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Abstract

Human Resource Management is an important asset for organisations. Training and development is an important component of human resource managed and aims to increase organisational productivity and profit, as well as, increase overall employee effectiveness. There are different approaches to training and development, as well as, different factors that can influence training and development. This dissertation investigated the impact of training and development on employee effectiveness in IT sectors operating within Ireland.

Objectives: This dissertation ultimately aims to answer the research question that has four aims and objectives. To also identify how employees perceive training and development and what factors have an influence on training and development programmes.

Method: The research design that was used for this dissertation was a survey questionnaire. The questionnaire was carefully designed and built upon the literature review. The questionnaire consisted of 29 questions and this was distributed among IT employees working in IT companies within Ireland.

Findings: Based on the questionnaire that was distributed among IT employees working within Ireland, the results showed that employees have strong positive attitudes towards training and development. The results also shows that not only do IT employees have positive attitudes towards training and development, training and development means a great deal to them.

Conclusion: The results show that training and development does has a positive relationship with employee effectiveness. Therefore, IT companies should ensure they provide proper training and development programmers to all their employees.

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1. Introduction

Human Resource Management (HRM) is the management of people within an organisation to achieve organisational goals and objectives. According to Jouda, Ahmad and Dahleez (2016), training helps organisations to achieve their goals and it is one of the main human resource activities in an organisation. It is important to note that training is a crucial part of HRM as it is the fastest growing areas of personal activities (Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014). The knowledge and skills that are acquired through training and development is important because of the rapid changes in technology and systems (Muscalu, 2014). Training and development programmes in organisations is important because it aims to increase employee performance and enhance organisational productivity. As we will see later in the dissertation, training and development programmes can increase employee performance, organisational productivity and profit. Also, training and development can help employees be more confident in their jobs knowing their skills are being used appropriately. However, while the benefits of training and development are clear, there is an abundant of shortcomings of training and development that this dissertation will also look at. For example, Boston Consulting Group (BCG) (2015) found in a survey that billions of dollars that are being spent on training annually are being wasted because training is not geared towards driving business results.

1.1. Purpose

In this day and age, because of the rapid changes in technology and systems, many organisations are increasingly engaging in training and development programmes in order to meet the needs of the organisation and of its employees. Because the workforce has become competitive and complex, there is an increasing need for competent employees and having good training and development programmes can help organisations get the upper hand. Training and development is an important area and there is a lot of literature that examine training and development and its effect on the performance of employees in an organisation.

According to Sila (2014), training and development also helps employees to stay competitive and productive in an organisation, once they are provided training and development to increase their knowledge and skills. Costen and Salazar (2011) say that employees tend stay longer, be more engaged and form strong bonds with their organisations when they are trained and developed. For an organisation to stay competitive in the market, employees need to be competent in the jobs they are required to do. Training and development programmes are therefore essential due to its ability to improve employee performance as well as organisational productivity and keeping an organisation competitive.

1.2. Structure of Research

Chapter two of this dissertation will look at the literature on the area. This chapter will also examine if there is a link between training and development and the performance of employees. This chapter will also explore organisational productivity, employee engagement, the different approaches of training and development, the benefits of training and development and the factors that can influence training and development. Chapter three will assess at the research question that will be derived from the literature review and the aims and objectives of this dissertation. This chapter will also assess why this this was undertaken, the scope of the dissertation and the significance. Chapter four will address the methodology of this dissertation. This chapter will first assess the different approaches to the dissertation and explain why it chose one particular approach. Secondly, this chapter will assess the reliability and validity of the undertaken dissertation. Chapter five is an important chapter, which is the data collection and analyses. Chapter six will conclude this dissertation. Chapter 7 will provide some recommendations. Chapter eight will be personal reflection. Finally chapters nine and ten will be references and appendices respectfully.

2. Literature Review

This section of the dissertation will review the relevant literature to get a better understanding of the importance of training and development and its effectiveness on organisation and employee performance. The literature review will also examine if there is a link between training and development and the performance of employees. Training and development is an important area and there is a lot of literature that examine training and development and its effect on the performance of employees in an organisation. M. and Indradevi (2015) say that training is the gaining of knowledge, skills and competencies by the employee. It has been noted by Kulkarni (2013) that ensuring the availability of a skilled and willing workforce to the organisation is one of the primary goals of training. Similarly, studies of other scholars such as Zahra, Iram and Naeem (2014) have shown that training is a crucial activity in attaining well qualified and well prepared workforce to achieve organisational performance of a higher standard. Indeed, many organisational seniors believe that employee training programmes can increase employee engagement, employee retention and organisational productivity (Sanjeevkumar and Yanan, 2011).

Kulkarni (2013) says that training is used to describe the processes that improve employees' skills, abilities and aptitudes to perform specific jobs. Training is important because not only does it improve the employee in terms of skill, ability and aptitude, it also aids in the development of new talents in employees within the organisation. On the other hand, the goal of employee development is to develop the most superior workforce to help the organisation to grow successfully (Salah, 2016). Similar remarks were made before as Kulkarni (2013) says that the purpose of employee development programmes are to meet specific objectives that not only help employee performance but also help organisational performance. It is important to note that in the process of management development, there are several steps and these include evaluating the organization's current management resources, determining

individual needs, designing and implementing development programs and reviewing organisational objectives (Kulkarni, 2013). The literature review will explore organisational productivity, employee engagement, the different approaches of training and development, the benefits of training and development and the factors that can influence training and development.

2.1. Organisational Productivity

This part of the literature will assess training and development and what it means for an organisation. There are a number of academic writings in the area of training and development. Training and development is important because it has emerged as a key issue for organisations worldwide (Rajasekar & Khan, 2013). Amyan (2016) agrees and adds that organisations and institutions have an important place that is occupied by training and development. According to Jouda, Ahmad and Dahleez (2016), training helps organisations to achieve their goals and it is one of the main human resource activities in an organisation. On a similar note, one of the major components of human resource management is training and development that helps to improve both at organisational and individual level (Tahir, Yousafzai, Jan and Hashim, 2014). According to Elnaga and Imran (2013), training and development is necessary for an organisation and without such training and development, employees would not have great control over their responsibilities and duties. Training and development helps organisations not only to achieve their goals, but it also helps in profits and organisational productivity as employees are performing better and are more productive.

Other academic scholars such as Obi-Anike & Ekwe (2014) agree that training and development is very important in the area of human resource management. They add to the existing literature by proposing that it is in fact rapidly growing in the area of personnel activities (Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014). It should be noted that once an organisation realizes the necessity to expand and improve, training and development becomes unavoidable (Falola,

Osibanjo and Ojo, 2014). Because of the constant dynamic changes in the world, organisations are becoming more competitive and it is through training and development that organisations can stay on top and be productive. Training and development will help employees adapt to the changes and this would be very beneficial to the organisation. Thus, echoing previous academic researchers, according to Brahmana, Brahmana and Fei Ho (2018), for any organisation to be able to stay competitive in the current highly competitive business environment, they need to have trained and developed employees. Similar to Brahmana et al. (2018), employee capabilities are improved through training and development and therefore, to understand this, employers must also act as trainer for their employee to accomplish the goals of the organisation (Taufek & Mustafa, 2018).

The knowledge and skills that are acquired through training and development is important because of the rapid changes in technology and systems (Muscalu, 2014). Now that the importance of training and development is clear, it is advised for organisations to invest in training and development. In order for organisations to benefit from training and development, organisations must invest (Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014). Though, successful organisations are mindful of the importance of investment in training and development (Shafiq & Hamza, 2017). According to Obi-Anike & Ekwe (2014), the crucial purpose of any training and development is to add value to human resource. Furthermore, they say that any training and development that fails to add any real value to human resource should be abandoned (Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014). When organisations do invest in training and development, the profits would exceed the investment. Research shows that successful organisations try hard to provide substantial investment in their human capital (Rajasekar & Khan, 2013). Interestingly, Llyas, Kadir and Adnan (2017) say that any investment that improves the productivity of employees is an investment in human capital because when employees are trained, they acquire knowledge and skills that cannot be separated from them.

This knowledge and skills then become part of the employee contributing to his productivity. Investing in training and development helps organisations to perform better, be more effective and competitive. M. and Indradevi (2015) say that the development of an effective training programmes can be crucial for the long-term success of the organisation. However, while the benefits of training and development is quite clear from the literature, there are also pivotal shortcomings of training and development one should be aware of. According to a survey by Boston Consulting Group (2015), billions of dollars that are being spent on training annually by organisations are being wasted because the training is not geared towards driving business results. The Boston Consulting Group (2015) found that frontline leaders are often overlooked by organisations who are very pivotal as they are the ones that are dealing with customers directly, where the work is done and where value is actually created. The evidence shows that if training is not geared towards driving business results, the training would not be effective and any investment in training and development would be wasted. It is important to note that a successful training and development program does not need invest in the millions (Popov, 2015). But rather, more effective methods of training and development will reduce the amount the organisation needs to spend (Popov, 2015).

