

# ROLE OF TRAINING TRANSFER AND POST-TRAINING ON JOB PERFORMANCE IN MIDDLE EASTERN COUNTRIES: CASE OF PALESTINE

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## Abstract

*Extant research suggests that supervisor support and perceive utility facilitate employee training transfer and might increase productivity. Within Palestine context there are ambiguity in previous research that post training factors such as supervisor support and perceive utility associated with training transfer and job performance. Thus this study intended to investigate the post training factors relationship with the job performance with the mediating effect of training transfer. One of the most critical challenges facing the developing countries is the training and development of its people, employees are the one the critical strategic asset in any organization. In this quantitative study 300 academic staffs from different universities in Palestine were taken as a sample and has found the positive significant association of supervisor support training transfer and job performance. However, no relationship had been found among perceive utility, training transfer and job performance.*

**Keywords:** Supervisor Support, Perceive Utility, Training Transfer, Job performance, Higher Education.

2016 GBSEJournal

## Introduction

Fierce competition in global market and technological innovations lead organizations to invest profoundly in training to fit with the current situation and increase employee performance ever than before. Organizations around the world believing that train employee will increase their performance and productivity and thus organizations are investing huge amount of money on training (Yamhill, 2001). But research showed that, there are only a small percentage have gotten the return of investment as employees transferred very little portion of their learned knowledge in the workplace.

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In recent studies it has found that In fact, typical estimates of skills lost due to poor transfer of training range from 66% to 90% (Sookhai & Budworth, 2010). In addition, only 21 percent of interested organizations assess the level of transfer of training of their employees (Lim & Nowell, 2014). Frequently associated when the employees can use what they have learned at the workplace (Bouzuenda, 2014) and percentage of applying the learned knowledge is low (Mohammed Turab, & Casimir, 2015). Due to huge investment organizations thus suffers if the employees are not able to transfer the learned skills and knowledge. The reason behind the lack of transfer from the training this paper aims to investigate the pre-training factors and the role of training transfer to enhance job performance of employees.

Post-training interventions, the use of transfer mechanisms and employees' reactions to them are also known in this discussion. Introducing appropriate managerial activities could have a relevant influence on the perception of the importance of training, motivation to learn and training transfer (Baldwin et al.; 1991). Thus, this study investigated how the post training factors such as supervisor support and perceive utility effect training transfer and job performance in Palestinian higher education institute.

## Literature Review

Job performance can be denoted to measurable actions, behavior and outcomes of an employee engage in and work towards to achieve his own goal or task that are linked with and contribute to organizational goals. Several studies has been confirmed and evidence that training can increase the productivity of an individual and also found a positive impact on the productivity of individuals which in turns increase organizational performance (Dumas & Hanchane, 2010; Mohammed Turab, & Casimir, 2015; Sahinidis & Bouris, 2008). The benefits of training for individuals include up-dated skills and knowledge, and improved effectiveness to the job and increase their performance (Nikandrou, Brinia, & Bereri, 2009).

The transfer of training defined in previous studies as the degree to which trainees can apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained in training to his/her own job context (Blume, Ford, Baldwin, & Huang, 2010; Brinkerhoff & Apking, 2001). Transfer can take place when an employee's learned behavior from the training is generalized to his own job setting and sustained over a period of time (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Blume et al., 2010; Brinkerhoff & Apking, 2001; Wexley & Latham, 1981).

Burke and Hutchins (2008) findings suggested that work climate impact was (49%), the trainer's role 48%, and design and delivery interventions of training was impact of 46%, and learner characteristics impact was 2%. Furthermore, Burke and Hutchins (2008) found in that study the role of supervisors implied (25%) and the trainees (23%) had implied significantly over the training during (48%), after (32%), and before (12%).

### Supervisor Support

The degree to which the individual trainee's supervisor helps him/her to set performance goals, provides opportunities and space in organization to use his/her newly learned skills, and recognizes and rewards that individual for applying that skills and knowledge on the job

(Short, 1997). Work environment impacts on training transfer and it plays an important role in training transfer (Rouiller & Goldstein, 1993).

A training program might have implemented with an excellent design and delivery strategy but lacking of an appropriate environment that supports trained tasks then it can be considered the training program has little value or outcome (Grossman & Salas, 2011). According to Salas and Stagl (2009; 2006), trainees can get support from supervisors through recognition, encouragement and rewards, and modelling trained behaviours. In the discussion of new learning Lim and Johnson (2002) also identified supervisors' participation as the engagement in training and provision of positive feedback as forms of assistance mostly recognized by the trainees so that it influences their transfer positively.

