

# The Relationship Between Transfer of Training and Job Performance Among Employees at Natural Resources and Environment Board (NREB) in Kuching, Sarawak

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## Abstract

The success or failure of training pro is crucial not just for establishing and maintaining a healthy workforce, but also for improving organizational well-being and giving competitive advantages. This study uses a correlational research methodology to determine the relationship between Transfer of Training and Job Performance among employees of the Natural Resources and Environment Board (NREB) in Kuching, Sarawak. A total of 102 questionnaires were delivered and returned over two weeks. The study looks at the impact of trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment on job performance. The findings demonstrate substantial correlations: Training Design has the highest correlation score with Job Performance ( $r = .725$ ,  $n = 102$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), followed by Work Environment ( $r = .702$ ,  $n = 102$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ), and Trainee Characteristics ( $r = .572$ ,  $n = 102$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ). These results suggest that organizations should provide rewards and recognition to their employees, and employees should be encouraged to seek recognition in the workplace.

*Keywords: Trainee characteristics, training design and work environment*

## 1. Introduction

Training transfer is the extent to which training outcomes are used in the workplace (Andoh et al., 2022). Training transfers are fundamental in developing and maintaining a competent workforce, crucial for organizational success and competitive advantage. Effective training enhances employees' skills, knowledge, and attitudes, leading to improved job performance and overall organizational productivity (Noe & Kodwani, 2018). The Natural Resources and Environment Board (NREB) in Kuching, Sarawak, has implemented various training programs to enhance employee competencies and ensure the effective execution of their roles in environmental management. Despite the significant investment in training programs, the extent to which these initiatives translate into improved job performance remains uncertain. The transfer of training, defined as the application of acquired skills and knowledge to the job context, is a critical factor influencing the effectiveness of training programs. However, factors such as trainee characteristics, training design, and the work environment may impede or facilitate this transfer (Baldwin et al., 2017).

This study aims to investigate the relationship between the transfer of training and job performance among employees at NREB Kuching. Specifically, it examines the influence of trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment on job performance. By identifying the factors that significantly affect job performance, the study seeks

to provide actionable insights for improving the efficacy of training programs. This research is significant for several reasons. Firstly, it contributes to the existing literature on training effectiveness by providing empirical evidence on the factors influencing the transfer of training and job performance within a public sector context. Secondly, the findings offer practical implications for NREB and similar organizations aiming to enhance their training programs. By comprehending the key factors that influence a training transfer's success, organizations may create training interventions that are more effective and increase both organizational and employee results. The study concludes by highlighting the significance of customized training plans and a supportive work atmosphere in enabling the implementation of acquired skills, hence influencing human resource development policy and practice.

## 2. Literature Review

For many years, transfer of training has been defined as the extent to which what is learned in training is applied in the workplace (Andoh et al., 2022). Baldwin & Ford (1988) stated that transfer of training is the degree to which trainees apply the knowledge, skills, behaviours, and attitudes acquired in training to the workplace. The learning process is essential and must be continuous to ensure the transfer of information and skills in training (Nazli et al., 2015). This is one of the efforts of organizations to

prepare employee training to promote learning and develop professional skills. This is in line with Saks & Smalley (2014) who stated that transfer of training refers to the application, generalization, and maintenance of knowledge, skills, and behaviours from the training environment to the work environment.

Effective training transfer is influenced by trainee characteristics, training design, and work environment, with the work environment having a greater impact than trainee characteristics (Rebecca & Sangarandeniya, 2023). Baldwin & Ford (1988) stated that trainee characteristics consist of skills and abilities, motivation, and personality factors. Many studies consider trainees' characteristics when deciding on training transfer. The study showed that employees became more competent and demonstrated more employable skills, which in turn improved their job performance throughout training.