Therefore, training and development is pivotal for the survival of any organisation (Falola et al., 2014). Organisations should also try and develop new methods of training and development for the employees and employers for the benefit of both parties (Taufek & Mustafa, 2018). This is because effective training and development programmes can help employees be more engaged in their jobs, that that will in turn, increase organisation productivity. This will be discussed more in the next section. On the same note with Taufek and Mustafa, (2018), a good proposed training and developed design can be critical for both the employee and organisation (Brahmana et al., 2018). It is evident that training and development can increase an organisations profit through productivity. One should be mindful that if there

is excessive training and development, employees lose interest in their learning out of boredom (Robertson, 2019). In addition, once an employee loses interest, anything an employee is thought thereafter, will not be learned. Therefore, training and development should be proportionate so that the employees retain what they have learned.

2.2. Employee Engagement

Having looked at organisational productivity, this dissertation will now explore employee engagement as a means of increasing organisational performance. According to Elnaga and Imran (2013), a company's reputation and profitability is influenced by the employee. This is because employees are the greatest assets a company has. Furthermore, they say that employees in organisations are responsible when it comes to the majority of work that needs to be done, making sure customers are satisfied, quality products and events (Elnaga & Imran, 2013). Training and development should be adopted by organisations to upgrade the employees' knowledge and skills that would enable them to remain competitive and productive in the organisation (Sila, 2014). For any organisation to stay competitive, their employees in all departments must be very competent in what their role requires them to do. According to academic scholars such as Sendawula, Kimuli, Bananuka and Muganga (2018), one way that an employees' productivity can be increased is through training. Most organisations worldwide have recognised the importance of training and the effect it can have in an organisation (Dabale, Jagero and Nyauchi, 2014). When an employee receives training and development, this will increase the employees' performance, that will in turn, increase the employees' engagement.

Sila (2014) says that job satisfaction and more confident employees are achieved once training is administered. This aids in employee as well as organisational performance as training builds loyalty towards an organisation (Sila, 2014). As shown earlier in the literature review, training and development has many benefits such as improving the employee knowledge, skills, engagement and behaviour (Dabale et al., 2014). Similarly, another benefits

of training and development is that it reduces energy waste and increases employee and organisational productivity (Ilyas, et al., 2017). More benefits of training and development include skills and knowledge are able to be transferred from trainer to trainee on new organisational services and technology (Sila , 2014). Interestingly, training and development is seen as a strong foundation for communication within an organisation and is said to be a good place to start in improving employee performance (Muscalu, 2014). On a similar note, training and development are designed to improve employee performance and competence level (Jouda et al., 2016). Once employees are performing well and are very competent, they are more likely to be more engaged.

It is no surprise that training and development programmes are the encouragement employees need to improve their performance and competencies, which will in turn increase organisational productivity (Elnaga & Imran , 2013). It is crystal clear from all the literature in the area that training and development is critical in the development of organisations, improving performance and giving companies a competitive edge and to stay on top (Dabale et al., 2014). Training and development essentially improves the quality of employee performance directly and through human resource outcomes (Muscalu, 2014). Interestingly, according to Rajasekar and Khan (2013), in order for organisations to ensure that employees' new skills and knowledge that has been learned from training is transferred to the workplace, the organisations will need to give the employees constructive feedback during and after the training. According to Otiena, Waiganjo and Njeru (2015), employees are likely to be more engaged in their work and have better attitudes if the organisations they work for provides them with training and other useful resources.

Training and development programmes are ultimately designed to have many benefits and some of the main benefits include enhancing the skills and knowledge of employees that work in an organisation (Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014). It is noted that these changes in employee

behaviour alters in a direction that will aid in achieving organisational goals and objectives (Dabale, et al., 2014). Training and development has to be effective in order to have an impact on the performance of an organisation's employees. It is important to be aware that Popescu, Popescu and Iancu (2010) say that traditional training methods need to be revised and different methods need to be presented. Similarly, Fox (2016) says that because traditional training and development focus on broad, generic themes and not in specific skills and individuals, they fail to be effective. Fox (2016) goes on to say that one way to deal with this is micro learning app that allows employees access to information at a moment's notice to address specific business challenges. Popov (2015) says that useful training and development programmes offer practical skills that is critical to the development of the organisation. Similarly, if an organisation intends to invest millions into training and development, the organisations must ensure it is confident that the training and development programme will help the employees achieve new skills and knowledge (Carucci, 2018). If the organisations has doubt if this is not the case, then they should not invest millions in training and development.

Thus, training and development has to be effective in order to have an impact on the performance of an organisations' employees. When employees are properly trained and development in an organisation, they are more likely to be more engaged in the work that they do. However, this is no easy task as there are several factors that influence training and development. These factors will be discussed later in this dissertation. Effective training and development is also important because it helps retain employees. According to Costen and Salazar (2011), when employees are trained and development, they form a stronger bond with the organisation and tend to stay with that organisation and be more engaged. As mentioned earlier, employees are the greatest assets a company has and losing such as asset can have dire consequences. Having looked at employee engagement, this dissertation will next examine one of the key benefits of an effective training and development programme.

2.3. Benefit of Training and Development

Training and development has been shown to be useful in many ways from employee engagement to organisational performance. One of the key benefit of training and development is employee retention. Retention has been noted in the literature as being an employees' decision to stay or continue working for an organisation after attempts by the organisation have been made to encourage the employee to stay (Cotton and Tuttle, 1986). This part of the literature review will assess employee retention in terms of training and development. One of the greatest assets an organisation has is human capital (Al-Sharafi, Hassan and Alam, 2018). The current business world requires organisations to operate within an environment that is constantly changing and becoming more competitive. Ldama and Bazza (2015) rightly point out that it is very expensive for organisation to retain experienced workers. It is however, more expensive and has financial implications for an organisation if an experienced employee leaves their job.

Therefore, an organisation that is able to keep their valuable employees has a source of competitive advantage (Ldama and Bazza, 2015). It is also important for human resource managers to retain competent staff for the overall benefit of the organisation. Vos and Meganck (2008) say that retention management has become increasingly popular in the human resource management literature. Al-Sharafi et al. (2018) say that organisations without such valuable employees will not survive in the competitive world. The cost of replacing these valuable employees could be tangible to the cost of the recruiting and selection of employees and their training (Mitchell, Holtom and Lee, 2001). Longenecker and Scazzero (2003) notes that this cost can be tangible represented by reducing the moral and productivity performance of other employees in the organisation. Studies have been done to show how much it really costs to replace an employee.

The study by Kaye and Jordan-Evans (2000) for example shows that the replacement of employee cost 70-200 percent of their annual salary. On the same note, Longenecker and Scazzero (2003) discovered that when an organisation replaces an IT employee, it costs roughly about 2.5 times the employees' annual salary. Therefore, it is becoming clearer that retaining existing employees in an organisation is a much more better and beneficial than hiring new employees (Mitchell et al., 2001). Organisations as we know are aware of this and in response, they are engaged in better practices, better policies and better strategies in order to retain their valuable employees and reduce employee turnover. According to Presbitero, Roxas and Chadee (2016) employees' skills, abilities and knowledge are increasingly becoming more important for both the employee themselves and for the organisation. It is therefore important that these employees are trained and developed so that they can learn new skills and knowledge that would help improve the employees as workers.

Al-Sharafi et al. (2018) says that organisations that provide training and development programmes, maintain their competitive advantage and employees are also motivated and will most likely stay with the organisation. Furthermore, Aragon-Sanchez, Barba-Aragon and Sanz-Valle (2003) say that organisational competitive advantage, organisational profitability and organisational effectiveness are some of the benefits an organisation receive from training and development programmes. They also said that results from a study that was done on 457 medium and small organisations across Europe showed that there is a substantial link between training and effectiveness and profitability (Aragón-Sánchez et al., 2003). George (2015) also conducted a study and he concluded that training and development are among the strongest factors related to employees' retention. Huang and Su (2016) did a study to examine the influence of training satisfaction and an employees' desire to leave an organisation. However, the results showed that there was a negative relationship between job satisfaction and turnover intention.

