



Training motivation and satisfaction: The role of goal orientation and offshoring perception



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ARTICLE INFO

Article history:

Received 30 June 2016

Received in revised form 5 October 2016

Accepted 9 October 2016

Available online xxx

Keywords:

Goal orientation

Training motivation

Training satisfaction

Offshoring perception

Learning

Transfer

ABSTRACT

An individual's goal orientation can influence their training motivation training satisfaction. Additionally, with the increased movement of jobs overseas, an individual's perception regarding the intensity of the occurrence of offshoring may influence this relationship. To evaluate the relationships of the dimensions of goal orientation (learning, avoid, and prove) on the dimensions of training motivation (learning and transfer) and training satisfaction (SEM). The findings suggest that learning and prove goal orientations were positively related to motivation to transfer and motivation to learn. Additionally, learning goal orientation and training satisfaction are positively related. Furthermore, offshoring perception particularly influenced the relationships involving learning goal orientation. Specifically, high offshoring perception (the belief that offshoring occurs frequently) strengthens the relationship between learning goal orientation and motivation to transfer, motivation to learn, and training satisfaction.

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1. Introduction

Organizations use training to enhance an individual's productivity and communicate goals to new personnel (Arthur, Bennett, Edens, & Bell, 2003). While training refers to planned learning experiences designed to change an individual's knowledge, attitude or skills (Noe & Schmitt, 1986), the focus of this study is on training motivation and satisfaction. Training motivation refers to the direction, intensity, and persistence of learning-directed behavior in training contexts (Colquitt, LePine, & Noe, 2000), and training satisfaction refers to how people feel about the training aspects they receive (Schmidt, 2009). Noe and Schmitt (1986) identify two dimensions of training motivation. *Motivation to learn* refers to the trainee's desire to learn the content of the training program, while *motivation to transfer* involves the trainee's desire to use the knowledge and skills acquired during the training program. Several studies have examined the relationship between training motivation and several factors, including individual differences (Albert & Dahling, 2016; Colquitt et al., 2000), training outcomes (Bauer, Orvis, Ely, & Surface, 2016), and trainee reactions (Brown, 2005). Yet, while training outcomes have been studied, few of its antecedents have been explored (for exceptions, see Chih, Liu, & Lee, 2008; Colquitt et al., 2000; Medina, 2016).

Goal orientation is one potential antecedent and is explored in an attempt to better understand the means by which both training

motivation and satisfaction are realized for an individual. VandeWalle (1997) defined the three dimensions of goal orientation as follows. *Learning goal orientation* involves a desire to develop the self by acquiring new skills, mastering new situations, and improving one's competence. *Prove (performance) goal orientation* refers to the desire to prove one's competence and to gain favorable judgments about it. Lastly, an *avoid (performance) goal orientation* involves the desire to avoid the disproving of one's competence and to avoid negative judgments about it.

With the increasing globalization of the workforce (Shi & Wang, 2011), individuals become concerned about future employment opportunities. Offshoring refers to the "process of sourcing and coordinating tasks and business functions across national borders" (Manning, Massini, & Lewin, 2008, p. 39). Offshoring is frequently confused with outsourcing, which is the delivery of products and services by an external provider. For several companies, reducing labor costs is not the only strategic driver behind offshoring; rather, gaining access to pools of highly skilled talent around the world has emerged as an important trend (Bunyaratavej, Hahn, & Doh, 2007; Lewin & Peeters, 2006).

Researchers have examined the relationship of offshoring to multi-level outcomes. Antrás and Helpman (2006) and Blinder (2006) examined the economic drivers of offshoring focusing on trends in international trade of services and the comparative advantages of locations. Manning et al. (2008) compiled a thorough review of studies in offshoring. Although these studies have explored different levels of offshoring, an individual-level of offshoring remains unexplored. In this study, *offshoring perception* refers to an individual's perception of

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the intensity of offshoring and how offshoring affects future employment opportunities.

By studying goal orientation in relation to training motivation and satisfaction, this study investigates how individuals regard the importance of training regarding their future employment. Thus, by incorporating an individual's perception of the intensity of offshoring, researchers gain understanding into how increasing globalization affects an individual's intention to utilize training as a method to acquire new knowledge.

2. Hypotheses development

2.1. Goal orientation and motivation to transfer

Each of the dimensions of motivation to transfer can be influenced by an individual's goal orientations – learning, avoid, or prove. Individuals with a learning goal orientation attempt to understand something new or to enhance their level of competence in a subject, which can be continuously improved by acquiring knowledge and perfecting competencies (Wood & Bandura, 1989). In order to perfect these competencies, individuals with a learning goal orientation would then transfer the newly acquired knowledge to other areas.