### Perceived Utility

Perceived utility defined as trainees who perceive as useful and valuable training in the workplace are far more likely to apply to the new knowledge by individual (Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Chiaburu & Lindsay, 2008; Gilpin-Jackson & Bushe, 2007). Transfer can also be influenced by the perceived utility or value associated with participating in training by an individual trainee (Burke & Hutchins, 2007). According to Baldwin and Ford (1988) and Holton (1996), trainee characteristics such as cognitive ability, self-efficacy, and transfer motivation, perceived utility/value, and the profession as a trainee career is important to consider training transfer research.

Rapidly growing the importance of training, using training as a competitive tool to compete with their rivals. Regarding the training and training transfer which have a positive impact on employee and organizational goals and employees should be committed toward organization to give input from the training to enhance organizational goal.

## Theoretical Framework and Hypothesis

The Baldwin and Ford (1988) transfer model and the theoretical model of Holton (1996) and Holton, Bates, and Ruona (2000) have been the most frequently used in transfer studies (Lim & Morris, 2006). In their seminal work, Baldwin and Ford (1988) asserted that training has a multitude of variables, which can inhibit transfer (Kontoghiorghes, 2004). Michalak (as cited in Baldwin & Ford, 1988) referred to this as the “transfer problem” (p. 63). Baldwin and Ford (1988) contended that for the transfer of training to occur, learned behavior must be made in the job context and maintained over time.

This study adapted training transfer model from Baldwin and Ford (1988) study. A well-known framework for the transfer problem put forward by Baldwin and Ford (1988) posited that transfer is a function of three factors, namely, trainee characteristic (or individual factors), work environment (or environmental factors) and training design factors (or situational factors). The extant literature on training transfer has very little value to practitioners to maximize positive transfer. According to their suggestion, early empirical research studying the effects of individuals' factors (e.g. trainee ability, personality, and motivation) on transfer of training are very few.

Uma, and Susan (2012) reviewed the extant literature argued that the factors affect the training can be learnt under the following: trainee characteristics, intentions to transfer and reactions. Training design and delivery mechanisms. Work environment, and situational and organizational factors. This study thus investigated how supervisor support, perceive utility effect training transfer and job performance. Figure 1 represented the adapted model of this study.

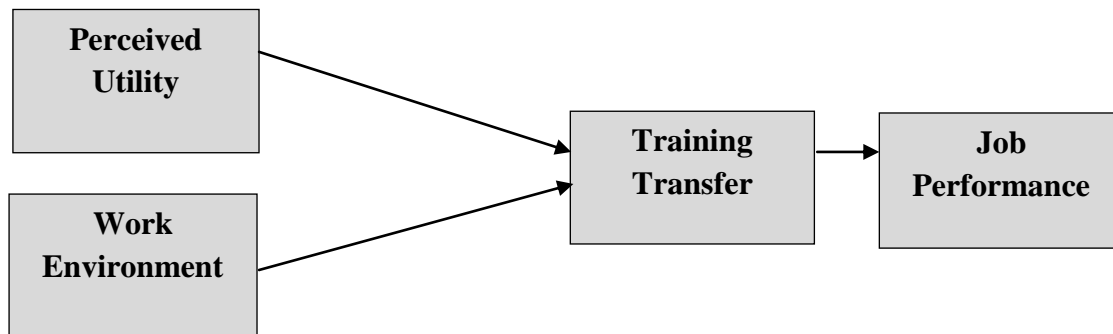


Figure 1. Research Model

#### *Supervisor Support*

Cromwell and Kolb (2004) distinguished that the trainees who obtained high levels of supervisor support transferred more knowledge and skills just after one year of participating a training program in comparison to those who reported lower levels of support. Importance of supervisor involvement or participation in training for transfer outcomes have been emphasized in other studies as well (Gilpin-Jackson & Bushe, 2007; Saks & Belcourt, 2006). Kontoghiorghes (2001) identified supervisory support in the form of encouragement for the application of new skills.

Studies on the effect of the work environment on training transfer have widely discussed support as a major category necessary for positive transfer (Huczynski and Lewis, 1990). The most consistent factor explaining the relationship between the work environment and transfer is the support trainees receive to use their new skills and knowledge (Clarke, 2002). From this discussion this study intends to test the following hypothesis:

*H1: There is a positive relationship between supervisor support and job performance when training transfer mediate the relationship.*

