Factors That Enhance the Implementation of Skills and Training Outcomes in Nigeria

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Abstract

Billions of dollars are spending every year in Nigeria for the training of government officials in order to increase their productivity and efficiency. The training focused on trying to change behavior or teach new skills and knowledge to an individual trainee to realize their performance goals. This paper focuses on how participants implement knowledge gain from workshop programs attended. The study examines the literature on the study of implementation and proffers a model for the implementation of training programs. The paper finds out that implementation of skills and knowledge from training programs are below expectation in Nigeria the paper also find out that based on the literature reviewed there are factors that enhance the implementation of skills and training outcomes attended by public servants in Nigeria. Finally, the paper concludes by suggesting ways that will improve the implementation of skills and knowledge from training programs.

Keywords: Implementation, Skills and Knowledge, Training Programs

■ 1.0 INTRODUCTION

Implementation of skills and training, application of knowledge that has been newly acquired during training continues to be a major concern to the implementation of training. (Seyler, Holton III, Bates, Burnett, & Carvalho, 1998). Training is the most used method for improving performance in the workplace, but the training did not result in the implementation of new skills and knowledge acquired during training to the job. Literature shows that the rate of implementation of new skills is too low and also researchers continue to struggle to find out the reasons why a higher percentage of skills and knowledge acquired during training programs is difficult to be implemented to the workplace environment despite the spending of resources and time. Implementation of training is important to governments and organizations, this is because the government at all levels has invested a lot of resources in sending their staff to training in order to increase their knowledge and skills. Furthermore, it is expected for the employees to implement the learned knowledge into the workplace.
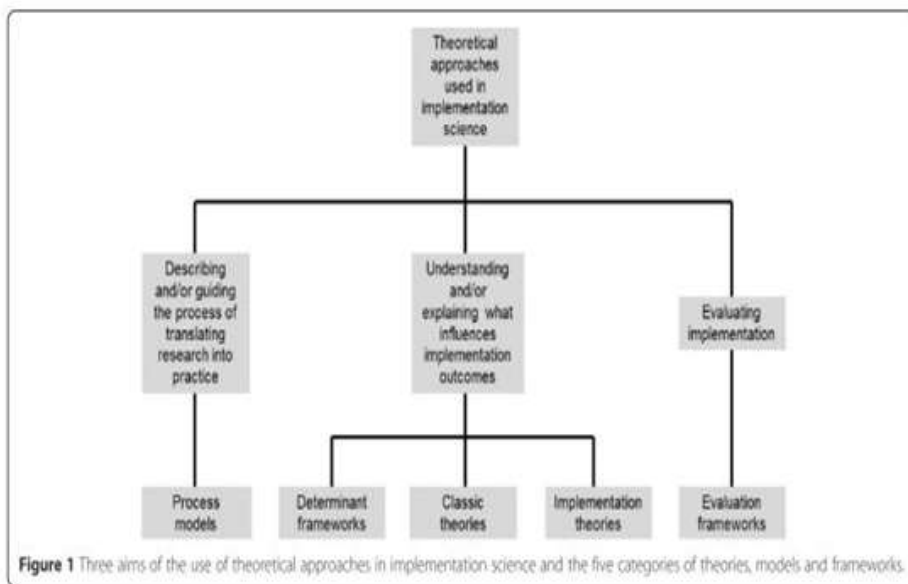
Successful implementation of skills and knowledge acquired from the training program depends on the organization implementation climate in which it expert, support and reward implementation of new knowledge that will enhance productivity (Bunger et al., 2019). Before training should take place the organization needs to agreed-upon objectives to be achieved. Therefore, each year billions of dollars are spent to train frontline workers but only a small fraction of these training is successfully implemented into practice (Birken et al., 2016; Bunger et al., 2019;

Jr, Jaca, & Carlos, 2019). The implementation of a training program is one of the challenges organizations and governments face despite spending a huge amount of resources. The purpose of this paper is to identify factors that enhance the implementation of skills and training outcomes and propose a framework for the implementation of training programs acquired.

