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Challenges Affecting the Effectiveness of Training Programs in Improving Employee Performance at Chreso University

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated challenges affecting the effectiveness of training programmes in improving employee performance at Chreso University. Guided by Human Capital Theory, the study adopted a deductive approach and a mixed-methods convergent parallel design. Participants included permanent and contract employees who had attended formal training within the previous three years, together with three Human Resource Managers as key informants. Slovin's formula, simple random sampling, and purposive sampling were used. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and semi-structured interviews. Quantitative data were analysed using SPSS Version 26 through descriptive statistics and regression analysis, while qualitative data were analysed thematically. Major challenges included limited training opportunities, reported by 68 respondents (85%); inadequate funding, 57 (71%); irrelevant training content, 52 (66%); and inadequate follow-up and evaluation, 45 (57%). The study recommends increased funding, equitable training opportunities, regular training needs assessments, and systematic post-training evaluation to improve employee performance and strengthen overall institutional effectiveness

Keywords: Training, Employee performance, Chreso University, and Human capital theory.

1. Introduction

In any business, employees are the most important assets and keeping them trained has remained the key factors for their efficiency in the production of goods and delivery of services by the organization (Osabiya, 2020). Conversely, the efficiency of the organization in the production of goods and delivery of services by the organization depends among others on availability of well-trained employees. Training ensures that employees have required qualifications in terms of job knowledge, skills, abilities and understanding (Kolibacova, 2014; Enga, 2017; Afroz, 2018).

According to DeSario (2021), training refers to learning experiences designed to enhance the short-term and/or long-term job performance of individual employees. In this regard, training is viewed as part of an ongoing developmental process. Training needs should be aligned with the organizational mission (Miller, 2017). Therefore, when organizations plan their training activities, they must ensure alignment with their mission. The effective application of training and development programs leads to the acquisition of high-performing employees in the workplace. Retorio (2025) also define training as the process of enhancing the skills, knowledge, exposure, and abilities of an individual.

According to Griffin (2022), investing in employee training and development offers significant advantages for organizations. It enhances employee performance, fosters innovation, and supports the achievement of organizational objectives. Providing continuous learning opportunities increases employee engagement, reduces absenteeism, and leads to higher productivity and profitability. Furthermore, employee training and development involve dedicating time and resources to supporting employees' growth, enabling them to become experts in their roles while contributing to the overall success of the organization. These investments result in numerous benefits, including improved productivity, higher job satisfaction, and stronger alignment between employees' personal goals and organizational objectives.

Khan (2021) postulates that training plays a distinct role in achieving organizational goals by integrating the interests of the organization and its workforce. Training enhances both employee and organizational efficiency and effectiveness (Griffin, 2022). Employees with greater on-the-job experience tend to perform better due to increased skills and competencies. Siddiqui (2020) emphasizes that training and development programs are an integral component of human resource development (HRD). It is widely acknowledged that all organizational tasks, regardless of scale or sector whether primary, secondary, or tertiary require human resource involvement.

Effective training benefits organizations in various ways. It plays a vital role in building and maintaining capabilities at both individual and organizational levels and contributes to organizational change (Valle et al., 2020). Additionally, it enhances the retention of talented employees, thereby reducing unintended employee turnover (Shaw et al., 2019). Training also signals an organization's long-term commitment to its workforce, which in turn improves employee performance (Pfeffer, 2018). Collectively, these contributions lead to a competitive advantage, improved employee performance, and increased organizational productivity (Bart et al., 2018).

According to Godwin et al. (2020), Chreso University operates in a dynamic higher education environment where maintaining high employee performance is essential for achieving institutional goals and delivering quality educational services. To remain competitive, the university may ensure that both academic and non-academic employees possess the knowledge, skills, and competencies required to perform efficiently (Pfeffer, 2018). Although the university has implemented various staff training and development initiatives, there is limited empirical evidence regarding the extent to which these programmes have enhanced employee performance.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Challenges Affecting the Effectiveness of Training Programs in Improving Employee Performance

A study conducted by Ogalo (2021), revealed that lack of management and supervisor support. Training transfer depends not only on what employees learn, but also on whether supervisors encourage them to apply new knowledge at work. Baldwin and Ford (2021) argue that work environment factors, including supervisor support and opportunity to use skills, strongly influence whether training is transferred to job performance.

