



**IMPACT OF LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT ON THE PERCEPTION OF CRITICAL SKILL  
PREPAREDNESS OF THE EMPLOYEES IN THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR**

**Dr. F. R. Alexander Pravin Durai**

Head and Associate Professor, Department of Commerce, St. Joseph's College (Autonomous), Trichy.

**JULIE JOSE,**

Ph.D. Research Scholar, Department of Commerce, St. Joseph's College (Autonomous), Trichy.

**Abstract**

The success and failure of every organization depend on the quality and efficiency of the human resources. Well-trained employees with advanced skills, knowledge, and competency are the cornerstone of organizational success. Hence the purpose of this study is to investigate the relationship between learning and development and perceived skill preparedness among IT professionals. A descriptive research method is applied in this study using 952 questionnaires distributed among IT employees. The collected data were carefully analyzed using SPSS version 25. The statistical tools used include frequency tables, percentages, means, and standard deviations, and inferential statistics like KMO and Bartlett's test, SEM, and Regression to determine whether there is a significant relationship between learning and development and perception of skill preparedness. The analysis and interpretations were done at a 0.05 level of significance. The study concluded that learning and development have a significant impact on the employee perception of skill preparedness.

**Keywords:** Learning and Development, Employee Efficiency, Skills and knowledge.

**Introduction**

In the present competitive era, the survival of every IT organization depends upon efficient human resources. The more innovative, creative, and inventive the employees are, the more will be the output of the organization. Learning and development are one of the significant factors of Human Resource Management that helps the employees in improving their knowledge, skills, ability, satisfaction, and competency. Learning and Development play a vital role in the perception of critical skill preparedness among employees, especially in IT companies. Employees are updated with the most modern techniques and technological advancements as they are valued by the organization. Human Resources are an indispensable asset and a key factor for gaining a competitive advantage and learning becomes the most essential tool for its actualization. Through L&D employees' capabilities, expertise, and commitment increase and that influences the organization in preserving and upgrading the obtained positions in the IT industry. Organizations must consider the effort, cost, and time



utilized for learning and development programs as an investment rather than a cost for the skills preparedness of employees.

### **Significance of the study**

Learning and Development become indispensable the moment when an organization realizes the need for further expansion and improvement. The HR professionals along with the managers and leaders align the learning and development strategies in connection with the organizational goals that can contribute to the smooth functioning of the organization. Therefore, understanding the HR activities, especially learning and development enables the managers to help the employees enhance their skills and abilities and perform better and keep them motivated. This will strengthen the individual and organizational efficiency and meets the goals and standards despite the unforeseen changes and challenges. This study becomes important because many IT organizations are striving for talented employees that can only be achieved through enhancing the employee's skills, knowledge, abilities, competency, etc. through effective learning and development designs. However, the results of the study will help the management to identify the perception of critical skill preparedness of employees through learning and development in IT companies.

### **Review of Literature**

#### *i) Learning and Development*

The current business enterprises have no other option before them than to become an organization that learns. Learning is the only way through which development and survival are assured. Stop learning is considered as stop living. Therefore, the expansion and survival of organizations depend upon effective learning and development (Handy, C. 1995). It is a necessary factor not only for the employees but also for the organization for running the daily corporate races (Blickstein, 1996). The amount spent on L&D is considered an investment only when the desired outcome results in fulfilling the purpose of enhancing employees' skills, knowledge, and performance. The effectiveness of learning and development activities depends on the effective design and delivery and the methods of learning used thereof. Identifying the learning needs is one of the significant factors that lead to effective L&D methods that need to be implemented. The learning program will be good only when the Training Need Assessment (TNA) is properly handled or else it will go in vain. TNA is necessary for accomplishing the organizational objectives and connecting the gap between the required skills and the existing skills of the employees for higher efficiency.

