the dimensions in the Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory, which includes the dimension of instrumentality. By including all dimensions of Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory, it can help to obtain deeper understanding on the theory and the variable of motivation to transfer in training transfer research. Failure of including all dimensions of theory will affect the validity and reliability of theory, as well as the findings. Thus, it is important to carry out this research to determine the impact of motivation to transfer, which includes all the dimensions of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy, on employees' perception to training transfer in Malaysia manufacturing company.

In Malaysia, for the purpose of preparing workforce to be skilful, knowledgeable, and able to compete with other countries, many effort of investing on training and development activities in organizations has been done by our government (Othman, 2005; Zubaidah *et al.*, 2007; Devadasan and Meng, 2009). According to Astro Awani (2015), manufacturing sector has invested RM 4.4 billion on training alone. Malaysian Investment Development Authority (MIDA) (2015) also mentioned that, Melaka has become the key investment hub for manufacturing sector. One of the investment is training and development in manufacturing sector. Human Resource Development Fund (HRDF) (2014) reported that RM 10 million has been invested onto manufacturing sector. However, in the recent study from Baluch *et al.* (2013), they revealed that, the workers in manufacturing industry failed to apply the skills and knowledge, thus they are unable to increase productivity. They added, failure of training transfer has brought up an issue of skilled workers shortage in Malaysia manufacturing sector. In another word, training transfer failed to occur among the workers in manufacturing industry in Malaysia. This statement is also supported by

past researcher, in which, Abdullah (2009) found out that training transfer is one of the challenges in Training and Development (TD) practices in manufacturing industry in Malaysia. She claimed that most of the times employees are unable to apply their skills onto their workplace. Abdullah (2009) continued, in order to improve the learning and development in the workplace, employees should be motivated throughout the process. Since Malaysia is demanding skilled workers in manufacturing industry (Wan, 2016), it is important to have effective training transfer among employees in manufacturing industry. It is argued by Subedi (2004), Vuuren, de Jong and Seydel (2007) that, past studies have not offered ample evidence to be utilized as guidelines in improving training transfer. Therefore, it is crucial to carry out research to investigate the employees' perception on training transfer in Malaysia manufacturing sector. However, past studies are mostly carried out in educational context or among students (Cheng and Ho, 2001; Klein, Noe and Wang, 2006; Stansfield and Longenecker, 2006). It is argued by Sekaran and Bougie (2010) that, data collected from students are significantly different from organizational personnel. Thus, this study might be able to reduce methodological gap by conducting research in real organizational personnel in manufacturing industry. Future researchers and industries will have more understanding on the impact of supervisory support and motivation to transfer on transfer of training in Malaysia manufacturing industry. Moreover, according to Baharim (2008), several past studies were lacking of well adapted and validated research instrument. This may lead to the goodness of data and bias. Thus, in order to reduce this problem and to provide comprehensive understanding of the impacts, this study used validated and reliable questionnaire to study the impacts of variables towards employees' perception on training transfer.

In a nutshell, there are theoretical gap, methodological gap, and practical gaps found in past studies. This study helped to reduce the gaps as mentioned so that comprehensive understanding can be provided to both academic world and manufacturing context in Malaysia. Industrial development gives contribution to country's economic development. It could bring optimum level of economic growth if employees are well-trained and knowledge of training is successfully transferred in workplace. Supervisory support and motivation to transfer should be concerned.

Thus, it is vital to identify whether there are impacts of supervisory support and motivation to transfer on training transfer process in manufacturing sector as what has been done in this study.

1.4 Purpose of Study

The main purpose of this research is to determining the impact of supervisory support and motivation to transfer on employees' perception on training transfer in manufacturing companies. The supervisory support is divided into emotional support, instrumental support, and feedback. While, the motivation to transfer is divided into three dimensions which are Valence, Instrumentality, and Expectancy. Meanwhile, training transfer is also divided into three dimensions to be studied, which includes trainees' reaction, job attitude, and improved job competency.

