



# The Influence of Training System on Employees' Hard Skills in the Palestinian National Authority

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## Abstract

The purpose of this study is to report the influence of a training system on improving employee hard skills. The motive of this study is to investigate the implementation of training system in public organisations. The paper uses a survey questionnaire to collect data from the Palestinian National Authority ministries. One hypothesis was formulated to guide the study. Individual-level analyses from a sample of 399 employees from Palestinian National Authority ministries indicate that training systems have a positive effect on employees' hard skills. The theoretical contribution of this study is to demonstrate the value of training systems on employee hard skills. It further confirms the importance of addressing the relationship between organizational practice and employee outcomes, and accordingly the results will contribute the HRM literature. From a practical standpoint, the findings encourage careful consideration of the training system used in the Palestinian National Authority and support the utility of the framework to inform future studies.

## Subject Areas

Human Resource Management, Management Organization

## Keywords

Training, Hard Skills, Public Organisation

## 1. Introduction

The importance of employee hard competencies, is recognized since hard skills are needed for organization success. Also, hard skills are important for job success and organizational effectiveness [1]. Hard skills are related to technical

knowledge as well as job related skills [2]. Preceding studies established hard skills as a serious element in determining employee job performance particularly in the public sector organizations [3]. Thus the Palestinian authority organizations will benefit when the effectiveness of their HR is improved, in order to face the difficult conditions under occupation.

Training is important as it serves as a platform to provide skills enhancement deemed necessary by the organization that must be acquired by employees and later, to be utilized by the organization to achieve its objectives [4] [5]. Therefore, as Palestinian organizations progress in response to the serious change in their organization systems, they need to develop skills of their staff [6]. Therefore, training system must be integrated as a part of the organizational systems in order to realize organizational outcomes. In this particular argument, the training and development of the employees have direct contributions in the high achievements of organization which show better performance [7]. As identified by [8] training increases the organizational performance as predicted by many researches, which in turn can increase organizational sustainability.

Generally, in the Palestinian context, similar to Arab and developing countries, employee development and training performed to upgrade employee performance [9]. PNA organizations employed these particular training practices that are more familiar in public sector organization [10] [11]. As well, similar to public sector organization PNA organizations, Palestinian Development Plan (PDP) was conducted to focus on the development of human capital. As a result, many training programs were established. With respect to training practices within the PNA organizations in 2010, the PNA organizations offered a public training diploma program. However, this program was proposed for those employees who have already demonstrated improvement.

## 2. Literature Review

Training is one of the major functions of human resources management in an organization. Training refers to the teaching and learning activities carried out for the primary purpose of helping members of an organization to acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and abilities and attitudes needed by that organization [12]. Training systems are considered as a systematic practice of attempting to develop skills for the current workforce. Based on such definitions, the main purpose of training is to acquire and improve knowledge, skills towards work.

Training is also considered an organizational tool for the employers to extract the required performance from the employees [13] [14]. The objective of training systems is to upgrade employees' skills to systematically develop employee effectiveness. Literature supports that training practices differ between organizations [8]. It is the organizational characteristics and job characteristics as well as the characteristics of employees [8] which can determine the training practices. Therefore, the organization must consider the most suitable training system for attaining employee competence and success, as well as analyzing and organizing

the training needs [5] [15].

Training and development is utilized to conduct better employee outcomes [14]. The basic structure for the assessing the training activities has come from [15] Kirkpatrick's (1976) model. Kirkpatrick's model is based on a number of levels of evaluation. These are identified as the Reaction Level, Learning Level, and Behavior Level. At the Reaction Level, the organization can measure the employee's attitude after the training course. The training evaluation is required to determine whether knowledge skills were learned during the training. At the Behavioral Level, the intention is to evaluate job performance. This performance evaluation is to specify the learner's skill [15] [16] [17].

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### 3. Importance of the Research

This study reports the influence of a training system on improving employee hard skills, and is to investigate the implementation of training system in public organizations.

The current study match between training literature and competence literature. Few models of training-outcomes distinguished employee several outcomes such as attitudes and competence. To address this gap, the current study distinguished these technical skills to achieve superior training-outcomes. However, these particular hard skills are the most applicable training-outcomes since the training system aimed to improve employee skills in general but the most valid is hard skills outcomes [2].

Insufficient experimental studies discover the effect of training variable practices in Palestinian context. To address this gap, this paper contact training variable as independent variable to achieve better employee skills in order to attain superior employee performance. Therefore, in order to overcome the low level of employee performance in the Palestinian organizations [18], Palestinian decision maker in public sector organization can recognize the effect of training system on individual hard skills. And identify the important of these hard skills to realize superior employee performance.

