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THESIS
- ABSTRACT -

**STUDY ON THE IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND
DEVELOPMENT ON INDIVIDUAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL
PERFORMANCE**

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SUMMARY

Training and personal development programs (FPDP) are a challenge for all organizations, both public and private. In this paper we aim to contribute to the state of knowledge aimed at the impact of training and personal development of employees on organizational performance, by creating a methodological framework necessary to identify positive and negative influences. The research will focus on providing a holistic view of FPDP practices in public organizations in Romania, in order to make recommendations for future FPDP programs and to formulate a framework for essential FPDP practices.

Topicality of the topic and the degree of knowledge of the research area. In order to remain competitive in an increasingly globalized economy, organizations are giving increasing priority to the continuous learning of employees in order to improve their skills and competencies. Organizations that build learning-oriented cultures will be able to adapt and succeed in the ever-changing business environment. Employee skills and knowledge are considered a competitive advantage in the contemporary knowledge-based society. As organizations grow in size and complexity, the challenges they face as well as the number of employees in need of training and personal development programs (FPDP) increase. The factors that have influenced the business world in the past have changed in recent years. Economic development, the knowledge economy, globalization and technological change have created a huge gap in skills and knowledge that creates a need for employees and managers to acquire additional skills and abilities. Changes in market demand and constant changes in work processes involve constant changes in the skills needed for an organization's activities. These changes have increased the challenges and pressures facing organizations. To meet these challenges, many organizations use FPDP programs to fill the skills gaps needed for organizational activities.

The structure of the doctoral thesis, the research objectives and the research questions. The study aims to investigate the impact of training, the effects on individual and organizational performance and make recommendations for more effective management of FPDP programs in the future.

The following objectives have been formulated to effectively assess the impact of FPDP initiatives on individual and organizational performance and the factors influencing FPDP:

- researching the nature of FPDP programs in order to formulate a theoretical framework for the study and future development of FPDP programs;
- establishing a methodological framework based on the investigation of the relevant specialized literature in the field of FPDP of employees and laying the foundations for an empirical study on the impact of professional training and personal development of employees on organizational performance;
- assessing the effectiveness of the FPDP on all employees in terms of employee knowledge, employee skills, ability, work ethic, general morale and confidence, and the relationship between the FPDP, employee professional skills, employees turnover, job satisfaction work and performance at work;
- researching the effectiveness of the FPDP in terms of overall individual and organizational performance, in order to make recommendations for better future performance;
- developing a framework for key FPDP practices and making recommendations for the

effective planning, implementation and practice of FPDP policies in organizations.

In order to achieve the objectives of the research and the purpose of the paper, a series of research questions were formulated that underlie the formulation of the hypotheses investigated based on the data provided by the empirical study:

1. How effective are current FPDP programs in research organizations?
2. What impact do FPDP programs have on knowledge, skills, abilities, morale, performance, intention to quit, job satisfaction, and job productivity?
3. What are the economic-socio-demographic variables that differentiate the impact of FPDP programs on organizational outcomes?
4. To what extent do FPDP programs improve individual and overall organizational performance?
5. What is the mediating effect of the improvement of professional skills acting in the relationship between FPDP programs and organizational results, performance and job satisfaction, employees' turnover?

The research objectives are treated sequentially in the five chapters of the paper, from the perspective of the pragmatism paradigm combining quantitative and qualitative methods, following five axes of research.

The motivation for choosing the topic and the importance of research. The results of this study will be of great help to future researchers and academics alike who are researching knowledge in the field of human resource development in Romania and beyond. The information collected from the organizations included in the empirical study will highlight the strengths as well as the shortcomings in the formulation and implementation of FPDP programs. Through this study we aim to contribute to knowledge by presenting an improved framework, useful for researchers in the field of the effects of FPDP programs in public sector organizations. The results of this study can serve as a tool for a more extensive future study in the field of FPDP in both the public and private sectors. Therefore, the results will improve the planning, formulation and execution of future FPDP programs to ensure the long-term sustainability of organizations.

Methodological tools used. A mixed method of simultaneous data collection has been applied in this research, as it provides both quantitative and qualitative data. Various statistical methods were used in the investigation to determine the relationship between the variables of interest. These include descriptive statistics, Chi-square test, correlation, multiple regression and modeling of structural equations. Descriptive statistics use the average as well as the frequencies of the variables. The Chi-square test allows the comparison of a categorical data group with an estimated theoretical distribution. Inferential statistical tests such as multiple statistical regression and modeling of structural equations provide valuable information that promotes an understanding of the impact of FPDP on employee competencies and outcomes, including perceived improvement in organizational performance.