#### *ii) Trends and techniques in learning*

Learning and development activities become highly effective when employees are taught according to the recent trends and technological methods and techniques (G. Kaupins, 1997). For the effective operation of an organization, employees must have the capacity to handle the seeming contradictions. It requires both psychological as well as technological know-how. Therefore, organizational learning must remain at the



forefront with the focus on providing learning and development according to the recent trends and techniques to respond to the uncertainty. The need for L&D is to update and upskill the employees with the latest technical and technological developments. Even though the employees are good enough at performing their job, they need more knowledge and skills to appraise themselves to be more efficient (GV Narasimhan & CS Ramanarayanan, 2014). It is with the help of L&D the employees become more innovative, capable, and efficient to accept the new techniques and technologies provided to them

*iii) L&D leading to efficiency and productivity*

Every organization expects outstanding performance from employees and this need is fulfilled through constant learning and development. Effective training leads to improved efficiency of the employee resulting in increased productivity. There is a strong correlation between the L&D activities and an enhanced level of efficiency with an increase in productivity. The effectiveness of L&D reflecting the efficiency of the employee depends upon the employee's level of participation in the learning activities. L&D allows the management to arrange a favorable climate that brings engagement and efficiency to the employees. Joyful and engaged employees are more likely to be committed, efficient, and productive. L&D enhances team spirit, and inter-team collaborations and improves teamwork which will automatically reflect in high productivity. It is positively related to organizational commitment, enhanced performance, and more efficiency with an increase in productivity. The rewards offered to the topmost performers after assessment also has an impact on the efficacy and productivity (Guna et al. 2013).

*iv) Learning feedback, suggestions, and evaluation*

The evaluation and feedback after the learning and development curriculum have to be evaluated. Lack of evaluation of learning outcomes and employee performance leads to inefficiency in employees and the organization. Suggestions and feedback from employees immediately after the learning activities are highly essential for the organization and employees' efficiency (Elbadri, 2001). The success of every learning course is linked to the methods and techniques used, the acquired skills and expertise in the job, and the assessment standards used in evaluating the same. Every organization needs to note that the L&D needs have to be identified first to select the right methods and techniques to be included in learning programs before they are implemented, and evaluating the outcome is also crucial to know the impact of the learning provided (McCourt, W., Derek, E, 2003).

*v) Learning and Development resulting in skills acquisition and job satisfaction*

An organization's effectiveness and performance depend upon the skilled workforce. Therefore, companies invest and focus on implementing effective learning and development programs for organizational effectiveness (Mayfield, 2011). The more the employees are trained with updated knowledge and continuous learning, the less will be their level of dissatisfaction. L&D promotes professional creative thinking and enhances skills and perceptions with satisfaction in the job the employees deal with. The unskilled workforce is transformed into



the most versatile who become capable of discharging their duties and responsibilities with efficiency and job satisfaction (Ameeq and Hanif, 2013). L&D can be addressed as a technique that transfers newer knowledge, skills, and competence to improve their performance in the current and future assignments.