1.5 Research Questions

In order to study this research, there are several research questions that needed to be answered. The research questions are as below:

1. What is the level of supervisory support of employees in manufacturing companies?
2. What is the level of motivation to transfer of employees in manufacturing companies?
3. What is the level of employees' perception on training transfer in manufacturing companies?
4. What is the relationship between supervisory support (Emotional Support, Instrumental Support, and Feedback) and employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies?

5. What is the relationship between motivation to transfer (Valence, Instrumentality, and Expectancy) and employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies?
6. What is the impact of supervisory support (Emotional Support, Instrumental Support, and Feedback) on employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies?
7. What is the impact of motivation to transfer (Valence, Instrumentality, and Expectancy) on employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies?

1.6 Research Objectives

Objectives of research are as below:

1. To identify the level of supervisory support of employees in manufacturing companies.
2. To identify the level of motivation to transfer of employees in manufacturing companies.
3. To identify the level of employees' perception on training transfer in manufacturing companies.
4. To determine the relationship between supervisory support (Emotional Support, Instrumental Support, and Feedback) and employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.
5. To determine the relationship between motivation to transfer (Valence, Instrumentality, and Expectancy) and employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.
6. To determine the impact of supervisory support (Emotional Support, Instrumental Support, and Feedback) on employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

7. To determine the impact of motivation to transfer (valence, instrumentality, and expectancy) on employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

1.7 Hypotheses

In this study, alternative hypotheses were used by the researcher. The hypotheses are as below:

H1: There is relationship between supervisory support with the dimension of emotional support and employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

H2: There is relationship between supervisory support with the dimension of instrumental support and employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

H3: There is relationship between supervisory support with the dimension of feedback and employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

H4: There is significant impact of supervisory support with the dimension of emotional support on employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

H5: There is significant impact of supervisory support with the dimension of instrumental support on employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

H6: There is significant impact of supervisory support with the dimension of feedback on employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

H7: There is relationship between motivation to transfer with the dimension of valence and employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

H8: There is relationship between motivation to transfer with the dimension of instrumentality and employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

H9: There is relationship between motivation to transfer with the dimension of expectancy and employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

H10: There is significant impact of the motivation to transfer with the dimension of valence on employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

H11: There is significant impact of the motivation to transfer with the dimension of instrumentality on employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

H12: There is significant impact of the motivation to transfer with the dimension of expectancy on employees' perception of training transfer (Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, Improved Job Competency) in manufacturing companies.

1.8 Significance of Study

The significances of this study are discussed in two types, which are in terms of knowledge and application in real-world. Firstly, in terms of knowledge, this study could be added to the literature in the field of supervisory support, motivation to transfer, and training transfer of employees in manufacturing industry. In addition, the results of the study could be taken as useful references for future researchers who are interested to conduct research on similar industry with different populations. A useful reference can help future researchers to obtain a better understanding on supervisory

support, motivation to transfer, and training transfer among employees in manufacturing industry.

While in term of application, this study can benefit manufacturing companies in Melaka. Employees in manufacturing companies in Melaka are considered as the assets of the company. The findings of this research can provide Melaka manufacturing companies a big picture of the level of supervisory support, motivation to transfer, and training transfer by mailing the authorities a report of findings. From the findings of these levels and the impacts, the management of Melaka manufacturing companies are able to gain more understanding on how much supervisory support and motivation to transfer can affect training transfer process. From here, the managements can take necessary actions to improve training transfer process in Melaka manufacturing companies. Once training transfer process is improved, the investment on training will be worth the value.

Moreover, there are mixed findings found in the past studies of supervisory support and training transfer. There is a need to make further assessment onto the impact of supervisory support on training transfer. Velada *et al.* (2007) argued that different organizational context might have different supervisory support effect towards training transfer. They recommended future researchers to examine the generalizability of result in different organizational context. Thus, by carrying out this research, the impact of supervisory support on training transfer can be assessed in different context. This can be contributing onto the consistency of findings since there are mixed findings in past studies.