All in all, Al-Sharafi et al. (2018) say that the positive relationship between training and employees' retention is evident in the literature. The results of the literature examined in this literature review shows the importance of training and development in keeping and retaining valuable employees in organisations. Scholars such as Costen and Salazar (2011) stress that employees who avail of training and development programmes are more likely to stay with the organisation. On a similar note, Renaud, Morin, Saulquin and Abraham (2015) state that there is a positive relationship between training and development and employee retention. Interestingly, this is particularly true in the IT sector as the business environment is increasingly relying upon competitive advantage and loss of valuable employees can be critical for the organisation (Longenecker and Scazzero, 2003). Thus, based on the literature, organisations are able to keep and retain valuable employees, provided the organisation provides training and development to their employees.

2.4. Approaches of Training and Development

Having assessed the different ways that training and development is useful and the benefit of training and development, there are also different approaches. It is important to mention that different terms have been used over time when one considers the term training and development in a broader prospect. Interestingly, research as far back as the 1990s have examined the different approaches of training and development. Therefore, Read & Kleiner (1996) say that training and development comes in many different forms and new or different variation is continuously being added. Regarding training and development, there are two main primary methods. The first is off-the-job training methods that include roleplaying, lectures and conferences etc. There is also on-the-job training methods and these include methods such as coaching, mentoring etc. This section can not assess every single method that there is. However, this literature review will review the literature on the most important methods and methods that are very relevant today.

Lectures and seminars in colleges for example are examples of methods that are commonly used for training (Raheja, 2015). Read & Kleiner (1996) say that lectures and conferences are a poor training method strictly speaking. Other scholars such as Martin, Kolomitro and Lam (2014) agree and say that the lecture and conference method is restricted, not sociable and disconnected from real practice. Similarly, Read & Kleiner (1996) say that this method of training is poor because there is a lack of trainee involvement and the feedback to the trainees is lacking. Lectures and conferences have been noted as the traditional method of instruction (Raheja, 2015). Martin, Kolomitro and Lam (2014) propose that the lecture and conference method should only be used in circumstances where the training content is simple and there is no high consequence where this training method fails to provide the required target knowledge.

The other type of off-the-job training method this dissertation will look at is role playing. It has been noted that role playing works best in group discussions and tends to encourage participation and feedback (Read & Kleiner, 1996). Raheja (2015) says that role playing is not limited to a single role play but can be multiple role plays and can also be spontaneous. Scholars have noted that one of the advantages of this method of training is that it provides trainees with the opportunity to apply the context to the situation (Martin, Kolomitro and Lam, 2014). This helps the trainees to practice without worrying about failing. A person who has been affected by a particular issues is role played by the trainee and the impact the issue has on human life and activities from that person's prospective (Raheja, 2015). It is important to mention that in role playing, trainees act out roles that are applicable to the training goals and objectives. While the dissertation has looked at the usefulness and advantage of this type of training method, it should be mentioned that if there is no consequence, there is as risk that the content might not be taken seriously (Martin, Kolomitro and Lam, 2014).

Mentoring is really about the development of the attitudes of employees (Read & Kleiner, 1996). Read and Kleiner (1996) go on to say that mentoring like coaching, is the one to one interaction between the employee and a senior member of the company. Coaching has become increasingly important. Sweeney (2007) says that coaching is the difference between a career stepping up a gear and the career continuing in cruise control. Bachkirova, Arthur and Reading (2015) say that the last two decades has seen an extraordinary growth in coaching. This literature review will therefore also look at coaching and how it fits under training and development.

It is important to note that today, coaching has become very popular. Coaching is said to be focused mainly on the individual themselves (Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2008). It has been also said that “coaching is all about change” (Tompkins, 2018, pp. 116). It is interesting to note that while the term coaching has received a lot of attention, it still remains very vague in what coaching actually means (Berg and Karlsen, 2012). They also say that while the definition of coaching is very vague and confusing, coaching in some organisations have become an important part of their training and development process (Berg and Karlsen, 2012). Redshaw (2000) claims that although we are aware of coaching only recently, coaching has been around for a long time. He goes on to say in his article that there must have been some form of coaching in the building of the Pyramids in Egypt and the Great Wall of China from managers to workers who were all involved (Redshaw, 2000). According to the Emerald Group Publishing Limited (2008), coaching allows individuals to review themselves and their performance in order to identify areas to be improved upon. Organisations that opt out of coaching do so because coaching is labour intensive, it is very expensive and usually difficult to assess (Tompkins, 2018).

There are two types of coaching that an organisation can utilise and these are formal and informal coaching (Tompkins, 2018). Regarding this, scholars such as Grant and Hartley

(2013) say that the formal type of coaching involves meetings with clear goals where the sessions have a clear beginning and an end. Interestingly, evidence shows that while organisations do engage in formal coaching, this has a lower impact when compared to informal coaching (Nelson, Cushion and Potrac, 2006). Other scholars have agreed and pointed out that formal coaching is limited in its contributions, whereas, in informal coaching, it is the informal learning that is involved in performing their jobs that make the greatest contribution (Mallett, Trudel, Lyle and Rynne, 2009). Unlike formal coaching, in informal coaching, the interaction is not planned and more random (Tompkins, 2008). Tompkins (2008) gives examples of informal coaching and says it could be a hallway discussion, phone conversation or a conversation in the breakroom. In this regard, Grant and Hartley (2013) note that it is in this in which coaching techniques are used more implicitly. Berg and Karlsen (2012) interestingly found that peer coaching is also becoming prevalent where both the coach and coachee is acted out by the participants. They go on to say that peer coaching is a cost-effective approach to enhance the professional practice at the workplace Berg and Karlsen (2012).

Thus, training and development when considered broadly can encompass different approaches. The main primary methods of training and development are off-the-job training methods and on-the-job training methods. Each approach has their own pros and cons and organisations should be watchful when deciding which method to utilise. As it has been mentioned already in this dissertation, coaching has become increasingly popular today and therefore it was important to assess this methods much more than other methods. Coaching can make employees feel more connected with their organisation that will in turn, increase productivity and help with staff turnover (Sweeney, 2007). Other scholars have say that for coaching to work effectively, a particular type of climate and environment is needed (Redshaw, 2000). Mosca, fazzari, buzza (2010) say that coaching is an art and a science that comes naturally for some. Some organisations opt out of coaching because they do not see a return in

their investment and do not know how to assess coaching appropriately. In summary, coaching is beneficial to both the organisation and the employee (Redshaw, 2000). Similarly, coaching is also said to be a two-way relationship that has benefits for both (Emerald Group Publishing Limited, 2008). It is important to mention that training and development programmes are influenced by different factors. Factors that can influence training and development will therefore be discussed next.

2.5. Factors that can influence training and development

The above literature reviewed training and development and how it can increase organisational productivity and employee engagement. It also assessed the benefits and different approaches of training and development. This section will review the relevant literature on the factor(s) that can influence training and development, to get a better understanding of the important factors that affect training and development. As the economy is becoming more competitive globally, many organisations are looking for new training and development programmes that will train and develop their employees (Popov, 2015). Therefore, it is also important to consider the factors that can influence training and development. There are a lot of different factors that influence training in organisations worldwide. This section will also assess how having the right factors when undertaking training and development can help the organisation overall.

Haywood (1992) has recognised human resource policy of training and development is one such factor and says that training has become a circus. Haywood (1992) also said that too many training programmes place an emphasis on ease, fun and uncertainty, instead of promoting the purpose behind the design of programs mainly skill development and behavioural change. Some of the factors that influence training and development have been found by (Haslinda & Mahyuddin, 2009). They found that individual attitudes, job related factors, deficiencies in training and development practices as well as lack of support from

senior management and peers are some of the main factors that influences the effectiveness of training and development (Haslinda & Mahyuddin, 2009). This means that if there is lack of support from senior management and if there is a problem and no training practice, then there is no chance of effective training programme. If there is no adequate training and development, then employees are likely to leave the organisation.

On a similar note, Birdi (2005) found that poor managerial support from top managers can impact the creativity training with regard to influencing idea implementation. According to Birdi (2005), when there is less support from the department, this will negatively affect training and development. Other factors that have been found to influence training and development is open-mindedness (Fischer, 2011). It is been discovered that training and development become very effective when the participants are working with an open mind. Other scholars have also found factors that can have an effect on training and development. For example, Sanjeevkumar and Yanan (2001) say that work environmental factors such as managerial support, peer encouragement, adequate resources etc. is important in regards to the training and development of employees. Driskell (2012) found in his study that factors such as the type of training implemented, the content of the training and training expertise also has an effect on training and development. Therefore, the success of any training programme and the retention of employees would depend on many influential factors.

