

The Impact of Situational Factors on Pre-Training Motivation

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This conceptual paper proposes a model examining the effect of environmental and organizational structure characteristics as well as the effect of organizational strategic choice on pre-training motivation. Positive relationships between the stable-dynamic dimension of the environment, the organic-mechanic dimension of the organizational structure are proposed. The moderating role of organizational strategic choice in the proposed relationships is also discussed. Pre-training motivation is also predicted to be higher in organizations following a differentiation strategy than that in organization following a low-cost strategy.

INTRODUCTION

Training motivation can be conceptualized as the direction, effort, intensity, and persistence that trainees apply to learning-oriented activities before, during, and after training (Kanfer 1991, Tannenbaum & Yukl 1992). Several studies have found (and supported) that trainees' motivation to learn and attend training has an effect on their skill acquisition, retention, and willingness to apply the newly acquired KSAs on the job (e.g. Martocchio & Webster 1992, Mathieu et al., 1992). Whereas the literature is, in general, clear about the influence of training motivation on learning outcomes, an adequate model that helps understand the antecedents of training motivation has not emerged yet. Recent research has shown big effort placed on understanding effects of individual characteristics but little effort on effects of situational characteristics, especially on the environmental and organizational characteristics.

Consistent with Salas and Cannon (2003), there is little effort in recent research to understand the effects that situational factors (i.e. environmental and organizational characteristics) have on training motivation. The only considerable effort is made by Colquitt, LePine, and Noe (2000) who have shed light on the underlying processes and variables involved in understanding training motivation throughout the training process. Their integrative narrative and meta-analytic review suggest that training motivation is multifaceted and influenced by a set of individual (e.g. cognitive ability, self-efficacy, anxiety, age, conscientiousness) and situational (e.g. climate) characteristics. This effort provides the beginnings of an integrative theory of training motivation, a much needed synthesis and organization.

In term of situational characteristics, Colquitt and his colleagues found that supervisor support, peer support and positive climate were moderately related to "motivation to learn", or "training motivation" in their study. This finding accounted for a very small portion of the study analysis and considered "not examined with enough frequency to be included in the path analysis" (p.682).

As conceptualized above, training motivation needs to be examined before, during and after the training program. As a consequence, its antecedents across three stages will be different and should be examined differently. However, research on situational effects on training motivation also focuses only on this relationship during and after training. For example, Tracey, Tannenbaum, and Kavanagh (1995) examined an organization's climate for transfer, which refers to trainees' perceptions about characteristics of the work environment that influence the use of training content on the job. The main features of a positive climate may include adequate resources, cues that serve to remind trainees of what they have learned, opportunities to use skills, frequent feedback, and favorable consequences for using training content. Tracey et al. (1995) found that such a climate predicted the extent to which employees engaged in trained behaviors on the job. Similarly, Rouiller and Goldstein (1993) found that a positive climate was associated with transfer of managerial skills in the fast-food industry.

The final gap in training motivation research is that the absence of the external environment analysis. A few researchers have examined some internal environment factors such as the perceived presence of manager support or peer support for participation in learning activities (e.g., Birdi, Allan, & Warr, 1997; Fecteau et al., 1995). Fecteau et al. (1995) argued that both managers and peers could help trainees, particularly in transferring learned skills on the job (see also Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Their study of 967 managers in departments within state government agencies showed a positive link between peer support and transfer and a positive link between manager support and motivation to learn. Birdi et al. (1997) linked manager support (though not peer support) to increased on- and off-job learning, increased development, and increased career planning. Finally, Clark et al. (1993) indicated that supportive managers can emphasize the utility of training to the job, thus impacting trainee motivation.

Generally, the gaps in training motivation research can be summarized in threefold. First, there is a lack of efforts to understand the effect of situational characteristics compared with those placed on individual characteristics. Second, among the rare research about situational effects on training motivation, there are none discussing pre-training context motivation. Finally, situational researches just focused on internally environmental effects on training motivation.