The implementation of skills and information in the workplace can be greatly enhanced by effective and efficient training transfer methods and procedures, which can raise the return on training investment and improve employee behavior (Dixit & Sinha, 2022). According to Baldwin & Ford (1988), professional relevance of training content, material sequencing, and the incorporation of learning concepts are all aspects of training design. A range of training techniques can be used, such as role-playing, presentations, videos, case studies, tutorials, discussion groups, demonstrations, and handouts (Pesiridis et al., 2014). Therefore, effective training design leads to improved performance and maximized benefits.

According to Hughes et al. (2020), peer, supervisor, and organizational support contribute significantly to training transfer and retention, with transfer motivation mediated through these relationships. Research has shown that employees are more likely to apply their knowledge at work when they perceive the organizational climate as supportive (Chelliah et al., 2016). Without encouragement from their supervisors, employees lose enthusiasm to perform their jobs, which results in training not being transferred to the workplace (Nazli et al., 2015). Nazli & Khairudin (2018) claim that learning cultures may have an impact on workers' motivation to transfer training within the company. Additionally, studies have shown that job performance improvements from training programs are unlikely to occur until the newly acquired competencies are applied in the workplace (Nazli et al., 2015).

The accomplishment of organizational objectives, such as long-term profitability, growth, income, and job satisfaction as well as higher staff productivity and better service and product quality, is referred to as job performance. (Torabi et al., 2021). A study conducted by Shaheen & Soomro (2022) found that training transfer significantly improved job performance in the development department and there was a strong positive relationship between training factors and

training transfer. Research has shown that trainee characteristics are closely related to job performance (Mohanty et al., 2017). High confidence in completing tasks can lead to higher levels of self-efficacy (Mahmud, 2018). Supervisor support is a key factor involved in the work environment. According to Qureshi & Hamid (2018), research has shown that employees' positive feelings about supervisor support can improve their coping and improve employee outcomes. Having supervisor support can help employees achieve their goals and improve their job performance. The relationship between job performance and training design has been studied for decades, and most researchers agree that effective teaching strategies and learning principles in training programs motivate trainees to perform better (Suhepi & Syah, 2018).

### 3. Methodology

The current study used a correlational research method to look at the relationship between training transfer and work performance among NREB employees in Kuching, Sarawak. A total of 102 respondents completed the questionnaire using a census sample technique. The questionnaire was adapted from Nwokeiwu (2013) and uses a 1-4 Likert scale. Participants had 14 days to complete the questionnaire, which had four sections: Section A (Demographic Background), Section B (Trainee Characteristics, Training Design, and Work Environment), and Section C (Job Performance). The data were analysed using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0, with Pearson Product-Moment Correlation used to assess the correlations between variables.

### 4. Result and Discussion

Section A of the questionnaire details the demographic background of participants, including gender, age, education level, marital status, and working experience. Table 1 summarizes the frequency and percentage for each category. Out of 102 participants, 38 were male (37.3%) and 64 were female (62.7%). Age-wise, 12 participants were 21-25 years old (11.8%), 22 were 26-30 years old (21.6%), 31 were 31-35 years old (30.4%), and 37 were 36 years old and above (36.3%). Regarding education level, 32 had SPM (31.4%), 2 had STPM (2.0%), 41 had a Diploma (40.2%), 15 had a bachelor's degree (14.7%), and 12 had a master's degree (11.8%). In terms of marital status, 64 participants were married (62.7%) and 38 were single (37.3%). For working experience, 12 participants had less than 4 years (11.8%), 18 had 5-10 years (17.6%), 26 had 11-15 years (25.5%), 31 had 16-20 years (30.4%), and 15 had 21 years and above (14.7%). In conclusion, most participants were female (62.7%), aged 36 and above (36.3%), had a Diploma (40.2%), were married

(62.7%), and had 16-20 years of working experience (30.4%). The least common categories were males (37.3%), aged 21-25 (11.8%), with STPM (2.0%), single (37.3%), and with less than 4 years of working experience (11.8%).