Beigi & Shirmohammadi (2011) discussed the factor of emotional training and the impact it has on the quality of service that is produced. Companies can also benefit from emotional training as they are related to verbal communication. The training material that are used by trainers are factors that can also affect training effectiveness (EL Hajjar & Alkhanaizi, 2018). Regarding the training of Staff, Sanjeevkumar and Yanan (2001) say that when staff in an organisation are trained, this can enhance the sense of ownership and belonging. This sense of ownership and belonging is echoed by Yaqoot, Noor and Isa (2017). It is interesting to note

that the presentation style of the trainers may affect training and development (EL Hajjar & Alkhanaizi, 2018). The goal of every trainer is to encourage every participant to increase their desire to learn and expand their knowledge. One of the major concerns regarding training and development relates to the very high rate of ‘baby boomers’ entering the workforce (Abdullah, 2011). It is clear from Abdullah’s (2009) research that the ageing population has great implications for the future of human resource development in organisations.

Thus, this literature review has shown that there are several factors that can influence training and development. Punia and Kant (2013) say that organisations can make training and development more effective by looking at how the training and development system aligned with the organisational strategy. The literature on the factors that affect the effectiveness of training and development, most notably environmental factors, human resource policy of training and development, motivation and attitude have arose to be responsible in making training and development more effective. Interestingly, regarding factors that affect the effectiveness of training and development, Yaqoot, Noor and Isa (2017) say that training specialists need to pay attention to these factors as it can help them achieve competitive benefits. The literature review has also shown that having the right factors when undertaking training and development can help the organisation overall.

2.6. Conclusion

In this day and age, human research development practitioners are being increasingly confronted with the challenge of coping with the demand for skilful workers (Abdullah, 2009). These challenges include the hiring, training and retention of competent employees. As mentioned earlier, Abdullah (2009) goes on to say that the ageing workforce is also becoming a challenge where they need to be developed to become knowledgeable workers. This literature review has discussed other aspects of training and development such as coaching. Interestingly, training and development helps employees achieve better cooperation within the organisation

as training and development moulds the attitudes of employees (Kulkarni, 2013). Training and development is seen as the most appropriate way to develop employees to meet organisational objectives and to increase the organisations' general performance (Zahra, et al., 2014). Organisations are becoming more and more aware of the importance of training and development and it would be in the best interest of the organisations to start investing in training and development (Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014). It is important for organisations to consider the shortcoming of training and development.

From the literature review it has been shown that factors such as emotional training, open-mindedness and lack of support from senior management are some of the various factors that can influence training and development. Considering the factors that can influence training and development is a step in the right direction to ensuring adequate and beneficial training and development programmes. Having reviewed the literature, evidence of good training and development has been shown to be profits and productivity, employee retention and employee engagement. Good training and development can increase organisation productivity that yields greater profits. Training and development also helps employees be more engaged in their work when they are trained and development adequately. Without adequate training and development, there would be unhappy employees, high turnover and there will also be increased business expenses. The knowledge and skills that are acquired through training and development is important because of the rapid changes in technology and systems (Muscalu, 2014). Similarly Salah (2016) notes that training and development is very important in order to develop the employees to meet the rapid changes in technology and in the workplace. Popov (2015) interesting notes that many training and development programmes fall short of being useful, a quality that should be compulsory. Ultimately, training and development can be seen as being very useful at times, but it can also fail at other times (Carucci, 2018). Both these perspectives has some truth to them.

3. Research Question

This dissertation ultimately aims to answer the research question that has four aims and objectives. The research question will provide information on how training and development has an effect on the performance of employees in IT sectors that operate in Ireland. While there is research done in this area, the impact training and development has on the performance of employees in IT sectors still needs to be empirically measured. Literature shows that there are different factors that influence training and development. The literature also shows that there are different approaches to training and development that play a vital role regarding the retention of employees in an organisation. This research question helps in examining the levels to which training and development has an effect on the performance of employees. Consequently, the research question that can be drawn from the literature review is as follows,

3.1. Research Question

The core purpose of this dissertation is to investigate the impact of Training and Development on Employee Effectiveness: An examination of IT sectors operating in Ireland.

Research aims and objectives,

The aims and objectives of this dissertation are as follows,

- To establish the impact of training and development on employee performance.
- To identify opinions of employees on the extent to which they have found training and development to be beneficial.
- To identify the different methods of training and development that has an effect of employee effectiveness and productivity.
- To assess the factors that influence training and development.

3.1.2. Research Aims and Objectives: The overall aim of this research project is to analyse the Impact of Training and Development on Employee Effectiveness as evident from IT sectors operating in Ireland. The specific objectives of this dissertation are outlined below.

3.1.3. Objective 1: This research project's first objective is to measure the impact of training and development on employee performance. There has been a lot of research carried out in the area of training and development and the effect it has for both an employee and the organisation.

3.1.4. Objective 2: The second objective of this research project is to assess the personal response of employees that work in organisations that deploy training and development. It is also important for this research project to demonstrate how employees value the training and development that is offered in their workplace. A myriad amount of previous research projects have pursued to examine training and development and its effect on employee/organisation performance (Muscalu, 2014; Obi-Anike and Ekwe, 2014). There is more critical appreciation needed for training and developments as a means of employee effectiveness in the workplace.

3.1.5. Objective 3: The third objective of this research project is to identify the different methods of training and development. The literature shows that there are different methods of training and development that have an effect on employee performance and productivity. Therefore, it is important for this dissertation to identify and examine these different methods of training and development.

3.1.6. Objective 4: The fourth and final objective of this dissertation will be to determine the factors that influence training and development. In this regard, the literature shows that there are a number of different factors that can influence training and development. The success or failure of any organisation is largely influenced by the competency of its employees. Therefore, training and development is vital and the factors that have an influence should not go avoided.

3.2. Hypotheses

Because there are a number research studies done on this area that indicate that training and development does have a positive impact on the effectiveness of employees, while other research studies have come up to the very opposite result, it justifies the need for more research in this area. Therefore, the aim of this dissertation is to investigate the impact of training and development programmes on the performance of employees in an IT sector that is operating in Ireland. Hence, based on the design of the dissertation the following hypotheses are proposed:

H1. There is a positive relationship between training and development and employee effectiveness.

H2. There is a positive relationship between training and development and organisation effectiveness.

H3. Employees perceive training and development as very important and advantageous to them.

3.3. Justification for research

As previously noted, the main aim of this dissertation is to investigate the impact of training and development on the performance of employees. This dissertation will primarily focus on employees working in an IT sector that is operating in Ireland. This dissertation will also look at how different methods of training and development are being used by employers to increase effectiveness among their staff including employee retention, organisational productivity and different approaches of training and development. The literature shows that there are different methods of training and development and these have been used for a very long time. However, some methods such as coaching are becoming very important today. As organisations are becoming more and more competitive on a global scale, there is a growing need for competent employees with the right skills, attitude and knowledge. In this regard,

Zahra, Iram and Naeem (2014) have shown that training is a crucial activity in attaining well qualified and well prepared workforce to achieve organisational performance of a higher standard.

Other scholars such as Kulkarni (2013) have said that training and development is important because it is seen as the process that improve employees' skills, abilities and aptitudes to perform specific jobs within an organisation. As noted, training and development is also important for organisational performance also. Therefore, this dissertation will also explore the effect of training and development on organisational performance. The importance of this dissertation on the effectiveness of training and development will be shown as scholars such as Obi-Anike and Ekwe (2014) have for example shown that training and development consists more than just mere skill development, training and development helps organisations in gaining competitive advantage over their competitors. Poorly trained and developed employees can have serious consequences for an organisation. If employees are not adequately trained and developed, they are likely to leave and staff turnover can have consequences for organisational performance. This is because there is a loss of talent and replacing this lost talent can yield greater costs for the organisation.

3.4. Scope of research

It is accepted from the literature that the human resource practices of any organisation is critical for the organisation in attaining their goals. A lot of the human resource management practices are undertaken with the hopes of ensuring that the organisation can attract and retain competent employees. These competent employees can help the organisation to have a competitive advantage over other organisations. This dissertation was carried out to measure the impact of training and development as a human resource management practice and its effect on the performance of employees in IT sectors operating in Ireland. The respondents that were involved for this dissertation were targeted at random from different IT sectors operating in

Ireland. Some of the main constraints that affected this dissertation include time, geographical representation of the IT sector and limited number of organisations.