#### *Perceive Utility*

The effectiveness of a training program is largely dependent on the trainees' ability to use their newly acquired competencies on the job (Salas et al., 2006). Thus it is important to determine whether or not trainee's exhibit learned behaviors once they return to the work setting (Grossman & Salas, 2011). Transfer can be influenced by the perceived utility or value associated with training (Burke, and Hutchins, 2007). Axtell et al. (1997) found trainees who perceived training as relevant had higher levels of immediate skill transfer. Also, trainees' immediate training needs significantly affected their perceived learning transfer (Lim and Morris, 2006). Therefore, the following hypothesis is suggested:

*H2: There is a positive relationship between perceive utility and job performance when training transfer mediate the relationship.*

## Method

This study is quantitative in nature and the sample has been drawn from the larger population. The population of this study is the academic staffs working in several universities in Palestine. Among all of the academic staffs 331 were selected for this study. This study adapted several scales from past studies to measure the constructs. For instance, job performance measure was evaluated by a scale developed by Pearce and Porter (1986), and used by Hochwarter et al. (1999). Training transfer by Xiao (1996). Post training factors for perceive utility and supervisor support variables' items were adapted from Saks and Belcourt (2006). All of the items were used on a 5 point Likert scale from Strongly Disagree to Strongly Agree. After collecting back, a total of 300 usable questionnaires were used in this study for analysis purpose.

## Result

This study applied a two-stage model-building process to determine structural equation modeling (SEM) suggested by (Hair et al., 1998; Hoyle & Panter, 1995; Jöreskog & Sörbom, 1996). To analyze the data, we followed two steps: first, using confirmatory factor analysis, and second, analyzing the hypotheses with structural equation models. Confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) was used to test the reliability and factor loading of variables to conform the alignment with the basis of the theory.

CFA Model for supervisor support, perceive utility, training transfer and job performance were measured by total 32 items. These items were measured for first-order constructs. All variables result of AVE meet or off 0.5 for all the cutl items and parcel indicators as suggested by Nunnally & Bernstein, 1994, ranged from 0.563 to 0.596. Moreover, the composite reliability of the variables meets the standard recommended value of 0.6 for all constructs as recommended by Bagozzi and Yi (1988), ranging from 0.885 to 0.910. The Cronbach's Alpha values ranged from 0.886 to 0.907 which were above the threshold of 0.7 as suggested by Nunnally and Bernstein (1994). Result of CFA has been presented in Table 1.

Table 1.  
CFA for Study Variables

Variables	Reliability	AVE	CR
Supervisor Support	0.907	0.594	0.910
Perceive Utility	0.899	0.596	0.898
Training Transfer	0.886	0.563	0.885
Job Performance	0.907	0.586	0.908

The values of R<sup>2</sup> for training transfer and job performance were 0.68 and 0.42 respectively. This indicates, for example, the error variance of training transfer approximately 68 percent

of the variance of Training Transfer itself. In other word, 68 percent of variations in training transfer are explained by its predictors (supervisor support and perceive utility). Overall findings showed that both scores of R<sup>2</sup> value satisfy the requirement for the 0.30 cut off value (Quaddus a Hofmeyer 2007).

An examination of goodness-of-fit indices indicates that the research structural adequately fitted the data:  $\chi^2 = 271.028$ ,  $df = 163$ ,  $p=0.000$ ,  $GFI = 0.926$ ,  $AGFI = 0.885$ ,  $CFI = 0.971$ ,  $TLI = 0.959$ ,  $IFI = 0.972$ ,  $RMSEA = 0.047$  and  $\chi^2/df= 1.663$ . Structural model has been presented in the Figure 1 and in Table 2 result has been presented.

