

Training Practices in Large and Medium Textile and Apparel Industries of Punjab

Shipra¹, Dr Aneet², Dr Amandeep³

¹(Research Scholar / IKGPTU, India)

²(Director, GJIMT, Mohali, Punjab)

³(Consultant, Talent Management & Organization Development)

Corresponding Author: Shipra

Abstract : Growing competitive pressures lead the organizations to be effective in developing their human resources through appropriate training interventions. The objective is to study various cost-effective methods and techniques of imparting training for this sector. The field survey was done in the Textile and Apparel organizations situated in the state of Punjab. A total of 214 respondents of 33 Industries belonging to different managerial levels took part in this survey. The findings indicated on the job trainings and computer-based learning are commonly followed in textile and apparel manufacturing units of Punjab, due to their flexible, easy accessibility and cost effectiveness approach. The results indicated in the study, thus, help understand the organizations to increase their human capabilities through effective and strategized training approaches helping them to remain competitive in the dynamic markets.

Keywords: Indian Textile and Apparel Industry, Training & Development, Training Methods, On the Job Trainings, Computer based learning,

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I. Introduction

In the contemporary business scenario, organizations need to have competitive advantage above their arch rivals by building their strength in people and processes as these are no longer a matter of trend rather of survival. Strategic and productive organizational developmental changes are necessary for their sustenance in the longer run. Organizations, thus, find innovative and creative means and ways to differentiate their products for greater value and customer satisfaction.

However, it is to be noted that the concept of innovation is defined solely by the organization itself and their ability to innovate contributes depends upon the inhouse competencies. Dostie (2018) stated that ability of an organization to innovate depends upon its human capital. The data for the study collected from the Canadian Workplace and employee survey indicated that organization sponsored trainings lead to more product and process innovations. Sheehan, Garavan, & Carbery (2014) realized that the relationship between Human Resource Development and Innovation has not been well researched despite having significant recognition of innovation with organizational competitiveness. Their findings established the positive contribution of HRD interventions towards innovative activities of an organization. The authors indicated the positive influence of HRD on Employee Engagement, Motivation, Leadership, learning culture etc that are associated with innovation. The authors emphasized the analysis of the relationship between HRD and innovation in the context of an organization's culture and its leadership capabilities.

II. Employee development through appropriate Training Interventions

Business entities can take immense benefit from creativity and innovations through appropriate training interventions to provide best quality goods and services to their customers accumulating higher financial returns. The innovative abilities of any organization are enhanced by developing the skills and abilities of its human resource through continuous learning and development culture imparted through strategic training. Børing (2017) stated employee training as a stimulating agent for creative ideas to enhance innovation in an organization. The author was able to ascertain the positive correlation between employee training and organization's innovative activities. The author, however, stated that the relationship between training and innovation strategies is arguable as it works in combination with other human resource practices.

Hameed & Waheed (2011) explained through his model the relationship between employee development variables including learning, skill development etc and their performance. Their paper presented the importance of the activities that led to employee development and human capital investment and the challenges faced. According to Sirisetti (2011) human resources of the organizations need to be involved in the reform process and continuously equipped with appropriate skills. The practices facilitate in building their leadership competencies to enable them to meet challenges and opportunities of the 21st century. Evans, Bichanga Orina; S.B.Akash; Oyagi (2012) opined that training and development are the only reliable source of competitive advantage in a fierce, competitive global market. Alasadi & Sabbagh (2015) did a study on "Role of Training in small Business Performance" and concluded that the small business owners should understand that investment in management T&D would help their firms for the changes that are necessary for expansion and growth in an organization. Kulkarni (2012) viewed that "Training" helped to make the functioning smooth, increased the quality of work life of employees and contributed to the development of an organization. He opined that required advancements in an organization can be achieved through "Development" which is a continuous process whereas training has specific goals. Thaler, Spraul, Helmig, & Franzke (2017) studied the extent of enhancement of employees' public service motivation through employee

training. “Their findings indicated a significant effect of satisfaction with employee training on competence gains and a mediating effect of public interest.”

Salas & Cannon-Bowers (2001) mentioned in their chapter on “The Science of Training: A Decade of Progress” that looking at the trends, training professionals would be forced to understand the science of training to optimize its outcomes and its evaluation. The authors believe in the commencement of a new era where the realization of the reciprocal relationship between training research and practice would happen. The results of the findings by Ameerq, Ameerq-ul; Hanif (2013); Falola, Osibanjo, & Ojo, (2014) indicated that T&D affect the performance of employees and effectiveness of an organization. The implication of their findings is that organizations should make efforts to enhance the employees’ skills and knowledge through required training interventions at the right time.