3.5. Significance of study

Appreciating human resource practices specially training and development is important because it helps managers to ensure employees are motivated and working at their best. These employees are the vital assets of organisations. Therefore, ensuring employees are performing well is very important for organisations. This will not only strengthen individual performance, but organisational performance also that will help organisations to meet their goals. An organisation cannot achieve competitive advantage without competent and skilful employees. This dissertation's findings will help in determining where training and development works and where challenges lie so that improvements in these areas can be done. This dissertation's results will also help managers in implementing a more effective training and development programme that will increase performance and productivity. It is hoped that, the results of this dissertation can to a certain degree be beneficial for anybody who is interested in this area.

4. Methodology

This chapter of the dissertation will present a description of the methodology that is undertaken. This chapter is very important in any dissertation because it describes the methods and techniques used. This chapter will first look at the research design. The research design is a framework of the methods and techniques chosen for this dissertation to adequately answer the objective of this dissertation. Secondly, this chapter will assess the reliability and validity of the undertaken dissertation.

4.1. Different Approaches to a Dissertation

There are different approaches one can take when undertaking a dissertation. For this study, positivism and interpretivism approach was considered because they are the two most famous approaches. According to Riyami (2015) the term paradigm was first used in 1997 that referred to an overall theoretical framework. Auguste Comte was a French philosopher who believed that reality can be observed and therefore founded the term positivism (Antwi and Hamza, 2015). It is interesting to note that the positivist paradigm is also known as the scientific paradigm (Mack, 2010). The positivist is considered a form of or a progression of empiricism because of the fact it is commonly associated with experiments and quantitative research studies (Ryan, 2018). According to positivists, some facts can be proven and reality is the same for each person. They furthermore say that observations and measurements can be used to explain what that reality actually is (Ryan, 2018).

Therefore, it is safe to say that the purpose of this approach is to prove or disapprove a hypothesis (Mack, 2010). Data collection in this type of approach involves gathering data in the form of numbers to enable evidence to be presented in a quantitative form (Riyami, 2015). Questionnaires are usually used to carefully measure what is observed.

It is important that the criticisms of this approach is assessed. The positivist paradigm has been criticised because it can apply the scientific method to research on human affairs (Mack, 2010). Others such as Karl Popper have spoken out in response to the criticisms by arguing that the good qualities of the research method should not be disregarded, rather small adjustments should be made to improve upon it (Mack, 2010). Because of the criticisms the positivist approach received, a different paradigm was formed.

The other approach this dissertation will assess is the interpretive paradigm. Ryan (2018) says that interpretivism is rooted in anthropology just like positivism. It is important to note that this approach is also known as anti-positivist because it was formed as a reaction to positivism (Mack, 2010). Other scholars such as Riyami (2015) say that this type of approach is also known as the constructivist paradigm since realities are multiple and socially construct. Aliyu, Bello, Kasim and Martin (2014) say that this type of approach implements a methodology that allows researchers to do their study in a natural setting. Researchers can employ phenomenology, ethnography, a case study, grounded theory and life history Aliyu et al. (2014). While a lot of different methods are used to collect data in this type of approach, Riyami (2015) ascertains that the most popular method that is used in this type of approach is the interview because it allows the investigations of things that are not visible to the naked eye.

It is also important to note that a researcher of this type of approach supports that there is no worldwide and universal truth (Aliyu et al. 2014). Furthermore, researchers of this type of approach understand, comprehend and interpret from their own outline of orientation and reference (Aliyu et al. 2014). Like the positivist approach, this approach also has some criticisms. The interpretivism approach has been criticised by some that it neglects the acknowledgment of the political and ideological influences on knowledge and social reality (Mack, 2010). Riyami (2015) notes that other criticisms include the ontological assumption being subjective rather than objective. Mack (2010) says that one of the biggest limitations of

this type of approach is that the approach abandons the scientific procedures of verification, thus results cannot be generalized in other areas. It is for these criticisms that the overall benefit of this type of approach is always questioned by positivists.

Ryan (2018) says that the most common positivist research design contains quantitative methods such as a questionnaire. Therefore, this study will use the positivist approach and not the interpretivism. The interpretivism approach will not be used because this approach is usually used to collect data by using methods such as interview. The positivist approach will be applied through a carefully designed questionnaire that will attempt to answer the research questions. The questionnaire will be constructed based on the literature review. The questionnaire will be constructed by assessing the literature review and themes that have surfaced. A validated questionnaire will not be used as most that have been considered for this dissertation did not fully capture the areas that are being investigated. The questionnaire is available in Appendix x. Therefore a carefully structured questionnaire will be designed based on review of the literature. This also ensures that the insights that is being provided by the positivist approach is valid and reliable.

4.2. Research design

This dissertation will mainly be based on primary data that will be collected from a structured research questionnaire. The research questionnaire has been designed based on the literature review by using a 5 point Likert scale that consists of assigned values between 1 to 5 where value 1= Strongly Agree, 2= Agree, 3= Neutral, 4= Disagree, 5= Strongly Disagree. It is important to mention that at the end of the questionnaire, the respondents will also be required to give few short paragraph answers in the research area. Secondary data is also used in this dissertation and these are collected from journal articles, books, websites etc. The data collected will be assessed in more detail in the data collection section of this chapter.

It is important to note that there are different types of research methods that can be used when doing a dissertation. Researchers can employ a quantitative research method or qualitative method or even a mixture of the two. Though, a mixture can be quite complex. Therefore, researchers need to be mindful of different research traditions when deciding which method to use when undertaking a dissertation (Yilmaz, 2013). In the social science context, when a researcher is analysing any type of phenomena, qualitative and quantitative are the two main methods that are being used (Park & Park, 2016). Furthermore, Park and Park (2016) say that both research designs seek valid and reliable results. Hammarberg, Kirkman and de Lacy (2016) do note that when any of the two research designs is appropriate, they should be used. They say that the quantitative research method is more appropriate when factual data is needed to undertake the research question and when information is required on opinions, views, beliefs etc. However, in contrast, qualitative research method is more appropriate where a dissertation is answering questions about experience, often from the standpoint of the people that are participating in the study (Hammarberg et al., 2016). However, it should be noted that the appropriateness of qualitative and quantitative research approaches to undertaking a social research is heavily debated over several decades (Park & Park, 2016).

Quantitative research method has been defined as the type of research that analyses data according to numerical data, especially statistics (Yilmaz, 2013). Qualitative research method on the other hand is an understanding of the descriptive account and differences and similarities of different events (Park & Park, 2016). According to Park and Park (2016), some researchers have recommended that the qualitative and quantitative approach should be combined as an integrated approach known as triangulation. Therefore, Hammarberg et al. (2016) say that it is possible to combine the two methods. However, great care should be taken so that the two methods are being utilised for appropriate reasons in a dissertation. However, when looking at the different methods alone and by themselves, the question of do they provide the same

information arises. Montgomery (2011) looks at this specifically and says that when looking at qualitative and quantitative by themselves, they provide us with the same consistent result. Agreeing with Montgomery (2011), Park and Park (2016) say that both the quantitative and qualitative research methodologies share commonalities regarding the analysis of a phenomena in the social science context. While both the qualitative and quantitative method seek reliable and valid results (Park & Park, 2016), this dissertation will mainly use the quantitative research method.

According to Yilmaz (2013) the general pattern of a participants' reaction to a treatment or programme is discovered when a questionnaire is deployed. The most prominent way to extract information by using a quantitative research method is a questionnaire. This study will take place in IT companies that are operating within Ireland. Quantitative research method is the most appropriate method to use for this dissertation. Another reason why a quantitative method is most suitable is because the quantitative method requires factual data to answer the questions that are trying to be answered (Hammarberg, Kirkman and Lacey, 2016). Therefore, this research project will need factual data in order to answer the questions that are being investigated. A questionnaire will be prepared and distributed among staff members of IT companies in Ireland. These participants will be chosen because they are experts in their field and can provide good information on the training and development they have been provided. The potential participants will be approached and asked if they would like to take part in a questionnaire. For those staff members that agree to take part in the questionnaire, they will receive the questionnaire to complete. The questionnaire will be anonymous and the staff members who are participating can at any stage decline to take part. The data will then be stored and analysed accordingly.

4.3. Research Validity and Reliability

Validity has been defined by scholars as the extent to which a dissertation is accurately measured in a quantitative method (Heale and Twycross, 2015). Other scholars say that it is the meaningfulness of a dissertation (Drost, 2015). When a study is carried out to explore depression, it should explore depression. If it explores for example anxiety, then it would not be considered valid. Content, construct and criterion validity will be assessed in this dissertation. Content validity is concerned whether the instrument sufficiently covers all the areas it was intended to cover (Heale and Twycross, 2015). Furthermore, face validity is a subset of content validity, where opinions of experts are considered whether an instrument measures what it was intended to measure (Heale and Twycross, 2015). Content validity has some downsides where it is seen to be much subjected like face validity (Bolarinwa, 2015).