On top of that, this research studies the impact of motivation to transfer on training transfer as well. There are scholars mentioned that most of the training transfer studies had left out the effect of motivation to transfer (Egan *et al.*, 2004; Bhatti and Kaur, 2009; Chiaburu *et al.*, 2010; Grossman and Salas, 2011). To measure motivation to transfer, the researcher includes the dimensions of valence, instrumentality, and expectancy based on Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory. Past studies that used Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory to measure motivation to transfer

did not study all dimensions of Expectancy Theory. Chiaburu and Lindsay (2008) mentioned that the dimension of instrumentality was left out by researchers. They argued that the omission of Instrumentality is serious. Besides, the researcher of this study adopts different instrument with past studies, which includes all dimensions of Expectancy Theory. Thus, by doing this research, it can contribute more knowledge on motivation to transfer (valence, instrumentality, and expectancy) and transfer training to academic world.

Last but not least, past studies are mostly carried out in educational context or among students (Cheng and Ho, 2001; Klein, Noe and Wang, 2006; Stansfield and Longenecker, 2006). Data collected from students are significantly different from organizational personnel (Sekaran, 2003). Thus, this study is able to reduce methodological gap by conducting research in organizational personnel in manufacturing industry. Future researchers and industries will have more understanding on the impact of supervisory support and motivation to transfer on transfer of training in Malaysia manufacturing industry. Thus, it is significant to carry out this research to investigate the impact of supervisory support and motivation to transfer on training transfer in manufacturing industry. This is because successful training transfer will enhance performance of employees in manufacturing sector and contributes to the economic development of Malaysia.

1.9 Scope of Study

There are several scopes in this research. Firstly, this research was carried out in manufacturing companies in Central Melaka. The second scope of this study is the data collection method. In this quantitative study, questionnaire was used and distribute to respondents. Thirdly, supervisory support variable in this research is studied under Social Exchange Theory by Blau (1964). There are three dimensions involved in this theory, which are Emotional Support, Instrumental Support, and Feedback. Its questionnaire items are adopted from Hammer *et al.* (2009) and Palomo

et al. (2010). Next, in this research, the variables of Motivation to transfer are using three dimensions under Expectancy Theory by Vroom (1964), which are Valence, Instrumentality, and Expectancy. It is measured by questionnaire which is adopted from Ayres (2005). This questionnaire covers all the dimensions of motivation to transfer that was addressed in this study. On the other hand, Training Transfer variable is under Cognitive Theory by Neisser (1967). There are also three dimensions involved in this theory, which are Trainees' Reaction, Job Attitude, and Improved Job Competency. It was measured by using questionnaire as well. The questionnaire of Training Transfer is adopted from Ng and Ahmad (2012). Last but not least, in this study, the impacts of variables were studied. The effect of supervisory support and motivation to transfer towards training transfer were studied as well.

1.10 Conceptual Definitions and Operational Definitions

The conceptual and operational definitions are given in this section.

1.10.1 Supervisory support

Conceptually, Nijman *et al.* (2006) described supervisory support as the degree of the supervisor perform in the way that enhances the knowledge transfer process among employees after training. Scaduto *et al.* (2008) explained further, employees who have positive relationship with their supervisors, will have better communication in organization. According to Seyler *et al.* (1998), supervisory support is defined as the degree of managers provide support and emphasize the transfer of learned material. Clark *et al.* (1993) explained further, when subordinates perceived weak support from supervisors, subordinates will feel demotivated in the process of learning during training.

In this study, supervisory support is defined based on the Social Exchange Theory by Blau (1964). Thus, for the purpose of this study, supervisory support is

defined as the working environment that emphasizes on exchanging relationship between supervisor and workers in which, supervisor takes initiative in providing support, such as emotional support, instrumental support, and responding feedback to the workers (Blau, 1964). Under Blau's (1964) Social Exchange Theory, there are three dimensions were studied in this study, which are Emotional Support, Instrumental Support, and Feedback. The operationalized definitions are as below.

(i) Emotional Support: For the purpose of this study, emotional support is defined as the esteem and caring from supervisors to trainees' feeling and problems (Blau, 1964).

(ii) Instrumental Support: For the purpose of this study, instrumental support is defined as the sense of obligation from supervisors to trainees by reacting to trainees' demands (Blau, 1964).