Macpherson & Jayawarna (2007) suggested the appropriateness of formal training for small and medium enterprises. They further stated the requirement of formal training with respect to size, market, products, and organizational structures. The authors specified the challenge of understanding respective organizational structures and appropriate training interventions and asserted the need of understating the respective firms. Chatzimouratidis and Lagoudis (2012) focussed on the evaluation of the most popular Human Resource T&D methods and the techniques available today. The primary data through questionnaires was taken from different sectors and industries in Greece. As per the study, training methods like Vestibule training/simulators and ‘mentorship’ are among the first priorities. Web-based learning and on the Job learning are good alternatives for cutting down the costs. The authors stated that the finalization of T&D methods depends on many factors such as the absence of certain required resources, trainers and participants personality, the ongoing competition and the operational area of a company.

Training helps in achieving the formulated objectives of the organizations and appropriate training methods need to be adopted to make the training effective in the long run. The study presented in this paper establishes the appropriate methods and techniques of training for select Textile and Apparel industries in the state of Punjab, India.

III. Competitive advantage through trainings in Indian Textile and Garment Industry

Porter (1990) stated in his paper that high intensity competition at domestic level helps in breeding international success. The author mentioned cost-oriented company strategies and structures as the key factors for enhancing domestic competitive conditions. He emphasized the need to prioritize the indigenous resources to face economic challenges. The author recognized the need of innovation and advised to foresee the needs, environment forces and trends in advance for sustained competitive advantage. Considering the understanding of the domestic level market to reach at global levels, textile and apparel industry of India has a huge role to play in the Indian economy being major foreign exchange earner and largest employer after agriculture in India.

Devaraja (2011) stated Textile and Garment Industry to be the biggest and one of the oldest manufacturing sectors. He also mentioned that Indian Textile Industry has grown more post the Liberalization of trade and economic policies initiated by the government in the 1990s. India’s Textiles and Clothing industry contributes majorly to the Indian export revenues. The textile industry generates 14% of industrial production, which is 4% of GDP; and 11% of the country’s export earnings, employs more than 45 million people having a share of nearly 12% of the country’s total exports. Textiles sector is second only to agriculture for providing employment to people in India. The textile and apparel market is estimated at USD 118 billion, 69% of which is domestic and 31% exports. The overall domestic market of India is at USD 81 billion in 2016 as per the analysis by Wazir advisors.

Although the Indian Textile industry is strong enough to sustain its own manufacturing competence, but certain critical factors need to be addressed, one of them being need of innovation and human resource capabilities. The global market demand is continuously evolving as the customers are looking for innovative products for their better performance and quality. Textile products are becoming more functional and aesthetic in their appeal because of changing perceptions of customers to acquire valued added products. Countries like Japan, Korea and Taiwan have focussed on developing innovative products, however, Indian industry needs to structural changes to raise itself from basic products. The need of the hour is to increase focus on research and development, innovative methods and talented human resources.

The knowledge paper by Ficci and Wazir advisors (2017) stated that despite having younger workforce, the availability of skilled workforce is a huge challenge for Indian textile industry. The current skill levels in textile sector are insufficient for maximum productivity and efficiency. The talent shortage in this sector, thus, needs to be addressed by recruiting right people and training them further for continuous development of their skill levels. The businesses also need to bring about structural changes in their working environment to retain such talent in their organizations. The need of the hour for the sector is to focus on continuous skill development as key for improvement and consider high performance training for greater employee involvement.

The industry generates jobs not only in its own sector but also for other ancillary sectors. Indian garment Industry is facing a considerable change in aims, objectives, and parameters of growth because of globalization leading to corporate mergers and acquisition phases of smaller companies. Though there are automation and computerization, apparel manufacturing firms are still labour oriented and labour turnover is also quite high. In such organizations, it becomes necessary to have a good structure to train and develop the workforce for the efficient functioning of the organization as it helps in achieving the goals and objectives of individuals and organization. Periodic studies would give an insight into the state of matters thereby providing an opportunity to improve. Although earlier studies on this subject have already been made, there is still a large and wide scope of scientific study over the HR T&D policies and practices in the Apparel Industry. The purpose of the study is to find out the current policies /practices of HR T&D practices followed in the Apparel industry and devise their evaluation and efficiency measures. There is an immense scope in the Apparel Industry for this field.