However, Bolarinwa (2015) does mention that researchers can combine a number of different forms of validity to increase the validity strength of a questionnaire. Construct validity on the other hand, concerns whether inferences can be drawn about test scores related to what is being studied (Heale and Twycross, 2015). Drost (2015) suggests that to determine construct validity, evidence must be gathered from six validity types that are as follows; face validity, content validity, concurrent validity, predictive validity, convergent validity and discriminant validity. Bolarinwa (2015) interestingly says that construct validity is most important and most difficult validity measure. The third validity this dissertation will assess is criterion and this concerns the degree to which measure is connected to the outcome (Taherdoost, 2016). The problem with this type of validity is that such predictor is not easily established and may not be available Bolarinwa (2015).

Heale and Twycross (2015) say that reliability is related to the consistency of a measure. Other scholars also look at reliability and say that it is the extent to which a questionnaire or any other type of measurement yields the same results over a number of trials (Bolarinwa,

2015). Interesting to note, when a researcher completing an instrument that is measuring motivation should ideally have the same responses each time they have completed the same test (Heale and Twycross, 2015). It is important to also note that reliability concerns scores and not the people (Bolarinwa, 2015). Therefore, in research, it is the scores that can be reliable and not necessarily the people. Reliability also relates to repeatability and it can be very difficult to give an exact calculation of reliability (Taherdoost, 2016; Heale and Twycross (2015).

Drost (2015) says that how a measure is being used can determine the satisfactory levels of reliability. In this dissertation, validity was taken into account. This dissertation deploys a questionnaire that is designed on the basis of the research's needs. It is very advantageous because it measures exactly what it was intended to measure. Therefore, there was little need to depend on other researchers for information on some problem areas and relevance of some of the components of the questionnaire. Before any questions in the questionnaire was identified, literature review was first carefully conducted in this research area. The questions that were identified in this questionnaire were designed having taking into account the issues that related to the problem and goals of this dissertation. It is for this reason that it should therefore be accepted that the responses and results from this dissertation are reliable.

5. Data collection

This section of the dissertation will detail how the data used in this study was collected. This dissertation is limited to IT companies that operate in Ireland. As this dissertation is not doing a case study on a specific IT company, participants were chosen randomly from different IT companies that are operating in Ireland. Likewise there is no target size in this study because this dissertation is not doing a set population such as a percentage of staff in an IT company. Only primary data was collected for this dissertation. A specifically designed questionnaire to answer the questions proposed by this dissertation is the only type of primary source that is employed. A designed questionnaire that comprises of 29 questions is constructed and administered to IT employees in different companies by the researcher. The ultimate goal of the questionnaire is to investigate the effect of training and development on the performance of employees in IT sectors that operate within Ireland. The questions in the questionnaire are carefully designed to answer the research questions that are being asked in this dissertation. The questions are fairly short and very clear so that the participants does not spend too much time on them and get bored.

The questionnaire has a consent form that ensures that the participants are agreeing to take part in the questionnaire. The consent form has other objectives also; first, to ensure that the participants are participating out of their own free will, second, to ensure that the participants know that their identities will be anonymous and their answers confidential. To be able to access participants, I had to go to IT companies in person and talk with employees if they would be interested in participating in my study. Some jumped at the opportunity while others were hesitant. Some respondents were keen in responding to the questionnaire as soon as possible while others preferred to answer the questionnaire at their own leisure. The validated questionnaires considered for this dissertation were relevant to a certain extent in what this dissertation is trying to answer. Some parts of the questionnaires were not relevant

and some were not. After quite some time searching and having exhausted all resources, it was ultimately decided that it would be in the best interest to construct a questionnaire based on the themes that have emerged from the literature review. This questionnaire that is designed from the literature review fits with what the dissertation is trying to investigate perfectly. The questionnaire is clear, simple and to the point. The way the questionnaire is constructed, it motivates participants to finish all of it.

5.1. Description of Sample Set

For this dissertation, the selection criteria that was used was to select employees who work in IT sectors in Ireland. It will be interesting to see the composition of the workers in these companies and what they thought of training and development. Employees of different age, education level etc. Participated in this dissertation. The survey questionnaire was distributed among different IT companies in Ireland. A total number of 53 questionnaires got responses from employees working in IT sectors that operate within Ireland. All of these responses were collected for analyses. It is important to mention, 53 responses will be used in the analyses and therefore 53 will represent a response rate of 100%. According to Orb, Eisenhauer and Wynaden (2001), every type of research contains ethical issues. Furthermore that the research process can create tension between the aims of the research and the privacy of its participants (Orb et al. 2011). Some of the main ethical issues that was considered for this dissertation were informed consent, respect to anonymity and respect to confidentiality. Informed consent allows the researcher to protect a participant's right to anonymity (Fauka and Mantzorou, 2011). When conducting a dissertation, it is important to protect the participants from all types of damage i.e. physical, psychological etc.

Table 1: Gender of participants

Gender	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Male	36	67.9
Female	17	32.1
Other	0	0
Total	53	100

According to the table above, there were a total of 53 respondents that took part in the questionnaire of this dissertation. The majority of the respondents as expected were male who had a total percentage rate of 67.9 percent. This result would indicate that there are more males than females who are involved in this line of work. The female percentage rate in this study was found to be nearly half that of the males at 32.1 percent.

Table 2: Age levels of participants

Age levels of participants	Frequency	Percentage (%)
0-25 years old	29	54.7
26-35 years old	11	20.8
36-50 years old	11	20.8
51 years or above	2	3.8
Total	53	100

Table two indicates that employees in the IT sector come from all ages. The majority of employees who are working in IT sectors in Ireland are 0-25 years old. The questionnaire

shows that 29 participants of this dissertation fall within this category and they represent 54.7 percent. Table two interestingly shows that 11 of those participants who took the questionnaire are between the ages of 26-35 and 36-50. There is only 2 respondents that were above the age of 50 who took part in the questionnaire. This result indicates that employees in IT sectors in Ireland are fairly young. Therefore, IT companies should ensure appropriate training and development programmes are available so that the young employees are acquired with the skills and knowledge needed to succeed in the company.

Table 3: Education levels of participants

Educational Distribution	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Primary Degree	1	1.9
Secondary Degree	4	7.5
College Degree	27	50.9
Master's Degree	17	32.1
Other	4	7.5
Total	53	100

As it can be seen in table 3, the respondents that partook in this dissertation hold a range of educational degrees. The majority of the respondents hold a college degree and they account for 50.9 percent of the respondents that took the questionnaire. There is also a quiet good number of respondents that hold a master's degree. They accounted for 32.1 percent of the respondents that participated in the dissertation. Most of the other respondents either hold a secondary degree educational qualification or other. The results is very interesting, as 1.9 percent of the respondents hold only a primary degree educational level. These numbers suggest that younger generations are becoming more interested in IT sectors and they would

lack the necessary skills and knowledge to perform to the best of their abilities. Therefore, training and development should be an important requirement in these IT sectors.

Table 4: Employment type of the participants

Type of Employment	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Full-time employment	47	88.7
Part-time employment	6	11.3
Total	53	100

Table 4 indicates that the majority of the respondents are full time workers. The results show that 88.7 percent of those who partook in the questionnaire indicated that that they are full time workers. Only 11.3 percent of those who decided to do the questionnaire said they are part time workers. It is clear from the results that the respondents do find training and development very beneficial to them and since a lot of them are working full time, companies should ensure adequate training and development programmes are provided to their employees. This will help them perform better and be more committed in the jobs that they do.

Table 5: Employees' response on the benefit of training and development

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	14	28
Agree	26	52
Neutral	5	10
Disagree	4	8
Strongly Disagree	1	2
Total	50	100

Table 5 shows the data whether employees feel they are able to perform better because of training and development. 52 percent of the employees who answered this question agree that training and development does help them perform better in their jobs. 28 percent also strongly agreed on the same question. 5 respondents which make 10 percent of the participants decided to stay neutral at this question. It is interesting to note that 8 percent disagreed while 2 percent said that they strongly disagree that training and development helps them perform better in their jobs. It should also be noted that 3 respondents did not answer this question. The different responses and lack of responses suggests that a lot of employees do find training and development helpful in performing their jobs better while others do not. This might be because of the type of training and development that is being provided and how effective the training and development programme is being implemented.

