

Effect of Learning and Development Opportunities on Job Performance: Mediating Role of Learning Transfer Environment

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Abstract

This study examines the impact of Learning and Development (L&D) opportunities on job performance, with a specific focus on Business Process Organizations (BPOs) in Pakistan. While previous research has explored the relationship between L&D and employee performance in developed economies, there remains a lack of empirical evidence in the Pakistani context. This study employs quantitative research design, collecting data from 178 employees working in BPOs in Islamabad. Using regression and mediation analyses, the findings reveal that L&D opportunities have a significant positive effect on job performance, explaining 74.8% of the variance in employee performance. Furthermore, the study identifies the Learning Transfer Environment (LTE) as a critical mediating variable, demonstrating that an enabling LTE enhances the transfer of learned skills to workplace tasks, thereby amplifying performance outcomes. The research contributes to the existing body of knowledge by highlighting the role of contextual factors such as organizational culture, managerial support, and resources in optimizing learning effectiveness. Practical recommendations include designing tailored training programs, fostering a culture of continuous learning, and implementing mentorship initiatives to enhance skill retention and application. The study's implications extend to HR practitioners and policymakers, emphasizing the need for structured L&D strategies to improve workforce productivity. Future research directions suggest longitudinal studies and qualitative investigations to further explore moderating variables affecting L&D effectiveness.

Keywords: Learning and Development Opportunities, Business Process Organisations, Training, Learning Transfer Environment

Introduction

The success and sustainability of organizations heavily rely on the performance of their employees. In the context of Pakistan, where the economy is rapidly evolving, understanding the factors that influence job performance is crucial for organizations to remain competitive (Iqbal & Ahmad, 2020). Existing literature has highlighted the significant role of learning and development opportunities in enhancing employee performance and, consequently, organizational performance (Tan & Olaore, 2021). Learning and development is considered to be a significant factor in the

overall human resource management practices that can drive organizational success (Hamid et al., 2017; Sadler-Smith, 2009). The organisations can be benefited from the development of their employees' skills and knowledge, leading to improved job performance and higher productivity (Deng et al., 2023). Hence, it is utmost important to understand the relationship between learning and development opportunities and job performance in the context of Pakistan. Although studies have been conducted on Learning and development opportunities and organizational performance, there is a need for more empirical evidence, particularly in the Pakistani context, to comprehend the effect of these factors on job performance (Iqbal & Ahmad, 2020; Ali & Anwar, 2021); Karim et al., 2019). Studies have been conducted to assess the impact of organizational culture and other factors on employee performance in educational institutions (Afzal et al., 2024), as well as the determinants of employee performance in the corporate sector (Khan & Jabbar, 2013). However, the relationship of learning development opportunities and job performance, which is a crucial aspect of human resource management, requires further investigation (Newton et al., 2014). The Learning Transfer Environment (LTE) is the primary mediating variable between employee learning opportunities and employee performance. Skill improvement programs, mentorship, and formal training programs are some learning development opportunities that have a direct influence on employee performance. For learning opportunities to influence better performance, however, an enabling LTE is essential (Birdi et al., 2008). Organizational culture, supervisor support, resources, and work environment supportive or conducive of knowledge and skills transfer acquired from learning programs to job performance constitute the LTE (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Business Process Organizations (BPOs) in Pakistan have experienced substantial growth in recent years, driven by the country's young, tech-savvy workforce, cost-competitive labor market, and improving IT infrastructure. Major cities such as Karachi, Lahore, and Islamabad serve as key hubs for BPO operations, offering reliable internet connectivity and access to skilled professionals. Pakistani BPOs provide a wide range of services, including customer support, telemarketing, data entry, IT services, and back-office operations. Prominent companies like Techlogix, Systems Limited, TRG (The Resource Group), and IBEX have established themselves as leaders in the industry, catering to both local and international clients (Aslam, 2017). The sector has also benefited from government initiatives aimed at promoting IT exports and improving the ease of doing business, further positioning Pakistan as a competitive player in the global outsourcing market (moitt.gov.pk., 2020). The concept of L&D opportunities is valid in the technology related firms, for instance Business Process Organisations. These organizational practices have shown a significant impact on the overall organizational performance by improving the employees' skills and knowledge. Although studies are conducted on learning and development opportunities in Business Process Organisations, these studies are conducted in developed countries' s contexts. Hence, it is of utmost importance to investigate the effect of learning and development opportunities on job performance in the Pakistani context to establish empirical evidence and fill the gap in the existing literature.