The main purpose of this paper is to develop propositions about the effects of environmental characteristics (i.e. perceived of environment uncertainty), organizational characteristics (i.e. organic versus mechanic) and organizational strategic choices (differentiation versus low-cost) on pre-training motivation of organizational members. It is important to note that the paper only focuses on the pre-training motivation which is defined as the general feeling of training need. This need is usually stated by the organizational members through the statement "I/we need to be trained to work better". The training motivation during the actual training program and the training motivation to transfer the training content to the job are not in the scope of this paper.

ENVIRONMENTAL AND ORGANIZATIONAL INFLUENCES ON PRE-TRAINING MOTIVATION

According to Blanchard (2007), the feeling of training need comes from a triggering event that the organizational members does not have adequate knowledge, skill and ability (KSAs) to meet the job performance expectation. Assuming that an individual can benefit from gaining adequate KSAs to perform the job and thus, benefit the organization, it is predicted that the individual will seek for devices to enhance their KSAs. Training, in practice, is perceived by organizational members as the most useful way for this purpose (Blanchard, 2007).

The assumption above is consistent with the expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964). On the basis of this theory, researchers have suggested that when an employee has strong preference for the outcome contingent on performance improvement (Valence), he will seek training to fill in the gap of KSAs deficiencies (Instrumentality) with a strong belief that improving KSAs will lead to improving performance (Expectancy). For example, Mathieu et al. (1992) found that motivation was a function of perceptions that increased job performance (facilitated by training) led to feelings of accomplishment, higher pay, and greater potential for promotion. Colquitt and Simmering (1998) found that trainees who

valued outcomes linked to learning showed increased motivation levels. Departing from this point, I argue that given the organizational member's belief that training can be beneficial, any factor regardless its departure should be considered as having effects on pre-training motivation if that factor could make the organizational members think that they are lacking or will lack of adequate KSAs to meet the job performance.

Perceived Environment Uncertainty and Pre-Training Motivation

For the purposes of this paper, perceived environment uncertainty will be defined as an individual's perceived inability to predict something accurately (Milliken, 1987). An individual experiences uncertainty because he/she perceives himself/herself to be lacking sufficient information to predict accurately or because he/she feels unable to discriminate between relevant data and irrelevant data. It is clear that perceived environment uncertainty will be high in the environment which is characterized as highly uncertain. Duncan (1972), synthesizing from previous studies, identified two environmental dimensions: the simple-complex and the static-dynamic dimensions. The simple part of the simple-complex dimension deals with the degree to which the factors in the decision unit's environment are few in number and are similar to one another in that they are located in a few components. The complex phase indicates that the factors in the decision unit's environment are large in number. The static-dynamic dimension indicates the degree to which the factors of the decision unit's internal and external environment remain basically the same over time or are in a continual process of change. The dynamic-static dimension was proposed to have more significant effects on perceived environment uncertainty than did the simple-complex dimension. Duncan (1972) also identified the following main characteristics of an uncertainty environment: (1) an inability to assign probabilities as to the likelihood of future events, (2) a lack of information about cause-effect relationships and/or (3) an inability to predict accurately what the outcomes of a decision might be.

Milliken (1987) developed three types of perceived uncertainty about the environment. The "state uncertainty" is experienced by the administrator when they perceive the organizational environment, or a particular component of that environment, to be unpredictable. "Effect uncertainty" is defined as an inability to predict what the nature of the impact of a future state of the environment or environmental change will be on the organization. The third one, "Response uncertainty" is defined as a lack of knowledge of response options and/or an inability to predict the likely consequences of a response choice (Duncan, 1972). In sum, the characteristics of an uncertainty environment identified by both Milliken (1987) and Duncan (1972) contribute to the increment of organizational members' perceived environment uncertainty. Also, when the organizational members experience the high perceived environment uncertainty, they will face some performance deficiency – or at least feel that they will – because the inability to predict future (Duncan, 1972) or lack of knowledge of response options (Milliken, 1987). Thus, they will have higher feeling of training need than when the environment is highly certain.