Table 1. Demographic profile for participants

	Item	N	(%)
Gender	Male	38	37.3
	Female	64	62.7
Age	21-25 years old	12	11.8
	26-30 years old	22	21.6
	31-35 years old	31	30.4
	>36 years old	37	36.3
Education Level	SPM	32	31.4
	STPM	2	2.0
	Diploma	41	40.2
	Bachelor's Degree	15	14.7
	Master	12	11.8
Marital Status	Married	64	62.7
	Single	38	37.3
Working Experience	<4 years	12	11.8
	5 - 10 years	18	17.6
	11 - 15 years	26	25.5
	16 - 20 years	31	30.4
	>21 years	15	14.7

The replies were graded on a 4-point Likert scale (1 being strongly disagree, 2 being disagree, 3 being agree, and 4 being strongly agree). Descriptive statistics were utilized to summarize the results as in Table 2. Work Environment (M=3.59, SD=0.368), Trainee Characteristics (M=3.54, SD=0.42), Training Design (M=3.57, SD=0.433), and Job Performance (M=3.65, SD=0.377) were the mean scores for each variable. The findings show that the work environment had the highest mean score, with trainee characteristics, job performance, and training design coming in second and third, respectively.

Table 2. Descriptive analysis

Variables	Mean	Standard Deviation
Job Performance	3.65	.377
Trainee Characteristic	3.54	.420
Training Design	3.57	.433
Work Environment	3.59	.368

Pearson Correlation analysis (see Table 3) was used to investigate the relationship between Trainee Characteristics, Training Design, Work Environment, and Job Performance. The study found that Trainee Characteristics had a somewhat favourable and significant connection with Job Performance

( $r=0.572$ ,  $n=102$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). The study found a substantial positive link between training design and job performance ( $r=0.725$ ,  $n=102$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Similarly, Work Environment revealed a substantial positive and significant connection with Job Performance ( $r=0.702$ ,  $n=102$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). These findings indicate that training design had the strongest link with job performance, followed by the work environment and trainee characteristics.

Table 3. Correlation coefficient

Variables	1	2	3	4
Trainee Characteristics	1	.572**	.725**	.702**
Training Design		1		
Work Environment			1	
Job Performance				1

Table 4. Analysis findings

Independent Variables	Direction	Result
Trainee Characteristics	Moderate, positive and significant	.572**
Training Design	Strong, positive and significant	.725**
Work Environment	Strong, positive and significant	.702**

This study aimed to determine the relationship between Transfer of Training and Job Performance among employees at NREB in Kuching, Sarawak. The findings indicate that Training Design has the most substantial impact on Job Performance, followed by Work Environment and Trainee Characteristics. Recommendations to improve job performance include implementing recognition and reward systems, incorporating advanced technology in training, ensuring supervisory support, and encouraging continuous learning and initiative-taking. Future research should explore additional variables and expand to the government sector to deepen the understanding of training transfer dynamics. This study provides valuable insights and practical recommendations to enhance training effectiveness and job performance, advocating for a culture of continuous learning and organizational improvement.

The findings from this study reveal that Trainee Characteristics among employees at the Natural Resources and Environment Board (NREB) in Kuching, Sarawak, have a moderate, positive, and strongly significant relationship with Job Performance ( $r=0.572$ ,  $n=102$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). According to Baldwin and Ford (1988), trainee characteristics encompass ability, motivation, and personality factors. Recent research by Kiiru and Gachunga (2023) supports the notion that motivated trainees are more likely to apply new skills

effectively, thereby enhancing job performance. This study corroborates that higher motivation among employees leads to improved job performance. Thus, the correlation results confirm a moderate, positive, and significant relationship between Trainee Characteristics and Job Performance at NREB.

The study results indicate a strong, positive, and significant relationship between Training Design and Job Performance ( $r=0.725$ ,  $n=102$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Most participants at NREB found the training methods employed in the programs to be effective and beneficial. Chidananda & Udayachandra (2018) asserts that training design should enhance the relevance of the training content, activities, and examples to facilitate job application. Similarly, recent findings by Alshurideh et al. (2023) highlight the importance of aligning training content with job requirements to increase trainees' motivation and satisfaction. The correlation results and questionnaire feedback strongly suggest that NREB's training programs significantly contribute to improved job performance.