Table 6: Employees' response on the importance of training and development

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	28	52.8
Agree	22	41.5
Neutral	2	3.8
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	1	1.9
Total	53	100

One of the aims and objectives of this dissertation was to investigate what employees thought of the training and development that was provided to them by their company. Also, it is important to assess if employees find training and development important or not. The results being a no surprise found that the majority of those who took part in the research questionnaire strongly agree that training and development is very important to them. 28 respondents that make a percentage rate of 52.8 strongly found training and development important to them. 22 respondents who make a total of 41.5 percent agreed that training and development is important to them. 2 respondents stayed neutral on the question. Surprisingly 1 person strongly disagreed that training and development is important to them. The results indicate that employees do find training and development important. This confirms H3 and companies should ensure they are providing adequate training and development programmes to their employees.

Table 7: Employees’ response on the impact of training and development on retention

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	5	9.4
Agree	21	39.6
Neutral	16	30.2
Disagree	8	15.1
Strongly Disagree	3	5.7
Total	53	100

Table 7 depicts employees’ response on the impact of training and development on employee retention. Table 7 shows that the participants on this question gave mixed responses. 21 respondents which make 39.6 percent of the total, agreed that their stay in the company is largely impacted by the training and development they receive in their workplace. Only 5 respondents at 9.4 percent strongly agreed to the same question. 16 respondents with a percentage of 30.2 decided to stay neutral on the question. Interestingly 8 respondents disagreed that training and development impacts their stay in the company while another 3 strongly disagreed.

Table 8: Is employment important to the participants

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	23	43.4
Agree	15	28.3
Neutral	12	22.6
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	3	5.7
Total	53	100

The table above shows the degree in which the participants find their job important to them. Not surprisingly, 23 of those who took the questionnaire who also make 43.4 percent of the total strongly agree that their jobs are important to them. 15 participants agreed that their jobs are impotent to them and they made up 28.3 percent of the total. A number of participants at 22.6 decided to stay neutral on the question while 5.7 of those who participated said that they strongly disagree that their jobs are important to them. The results indicate that the majority of employees who work in the IT sector find their jobs important. Therefore, it is important to note that employees expect to be properly train and developed so that they can excel in their jobs that are important to them.

Table 9: Coaching increases retention in the company

Response	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Strongly Agree	8	15.1
Agree	22	41.5
Neutral	16	30.2
Disagree	4	7.5
Strongly Disagree	3	5.7
Total	53	100

The final table above shows how employees feel about coaching. It also shows how likely are employees are to stay with the company provided they receive appropriate coaching in their workplace. Interestingly, 8 of those who made 15.1 percent of the total strongly agree that their retention is impacted upon the quality of coaching. 22 percent of the participants who made a big 41.5 percent agreed the same. 16 of those of participated stayed neutral at 30.2 percent. 4 disagreed at 7.5 percent and 3 strongly disagreed at 5.7 percent. This overall indicates the importance of coaching. It is an area that is becoming really important and employees will likely stay longer if they are adequately coached.

A scatter plot is a graph where two variables are plotted along two axes. The pattern of the points on the graph reveal if a relationship is present.

Figure 1

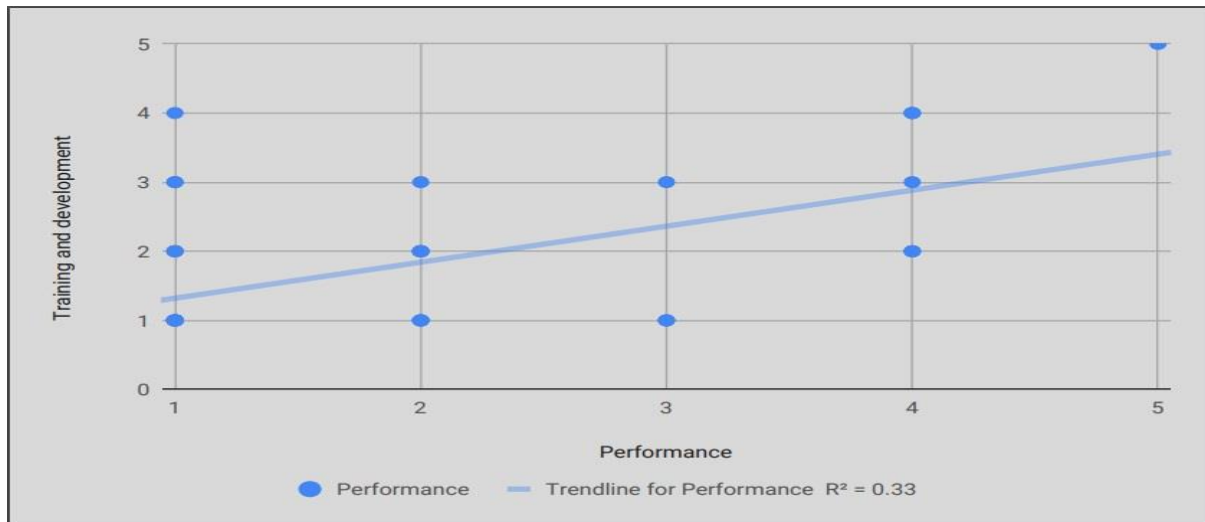


Figure 1 above measures the relationship between training and development in the performance of employees. The results indicates that there is a relationship to a degree between training and development and employee performance. Because there is a correlation between training and development, it is likely that employees will perform better if there is training and development.

5.2. Discussion

The purpose of any training and development programme is to achieve employee performance, gaining of new skills and competencies and organisational performance in terms of meeting goals and organisational productivity and profitability. One of the main purposes of training and development programmes is increase knowledge skills sets and change attitudes that will enhance employee performance in an organisation, but also, it will increase organisational effectiveness as evident by the literature review. The literature review also shows how training and development can be beneficial for not only the employee, but also, for the organisation as a whole.

When employees are properly trained and developed in an organisation, they are motivated to perform better, this in turn, increases organisational productivity. It is also important to mention that, as technology continues to advance at a rapid pace, employees are required to keep with the technological advancements by learning new skills and acquiring new competencies. The main objective of this dissertation was to investigate the impact of training and development on employee effectiveness. This dissertation found that employees connect their performance to training and development programmes which indicates that training and development does indeed improve employee effectiveness, which in turn, increases organisational productivity and effectiveness.

The concluding findings of this dissertation clarify the positive relationship training and development has with employee effectiveness. The results match previous studies' findings. A good example is the study by Tahir et al. (2014) who found out that training and development has a big impact on employee performance and productivity. The positive relationship training and development has with employee effectiveness supports the hypotheses H1. This indicates the importance of training and development as an essential practice for having effective employees. The literature shows that training and development does have a positive relationship on employee performance.

The literature also shows when employees perform better so do the organisations. Therefore, this supports H2. The results of this dissertation found that 51.9% of respondents strongly agreed that training and development is very important to them. Similarly, 42.6% of the respondents agreed that training and development is very important to them. The results of this dissertation further revealed that 51% of the respondents agreed that they are able to perform better because of training and development. 29.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that they are able to perform better because of training and development. These findings

corroborates with that of Taufek and Mustafa (2018) who found that training and development has a clear effect on the performance of employees.

5.3 Conclusion

Ultimately, the aim of this research project is to analyse the impact training and development has on employee effectiveness in IT companies in Ireland. The dissertation will mainly be based on primary data that will be collected from a structured research questionnaire. Opinions of employees working in the IT sector will be gathered and carefully assessed. The data shows what impact training and development has had on the employees regarding enhancement of their skills and whether it has changed their attitudes towards their work in any way. This dissertation deploys a quantitative research method. Quantitative research method has been defined as the type of research that analyses data according to numerical data, especially statistics (Yilmaz, 2013). As this dissertation is not doing a case study on a specific IT company, participants were chosen randomly from different IT companies that are operating in Ireland. Similarly, there is no target size because this dissertation is not doing a set population such as a percentage of staff in an IT company.

Factors that influence training and development will also be assessed by this dissertation. From the literature review, it is evident that factors such as lack of support from senior management, open-mindedness and emotional training are just some that can influence training and development. To thoroughly understand and investigate the question and the aims and objectives of this research project, factual data is required. Therefore, the quantitative research method is the appropriate method that should be used in this research project. It is also important to mention that strong consideration will be given to the ethical consideration when collecting the data for this research project. The findings of this dissertation clarify the positive relationship training and development has with employee effectiveness. The results of this dissertation also match previous studies' findings.