According to Olanipekun and Olanipekun (2022), poor training design is another weakness affecting training programs. Training that lacks clear objectives, practical examples, appropriate methods and follow-up activities may fail to produce meaningful learning. Arthur et al. (2022) found that training effectiveness is influenced by design and evaluation features, including the method used and how outcomes are measured. A study carried by Thwin et al. (2022), established that limited financial and material resources also reduce training effectiveness. Organisations with small training budgets may use inadequate trainers, outdated materials or short training sessions. As a result, employees may not receive enough exposure to develop the required skills. Recent studies also show that training requires proper planning, resources and leadership commitment to improve organisational performance (RSIS International, 2025).

Daqar and Constantinovits (2021), conducted a study that discovered that poor evaluation of training outcomes. Some organisations evaluate training only by attendance or participant satisfaction, without measuring learning, behaviour change or performance improvement. According to Cik et al. (2021) evaluation model suggests that effective training should be assessed at different levels, including reaction, learning, behaviour and results. Without proper evaluation, organisations may not know whether training has improved employee performance.

The empirical studies conducted by Eisenberger et al. (2018) indicated that employees' performance is affected by number of factors such as organizational structure and culture, job design and group dynamics. These factors contribute to the decreasing of employee performance. In order to improve employee performance and realize effectiveness of training, managers should take necessary measures, including among others motivation, job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Moreover, Wright and Geroy (2020) elaborated that employee competencies changes through effective training programs. This was also agreed by Swart et al. (2005) who argued that good quality training program that leads to employee motivation positively relate to higher employees' performance within organization.

Ahmed (2014) assesses the effect of Training on employee performance in Public sector Organization in Kenya, A case study of NHIF Machakos branch in Kenya. The result of the study found out that Training has an impact on organizational productivity although researcher seen that there were challenges from the management which lead failure for the organization to provide adequate training to employee. Hogarth (2012) in his study showed that staff training it doesn't help much to improve the performance of SIC employee due to the reason that Training on SIC insurance Company is not systematic. This findings is slightly different from the previous researcher reviewed who was openly agreed that employee training has direct relationship with their performance at work place. By the view of this scholar the staff training has nothing to do with the improving performance.

3. Objectives

The study was to identify the challenges affecting the effectiveness of training programs in improving employee performance at Chreso University.

4. Methods

This study utilized a pragmatic research philosophy, suitable for mixed-methods research, enabling the integration of quantitative and qualitative methods. A deductive approach was taken to test existing theories regarding the relationship between employee training and performance at Chreso University, employing a convergent parallel design to comprehensively assess training effectiveness. The sampling frame included all permanent and contract employees who participated in training programs over the last three years, compiled from Human Resource records to ensure equal selection chances. The sample size was determined using Slovin's formula.

$$\text{The formula: } n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Whereas: N= Target population

n=Total sample size

e = Margin of error or Error of Tolerance

In this study, the target population included 100 respondents, which comprised academic staff, non-academic staff, and 3 human resource managers as key informants. The sample size will be determined using Slovin's formula.