Environmental uncertainty can be defined broadly as the predictability and change expected in the environment (Duncan 1972; Milliken 1978) and also can be defined more narrowly, in terms of information availability (Yasai- Ardekani 1986). If information about the firm's task environment (customers, technology, government regulation, and suppliers) is readily available, managers can develop predictable expectations about the environment and design systems to exploit those expectations. When information is scarce, however, managers have difficulty planning and setting goals related to productivity and efficiency. The development of systems and technologies to bring the environment under control becomes problematic, undermining the rational goal value. A paucity of information may simultaneously shift the organization toward a dependency on key personnel and their individual judgment and experience. Such a situation would likely lead to a greater emphasis on the human relations value. Buenger et al (1996), in an empirical study of United States Air Force, found a significant positive relationship between information scarcity from the external environment and an emphasis on human relation value. According to Qinn & Rohrbaugh (1983), an organization with focus on human relation value will emphasize flexibility, stress cohesion, morale and human resources development, which in turn, create a favor environment for training activities.

Consider the stable-dynamic dimension of the environmental uncertainty, Buenger et al (1996) asserted that managers must also contend with environmental turbulence. While unpredictable and rapid change in the external environment disrupt planning processes and make gains in productivity problematic, the need for those processes intensifies (Kukalis 1991). Faced with uncertainty, managers must spend more time and resources on scanning and forecasting than on understanding and predicting their environment (Milliken, 1987). Additionally, Cameron (1986) reported that environmental turbulence was a major negative influence on morale in organizations. The reason may be that it distracts managers from the human relations values. The result is an increased emphasis on the rational goal value. Buenger et al (1996) proposed two opposite relationships: (1) a positive relationship between an emphasis on human relation value and complex training demand of an organization and (2) a negative relationship between an emphasis on rational goal value emphasizing control, planning and productivity and complex training demand of an organization (Qinn & Rohrbaugh, 1983). Surprisingly, their analysis found that both relationships were significantly positive. This result showed that, as a reaction to environment uncertainty, either an emphasis on human relation value or on rational goal value will lead to high complex training demand which can be considered to have interactional relationship with pre-training motivation of the organizational members.

In sum, the environment uncertainty has either direct effects on organizational members' pre-training motivation by decreasing their KSAs or indirect effects on pre-training motivation through the organization emphasized values systems. That allows me to propose the following proposition.

Proposition 1: Given the organizational member's belief that training can be beneficial, the organizational members' perceived environment uncertainty is positively associated with organizational members' pre-training motivation.

The Organizational Structure and Pre-Training Motivation

Organizational structure, defined as "the recurrent set of relationships between organization members" (Donaldson, 1996, p. 57), is one of the most ubiquitous aspects of organizations. Donaldson noted that structure includes—but is not limited to—power and reporting relationships such as those identified in organization charts, behaviors required of organization members by organizational rules, and patterns of decision making (e.g., decentralization) and communication among organization members. Further, it encompasses both formal and informal aspects of relationships between members. The most prevalent distinction for describing fundamental differences in organizational structure is that of mechanistic and organic structural forms. It is important to note that these two structural forms represent ends of a continuum, not a dichotomy. No organization is perfectly organic or mechanistic; most display some characteristics of both, and intermediate stages exist between the two archetypes (Ambrose & Schminke, 2003).

Mechanistic structure is characterized as rigid, tight, and traditional bureaucracy. In mechanistic settings, power is centralized, communications follow rigid hierarchical channels, managerial styles and job descriptions are uniform, and formal rules and regulations predominate decision making (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). Organizational members will be likely dependent on their top managers in decision making when facing a performance deficiency rather than looking for an innovative solution or think about develop their own KSAs to meet the performance expectation. Furthermore, because in mechanistic structure formal rules and regulations predominate decision making, it is likely that the mechanistic organization will emphasize the goal rational value system which pay less effort on developing the internal human resources than do the other system such as human relation value or open system (Milliken, 1987).

By contrast, organic organizations are characterized by flexible, loose, decentralized structures. Formal lines of authority are less clear, power is decentralized, communication channels are open and more flexible, and formal rules and regulations take a back seat to adaptability in helping employees accomplish goals (Burns & Stalker, 1961; Lawrence & Lorsch, 1967). It is clear that this kind of structure supports the human relation value and encourages the self development of organizational members as

well. Employees have more authority to make decision and thus, more self-efficacy to solve the performance deficiency by self-development rather than relying on the top managers. Colquitt et al (2000) found a significantly positive relationship between pre-training self-efficacy and pre-training motivation. Based on those premises, I argue that the members of organic organizations will have higher pre-training motivation than that of the members of the mechanistic organizations. Thus, the following proposition is offered:

Proposition 2: Given the organizational member's belief that training can be beneficial, the dimension organic-mechanistic of organizational structure will be associated with motivation of the organizational members.