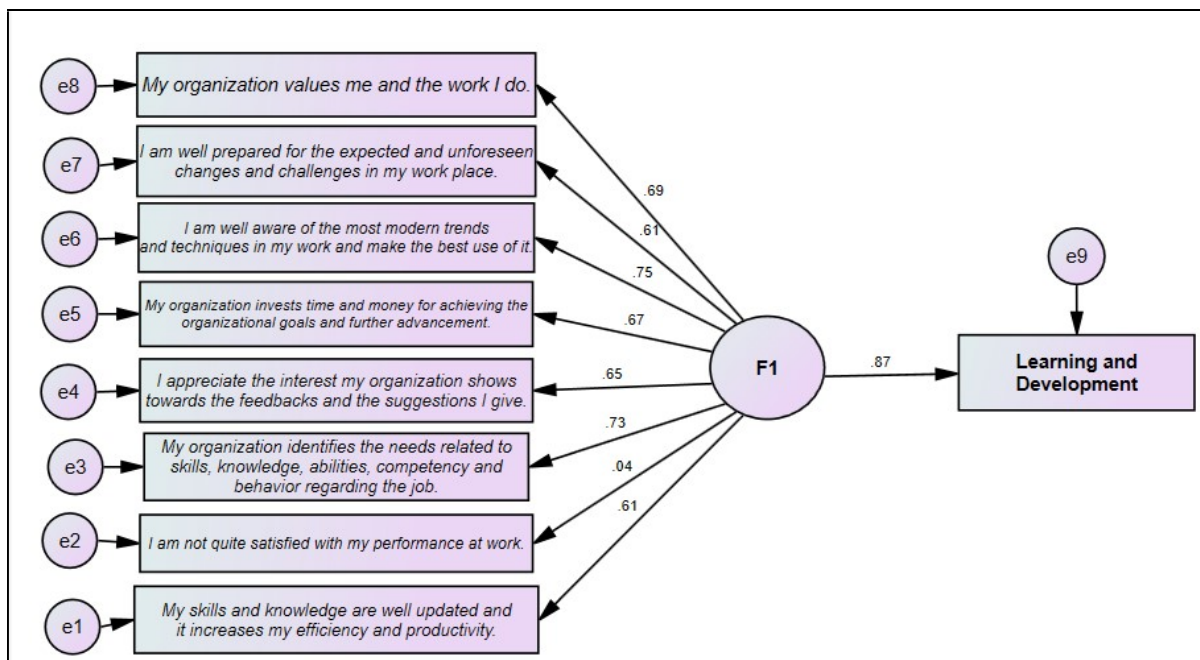
### Research Objectives

- To examine the role of learning and development in improving knowledge, skills, and competency in employees.
- To investigate whether learning and development help shape the perception of employees about their skill preparedness.
- To find out the role of learning and development in enhancing job satisfaction among employees.
- To examine the importance of evaluation and feedback on learning and development.

### Hypothesis

H1. There is a significant relationship between L&D and employee perception of skill preparedness.

### Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)





SEM is used to assess the relationship between variables and also to verify the compatibility of the used model. Learning and Development(e9) influences e6 to the extent of 0.75, e3 to the extent of 0.73, e8 to the extent of 0.69, e5 to the extent of 0.67, e4 to the extent of 0.65, e1 and e7 to the extent of 0.61 and e2 to the extent of 0.04. This is interpreted as, through L&D organizations identify the needs related to skills, knowledge, abilities, and competencies associated with the behaviors of employees in connection with their job. It helps the employees to learn the most modern techniques and technological trends related to their work. And that also helps them to make optimum use of those tools and techniques in performing their jobs efficiently. It helps the organization in identifying the skills, knowledge, and ability requirement of employees and creating awareness among the employees about the latest trends and techniques in their work, and help them optimally do their work and it ultimately results in employee developing an interest in their organization which is essential for retention.

**Table: 6- GOODNESS OF FIT TEST FOR STRUCTURAL EQUATION MODELLING (SEM)**

Model	Normed chi-Square ( $\chi^2/df$ )	GFI	AGFI	CFI	NFI	RMSEA
Study model	3.27	.902	.837	.889	.883	.068
Recommended model	Less than 5	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	< 0.1

For evaluation of SEM, emphasis is given to Chi-square, Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Goodness to Fit Index (GFI), Normed Fit Index (NFI), Adjusted Goodness to Fit Index (AGFI), and Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), which are shown in the Goodness Fit model in Table: 6. The criteria for accepting the model are as follows: RMSEA should be 0.08 or lower, CFI 0.09 or higher, and NFI 0.09 or higher. The fitness of the data and the measurement model are tested with the goodness-to-fit (GFI) test where greater than or equal to 0.9 shows a good fit.

Table 6 shows the result of the Goodness of Fit Test for SEM. GFI is 0.90 which is equal to the recommended value. The other values are also up to the level of satisfaction. AGFI is 0.837, CFI is 0.889, NFI is 0.883 and RMSEA is 0.068. Therefore, it is indicated that L&D influences the perception of employees up to a certain level of skill preparedness. A positive perception makes them a future-ready super-fluid environment with increased uncertainty and this enhances the scope of their retention in the company.



**Table 7: Regression Analysis**

Description			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
My skills and knowledge are well updated and it increases my efficiency and productivity.	<---	F1	1.000			
I am not quite satisfied with my performance at work.	<---	F1	.887	.060	16.085	***
My organization identifies the needs related to skills, knowledge, abilities, competency, and behavior regarding the job.	<---	F1	1.151	.063	18.185	***
I am well aware of the most modern trends and techniques in my work and make the best use of them.	<---	F1	1.248	.063	18.723	***
My organization invests time and money for achieving the organizational goals and further advancement.	<---	F1	1.002	.059	17.061	***
I appreciate the interest my organization shows in the feedback and the suggestions I give.	<---	F1	1.233	.066	18.623	***
I am well prepared for the expected and unforeseen changes and challenges in my workplace.	<---	F1	.947	.059	15.986	***
My organization values me and the work I do.	<---	F1	.943	.054	17.416	***
Q8_ave	<---	F1	.940	.046	20.453	***

Table 7 depicts the unstandardized coefficients and their related test statistics. The amount of variation in the mediating or dependent variable for each unit change predicting is symbolized by unstandardized regression values. In the table, the standard error, as well as the estimate attributed by the standard error is given. P column is associated with the hypothesis and its acceptance.