### 4. Conceptual Framework

Previous studies support the positive relationship between training system and employee competence [19], [20] recognized that the well-known method for attaining employee capability is through training and development. Furthermore, organizations acquire employees' competence as an outcome of training prac-

tices provided to the employees [21]. As [22] demonstrated that training practices positively affect work related ability. Additionally, [23] established the positive relationship between training practices and employee job related skills. [24] considered that the predictors of job related skills are beyond identifying relevant training system.

Based on the above literature, these hypotheses are generated:

*H: Training practice is significantly and positively related with employees' hard skills.*

Scholars have presented various conceptual frameworks to clarify the relationship between organization's human resource management systems and employee outcomes. However, the most relevant conceptual framework among these is human capital theory. Therefore, the current study utilized the human capital theory since the human capital theory argues that organizations with valuable human resource management will attain better levels of employee skills and abilities [25] [26]. Human capital theory considered training into two types; general training system and specific training system. General training system is any training that can be used for general purposes. Specific training is any training that can be used only for an organization; the content of the acquired skills is actual specific in nature [27].

## 5. Research Methodology

The sampling design used in the current study was the proportionate stratified sampling and according to [28], such sampling technique is more efficient as each main part of the population (ministry) is better represented, and more valuable and differentiated pieces of information about each group (ministry) are obtained. The employees were surveyed on their individual perceptions with regard to training practices and hard skills. Training practices was measured through 6 five-point Likert-scale items designed to assess organizational training system. The training scale was adopted from [13]. A 7 five point scale of hard skills was adopted from [29]. The study population consisted of 399 employees working in the PNA organizations. This population is appropriate for the study purposes because employees are reported to response the training practise questionnaire as well as skills level survey within PNA [2].

To insure the received responses were representative of the sample, a non-response bias test was conducted following the procedure suggested by [30]. In conducting factor analysis, this study followed the assumptions suggested by [30]. The present research employed the reliability analysis as a test for goodness of the instrument measure. ANOVA test was conducted to assess the extent of mean differences among the variables.

## 6. Results

SPSS software version 21 was used to analyses the direct and mediating relationship within the research framework.

**Table 1** indicated the mean for training practices ( $M = 3.50$ ;  $SD = 0.95$ ), hard skills ( $M = 3.92$ ;  $SD = 0.83$ ). **Table 2** proved that within PNA organizations the level of training practices, hard skills, are perceived to be above average.

The regression analysis the relationship between training practices and hard skills reveal that  $R^2 = 0.09$ ,  $F$  Change 5.874 ( $p < 0.001$ ), training  $\beta = 0.173$  ( $p < 0.01$ ). This result revealed that the hypothesis regarding training practices is significantly related with employees' hard skills is supported.

## 7. Finding

The research examined the importance of training system for employee hard skills. The result highlighted that there is significant relationship between training system and hard. The results of the study confirm that hard skills flow from training provided by the PNA organisations.

## 8. Conclusion

The results suggest that for PNA to support their organisation related problem, the solution lies in providing better training system to their employees. This means that when PNA undertake better training practice, benefit therein will help PNA organisations to update their employee hard skills which in turn help to improve organisation performance. When PNA organisations do not attend better training, their employee hard skills in work places stand to be low and of course this will result in low productivity. This finding is in agreement with [31] as well [22] findings which revealed that training system is a critical factor for predict employee skills abilities and outcomes.

## 9. Limitation and Future Research

Although the empirical findings of this study contribute to the existing literature, there is a need to develop more complex models that tie together HRM systems as a bundle and test their links and causal relationships to our particular hard skills variable. Also, there is a need to test the interaction effect of a moderating variable on the relationship between training and employee skills.

**Table 1.** Mean and standard deviation.

Variables	Mean	Sd
Training practices	3.50	0.95
Hard Skills	3.92	0.83

**Table 2.** The regression analysis for hard.

IV's	Hard skills		
	$\beta$	$\rho$	t
Training	0.173**	0.005	2.735

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## Appendix: Questionnaire Items

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### Training system

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- 1 My organization conducts extensive training programs for its employees in all aspects of quality.
  - 2 I normally go through training programs every year.
  - 3 In my organization, training needs are identified through a formal performance appraisal mechanism.
  - 4 In my organization, there are formal training programs to teach new colleagues the skills they need to perform their jobs.
  - 5 New knowledge and skills are imparted to me periodically to work in teams.
  - 6 In my organization, training needs identified are realistic, useful and based on my organization strategy.
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### Hard skills

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- 1 Computer literacy
  - 2 Technical expertise
  - 3 Organizational awareness
  - 4 Analytical thinking
  - 5 Personal planning and organizational skills
  - 6 Written communication
  - 7 Conceptual thinking
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