The Mediating Role of Organizational Structure in the Relationship Between Perceived Environment Uncertainty and Pre-Training Motivation

Contingency theory suggest that perceived environment uncertainty affects organizational structure, that administrators de-sign organizational structures such that the organization will be able to more effectively respond to environmental demands, and that they do this in accord with their perceptions of the environment. In general, it is argued that the more uncertainty that is perceived, the more will be the looseness or flexibility or "organicness" of the organizational structure, that is, that a positive relationship exists between these variables. For example, on the basis of a number of field studies Osborn and Hunt (1974) concluded that either perceived or objective environmental uncertainty is a determinant of organizational structure. In particular they stated (1974: 232):

“The work of Burns and Stalker (1961), Chandler (1962), Emery and Trist (1965), Lawrence and Lorsch (1967), and Neghandi and Reiman (1973), among others, has indicated that as [the task environment] becomes more dynamic, the organization must become not only more receptive to change, but alter its internal structure and operations to maintain and/or establish a high survival potential.”

If various structures are differentially effective in processing information to reduce decision-making uncertainty, then the information processing capabilities of structure would need to be consistent with the uncertainty perceived in the environment (Koberg, 1987). An organic structure, with its low degree of formality and high degree of information sharing and decentralization, enhances an organization's flexibility and ability to adapt to continual environmental and uncertainty (Mintzberg, 1979). Thus, the conceptual studies support the positive relationship between perceived environment uncertainty and organic organizational structure.

From the empirical perspective, the field studies of Duncan (1971), using data from 22 decision groups, and Khandwalla (1972), using data from 29 manufacturing firms, both found that increased perceived uncertainty was correlated with less mechanistic structures for effective organizations, thus apparently supporting the perceived environment uncertainty influences structure argument. Leifer and Huber (1977) in a field study comprising 12 work units (182 people) working in a health and welfare organization found supports for the positive relationship between perceived environment uncertainty and organic organizational structure.

Proposition 3: The organic – mechanic dimension of the organizational structure will mediate the relationship between perceived environment uncertainty and pre-training motivation of the organizational members.

The Organizational Strategic Choice and Pre-Training Motivation

This part is to examine the effects of organizational strategic choice on the organizational members' pre-training motivation. There are two dimensions of the organizational strategic choice discussed in theory: build versus harvest and differentiation versus low cost. The mission of the "build" strategy is to

gain market share often at the expense of short-term profitability and cash flow. The mission of the "harvest" strategy is to maximize short-term profits and cash flow, often sacrificing market share (Glueck & Jauch, 1984; Govindarajan, 1986; Hofer & Schendel, 1978). The build/harvest strategic missions do not describe how the firms compete, but only indicate the intended outcomes (Govindarajan, 1986). Thus, this dimension is not appropriate to be considered for its effects on the pre-training motivation of the organizational members which is depending on how the organization selects a long-term strategy to achieve the strategic goals.

Porter (1985) proposed two generic competitive strategies that describe a means for attaining the desired outcomes: low-cost and differentiation. This dimension is more appropriate for a discussion about its effects on pre-training motivation because it emphasize on the means, rather than the expected outcomes. For this reason, only the low-cost and differentiation strategies are considered in this paper.

A strategy of differentiation is defined as an attempt to offer a product that is perceived industry-wide as being unique (Porter, 1980). This strategy requires an external orientation and a creative flair in order to deliver a unique product to the customer. Since the differentiating firm does not make standard products, it needs to know both what types of products customers want and what customers think about the products it makes. There are multiple approaches to differentiation; it can be based on the product itself (i.e., technology, design, quality), marketing approach, delivery system, or customer service. A successful differentiator will seek approaches that lead to a price premium greater than the cost of differentiating. Considering that there are numerous ways of achieving and maintaining uniqueness in the marketplace, a differentiator will require a relatively large information-processing capacity to deal with the many available options. The logic of the differentiation strategy requires that a firm choose attributes on which to differentiate itself that are different from its rivals. The options available to a differentiator with respect to what unique product features to offer normally would be greater than those available in the case of a low-cost strategy. Thus, information-processing requirements will be huge in the case of organization following a differentiation strategy. The consequence is that, the member of the organization following the differentiation strategy will need great competency in all information related task such as collecting and processing.