$$n = 100 / 1 + 100(0.05)^2$$

$$= 100 / [1 + 100(0.0025)] = 90 \text{ Respondents}$$

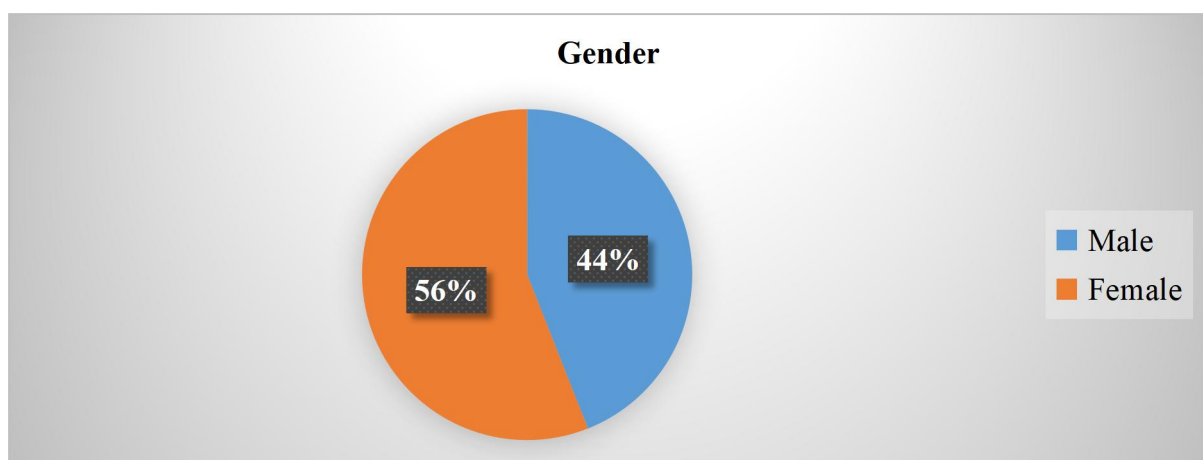
The study's qualitative component determined its sample size based on data saturation, with three Human Resource personnel from Chreso University purposively selected for interviews. In addition, a combination of simple random sampling and purposive sampling was utilized to include academic and non-academic staff, enhancing representativeness and reducing bias. Quantitative data were obtained via structured questionnaires to assess the link between training and employee performance, analysed using SPSS Version 26, while qualitative insights were derived from semi-structured interviews and thematically analyzed. Descriptive and inferential statistics clarified demographic characteristics and relationships, with statistical significance set at $p < 0.05$.

5. Results

5.1 Gender Distribution

To assess the proportion of male and female respondents, the frequency of gender was calculated. Figure 1 gives a summary of the findings for workers respectively.

Figure 1: Gender for workers



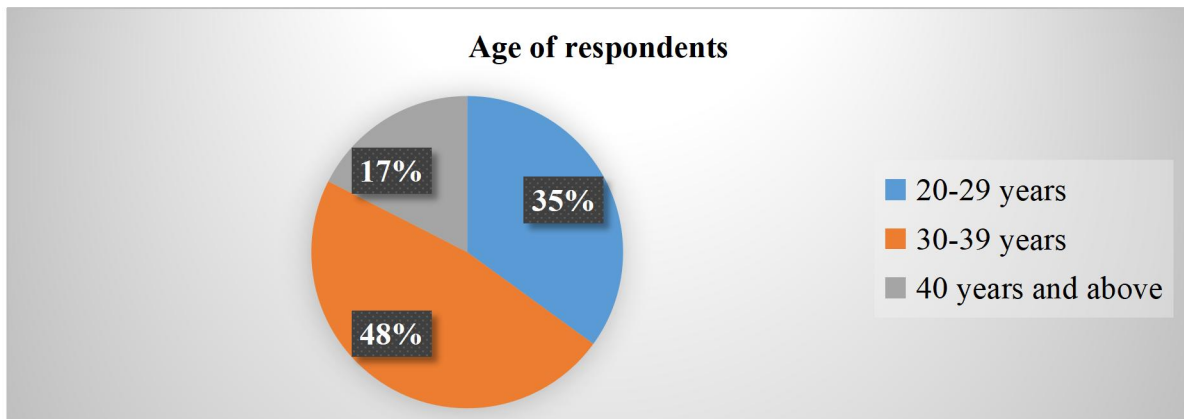
Source: Formulated by Author (2026)

The data presented in Figure 1 show the distribution of respondents by gender. Out of the total sample of 80 respondents, the study found that 45 (56%) were female, while 35 (44%) were male. The higher proportion of female respondents was expected because the institution has a predominantly female workforce.

5.1.2 Age of respondents

Age plays an important role in many research studies, as it can influence the outcomes and findings. Figure 2 presents the distribution of respondents by age. The results show that, out of the 80 respondents, 28 (35.0%) were aged 20–29 years, 38 (47.5%) were aged 30–39 years, and 14 (17.5%) were aged 40 years and above.