◼ 2.0 IMPLEMENTATION OF TRAINING

Implementation science and implementation policy research have proposed that the major problem of implementation is a lack of theoretical approaches to provide better understanding and explanation of how and why implementation succeeds or fails (Cairney, Nilsen, Ståhl, & Roback, 2013). There are theories or framework which seek to understand and or explaining what influence implementation outcomes (Nilsen, 2015). Process model is a model that specifies steps, stages, and phases in the process of evidence-based implementation, including the translation of research into practice and use of research.in the implementation of policy the main focus of process models is guide, describe and facilitate the process of translating research into practice (Nilsen, 2015).

Nilsen, (2015) also identifies determinant frameworks specify types of barriers and enablers that influence implementation they are variables that influence implementation outcomes the purpose is to understand and explain what influences and enhance implementation outcomes, there also frameworks that try to evaluate implementation to determine its success. Figure 1 below is the Types of framework theories, and models, proposed by (Nilsen, 2015).

Figure 1 Three aims of the use of theoretical approaches in implementation science and the five categories of theories, models and frameworks.

Source Nilsen, (2015)

◼ 3.0 FACTORS INFLUENCING THE IMPLEMENTATION OF SKILLS AND TRAINING OUTCOMES

Several studies have identified various reasons for lack of implementation of training which include poor assessments of training needs, lack of opportunity to apply new training skills on the job and lack of conducive atmosphere or implementation climate are the common examples (Bunger et al., 2019). Lack of implementation of training on the job means that the learning efforts not meeting the organizational goals or the trainees could not implement what they learn from the training program. There are several factors suggested by researches that influence the transfer of training. These factors can be categorized as follows: -

1. Trainee characteristics
2. Training design
3. A workplace environment or implementation climate

Trainee characteristics several research studies investigate the effect of trainee characteristics on implementation of training can be put into four categories motivation to implement, self-efficacy, organization training policy and expectancy approach (Seyler et al., 1998). Motivation to implement refers to the support and reward employees received towards job implementation of knowledge and training application (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010). When motivation to implement is supported and rewarded employee see benefit in training and can readily implement the training and they would perceive that implementing training will enhance their performance on the job effectively (Blume et al., 2010).

Self-efficacy is generally, the belief in oneself that he can use training and learning to change his job performance effectively. An individual with self-efficacy is more likely to implement trained tasks, attempt more difficult and complex tasks on the job (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Organization training policy had set a goal to be used to identify training needs and as a post-training intervention designed to facilitate the implementation of training by expecting, supporting and rewarding the application of training and knowledge gained from training programs and contributing to the development of self- efficacy (Bandura, 1990).

Expectancy beliefs Vroom, (1964 P74) suggest that employees will be motivated if they beliefs that their learning will lead to efficient performance, a successful employee would be expected to apply to learn and to perform better therefore, more motivated to implement learning. The outcomes of the training are expected to influence motivation to implement in addition to influence individual job performance. Expectancy theory suggests that people with high positive job attitudes commitment, and job satisfaction, are more likely to implement and perceive rewards from the implementation of training outcomes (Vroom, 1964 P74)

Ability is the skills that individual cognitive ability plays in carrying out the implementation of training. General cognitive abilities are the capabilities to effectively implement training outcomes because it shows the ability of individuals to use his mental capabilities involving reasoning and problem-solving examples evaluation, planning, judgment, recognition, and memory that are used in day to day job performance. Psychologies suggest that cognitive ability has an important effect on training implementation (Spinath, Spinath, Harlaar, & Plomin, 2006).

Training Design several studies have highlighted the impact of training design in influencing and enhancing implementation because these constructs impacting training implementation (Brinkerhoff & Gill, 1992). Some of the problems of implementation may be reduced if identified in the training design process. Holton III, (2002) found that the incorporation of learning principles, sequencing of training material and job relevance of training content was critical to the design process, most trainers in organizations have invested their resources and time to enhance the effectiveness of training design.