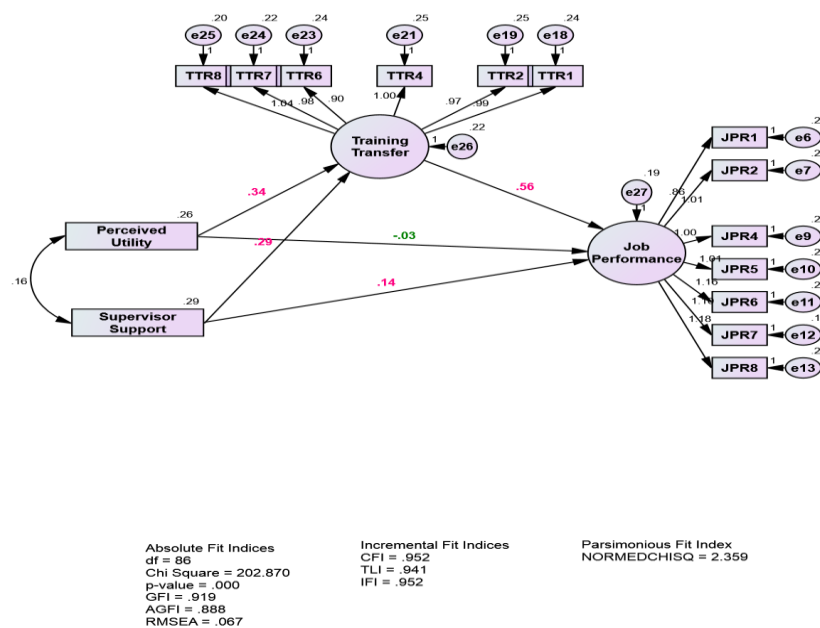


Figure 1: Structural Model of the study

Objective of this study was to determine the effect of post training factors (supervisor support and perceive utility) on job performance with the mediation effect of training transfer. In previous section two hypothesis were developed to test these effects. The result has revealed that there was a significant relationship between supervisor support and Job Performance without mediating variable training transfer, with the standardized total effect of 0.14 and the P-value of 0.00. whereas, the direct effect of perceive utility on training transfer was not significant with the standard beta value 0.11.

After the inclusion of training transfer as a mediating variable into the model the effects from supervisor support on job performance was significant whereas perceive utility was not significant. TDE and TCL on Job Performance (JPR) turned into insignificant, while the effects from WEN and SSU on Job Performance (JPR) were still statistically significant. Hypothesis one this accepted and it means that supervisor support is one of the important factor for training transfer to enhance the employee performance (0.13\*). As result shows that transfer of training mediate partially the relationship between supervisor support and job

performance. This result also has demonstrated that perceive utility is not significant with job performance for training transfer and rejected the hypothesis two stated in previous section.

Table 2.  
 Direct and Indirect Effect of Study Variables

	PUT	SSU
Total Effect of IV on DV without M (path a)	0.00	0.18**
Direct Effect of IV on DV with M (path a')	-0.04	0.14*
Indirect Effect of IV on DV through M (path bc)	0.04*	0.05**
Effect of IV on M (path b)	0.11*	0.13*
Effect of M on DV (path c)	0.36**	0.36**
Mediation Effect	No	Yes
Degree of Mediation	---	Partial

\*Contribution is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed); \*\*. Contribution is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Note: PUT= Perceive Utility, SSU= Supervisor Support, DV= job performance, M = Training Transfer

## Discussion and Conclusion

Supervisor support as a post training factor to transfer learned knowledge was found significant to enhance job performance of employee. Employees expected a favorable work environment where he/she can get appropriate supervisor support to perform his/her learned knowledge from training. This finding demonstrated that a positive transfer of training very much dependent on the supervisor support in the workplace of trainee. However, the results of this study indicate the negative association among perceive utility, training transfer and job performance of academic staffs in higher education institutes in Palestine.

When trainee has realized that he/she will have opportunity to use the learned knowledge from training then it effects positively transfer training into his/her work place. This study has found the negative relationship of perceive utility with job performance while mediating by training transfer. But found positive relationship with training transfer individually and this align with the findings of (Devos et al., 2007; Gilpin-Jackson & Busche, 2006; Holton, 2005; Holton et al., 2000). When employees do not have opportunities to use learned knowledge and skills, skill deterioration might be occurred and making difficult for them to transfer training transfer.

Supervisor support is a crucial variable that impacts training, implementation intention and training transfer (Ford et al., 1992; Huczynski & Lewis, 1980). According to Ford et al. (1992), supervisor's support contributes to the employees' willingness to transfer obtained skills following the training completed. Literature reveals various situational, contextual and trainee variables that influence the complex transfer process (Laker, 1990).

The role of training for the improvement of employee's skills and knowledge, and performance has long been acknowledged, in academic staffs in Palestine were exposed to training to acquire technical and instructional knowledge, skills and attitudes to carry out their tasks at their respective workplaces. Performance in the organizations can be geared up by training, this notion is held by a number of researchers among whom are Hill and Lent (2006), Satterfield and Hughes (2007), Kraiger (2002), Arthur et al. (2003). In their studies made it clear that training showed an overall positive effect on job-related behaviors or performance.

One of the limitation of this study was the sample size with in the educational institutes thus the future can be conducted across different type of organizations such as manufacturing, service and other professions not only within academic institutions. As a result, the findings cannot be generalized to employees in other organizations in Palestine with their professions. Supervisor support plays in important role for employee to transfer the learned training knowledge in their working place and it has helped employee to perform their job better than ever before. Thus this study confirms that the benefits of providing employees training to increase their job performance. Therefore, there are several implications for practice. First, training professionals should make arrangements for employees to receive post-training support to improve the possibility that they will transfer what they learned. This is particularly important when employees are new because they will likely have many questions about how to apply what they learned in training.

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