Literature Review

Learning and Development Opportunities

Learning and development (L&D) opportunities encompass structured interventions aimed at enhancing employees' knowledge, skills, and competencies through formal training, workshops, e-learning platforms, mentoring, and experiential learning (Garavan et al., 2021; Noe et al., 2017; Tones & Pillay, 2008). These initiatives are designed to align individual growth with organizational objectives, fostering adaptability in rapidly changing work environments. Modern L&D strategies increasingly emphasize continuous learning cultures, where employees engage in lifelong skill

development facilitated by digital tools and personalized learning pathways (Govender & Adegbite, 2022). Such opportunities not only improve technical proficiency but also cultivate critical soft skills like leadership, emotional intelligence, and innovation (Mohammadyari & Singh, 2015; Poláková et al., 2023).

Job Performance

Job performance refers to the measurable outcomes of an employee's efforts in fulfilling role-specific tasks and contributing to organizational goals (Campbell, 1990; DeNisi & Murphy, 2017). It comprises two dimensions: task performance and contextual performance. High job performance is influenced by factors such as employee motivation, resource accessibility, and alignment between individual capabilities and job demands (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2018). Recent studies highlight the role of adaptive performance, where employees adjust to technological or procedural changes, as a critical component of modern job success (Kumi et al., 2024).

The Relationship Between L&D Opportunities and Job Performance

Empirical evidence underscores a robust positive correlation between L&D opportunities and job performance. Structured training programs have been shown to enhance task efficiency, problem-solving abilities, and innovation, directly boosting productivity (Rampa & Agogué, 2021; Sitzmann & Weinhardt, 2018). For instance, employees participating in digital upskilling programs demonstrate higher performance in technology-driven roles (Van Laar et al., 2020). Furthermore, L&D initiatives improve employee engagement by fostering a sense of value and career progression, which in turn reduces turnover and strengthens organizational commitment (Nwokeocha, 2024). However, the efficacy of L&D programs depends on contextual factors such as managerial support, learning relevance, and opportunities for skill application (Garavan et al., 2020; Grossman & Salas, 2011). Organizations adopting blended learning models—combining online modules with hands-on practice—report higher performance outcomes compared to traditional methods (Sitzmann & Weinhardt, 2018). In conclusion, while L&D opportunities are pivotal for job performance, their impact is maximized when tailored to individual needs and organizational goals.

Mediating Role of Learning Transfer Environment

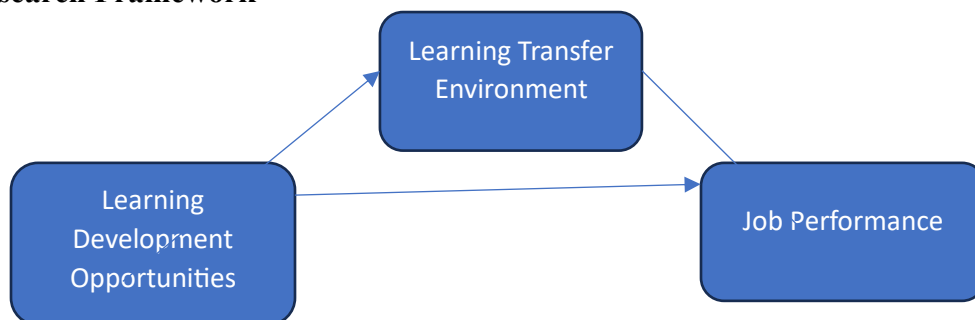
The Learning Transfer Environment (LTE) is the primary mediating variable between employee learning opportunities and employee performance. Skill improvement programs, mentorship, and formal training programs are some learning development opportunities that have a direct influence on employee performance. For learning opportunities to influence better performance, however, an enabling LTE is essential (Birdi et al., 2008). Organizational culture, supervisor support, resources, and work environment supportive or conducive of knowledge and skills transfer acquired from learning programs to job performance constitute the LTE (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). In an enabling LTE, employees transfer skills to work, resulting in better performance outcomes (Kraiger et al., 2004). The availability of an enabling LTE, therefore, mediates the quality of the relationship between learning opportunities and performance to derive maximum benefits of learning at the workplace.