Figure 2: Age of respondents



Source: Formulated by Author (2026)

5.2 Challenges Affecting the Effectiveness of Training Programs in Improving Employee Performance at Chreso University

The findings in Table 1 revealed several challenges affecting the effectiveness of training programmes in improving employee performance at Chreso University. The majority of respondents, 57 (71%), either strongly agreed (31%) or agreed (40%) that inadequate funding limits the effectiveness of employee training programmes, suggesting that financial constraints hinder the implementation and quality of staff development initiatives. Similarly, 68 respondents (85%) agreed that employees are not given sufficient opportunities to attend relevant training programmes, making this the most significant challenge identified in the study. In addition, 52 respondents (66%) agreed that the training programmes offered are not always relevant to their job responsibilities, indicating a mismatch between training content and employees' work needs. Furthermore, 45 respondents (57%) agreed that there is inadequate follow-up and evaluation to assess whether training has improved employee performance, while 25 (32%) disagreed and 10 (13%) remained neutral.

Table 1: Challenges Affecting the Effectiveness of Training Programs in Improving Employee Performance at Chreso University

Statement	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Inadequate funding limits the effectiveness of employee training programmes at Chreso University.	25 (31%)	32 (40%)	2 (3%)	12 (15%)	9 (11%)
Employees are not given sufficient opportunities to attend relevant training programmes.	27 (34%)	41 (51)	0	8 (10%)	4 (5%)
The training programmes offered are not always relevant to employees' job responsibilities.	22 (28%)	30 (38%)	8 (10%)	12 (15%)	8 (10%)
There is inadequate follow-up and evaluation to determine whether training has improved employee performance.	19 (24%)	26 (33%)	10 (13%)	14 (18%)	11 (14%)

Source: Formulated by Author (2026)

Human Resource Managers identified several challenges affecting the effectiveness of training programs in improving the performance of employees.

T1 said:

“One of our biggest problems is not enough money to train the staff. Sometimes we do find employees that need training but we don’t have the budget to do it for everyone.”

Another key informant T2 said that:

“Sometimes the workload prevents employees from attending training. “Some departments have to release an employee for training and that means that there may be duties that are not done during that time,” he said.

One Human Resources Manager T3 explained that:

Once employees have completed training, there is little follow-up to see if they are using the knowledge and skills they have gained. This makes it difficult for us to measure the real impact of training on performance.”

One participant T4 noted that:

Training programs are sometimes organised without a detailed assessment of the training needs. “Some employees end up going on programs that may not be directly related to the skills they need in their day-to-day work.

T1 also said that participants:

“Not every employee has access to training opportunities.”In some instances, priority is given to specific departments or positions, which can lead to other employees not being offered chances for professional growth.”

The key informants mentioned that the main challenges that hinder the effectiveness of training programs in enhancing employee performance at Chreso University were inadequate funding, workload pressures, insufficient training needs assessments, limited post-training evaluation, and unequal access to training, inadequate management support, lack of resources and employees’ attitudes.

5.2.1 Hypothesis Testing Using Regression Analysis

Hypothesis testing using regression analysis was employed to determine whether employee training had a statistically significant relationship with employee performance at Chreso University. The regression model was estimated using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), and the significance of the regression coefficient (β) was assessed using the t-test at a 5% significance level ($\alpha = 0.05$).

The hypothesis test examined whether employee training had a significant relationship with employee performance at Chreso University. The results showed a Pearson Chi-Square value of 11.376 with 9 degrees of freedom and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_0) was rejected, and the alternative hypothesis was accepted. This indicates that there was a statistically significant relationship between employee training and employee performance.

Table 2: Regression Analysis on Employee Training and Employee Performance

Test Statistic	Value
Sample Size (N)	80
Pearson Chi-Square	11.376
Degrees of Freedom	9
Likelihood Ratio	11.145
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.692
Significance (p-value)	0.000
Decision	Reject H_0

Source: Formulated by Author (2026)

The results presented in Table 2 indicated that employee training had a statistically significant relationship with employee performance at Chreso University. The analysis yielded a statistically significant result ($p = 0.000$), which was less than the 0.05 level of significance. Consequently, the null hypothesis (H_0), which stated that there was no statistically significant relationship between employee training and employee performance, was rejected in favour of the alternative hypothesis (H_1). This finding suggested that employee training was significantly associated with improved employee performance, implying that employees who received training were more likely to demonstrate enhanced knowledge, skills, productivity, and overall job performance. Therefore, the study concluded that training programmes played a vital role in improving employee performance at Chreso University.