The results addressing the third research question show a strong, positive, and significant relationship between Work Environment and Job Performance ( $r=0.702$ ,  $n=102$ ,  $p<0.01$ ). Findings indicate that most NREB employees effectively apply their training with minimal supervisory support. According to Faizal et al. (2017), effective communication from supervisors, including feedback on performance and clear instructions, is crucial for enhancing learning outcomes. Recent studies by Thakore and Bhatt (2023) emphasize the significant role of supportive work environments in facilitating the transfer of training and improving job performance. Thus, the correlation results suggest that strong communication between employees and supervisors at NREB contributes to the positive relationship between Work Environment and Job Performance.

## 5. Conclusion

In conclusion, this study delved into examining the relationships between Trainee Characteristics, Training Design, Work Environment, and Job Performance among employees at the Natural Resources and Environment Board (NREB) in Kuching, Sarawak. The findings highlighted significant positive correlations between all three predictors which is Trainee Characteristics, Training Design, and Work Environment and Job Performance. Specifically, Trainee Characteristics exhibited a moderate, positive, and statistically significant relationship ( $r = 0.572$ ), underscoring the impact of employees' skills, motivation levels, and personality traits on their job performance. Training Design emerged as a strong predictor with a positive and significant relationship ( $r = 0.725$ ), indicating that

well-structured training programs, aligned closely with job requirements, substantially enhance employees' ability to perform effectively. Similarly, the study found a robust positive relationship ( $r = 0.702$ ) between Work Environment and Job Performance, emphasizing the pivotal role of supportive organizational climates and effective supervisor-employee interactions in fostering the application of learned skills at work.

Based on the study's findings, several actionable recommendations can be proposed to further enhance job performance at NREB. Firstly, there is a need to enhance Trainee Motivation and Self-Efficacy. Implementing recognition and reward systems can effectively motivate employees, reinforcing positive behaviours and acknowledging achievements. Providing clear pathways for career development and advancement will keep employees motivated and committed to continuous improvement. Additionally, fostering a culture that promotes ongoing learning and skill development will empower employees to adapt to evolving job demands effectively. Secondly, Improving Training Design is crucial. Introducing advanced technologies such as e-learning platforms and virtual simulations can make training more engaging and relevant. Ensuring that training content is closely aligned with specific job roles and organizational goals will enhance its applicability and effectiveness. Utilizing diverse training methods, including practical hands-on experiences and interactive workshops, can cater to different learning preferences and maximize training outcomes. Thirdly, strengthening Work Environment support is essential. Encouraging supervisors to provide regular feedback and guidance will help employees apply newly acquired skills in their daily tasks. Creating a supportive organizational culture that values learning and development, and actively removes barriers to applying training, is vital. Establishing open communication channels between management and employees will facilitate addressing challenges and fostering a collaborative work environment. Fourthly, promoting continuous improvement through regular evaluation of training programs' effectiveness and responsiveness to feedback is critical. Providing resources and opportunities for employees to engage in self-directed learning and development will encourage them to take ownership of their professional growth. Conducting follow-up sessions and refresher courses will ensure that skills learned are maintained and updated according to evolving industry standards. Lastly, expanding research scope beyond this study's findings is recommended. Future research should explore additional variables that may influence job performance comprehensively. Extending studies to other sectors and geographic regions will validate findings and provide insights into sector-specific training dynamics. Investigating the long-term impacts of training programs on sustained

job performance will help assess the durability and ongoing benefits of employee development initiatives.

Implementing these recommendations will empower NREB to optimize its training programs, cultivate a supportive work environment, and ultimately enhance job performance among its workforces. These efforts are crucial in ensuring organizational resilience and competitiveness in a dynamic and evolving professional landscape.

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