Achieving differentiation sometimes may preclude gaining a high market share. It often requires a perception of exclusivity which is incompatible with high market share (Porter, 1980). This exclusivity, in turn, may require unique product design, distinctive styling, and sophisticated promotional appeal as well as manufacturing craftsmanship, multipurpose equipment, high quality materials, and extensive product research and development. The lower volume of production, combined with an organizational emphasis on special product characteristics and flexibility/adaptiveness toward the marketplace, suggests that differentiation strategy will lead the organization to an emphasis on human relational value system, which in turn creates a favorable environment for a complex training demand to develop (Buenger et al., 1996).

In contrast, a strategy of low cost signifies an attempt to sell an essentially undifferentiated product at lower-than-average market price (Porter, 1985). Low-cost producers typically sell a standard, or no-frills, product and place considerable emphasis on reaping scale or absolute-cost advantages from all sources. Low-cost strategy implies tight control systems, overhead minimization, pursuit of scale economies, and dedication to the learning curve; these could be counterproductive for a firm attempting to differentiate itself through a constant stream of creative new products (Porter, 1985). For a low-cost strategy to be successful, managers must direct their attention to the internal aspects of their organization, primarily to the production and engineering functions.

Achieving a low-cost position often requires a high, relative, market share or other advantages, such as favorable access to raw materials. It may require designing standard products for ease in manufacturing, maintaining a wide line of related products to spread costs, and servicing all major customer groups in order to build volume (Porter, 1980). Large production volume justifies investing in modern, efficient equipment using conveyORIZED assembly lines with modularized components for easy expansion of capacity. Equipment is usually of a highly specialized type (although this can be overcome with more expensive flexible manufacturing systems) and the skills required to operate it are generally low. Workers can be relatively unskilled and the discretion of people will be limited. Hence, in terms of

competitive strategy, a strategy of differentiation is likely to make the intra-organization's technology more akin to a job shop, small volume, batch type of operation. On the other hand, a low-cost strategy is more likely to require a greater reliance on standardization, routinization, and mass production. Thus, it is clear that organizations following a low-cost strategy do not create an environment that favors the learning activities as well as the pre-training motivation of the organizational members. Generally, differentiation and low-cost strategies are distinct and have different effects on pre-training motivation of the organizational members as proposed in the following proposition.

Proposition 4: The pre-training motivation of organizational members in the organization following the differentiation strategy will be higher than that of organizational members in the organization following the low-cost strategy.

The Moderating Role of Strategic Choice in the Relationships Between Perceived Environment Uncertainty and Pre-Training Motivation

The characteristic of uncertainty environment which is mostly related to a differentiation strategy is the information scarcity. Given that the organization does not change from differentiation to low-cost strategy, the increase of perceived environment uncertainty place a greater demand of on the organizational members' competency to collect, to filter and to process the required information to maintain the competitive advantage. Eisenhardt (1989) found that successful decision-makers in high-velocity environments use more information, consider more alternatives, and seek a greater amount of advice. Instead of departing from the analytical requirements of comprehensive decision-making, they accelerate their cognitive processes. The quick decisions resulting from comprehensive decision processes lead to better performance (Goll & Rasheed, 1997). Further, differentiation firms rely most on the application of unique technology to win the target market; in the high uncertainty environment, that the technology changes rapidly forces the firm keep continue training their employees to acquire adequate KSAs to run the new technology. In contrast, when the environment becomes highly unfavorable (i.e. high uncertainty), the low-cost firms may try to reduce the cost by cutting-off production or decreasing market size. Those reactions will lead to the decrease of the pre-training motivation of the employees.