IV Objectives

- i) To explore the significance of training in the select Textile and Apparel organizations
- ii) To study various methods and techniques of imparting Training in these organizations

V. Research Methodology

The given study is descriptive in nature utilizing primary as well as secondary data. Primary data has been collected by field visits to the respective companies carrying out trainings in their organizations. The secondary data has been taken from scholarly journals, annual reports, previous studies, reports, books etc. The field survey was done in the Textile and Apparel organizations situated in the state of Punjab. A total of 214 respondents of 33 Industries belonging to different managerial levels took part in this survey. A well-structured questionnaire based on five-point Likert scale was used as a research tool to conduct this study. The data collected was analysed by the usage of SPSS package and inferences were made based on descriptive and Inferential statistics.

VI. Findings and Discussion

Appropriate training methods help in improving the productivity of an organization and enhance the cost-effectiveness of the training programs in an organization. They help the employees to equip themselves for new skills so that they can increase their productivity that is beneficial to organizations in the long run. Despite so much of technological advancement and lot of methods devised in recent times to impart training in the most effective manner, the most dependable are still the traditional methods as indicated by the results of the study.

Table 1.1: Cross Tabulation of Management Level of Respondents and Employees undergo more On the Job Trainings rather than Class room-based Trainings

		<i>Employees undergo more On the Job Trainings rather than Class room based Trainings.</i>					Total	
		Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Can't Say	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree		
<i>Management Level of the Respondent</i>	Senior Managers	Count	4	3	11	4	4	26
		% of Total	1.9%	1.4%	5.1%	1.9%	1.9%	12.1%
	Middle Managers	Count	6	12	24	42	15	99
		% of Total	2.8%	5.6%	11.2%	19.6%	7.0%	46.3%
	Junior Managers	Count	4	5	12	41	27	89
		% of Total	1.9%	2.3%	5.6%	19.2%	12.6%	41.6%
Total	Count	14	20	47	87	46	214	
	% of Total	6.5%	9.3%	22.0%	40.7%	21.5%	100.0%	

Ref: Field Survey

The results indicated that most of the middle-level managers were agreeing that employees undergo more on the job trainings rather than classroom trainings. On the job trainings (OJT) help the trainees to learn through observation and at the actual workstation implying not much analysis is required to understand a job. OJTs are economical in nature as they avoid any kind of training needs and arranging any extra spaces. Immediate productivity and quick learning are other advantages of making the OJTs effective for the learners in apparel industry. The results of the study are supported by Riding & Mortimer (2000) who investigated on the job training and its effectiveness and observed that these trainings provided an exciting challenge to professional trainers, however, they needed a secure foundation and an understanding of principles of learning and instruction.

CHART 1.1: Employees undergo more On the Job Training rather than Class room based Training.

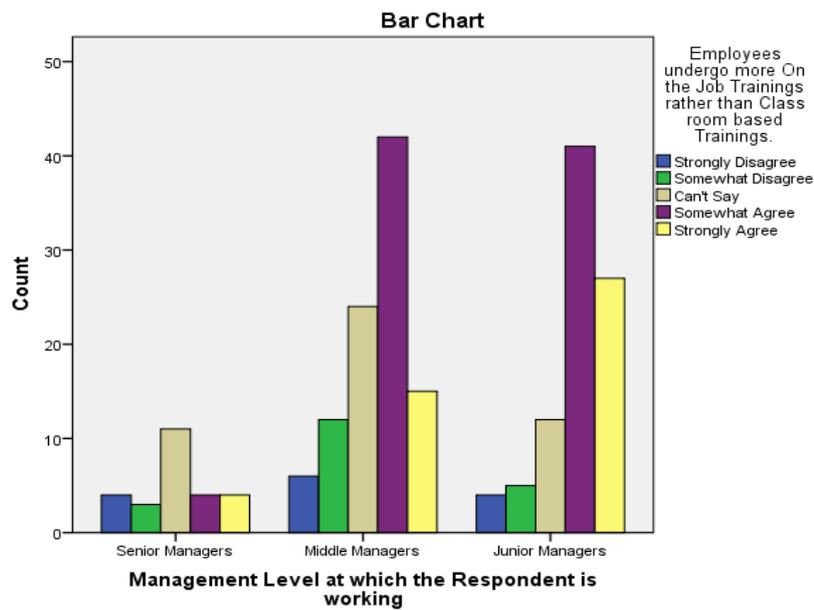


TABLE 1.2: Descriptive Analysis of “Employees undergo more On the Job Trainings rather than Classroom based Trainings”