Theoretical Framework

Social Cognitive Theory of Bandura (1999) provides theoretical base for the current research study. It states that learning occurs by observing and modeling the behavior of other people. This coupled with the experience of the candidates. Previous experience is a good source of knowledge to be attained. To fully understand how Learning and Development Opportunities can affect or interact

with individual performance within firms, a basic understanding of the social learning process is essential.

Research Framework



Methodology

The current research study used a deductive approach. The data was collected from the Business Process Organisations (BPO) of Islamabad.

Sample and Sampling Techniques

A sample of 200 employees was selected as the sample size. While convenience sampling technique was used for data collection. A total of 178 questionnaires were returned which were completed, hence considered for data analysis

Data Collection and Tools

The data was gathered through questionnaires. The questionnaires were adopted from the previous studies. For instance, Learning and development Opportunities were measured on 18 items scale adopted from Tones, M., & Pillay, H. (2008). While, Job performance was measured on 25 items scale adopted from Goodman & Svyantek (1999). Similarly, Learning Transfer Environment was measured on 23 items scale adopted from Liu & Chan, (2017).

Results and Discussions

Frequency Distribution

Gender

The table shows the gender wise distribution of employees. Out of 178 employees 123 were male while the rest 55 were females. The valid percentage of male and female are 69 and 30.8 respectively.

Table 4.1. Gender

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Male	123	69.2	69.2	69.2
Female	55	30.8	30.8	100
Total	178	100	100	

Age

Table 2 shows the age distribution of respondents. It shows that employees with age bracket of 20-25 are 15 in number while the respondents from 31-35 are 50 in number making a higher portion of the employees. In other words, out of 178 employees, those with the age bracket of 31-35 are the highest in number. While 20-25 years of employees are lowest in number.

Table 4.2. Age

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
20-25 Years	15	8.4	8.4	8.4
26-30 Years	44	24.7	24.7	33.1
31-35 Years	50	28.0	28.0	61.1
36-40 Years	45	25.2	25.2	86.3
41 and above	24	13.4	13.4	100
Total	178	100	100	

Education

Table 4.1.3 shows that out of 178 employees, 31 are BA/BSc while MA/MBA are 114. Similarly, MPhil and PhD are 25 and 8 in number. As a percentage it is 17.4%, 64% and 8 respectively.

Table 4.1.3. Education Distribution

	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
BA/BSc	31	17.4	17.4	10.2
MA/MBA/MSc	114	64.0	64.0	87.1
MS/MPhil	25	14.0	14.0	97.3
PhD	8	4.49	4.49	100
Total	178	100	100	

Scale Reliability

The reliability of the scale was determined through using Cronbach Alpha value. The value is considered to be good if it is equal or above 0.70 (Izah et al., 2023). Table 4.2 shows the reliability of scale.

Table 4.2 Reliability Statistics

S.No	Variable	No of Items	Alpha Value
1	LDO	18	0.81
2	JP	25	0.83
3.	LTE	23	0.80

Table 4.2.1 Correlation Analysis

	1	2	3
1. JP	1		
2. LDO	.884**	1	
3. LTE	.644**	.521**	1

**Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Table 4.2.1 mentions the correlation coefficients among the study variables, with Job Performance as the dependent variable. Learning and Development Opportunities and Learning Transfer Environment are also mentioned. As seen, all the variables are highly correlated with the dependent

variable JP. It shows that all variables are positively and strongly correlated with the dependent variable JP at the .01 level.

Regression Analysis between LDO & JP

Table 4.3. Regression Coefficients

	B	S.e	t	p	f
LDO	.954	.032	26.34	.000	856.119

$R^2 = .748$, $DV = \text{job performance}$

The table reported above shows the regression output where learning and development opportunity is treated as independent variable and job performance is dependent variable. As depicted, the value of R^2 is 0.748, indicating that LDO explains 74.8% variance in the dependent variable JP. The value of f statistics is well above indicating the model fitness. As highlighted, the value of t is well above the recommended threshold of ± 1.96 and the p value is less than 0.05, i.e., $p < 0.05$, therefore it is stated that LDO is significantly related to JP. The unstandardized coefficients is 0.963 and positive. This means that a one-unit change in an independent variable will bring 0.963 units change in the dependent variable in the similar direction.