6. Discussion

The findings revealed several challenges affecting the effectiveness of training programmes in improving employee performance at Chreso University. The majority of respondents, 57 (71%), either strongly agreed (31%) or agreed (40%) that inadequate funding limits the effectiveness of employee training programmes, suggesting that financial constraints hinder the implementation and quality of staff development initiatives. Similarly, 68 respondents (85%) agreed that employees are not given sufficient opportunities to attend relevant training programmes, making this the most significant challenge identified in the study. In addition, 52 respondents (66%) agreed that the training programmes offered are not always relevant to their job responsibilities, indicating a mismatch between training content and employees' work needs. Furthermore, 45 respondents (57%) agreed that there is inadequate follow-up and evaluation to assess whether training has improved employee performance, while 25 (32%) disagreed and 10 (13%) remained neutral.

The findings of this study are consistent with the work of Armstrong and Taylor (2023), who argue that inadequate financial resources are among the most significant barriers to effective employee training and development. They explain that limited funding often restricts organizations' ability to design quality training programmes, engage qualified trainers, acquire modern training materials, and provide employees with adequate learning opportunities. Consequently, organizations may fail to realize the full benefits of training investments. Similarly, Noe (2020) observes that organizations with insufficient training budgets often struggle to provide continuous learning opportunities for employees, leading to skill gaps and reduced employee performance. These findings support the current study, where the majority of respondents agreed that inadequate funding and limited opportunities to attend relevant training programmes were major factors reducing the effectiveness of training at Chreso University.

The finding that training programmes are not always aligned with employees' job responsibilities is also supported by previous studies. Aguinis and Kraiger (2009) argue that training is most effective when it is based on a comprehensive training needs assessment that identifies the specific knowledge, skills, and competencies employees require to perform their jobs effectively. They note that when training content is poorly aligned with employees' work responsibilities, knowledge transfer and performance improvement are significantly reduced. Likewise, Goldstein and Ford (2002) emphasize that organizations should conduct systematic training needs analyses before designing training programmes to ensure that the content addresses actual job requirements. They contend that relevant training improves employee motivation, learning transfer, and organizational performance, whereas irrelevant training results in wasted resources and limited performance gains. These observations reinforce the present study's finding that a mismatch between training content and employees' job needs undermines the effectiveness of training programmes.

The challenge of inadequate follow-up and evaluation after training is further supported by the literature on training evaluation. Kirkpatrick and Kirkpatrick (2020) argue that organizations should not end the training process immediately after programme delivery but should evaluate behavioural changes and organizational results to determine whether learning has been transferred to the workplace. Without proper follow-up, organizations cannot establish whether training objectives have been achieved or identify areas requiring improvement. Similarly, Phillips and Phillips (2019) emphasize that post-training evaluation enables organizations to measure the return on investment (ROI) of training programmes, identify weaknesses, and make informed decisions about future staff development initiatives. They argue that continuous monitoring and evaluation strengthen accountability and ensure that training contributes to improved employee and organizational performance. These findings support the current study, which found that weak post-training evaluation mechanisms constitute a significant challenge affecting the effectiveness of employee training programmes at Chreso University.

7. Conclusion

The results of the study indicated that employee training has an important contribution to the enhancement of employee performance at Chreso University and there is a statistically significant relationship between training and employee performance ($p < 0.05$). Training better employees' knowledge, skills, productivity, and overall job performance. However, the effectiveness of training programs was hindered by a number of challenges such as inadequate funding, limited opportunities for employees to attend training, heavy workloads, inadequate training needs assessments, inadequate follow-up and evaluation, unequal access to training opportunities, inadequate management support, limited resources and negative employee attitude. Qualitative data from Human Resource Managers corroborated the quantitative findings, pointing to financial constraints, workload pressures, limited post-training evaluation, and the mismatch between some training programs and the job responsibilities of employees. The study therefore concluded that training was an effective tool for enhancing employee performance at Chreso University, but there was need to address these institutional and operational challenges to maximise the benefits and long term effectiveness of employee training programs.

8. Implications for Practice

The following were the implications derived from the findings:

1. The study also recommends that the university should conduct regular training needs assessments before designing or implementing training programmes.
2. The university should establish a systematic framework for evaluating the effectiveness of training programmes through post-training assessments, performance appraisals, employee feedback, and supervisor evaluations.

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