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Senior Managers	26	3.04	1.248
Middle Managers	99	3.48	1.082
Junior Managers	89	3.92	1.036
Total	214	3.61	1.119

Table 1.2 indicates the mean values observed for three categories of management levels for the observation of employees undergo more on the job trainings rather than classroom based trainings. The scores were found to be the highest for Junior Managers (M=3.92, SD= 1.119); and least for Senior Managers (M=3.04, SD= 1.248). Higher SD in case of Senior Managers indicates more deviation in their responses as compared to that of Middle and Junior Level Managers.

A One-way Anova indicated the mean differences between the responses of three management levels for employees undergoing more on the job trainings rather than classroom based Trainings. The results are listed as below;

Table 1.3: ANOVA for Mean Scores of “Employees undergo more On the Job Trainings rather than Classroom based Trainings”

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig. (.05)
Between Groups	18.670	2	9.335	7.938	Significant
Within Groups	248.138	211	1.176		
Total	266.808	213			

Table 1.3 indicates the mean differences between the three categories as p-value less than 0.05 validated the results. An analysis of variance showed that the Employees undergo more On the Job Trainings rather than Class room based Trainings was significant, $F(2,211) = 7.938, p < .05$.

Table 1.4: Post Hoc measures of “Employees undergo more On the Job Trainings rather than Classroom based Trainings”

(I) Management Level	(J) Management Level	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig. (.05)
Junior Managers	Senior Managers	.883*	.242	Significant
	Middle Managers	.436*	.158	

Post- hoc analysis (Table 1.4) were conducted as Anova F test was statistically significant. Specifically, LSD tests were conducted on all possible pairwise contrasts. The pairs of groups significantly different were ($p < .05$): Senior Managers ($M=3.04$, $SD=1.248$) and Junior Managers ($M= 3.92$, $SD=1.036$) and Middle Managers ($M=3.48$, $SD=1.082$). In other words, Junior managers undergo more On the Job Trainings rather than Class room-based trainings than Senior and Middle level managers. Dostie (2018) also indicated through his study that on-the-job trainings play equally important roles as compared to classroom trainings.

The employees at the three management levels were also asked about Computer based learning to be used as a technique of training. The cross-tabulation of the respondents on 5-point Likert scale is presented as below:

Table 2.1: Crosstabulation of Management Level of the Respondent and Computer based learning is used as a technique of Training

			Computer based learning is used as a technique of Training					Total
			Strongly Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Can't Say	Somewhat Agree	Strongly Agree	
Management Level of Respondent	Senior Managers	Count	2	3	4	13	4	26
		% of Total	0.9%	1.4%	1.9%	6.1%	1.9%	12.1%
	Middle Managers	Count	6	5	9	41	38	99
		% of Total	2.8%	2.3%	4.2%	19.2%	17.8%	46.3%
	Junior Managers	Count	0	7	15	34	33	89
		% of Total	0.0%	3.3%	7.0%	15.9%	15.4%	41.6%
Total	Count	8	15	28	88	75	214	
	% of Total	3.7%	7.0%	13.1%	41.1%	35.0%	100.0%	

Ref: Field Survey

Table 2.1 indicates the least number of respondents in total agreeing to observation of “Computer based learning is used as a technique of Training”. The percentage of Middle managers is the highest that agree with the given statement. 41.1% of the respondents somewhat agree with the given statement and only 3.7% strongly disagree with the given statement. Chart 2.1 represents graphically the number of respondents agree with the statement.