Research results. The five chapters of the paper follow sequentially the objectives and axes of the research.

The first chapter of the paper focused on *researching the nature of FPDP programs to formulate a theoretical framework for the study and future development of FPDP programs*. The main objective of this line of research was to present the general considerations regarding the training and development of employees, the way in which the general process of training and development of employees is carried out.

Organizations use FPDP programs for a variety of reasons. For example, the approach to organizational development of the FPDP process is based on the needs of departments, while the systematic approach to training needs is based on the identification of training needs of organizations. On the other hand, the political approach of the FPDP process favors privileged and loyal workers to individuals endowed with authority in the organization.

Successful business in the global economy requires new knowledge and skills. Therefore, a concerted effort needs to be made to identify FPDP needs. As companies evolve through various technological and environmental changes, employees and managers need to keep up with these changes so that they can adapt. This can be done through FPDP programs. That is, as structural changes in the economy occur, management must respond to such changes. Constant changes in production technology and work practices require continuous FPDP interventions. While some organizations operate in a stable business environment, others operate in fast-paced industries. It is especially important for the latter to train and retrain their employees on an ongoing basis. Changes in the production process of an extremely complex product influence the rate of formation and development offered by an organization. These changes require not only highly trained employees, but also constant learning to adapt to the processes.

The second chapter of the paper focused on *building a methodological framework for researching the impact of employee training and development on individual and organizational performance*. In this chapter we laid the foundations of the methodological framework of research on the impact of training and development of employees on individual and organizational performance, based on the review of the literature, by consulting bibliographic sources with a theoretical-methodological content, but also bibliographic sources with a strong empirical character.

The conceptual framework was obtained by adapting Holton's (1996) human resource development measurement and assessment model and Holton III and Bates's (2008) Learning Transfer System (LTSI) inventory measurement model to the context of empirical research. in Romania, by taking into account the results of secondary data collected from the literature. The results of the empirical study confirm the findings of Holton (1996). Although not all of the variables mentioned in Holton's (1996) model exerted an influence on human resource development, the FPDP has been confirmed as a strong influencing factor in increasing employee skills and job performance, which can lead to improved organizational outcomes. .

Research design is an important link between the theory and analysis that underpinned the study and the data collected. The ontological property of a study can be explained as follows: people's opinions reflect their attitudes, and their attitudes reflect their performance. Epistemology is concerned with knowledge and beliefs about reality; she is concerned with how people come to their perceptions and the origins of those perceptions. In order to carry out the research, the sources of knowledge that represent valid knowledge from an epistemological objective were people's perceptions of the phenomenon studied. Interactions with individuals allowed the researcher to generate and validate theoretical knowledge. This research has adopted a pragmatic approach, which aims to solve problems by choosing the explanations that produce the desired results. For the research, the case study was used as a strategy to investigate the research questions and objectives. A case study is a powerful research methodology that allows an investigator to carefully examine the data in a particular setting. A major disadvantage of case

studies is that their results can only be applicable in similar cases; being difficult to apply to society as a whole.

The third chapter of the paper focused on *assessing employees' perceptions of training*. The main objective of the chapter was to investigate and explore employees' perceptions of training in general. An improvement in skills and knowledge during training programs can lead to an increase in an employee's overall job performance. Therefore, the more skills employees acquire through training, the more likely they are to improve their performance in the workplace.

The evaluation and measurement of training effectiveness should be incorporated into the training plan. It is therefore recommended that public sector organizations evaluate their training programs regularly, at least once or twice a year, and that the results be established and documented for future activities. In addition, management should ensure that successful completion of training is recognized in the performance appraisal and, where appropriate, rewarded.

The fourth chapter of the paper focused on *the analysis of employees' perceptions of the effects of training and personal development*. Following the analysis, we found that the tendency to participate in FPDP programs was inclined towards the involvement of the majority in such programs, regardless of the wishes of the individual or the organization. FPDP programs are always implemented as needed. Training and development may be made compulsory only when used as a tool for the transmission of information on health and safety at work. Under normal circumstances, the FPDP should be based on the individual needs of employees and organizational tasks and requirements. FPDP programs have been very effective in selected organizations in achieving the goals set by the organization. All indicators show that FPDP initiatives have been very successful. Employee skills have been improved, customer complaints have decreased, and the overall performance of employees and the organization has been improved. The training needs analysis was performed at all organizational levels, but was predominant at the organizational level and less extensive at the personal level.