(iii) Feedback: Blau (1964) mentioned that every individual expects feedback. In order to study this research, feedback is described as the process of providing information about trainees' training transfer (Blau, 1964).

1.10.2 Motivation to transfer

Motivation to transfer is conceptually defined as the desires of an individual to utilize the knowledge gained from training during working hours (Noe and Schmitt, 1986). An individual needs to have inspiration to transfer their knowledge onto their job tasks. Seyler *et al.* (1998) mentioned that if employees are not inspired or motivated, they are considered as having low motivation to transfer. Hussain (2011) defined that, motivation to transfer happened when an individual deliberately transfers knowledge and skill onto jobs with full passion. Motivation to transfer is also defined as an aspiration to effectively use the learned knowledge and skills in workplace

because Bates *et al.* (2007) mentioned that motivation to transfer provides directions which acts as strength to transfer or utilize the knowledge at workplace.

For the purpose of this study, motivation to transfer is based on Expectancy Theory by Vroom (1964), which included the dimensions of Valence, Instrumentality, and Expectancy. These dimensions were assessed by using the questionnaire which is developed by Ayres (2005) based on Vroom's (1964) Expectancy Theory. These operationalized definitions are as below.

(i) Valence: For the purpose of this study, valence is defined as the attraction of a consequence to an individual, where an individual will have desire to the particular outcomes (Vroom, 1964).

(ii) Instrumentality: For the purpose of this study, instrumentality is defined as an employee's estimation on the likelihood that a certain level of job performance will lead to certain outcomes (Vroom, 1964).

(iii) Expectancy: In order to study this research, expectancy is described as the insight of an employee about the degree of which their effort will bring about a certain level of job performance (Vroom, 1964).

1.10.3 Training Transfer

Yamhill and McLean (2001) defined training transfer as the capability of employees to apply their knowledge and skills onto their job tasks at workplace. Baldwin and Ford (1988) added, to ensure training transfer happened, the applied behavior has to be retained and generalized to working context. Velada and Caetano (2007) had improved definition where training transfer is a process where employees utilize skills, information, attitudes, and actions onto their jobs after trainings. Broad and Newstrom (2000) defined in another way, where they defined training transfer

should be effective and ongoing utilization of knowledge and skills obtained from training setting to work setting.

For the purpose of this study, training transfer is defined based on Cognitive Transfer Theory by Neisser (1964). Thus, training transfer is defined as the degree of employees' perception on utilizing learned material at workplace after the transformation of knowledge (Neisser, 1964). As cited by Ertmer and Newby (2013), under Cognitive Theory, training transfer happened when the trainees or learners had improved their job competencies, and Cognitive Theory concerns about the attitude and reaction of trainees in handling the learned knowledge. In other words, trainees' reaction, their attitude on job, and improvement on job competency should be examined when Cognitive Theory is adopted in this research. Since Cognitive Theory emphasized on the trainees' attitude, reaction, and improved changes at workplace under this theory, thus the researcher studied three dimensions in this theory, which are trainee' reaction, job attitude, and improved job competency. The operationalized definitions are as below.

(i) Trainee Reaction: For the purpose of this study, trainee reaction is defined as the extent to which trainees respond to their job during training transfer process (Neisser, 1964).

(ii) Job Attitude: For the purpose of this study, job attitude is defined as the trainees' feelings and attachment to job during training transfer process (Neisser, 1964).

(iii) Improved Job Competency: In order to study this research, improved job competency is described as the enhanced ability of trainees to perform tasks (Neisser, 1964).

1.11 Summary

To summarize, this chapter has described the background of study, statement of problem, questions to be answered in this research, purpose and objectives, hypotheses, significance of study, scopes that to be covered in this study, and limitations. Besides that, definitions of terms are also explained in this chapter in order to investigate the correlation between supervisory support, motivation to transfer, and training transfer of employees in Central Melaka manufacturing companies. The following chapter will present and discuss in detail on the elements of supervisory support, motivation to transfer, and training transfer, as well as the impacts of variables on training transfer.

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