According to the expectancy theory (Vroom, 1964), because improving the organizational members' competency in information related task will help improve the differentiation organization's performance, both the organization and its members will favor the employee development activities. In contrast, the low-cost organization will not favor training their employees in uncertainty environment because of the cost increasing; that will decrease the pre-training motivation of their employees. It is predicted that, when the environment is highly uncertain, the pre-training motivation is expected to be higher in differentiation than that in the low-cost organizations. Thus, the strategic choice of the organization will significantly affect the relationship between the perceived environment uncertainty and pre-training motivation of the organizational members. That allows me to propose the following proposition about the role of strategic choice in the relationships between perceived environment uncertainty and pre-training motivation.

Proposition 5: Organizational Strategic Choice will moderate the relationship between perceived environment uncertainty and pre-training motivation of the organizational members. Particularly, the relationship between perceived environment uncertainty and pre-training motivation of the organizational members will be stronger in differentiation organizations than that in the low-cost organizations.

The Moderating Role of Strategic Choice in the Relationships Between Organizational Structure and Pre-Training Motivation

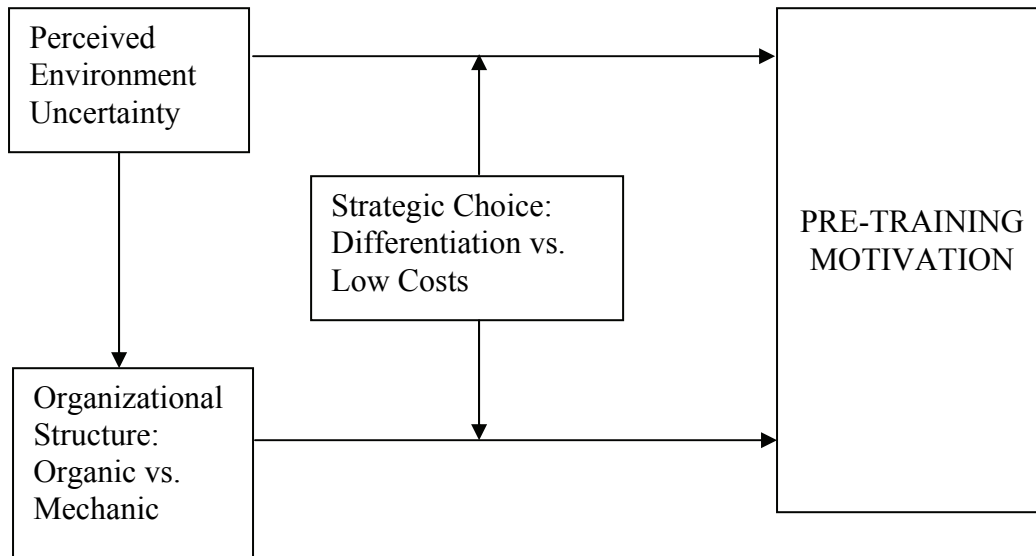
There is theoretical foundation for the argument that the differentiation strategy favors the highly organic organizational (low mechanic) structure and the low-cost strategy favors the low organic structure (high mechanic). The differentiation strategy relies on the less formalized structure and gives more

autonomy to the employees whereas the low-cost emphasize the standardization of the production process and limit the discretion of people (Govindarajan, 1986). Furthermore, as argued above, the differentiation firms tend to emphasize the development of their human resources while the low-cost firms tend to cut any activities that may increase their production costs. It is clear that given a constant level of an organization in the dimension organic-mechanic structure, the organizational strategic choice significantly affect the relationship between this dimension and pre-training motivation of organizational members.

Proposition 6: Organizational Strategic Choice will moderate the relationship between the dimension organic-mechanic of organizational structure and pre-training motivation of the organizational members. Particularly, the relationship between this dimension and pre-training motivation of the organizational members will be stronger in differentiation organizations than that in the low-cost organizations.

The relation of propositions in this paper is depicted in Figure 1.

FIGURE 1
THE MODEL OF ANTECEDENT OF PRE-TRAINING MOTIVATION
FROM SITUATIONAL FACTORS



DISCUSSION

The primary relevance of this paper is in its extension of the expectancy theory linking pre-training motivation to situational factors from the environmental to the organizational context. Theoretical arguments in support of the interactive effects of the perceived environment uncertainty, organizational structure and organizational strategic choice on the pre-training motivation of organizational members have been presented. The proposition developed here should serve as a foundation for new empirical research.