Some studies suggested that the incorporation of certain training strategies along with or subsequent to the presentation of instructional content in training programs may enhance implementation (Bonner, Fajardo, Doust, McCaffery, & Trevena, 2019).When trainees are taught how to implement or are given tools of strategies to assist them in implementing learned skills and then, given proper motivation and positive implementation conditions greater implementation is a likely result (Holton III, 2002). From the review of related literature on the effect of training design on the implementation of learning, training design is of two types (Blume et al., 2010).

(a)   Instructional design and

(b)   Instructional methods

(a)   Instructional Design Baldwin & Ford, (1988) explain four basic principles of instructional design among them three principles are related to training content that impacts training implementation. Identical elements, stimulus variability, and generalization principles. In addition, the program course content of the training has a strong relationship with the implementation of a training program. This indicated that, the relevance of training content to the job effect implementation motivation (Baldwin & Ford, 1988)

(b)   Instructional Methods Researchers have studied the effect of various types of instructional methods on training implementation (Abdullahi, 2013; Haines, Kuruvilla, & Borchert, 2004; Hamid, 2015; Tracey, Tannenbaum, & Kavanagh, 1995) Tutoring and Coaching Lewis, (1989) are considered as powerful tools to polish new behavior and skills acquired in the training. Another factor related to training design that requires a special mention is that the learners perceived the importance of the learning, for the participant will be able to apply the

new learning, knowledge, and skills the employee must perceive that the training is relevant to their job performance (Cairney et al., 2013).

Work Environment characteristics include support by an employer for the utilization of training skills learn from the training program and support from supervisors and colleagues to ensure the successful implementation of outcomes to their own workplace or industry that is the implementation climate (Bunger et al., 2019). Factors that hinder the successful implementation of training outcomes in the workplace are motivation to implementation, self-efficacy, cognitive ability of the trainee (Peters & O'Connor, 1980). Also, supervisor, facilitator and workplace support to implement training outcomes (Birken et al., 2016). Rouiller & Goldstein, (1993), examined the implementation climate of training they refer to implementation climate in general to the type and degree to which factors in the workplace limit or augment an individual application of knowledge and skills learned in the training to the job situation. Implementation climate components were classified into situational cues (goal, social, task and self-control) and consequences (positive reinforcement, punishment and lack of feedback). Both types are essentials in influencing the implementation of the learning application. Therefore, the support and reward of participant training in an organization i.e implementation climate existed, learners demonstrate importantly learning behavior, their supervisor influence how they will implement training by supporting, and rewarding them (Birken et al., 2016; Bunger et al., 2019).

Bunger et al., (2019) study on the role of supervisors' in influencing the implementation of innovation they found the key successful implementation of outcomes of learning is the support of supervisors and other middle managers by ensuring that skills and knowledge gained are successfully implemented in the workplace or industry. They also find out that supervisors performed the following functions that shape the implementation climate they diffused and synthesized information, mediated between strategy and day-to-day tasks, and justified implementation. Together, these roles interacted to convey expectations and support for implementation at the frontlines and implementation effectiveness (Bunger et al., 2019).

Studies indicated that the workplace environment can be an enabler and barrier to trainees' application of their learning and skills (Tracey et al., 1995). Kuroda & Yamamoto, (2018) identify factors that deal with the worker's relationship with his supervisor they find out that good communication and support between the employer and employee will lead to the employee productivity and skills development. Supervisors' lack of support, bad communication leads to the unsuccessful achievement of outcomes and leads to the quitting of staff. Good communication depends on employer and employee relationships.

Annuar Aswan Mohd Noor (2015) studied the relationship between supervisor support, transfer climate, transfer of training, and Self-Efficacy, The research showed that self-efficacy, supervisor support, transfer climate has a significant relationship with a transfer of training. The study recommends that organizations need to take proactive action to increase the employees' self-efficacy level, encourage supervisors to give support to their supervisee, and promote good organization climate especially to make a transfer of training occur in the workplace and utilize experience employees.

Holton III (2002) identify Feedback and achievement, support and implementation of achieved learning, support of co-workers in the implementation of successful outcomes and the extent to which supervisors and co-workers are oppose using new knowledge and skills. Task support, peer support openness to change, and the reward system have all been found to influence the implementation of training.