**Table 8: Standardized Regression Weights**

			Estimate
My skills and knowledge are well updated and it increases my efficiency and productivity.	<---	F1	.612
I am not quite satisfied with my performance at work.	<---	F1	.037
My organization identifies the needs related to skills, knowledge, abilities, competency, and behavior regarding the job.	<---	F1	.730
I am well aware of the most modern trends and techniques in my work and make the best use of them.	<---	F1	.752
My organization invests time and money for achieving the organizational goals and further advancement.	<---	F1	.669



			<b>Estimate</b>
I appreciate the interest my organization shows in the feedback and the suggestions I give.	<---	F1	.655
I am well prepared for the expected and unforeseen changes and challenges in my workplace.	<---	F1	.615
My organization values me and the work I do.	<---	F1	.688
Q8_ave	<---	F1	.874

According to the results of SEM analysis, developing employee skills, knowledge, and abilities and equipping them with the most modern trends and techniques related to their work, and collecting and evaluating employee suggestions are the major goals accomplished by L&D in IT organizations. The statistical interpretation and discussion prove the alternative hypothesis that there is a significant relationship between L&D and employees' positive perception of skill preparedness.

### **Conclusion**

The objective of the study is to identify the impact of learning and development on the perception of critical skill preparedness of employees in the IT sector. For this purpose, the collected data were analyzed and interpreted. It is observed that L&D helps in creating awareness about identifying the critical skills requirements of employees and developing those skills in them finally makes them future-ready. Through this process, L&D helps in the retention of employees. The results conclude that L&D is useful in the retention of employees because it identifies the skills and knowledge requirements, and providing such skills and knowledge to the employees makes them fit for the future. The whole process helps in serving the purpose.

### **Declaration of Conflicting Interests:**

Regarding the research, writing, and publishing of this article, the authors assure no possible concern or conflict.

### **Funding:**

In this research, publishing, and/or authoring of this work, the authors have no financial assistance.

### **References**

1. Ameer, A. & Hanif, F. (2013). Impact of Training and Development on Employee's Development and performance in the IT Sector of Lahore, Pakistan. *Journal of Business Studies Quarterly* 4(4)



2. Blickstein. Steve, (1997). "A Wider View of Training Effectiveness", *Management Development Review*, 10(6), pp. 220-221.
3. Elbadri, A. N. A. (2001). Training practices of Polish companies: an appraisal and agenda for improvement. *Journal of European Industrial Training*
4. FR Durai, A Pravin, I Adaikalasamy (2014) A Study on Human Resource Audit Practices Perception of Employees in Mando Automotive India Limited. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Computer Science and Management Studies*. Vol 2.
5. Guna, Umar, Oni Emmanuel, Tsado Emmanuel, Ayayi and Oluseyi (2013) Kuwait chapter of the *Arabian Journal of Business and Management Review* Empirical study of Training & Development as a Tool for Organizational Performance: A case study of selected banks in Nigeria. vol 2, no-10.
6. Handy, C. (1995). *Managing the Dream*. In S.Chawla and J.Renesch (Eds.), *Learning Organizations—Developing Cultures for Tomorrow's Workplace*. Oregon: Productivity Press.
7. Kaupins, G. (1997). Trainer opinions of popular corporate training methods *Journal of Education for Business*, 73(1), 5-8.
8. Mayfield, M. (2011) *Creating training and development programs: using the ADDIE method* *Development and Learning in Organizations: An International Journal*.
9. McCourt, W., Derek, E (2003) *Global Human Resource Management: Managing People in Developing and Transitional Countries*. Cheltenham, UK: Edward Elgar
10. Narasimhan, G.V., & Ramanarayanan, C.S. (2014) *Analysis of Training Needs Assessment and Implementation-A Comparative Study of Public and Private Sector Banks* *Indian Journal of Commerce and Management Studies*, 5(3), 71.