6. Conclusion

This dissertation shows the importance of training and development programmes as we are heading in an era of advancing technology. Therefore employees are required to learn new skills and knowledge to keep up with change. Organisations need to have employees who are able to adapt easily to the changing world market (Nda and Fard, 2013). Tahir et al. (2014) say that training and development enables employees to get far in their jobs within the organisation and this can also help increase the efficiency of the organisation. The goal of any training and development programme should be to add value to human resource, if it does not, then it should be abandoned (Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014). The main reason this dissertation was undertaken was to investigate the impact of training and development on the performance of employees in IT sectors that are operating within Ireland. The dissertation describes the various benefits of training and developed and also the different approaches to training and development. It has emerged from the dissertation that coaching and mentoring is gaining prominence. According to Salas, Tannenbaum, Kraiger and Smith-Jentsch (2012), training and development in this day and age is empirical in nature and theoretical based.

The data in this dissertation was collected from participants who worked in IT companies in Ireland. Due to the lack of relevant in terms of the research question and aims and objectives of this dissertation, it was decided that a validated questionnaire will not be used. The data was collected consisted of 29 questions in a carefully designed questionnaire. The questionnaire itself was designed based on the literature review. The sampling size of this dissertation was calculated and is 53 participants who all work in IT companies in various qualifications, type of employment etc. After having reviewed the collected data, the study revealed that training and development does have a positive relationship with the performance of employees in IT sectors. The data also showed that employees view very highly of training and development programmes. Their stay in the company is based on the training and

development they receive. The results show that training and development has come a good amount. Based on this result, it is evident that training and development can help organisational productivity and profit. Furthermore, it can be concluded that training and development does increase employee performance in the IT sector.

7. Recommendations

In line with the results of this dissertation, the following recommendations are proposed by the researcher that will address some of the problems identified when it comes to training and development. Also, this dissertation will propose ways of improving training and development programmes in IT sectors operating within Ireland, , such as:-

1. Organisations should ensure that the training and development programmes they are providing their employees are geared towards driving business result because if they are not, then the organisation would be wasting a lot of money.
2. The importance of training and development is quite clear from this dissertation. Therefore, it is important for organisations to set a good amount of budget for their training and development programmes. This can help improve upon the workforce in the organisation and can help make employees feel important in the organisation that will also increase organisational productivity. Furthermore, for IT companies will need to invest in training and development. This will help the organisation to be productive with engaged and have high performing employees. This would also ensure that the employees are loyal to the organisation and enjoy doing what they are required to do.
3. Organisations will need to have policies in place and be very careful of who is selected for training and development. If training and development is not appreciated or the importance not realised by the selected employee, then it can be all a waste. Therefore employees should be aware of the importance of training and development, but also, as said already, training should be geared towards driving business result.
4. For IT companies to be successful, different departments must engage in training and development of their employees. Training and development has become extremely important with the advances in technology and competition in the world market.

5. This dissertation shows that employees working in IT sectors in Ireland have very positive views of coaching and mentoring. Others have indicated that their company does not provide such coaching and mentoring. Therefore, it is important for organisations to realise the growing importance of coaching and mentoring. Organisations should also provide this type of approach of training and development as it has been shown to be very effective.

With these recommendations, timelines for implementations should be considered and any financial implications i.e. costings. Training and developing is essential to the success of a company, therefore, IT companies should have a timeline in place in which to deliver training and development programmes. Training and development should be provided for all employees in the IT sector. There are different approaches of training and development can be provided. It is very important and it should be continuous and not be just for a day or two. Training especially in the IT sector can take time to reap its benefits, therefore, employees should be provided training on a continuous basis. Continuous training is good because it not only trains existing talent but can also attract new talent in the company.

Regarding Coaching, this can be a set duration. Whereas, mentoring can be a lifelong training experience for the employees in the IT sector. Training employees is not cheap. Not only is it expensive to training employees, it can also be very time consuming. The size of the company can also play a big role on the amount of time that is spent on training and development programmes. The size of the company will also determine the amount of employees that can take part in training and development programmes. The approach to training and development an IT company takes also determines the amount training and development will cost. To ensure the company is aware of the cost of training, it is recommended that the records of expenses should be recorded.

8. Personal Reflection

Doing this dissertation stood out from other work I had done because of the self-directed learning that goes with it. It stood out because I was given the freedom to decide myself what the research will be on, rather than be given a topic and how I go about doing it. In doing this dissertation, I was given the chance to pick something that I am interested in and an area where I was curious to learn more about.

The reason why I chose to do this dissertation in this particular area was because I wanted to pick an area where it can resonate with me when I start my career in human resource management. Through my undertaking of this dissertation, I have now gained a lot of knowledge in the area of training and development. I have gained substantial knowledge around the different approaches to training and development and the different ways organisations benefit in training their employees. This is all important because they can help me in my future career in human resource management.

Undertaking this dissertation also helped me improve my time management skills. This dissertation required a lot of time and having a job on one side, family and social obligations on the other side, it could have become very daunting. I decided to do a bit of the dissertation every day that would ensure I had some time for my family and social life while also doing my job. The beginning of this dissertation was tough. However, with the help of friends, family and more importantly my supervisor, I was able to stay strong and manage to get this far. I had a difficulty in finding the right questionnaire that best fit my dissertation. Under the guidance of my supervisor, I decided that I would not use a validated one but instead, make my own that would be based on the themes that have emerged in the literature review. Another difficulty that I faced doing this dissertation was getting the responses for my survey questionnaire. I had no choice but to stay patient and eventually responses came pouring in.

The positive relationship between training and development on the performance of employees indicates to me that organisations should strive to provide the best training and development programmes they can to their employees. These programmes should be challenging, continuous but also enjoyable so that the employees do not lose interest. Training and development programmes should encourage employees to improve themselves. It is important to mention that I learned the most from conducting my survey questionnaire. Some of the responses in relation to how important training and development is to the employees made me realise the importance of these training programmes. Some of the employees even indicated that training and development are key in their retention in the organisation.

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10. Appendices

Confidentiality and consent form

Thank you so much for taking the time to participate in this survey questionnaire. The research survey is for use in a Master's in Human Resource Management in the National College of Ireland. Do not hesitate to contact me if you have any questions through my email x18144845@student.ncirl.ie.

Please answer yes or no for the following

I am participating in the study out of my free will

Yes

No

The researcher has permission to document, record or publish the results of the questionnaire if it need be

Yes

No

I am aware that I can withdraw from the study any time I want without any consequences

Yes

No

I am aware that I can withdraw the data collected in the questionnaire within two weeks

Yes

No

I understand that my responses will be confidential and anonymous

Yes

No

Demographic Information

1. Gender

Male

Female

Other

2. Age

0-25 years old

26-35 years old

36-50 years old

51 years or above

3. Sexual Orientation

Straight

Gay

Bisexual

Other

4. Educational Level

Primary Degree

Secondary Degree

College Degree

Master's Degree

Other

5. Type of Employment

Full-time employment

Part-time employment

Questionnaire

Questions relating to Training and Development

Please rate by how much you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

1. This company provides substantial training and development for its employees

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2. This company provides each employee with yearly training and development

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3. This company provides training and development so that employees are equipped with the required skills

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4. My stay in this company is largely impacted by the training and development that I receive

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

5. I am able to perform better because of training and development

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

6. To me, training and development is very important

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Questionnaire

Questions relating to Coaching

Please rate by how much you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

1. Have you been coached?

Yes

No

2. Coaching has positively impacted my retention in this company

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3. I have been able to enhance my skill in this company through coaching

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4. I am more confident in the work that I do because of coaching

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

5. With appropriate coaching, I will be satisfied and more likely to stay with this company

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

6. To me, coaching is essential

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Questionnaire

Questions relating to the retention of employees

Please rate how much you agree or disagree with the following statement:

Strongly Agree; Agree; Neutral; Disagree; Strongly Disagree

1. I am satisfied with what I do in this company

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

2. I would look for an opportunity in this company before I start looking for another job or change in career

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

3. I can see myself working for this company for a long time

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

4. If I was to start all over again, I would choose to work for this company again than any other

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

5. Employment is important to me, does not necessarily have to be in this company

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

6. I have checked for jobs in other companies in the past

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

7. If I was to get a better offer in another company, I would take it

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

8. My job is important to me

Strongly Agree

Agree

Neutral

Disagree

Strongly Disagree

Questionnaire

1. What aspect of your company has encouraged your stay in this company? Please explain your answer

2. What method of training should be provided by your company that will ensure your retention? Please explain your answer

3. Has coaching played a role in your stay in this company? If yes, Please explain your answer

4. Do you think a lack of or ineffective training is the reason for past employees leaving this company? If yes, please explain