Chart2.1: Computer based learning is used as a technique of Training

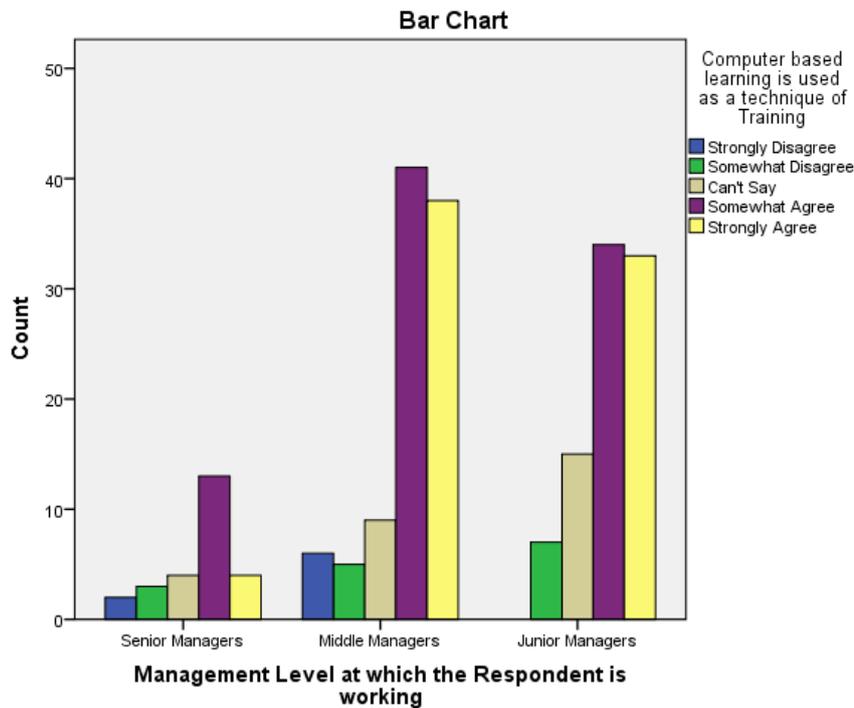


Table 2.1 indicates the descriptive statistics of the statement that Computer-based learning is used as a technique of Training. Mean values for Junior Managers were found to be the highest (M=4.04, SD=.928) with least standard deviation as compared to the Senior Managers (M=3.54, SD=1.140) and Middle Managers (M=4.01, SD=1.111). The least standard deviation in case of junior managers indicates lesser variation in their responses as compared to others. The variation in the responses of Senior managers is found to be the highest.

Table 2.1: Mean ranks of Computer based learning is used as a technique of Training

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Senior Managers	26	3.54	1.140
Middle Managers	99	4.01	1.111
Junior Managers	89	4.04	.928
Total	214	3.97	1.050

The findings presented in this study are supported by the previous studies also. Blanchard & Thacker (2006) stated that lectures and demonstrations are the simplest forms of presentation of information to a trainee by trainers. According to them, on the job training constituting methods like the apprenticeship, internship, mentoring, etc is another traditional form of used widely for learning at the workplace. The authors stated the increased retention of learning through audio-visual learning where the trainees gain insights through seeing and listening senses. Audio visual learning has been made widely and extensively possible through worldwide computer technology. The work culture of an organization can have a tremendous impact on learning by the usage of computers in learning.

VII. Conclusion

The findings lead to the degree of importance of HR T&D practices and methods and techniques undertaken by the select industries and include whether HR Training issues are being addressed with the changes in the technological trends in the Garment Industry. The global textile industry is relocating towards countries like Bangladesh, Vietnam, Sri Lanka, China etc to reap the benefits of low cost manufacturing. Indian textile industry too, need to restructure itself towards cost effectiveness. Trainings being one of the major investment areas, organizations need to strategize their learning approaches for their maximum benefit. The usage of computer-based learning observed as being common in this sector helps in the overall technological development of the organizations of this sector. Cost effectiveness of computer-based learning in terms of reduction in the travel arrangements and training time, flexibility in selecting learning materials, and access for self-paced learning modules help the organizations to craft their training needs for better competitive edge. It was observed that due to fast learning, immediate productivity, reduced costs on infrastructure and training processes OJT constitute a major role in

the textile and garment industry of India and are followed more commonly as compared to class room trainings. The results were supported by Huang & Jao (2016) indicating higher motivation for learning and learning performance in the students who went through structured OJT than the students who went through classroom based trainings. Benson-Armer, Otto, & Webster (2014) also indicated though their survey, the popularity of OJT as the most common method to build organizational capabilities

The results indicated in the study focus towards the issues of importance of training methods with respect to different managerial levels, T&D practices followed by the various organizations. However, the study being concentrated only in specific industrial regions of Punjab may not be generalized for other geographical regions and sectors. Further research may be conducted to extend the research findings to other regions and manufacturing sectors.

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