Testers, Gegenfurtner, & Brand-Gruwel (2015) identified several organizational factors that motivate the implementation of training

(a)   Support from the workplace

(b)   Policies

(c)   Tools provided for the job

(d)   The availability of a mentor

Recognition from the peers and open climate in communication also allow trainees to implement the learning to their jobs and task (Ramaswamy, Mosnier, Reed, Powell, & Schenck, 2019). Workplaces and Industries who continue to support their staffs in the application of new learning are more likely to achieve the implementation of

new learning and skills on the job.

Moreover, another factor of the workplace environment that is influencing training implementation is support from the organization. Organizations monitoring and evaluation systems such as support, appraisal, and reward play an essential role in the successful achievement of an individual or training outcomes. Baldwin & Ford, (1988) Asserted that when individual trainees know that they will be accountable for the implementation of learning, they will put more effort and ensure understanding and participate fully in the courses. This indicates that government and organizations should put more emphasis on the implementation of learning so that those employees who believe that by attending relevant training will increase their skill levels and enhance their job performance. Therefore, the organization should continue to support, reward individuals staff who implement training courses in their workplace.

Brinkerhoff & Gill (1992) Developed a study where the supervisor will discuss with the participant of training prior to commencement of the training program with regarding to the course content, the course objectives, the course targets or candidates and area of improvement and development in the workplace where the learning can apply from the training program. In addition, supervisor discussed issues concerning post-training with trainees including the extent to which the trainees learned the material, which barriers the trainee might face while implementing the training to the job and an emphasis on supervisor expectation regarding the use of trained skills to improve job performance (Brinkerhoff & Gill, 1992). Based on the above literature reviewed I propose a framework for successful implementation of training outcomes of learning and skills from training courses.

■ 4.0 FRAMEWORK FOR SUCCESSFUL IMPLEMENTATION OF TRAINING OUTCOMES OF LEARNING AND SKILLS FROM THE TRAINING COURSE.

Table 1 Framework for successful implementation of training outcomes of learning and skills from the training course.

Factors	Attributes	Marks		
		Implementer	Supervisor	Agreed Mark
Training characteristics	Motivation to implement			
	Self-efficacy			
	Expectancy Approach			
	Ability			
Training Design	Job relevance to Training Content			
	Instructional Method			
Communication Skills And The Ability To Listen	Writing Ability			
	Listening Ability and comprehension			
	Capable of obtaining and diffusing information			
	Adapting and synthesize information			
	Ability to apply training outcomes to their own workplace			
	Ability to support co-workers in the implementation of training.			

The above table 1 indicates a framework for the successful implementation of training outcomes of learning and skills from training course the employer and the employee will agree on performance objectives, the process towards achieving the objectives and factors affecting the implementation of the objectives before staff is sent to a training program that is the training needs identified. Therefore, the above framework can assist the organization in rating the employee before and after he has attended a training program.

Firstly, the organization will identify the training characteristics that are motivation to implement, self-efficacy, expectancy approach, and ability both the implementer or staff and his supervisor will rate and identify the agreed marks.

Secondly, training design needs to be identified before an employee will be sent for training in relation to Job relevance to training content and instructional method. The training program must be related to the job and what is the instructional method used for the training that will facilitate understanding and implementation? Thirdly, the employee will be rated before and after he/she returned from the training program his communication skills and ability to listen will be rated based on the writing ability, listening and comprehension, capability to diffuse information, ability to synthesize information, ability to apply training outcomes to their own workplace and the ability to support co-workers to implementation training outcomes. Based on this framework implementation of a training program will be achieved.

■5.0 CONCLUSION

This paper highlighted personal cognitive ability training characteristics and workplace support as enablers that facilitate the implementation of outcomes from learning programs to the workplace. The incorporation of such factors would improve the implementation of knowledge and skills learned in training to the workplace. The study also proposes a framework that will enable the implementation of the training program to acquire and to hold the employee accountable for the money spends on them. This model when applied by organizations and governments it will go a long way to help and enable implementation. Training of frontline workers is used in the enhancement of skills and knowledge in the workplace. Through a literature review, the study identifies factors and quality attributes that enhance the implementation of a training program.

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