The results are in line with the previous research studies such as Hou et al. (2017) and Sitzmann & Weinhardt (2018). They all confirmed that LDO has significant effect of JP and leads to employee productivity. Similarly, Garavan et al. (2020) and Grossman and Salas (2011) argue that employees with enhanced skills level have positive impact on their overall performance.

Mediation

The effect of the independent variable decreases, indicating a partial mediation effect; (b) the independent variable also exhibits a relationship with the dependent variable; (c) the intervening variable is positively and significantly associated with the dependent variable; and (d) upon adjusting for the influence of the intervening

Table 4.4 Total, Direct and Indirect Effects of X on Y

	Effect	se	t	p	LLCI	ULCI
Total effect of X on Y	.4312	.0427	7.8159	.0000	.3522	.5029
Direct effect of X on Y	.2341	.0408	4.9614	.0000	.1175	.3248
	Effect	BootSE	BootLLCI	BootULCI		
Indirect effect(s) of X on Y: PE	.2411	.0433	.1615	.3923		

Table 4.4 provides the overall, direct and indirect effects of LDO on employee performance using a Learning Transfer Environment. With LDO positive impacts $b=.431$, $p<0.001$, 95% CI [.381,.603], the estimations reflect favourably employee performance. With one unit change in LDO, Employee Performance $b=.234$, $p= 0.001$, 95Q% CI [.117,.324] will show. 216 unit change. The estimate also shows that LDO has a substantial $b=.241$, $p< 0.001$, 95% CI [.161,.392] influence on employee performance via Learning Transfer Environment. This clearly indicates how much the Learning Transfer Environment moderates the link between LDO and Employee Performance.

Recommendations

The results lead to the fact that organisations should focus on LDO through establishing a learning environment. Hence it helps to elevate the performance levels of employees. In these several recommendations are brought forward for the whole industry and management. Organizations can improve training programs by paying attention to some major strategies. Firstly, designing the training material to suit the individual needs of the employees guarantees more relevance and interest. Blending different types of learning like hands-on, e-learning, and workshops gives employees the opportunity to select the mode that works best for them, enhancing learning and application of knowledge. In addition, a culture of ongoing learning through constant feedback and provision of continuous development opportunities keeps the skills and adaptability intact. External collaboration with experts and utilizing new technologies also brings in fresh learning methods that keep the employees at the top of their line of work. Lastly, measuring the training's effectiveness through testing and practical implementation keeps the program aligned with organizational objectives and employee development. In essence, organizations must create an environment of continuous improvement to encourage learning and development initiatives geared towards business processes of new product organizations. Desktop-based resources can be allowed, but only for a short time from home. There could also be some measures to initiative mentorship programs, so more experienced team members could provide mentorship and guidance to new or not so experienced team members. Moreover, when development programs are aligned with organizational goals, employee learning becomes not only relevant in sense but also carries impact. Promoting cross-functional collaboration via team-building exercises and knowledge-sharing initiatives might also induce innovation and foster a culture of learning among employees. Lastly, acknowledging and rewarding employees who engage in learning activities can encourage others to do the same.

Implications

The current study has several managerial implications for industry. For instance, the findings of the study can help the management of BPOs and technology driven organisations to develop a framework which helps the employees to enhance their skills and learning abilities. It would help to enhance their productivity and job performance. Besides, the findings of the study can provide guidelines for the supervisors in supervising their subordinates.

Limitations and Future Directions

The current research has several limitations which can be overcome by future researchers. First and foremost, it uses cross sectional research design which at times causes common bias error. Hence, future researchers should use longitudinal research design or time lag studies. Secondly, the current research is quantitative research hence, future research should focus on qualitative research design for more indepth investigation. Lastly, the current research focusses on learning and development opportunities and its effect on job performance. Future research should be focused on other moderate or intervening factors which affect the learning and development opportunities and job performance.

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