The fifth chapter of the paper focused on *the analysis of employees' perception of the impact of employee training and development on individual and organizational performance*. In this chapter, we aimed to examine and explore employees' perceptions of the impact of FPDP programs on organizational outcomes, workplace performance, employee satisfaction, and the employees turnover the organization. An important factor in studying the impact of FPDP programs on individual and organizational performance is the professional skills whose improvement leads to increased performance.

The overall results of this study indicate that the proper management and implementation of training and education programs can significantly improve the performance of employees and the organization. Therefore, any organization that wants to be productive should make FPDP programs an essential part of its strategic business plan. Training and development play a major role in improving organizational performance. Public sector organizations need to be constantly looking for additional approaches and practices on human resources that can improve employee performance. Organizations must strategically and methodically develop training and personal development programs that are designed to achieve the desired organizational performance.

Own contribution and elements of originality. The main objectives of the paper were to assess the impact of the implementation of FPDP programs on improving employee skills, job performance, employees turnover, job satisfaction and organizational results to make

recommendations to improve the training process. . This study contributes to the validation and improvement of the Learning Transfer System Inventory (LTSI) measurement model, which has been integrated with Holton's model of research and measurement of human resource development assessment. This model, validated in the paper, can be used for future studies and measurements in the field of FPDP. Therefore, the conclusions of this paper can serve as a methodological tool for a future broader study in the field of FPDP in public sector organizations in Romania or in other countries.

The research methods and statistical analyzes used in this study were optimized to suit the specifics of the research, and the results obtained were tested and validated using different strategies. To avoid biases and limitations, the study used triangulation methods, using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The mixed research method was important because the analyzed phenomena have different layers; therefore, the mixed method allowed comparisons to be made between subgroups of employees. The research methods and statistical analysis used allowed for in-depth information to be obtained from employees, which allowed for the formulation of well-founded conclusions and recommendations for the development and future development of FPDP programs.

Following the empirical investigation, it was found that training and development have a positive impact on employees' skills, knowledge and abilities, regardless of their position and function. Going through FPDP programs also has a significant positive impact on individual and organizational performance, leading to improved workplace performance. Moreover, we found that confidence in FPDP programs has strong positive effects on the level of labor productivity, leading to an increase in the level of confidence in their own knowledge, skills and abilities of employees.

The paper makes, first of all, an important contribution to the knowledge stage by presenting a conceptual framework on the evaluation of the effects of FPDP on organizational results through the mediation of professional skills, a framework formulated following the findings of the literature review. In addition, the paper contributes to the knowledge, adding value to the ongoing debate on the impact of FPDP in a public organization and by presenting a model for the future study and management of FPDP programs.

The originality of the paper also lies in the fact that it includes a complex and comprehensive empirical study of the effects of FPDP in four organizations that investigated the relationship between FPDP programs and organizational and individual outcomes. Therefore, this study offers a new perspective on FPDP research, providing an in-depth analysis of FPDP programs in a public sector organization. The study aimed to fill the gap in the literature, adding value to the ongoing debate on the effects of FPDP on organizational performance.

Recommendations for further research. This study was conducted in four public sector organizations. Therefore, future research should be conducted to include a survey of other public and private sector organizations in Romania, which will provide more accurate data on the effects of FPDP on individual and organizational performance results and validate the results obtained under conditions of increased representativeness.

Subsequent research involving Romanian public organizations should take a holistic approach by including other models of human resource development; this will provide extensive knowledge of human resource development and organizational performance. Moreover, a longitudinal research study is needed to make stronger causal statements about the relationships

of these variables. The cross-sectional design does not allow very accurate observations on causal relationships. A future study could also consider a more objective measure of the influence of FPDP programs on employee performance. Finally, the framework presented in this study could be tested to provide a validated training and development model for future FPDP studies in Romania.

Keywords: training, personal development, human resources, training, training needs analysis, training objectives, external environment analysis, alignment of objectives, methods and techniques, selection of training methods and techniques, implementation of training programs, program evaluation training, feedback, involvement, skills development, increased knowledge, increased morale, improved confidence, overall performance, attitude of colleagues, attitude of supervisors, skills learned, achievement of goals, organizational performance, organizational results, job satisfaction, employees' turnover, labor productivity.