Both a prove goal orientation and an avoid goal orientation might create the desire to transfer training. A prove goal orientation is grounded in self-regulation that is based on attainment of positive outcomes, while an avoid goal orientation is based on avoiding potential negative outcomes (Elliot & Harackiewicz, 1996). Thus, individuals with a prove goal orientation would have internal incentive to obtain more training in order to incorporate that training into a new setting, such as daily routines, so that they can demonstrate competence to their peers. Likewise, individuals with an avoid goal orientation would be inclined to transfer the training to their daily routine to avoid negative consequences, such as not being able to complete tasks.

Hypothesis 1. An individual's (a) learning, (b) avoid, and (c) prove goal orientation is positively related to motivation to transfer.

As more organizations send their business overseas, individuals who desire to work in a particular field should obtain the necessary training in order to compete with others (Martin, Staines, & Pate, 1998). Hence, individuals' beliefs about the volume of offshoring that is occurring could influence their desire to obtain training. For example, an individual with a negative view of offshoring (i.e., most U.S. companies are sending jobs overseas) would believe that there are fewer job opportunities, which would make the person less inclined to seek out training (e.g., Christensen & Wright, 2011; Levine, 2012). Alternatively, an individual with a positive view of offshoring would perceive that there are more job opportunities if one has the appropriate training.

An individual's perception of offshoring can also impact the relationship between goal orientation and motivation to transfer. If learning goal orientation has a positive relationship with motivation to transfer, then an individual's offshoring perception would further strengthen the learning goal orientation – motivation to transfer relationship, as there would be more reason to obtain new knowledge. Conversely, an individual's offshoring perception would result in the relationship between one's prove goal orientation and motivation to transfer weakening since one would not only be able to transfer the new training but also would not be able to prove oneself. Lastly, since individuals with an avoid goal orientation would want to avoid disapproval from their peers, individuals' offshoring perception would potentially be impacted by their offshoring perception. For example, individuals with a high avoid goal orientation and a negative view toward offshoring (i.e., several jobs are moving overseas) would be less likely to engage in opportunities that would encourage transferring knowledge since they may be concerned that they would not be able to obtain the job if more jobs are going overseas since they would be concerned that they

would receive disapproval from peers if they did not obtain the job after engaging in training for a specific job.

Hypothesis 2. An individual's offshoring perception strengthens the relationship between (a) learning and (b) avoid goal orientation and motivation to transfer, but weakens the relationship between (c) prove goal orientation and motivation to transfer.

2.2. Goal orientation and motivation to learn

An individual's goal orientation could also influence one's motivation to learn. Colquitt and Simmering (1998) and Klein, Noe, and Wang (2006) demonstrated that learning goal orientation and motivation to learn are positively related. An avoid goal orientation, as the desire to avoid the disappointment of one's peers, would translate to an individual being motivated to learn new training to avoid appearing incompetent. Likewise, an individual with a prove goal orientation would be motivated by training in an effort to prove one's competence.

Hypothesis 3. An individual's (a) learning, (b) avoid, and (c) prove goal orientation is positively related to motivation to learn.

An individual's offshoring perception can impact the relationship between goal orientation and motivation to learn. For learning goal orientation, an individual's offshoring perception could strengthen the relationship between learning goal orientation and motivation to learn, as the outside influence would cause an individual to desire to learn through training. For example, for individuals with a high learning goal orientation and a positive view toward offshoring (i.e., only certain jobs are going overseas), they would be more focused on learning the information from training instead of what is occurring in the job market. Similarly, offshoring perception could cause both prove and avoid goal orientations to strengthen as an individual either proves competence or avoids disapproval. For instance, individuals with a high prove goal orientation and a positive view toward offshoring would be more focused on proving themselves to peers by learning the material presented in training instead of focusing on the jobs that are going overseas. Likewise, an individual with a high avoid goal orientation and a positive view toward offshoring would focus more on avoiding disapproval from peers by learning the material from training instead focusing on the jobs that are going overseas.

Hypothesis 4. An individual's offshoring perception strengthens the relationship between (a) learning, (b) avoid, and (c) prove goal orientation and motivation to learn.

2.3. Goal orientation and training satisfaction

Goal orientation can also influence an individual's training satisfaction. In learning goal orientation, the desire is to develop the self by various methods (VandeWalle, 1997). Thus, the individual who has a learning goal orientation could be satisfied with the training they have received. That is, an individual with a learning goal orientation may be satisfied with their training if they felt that they were given the opportunity to absorb the subject content. For prove and avoid goal orientations, an individual might gain satisfaction from training as it provides an outlet for one to prove competence and avoid disproving one's competence, respectively.

Hypothesis 5. An individual's (a) learning, (b) avoid, and (c) prove goal orientation is positively related to training satisfaction.

Furthermore, an individual's offshoring perception can impact the relationship between goal orientation and training satisfaction. For learning goal orientation, offshoring perception would weaken the relationship to training satisfaction, as this individual would be more concerned with the content of the training rather than what is occurring

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