Historically, as part of the development of the theory of pre-training motivation, considerable research efforts were devoted to identifying the factors on which pre-training motivation may be dependent. Several factors related to individual characteristics such as personality (Colquitt & Simmering, 1998), locus of control (Noe, 1986), self-efficacy (Martocchio & Webber, 1992; Quinoes, 1995) and aging (Stern & Doverspike, 1989) so far have been identified. Colquitt et al. (2000) develop an integrative

model which proposed training motivation as a multifaceted variable and called for a comprehensive approach which recognizes both individual and situational characteristics effects on this variable. This paper inherits and extends the importance of Colquitt et al.'s (2000) approach by first pointing out that perceived environment uncertainty is a preeminent source of variation for the pre-training motivation of the organizational members and further suggesting that the training complex demand are affected by the organization's chosen competitive strategy and organizational structure as well as by the interaction among those factors. Future theoretical developments in the area of training motivation might benefit from focusing explicitly on the organizational variables as the source of variation rather than only examining individual variables such as age, personality, and self-efficacy. Thus, a more comprehensive approach of training motivation will help understand training motivation from a situational perspective.

The propositions in this paper have practical importance as well. The general contribution is that managers need to recognize that training motivation is a multi faceted variable and situational factors has important effects on training motivation as do the individual factors. The more particular application is about the training decision and its effectiveness. Training is costly but there has been a lack of comprehensive typology to evaluate the training outcomes (Salas & Cannon 2003). The training cost \$59 billion was spent by the US employer on formal training in 1996. This number increased to \$129.6 billion in 2006 and \$134.39 billion in 2007 (ASTD Industry Report 1996, 2006, and 2007). The training cost in US companies is huge but not much when compared with other countries. Noe (1998) pointed out that US companies only spend about one-third as much as Japanese companies do on training. This information indicates that training is really considered important to organization through the world and companies are willing to invest a large amount of money in training activities. They key question here is: Are there some cases that the managers make wrong training decision (i.e. implement a training program while there is not a real training need)? This paper partially helps address this question by reminding the managers that situational factors may lead to high pre-training motivation. Managers can benefit from the proposed model to understand the organizational pre-training motivation in their actual contexts. Practices of either low or high pre-training motivation affect the training decision and training performance. It is clear that low pre-training motivation may lead to poor training performance but the pressure of high training demand also force the managers to make the wrong decisions as well. Members of organizations with organic structure and differentiation strategy will feel that they always need training to perform better whereas they may possess enough job competencies and training may not be the best solution or in other words, high pre-training motivation may become a false indicator of training need.

Limitation and Future Research Recommendation

This paper has some limitations. First, because this is the first paper attempting to examine the relationship between environmental and organizational factors on pre-training motivation, the theoretical background supporting the arguments is limited. Second, the distinction between the conceptualizations of perceived environment uncertainty and environment uncertainty is not cleared. Both the two terms are mutually used as one construct here but in fact, they are two different concepts. Environment uncertainty is the characteristics of the external environment in a period. According to Duncan (1972), uncertainty and the degree of the complexity and dynamics of the environment should not be considered as constant features in an organization. Rather, they are dependent on the perceptions of organization members and thus can vary in their incidence to the extent that individuals differ in their perceptions. Some individuals may have a very high tolerance for ambiguity and uncertainty so they may perceive situations as less uncertain than others with lower tolerances. As a consequence, pre-training motivation might be different from one individual to another; that challenge the validity of the model proposed in this paper. Finally, whether organizational strategic choice is a dichotomy or continuous variables is still a debate; its nature, when finally defined and widely accepted, may affect its proposed moderating role.

This paper also has some implications for future research. First, there is a need for empirical study to define the perceived environment uncertainty construct as well as to test for the construct's reliability and validity. Second, there are others situational variables that may affect the pre-training motivation but are not included in the model. Cultural effects and organizational compensation policy are examples. More

empirical and conceptual studies should be developed to provide a more completed understanding of pre-training motivation. Finally, how perception of organizational members about organizations' characteristics differs from the actual ones and whether this difference affects the pre-training motivation of the organizational members is a potential area for future research.

NOTE

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