

The Degree of Satisfaction of Multicultural Non-Native Speakers of Arabic with a Training Program: A Case of Faculty Members

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ABSTRACT

This study aimed to identify the effectiveness of training on non-native speakers of Arabic at a university in Saudi Arabia from their point of view by determining the degree of their satisfaction in terms of four aspects: benefits of the offered training, trainers' performance, organizational effectiveness of the training program and the difficulties encountered by the trainees during training. The study examined whether there are differences in the averages of the trainees' responses according to the number of their previous training courses. The surveyed sample consisted of 29 trainees chosen by the intentional method. To pursue the aim of the study, both quantitative and qualitative designs were used. A questionnaire consisting of 24 items was developed and the descriptive analytical method was used. The results showed that the average responses of the trainees in the areas of the scale as a whole were high according to the statistical standards followed in the study with an arithmetic average of (3.88). The benefit and the organization aspects of the training course received an arithmetic average of (4.63), the trainer's performance came next with an average of (4.61). In the last place is the aspect of difficulties with an average of 1.67, which is at a weak level. The study also found that there are no significant differences between the trainees' responses to the first three aspects according to the number of previous training courses the trainees attended. However, there are statistically significant differences for the fourth aspect 'difficulties encountered by the trainees', as the value of (f) is (5.34). The study offers insights into the usefulness of holding such a training program for refining the skills of the trainees and enhancing their teaching strategies to create a better classroom environment.

Keywords: Degree of satisfaction, Training programs, Training evaluation, Faculty members.

INTRODUCTION

Training is a necessary and continuous process that one needs to enhance their skills and stay updated with the development in the concerned field. Training is an integrated process consisting of trainees, trainers, an appropriate curriculum, advanced training methods, a suitable environment and an organizing committee. Recent trends in training have emerged, which are compatible with the development of modern technology. Training has an effective impact on the profitability of humans and is necessary to maintain a highly efficient workforce, as it enhances trainees' skills, helps instill confidence in workers and improves the quality of work (Abu Sheikha & Khrawish, 2008; Suleiman, Ilyas, Amin, Ruth, & Rasheed, 2018). Institutions that do not pay attention to training or in which there is no continuous improvement of training programs are likely to encounter difficulties. There are frequent changes and updates which normally occur in the surrounding environments and require the institutions to reconsider the skill, knowledge and capabilities of its human resources to suit the new environmental requirements.

The relationship between training and the trainees' performance has been asserted in some studies (Abdul

Ghafoor, 2019; Lasasmah, 2021; Shaaban, Alimat, & Gibran, 2018). AbdulGhafoor (2019) studied the effects of training on the productivity and performance of the employees in the administrative sector of the Basic Education College in the Public Authority for Applied Education and Training in Kuwait. Lasasmah studied the impact of appropriate training programs on improving the employees' performance in

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Abdullah Bin Rawaha Municipality in Jordan. His study aimed at showing the relationship between identifying the training needs of employees and training and development methods that increase the actual performance the training seeks to achieve. The study also aimed at evaluating training to know the role of efficiency and design of training in achieving the training goals. In addition, Shaaban et al. aimed to identify the role of training the administrators in developing institutional work. A questionnaire was administered on the study population which consists of 567 administrative leaders. The results of all of these studies confirmed the importance and effectiveness of training in developing the employees' skills and performance.

In the academic context, Mahmoud (2018) aimed to demonstrate the effectiveness of a training program for professional development in raising the teaching competencies of Arabic language teachers teaching non-native speakers of Arabic. This study proved the effectiveness of the training on the trainees teaching skills.

It can be observed from the studies above that institutions are in need to evaluate the training programs they provide to their workers to determine their effectiveness. These studies have evaluated the training programs implemented on samples of employees in different institutions. The current study, however, attempts to evaluate the effectiveness of training program that targets a sample of lecturers who are non-native speakers of Arabic.

Evaluation of training is a comprehensive process aimed at diagnosing the reality of training to identify strengths and weaknesses and plan for treatment. Fadloun (2018) aimed to reveal the reality of the professional training of the administrative employees at the Algerian University, where the study tool was distributed to a sample of 64 administrative employees from all faculties of the university. Fadloun found that the university contributes to a medium degree in providing vocational training courses for its employees.

The main purpose of training evaluation is to determine the effectiveness of training programs and measure their impact on trainees in achieving the goals for which the trainees were trained. The evaluation process is one of the basic stages in building any training program and is an attempt to understand, clarify and reveal the extent to which the objectives of training programs have been achieved. A series of organized processes can be carried out by an external team to an organization to reveal the strengths and weaknesses in training programs (Leopold, 2002).

There are some studies which have been concerned with the evaluation methods of training programs. Jassim's (2021) study aimed to use a theoretical framework for the evaluation of the credibility of the implemented training programs by

measuring their outputs. A comprehensive theoretical survey was used for all aspects of the training. The results showed that the training process is comprehensive and serves the various functions, whether technical or administrative, in the organization wherein training was implemented. Another study by Lien, Yun, & Mclean (2007) aimed at identifying the training evaluation methods and practices in seven Taiwanese technology companies in China by comparing Kirkpatrick and Swanson models with regard to satisfaction, learning, and performance. The results of the study showed that the evaluation of training relied on Kirkpatrick model and focused on satisfaction and learning. Similarly, Badir & Nihayat (2011) applied a questionnaire that is based on Kirkpatrick model to a sample of 274 administrators who work in major local authorities in the southern governorates of the Arab Republic of Egypt. The results showed that training in these authorities was evaluated on the levels of reaction and learning to some extent, ignoring the levels of organizational behavior.

The present study would be useful in shedding light on the reality of the evaluation of a training program as a serious attempt to fill the deficiency in the literature in this field. The current study also displays some levels of evaluation of a training program in terms of evaluating the adequacy of trainers, the training material, the program organizing committee and the training environment.

Recognizing the importance and usefulness of evaluating training programs, the researchers of this study attempt to evaluate a training program offered by the Training Unit in the Deanship of Preparatory Year at the University of Hail in Saudi Arabia. This Training Unit sought to conduct studies to continuously evaluate training programs to find out their advantages, enhance their strengths and address their weaknesses. The trainees targeted in this study are non-native speakers of Arabic teaching English language skills to native speakers of Arabic. A training program has been implemented to help the trainees develop their teaching skills and strategies and confidently build a suitable learning environment. The offered training is a teaching assistant preparation program called 'shaping the way we teach English'. It focuses on equipping the trainees with some instructional strategies and skills to help them support their students and meet their needs. Since the trainee is the focus of training, the trainees' opinions about the reality of training have been considered in this study in order to promote and develop upcoming training programs.

Objectives and Questions of the Study

The current study seeks to achieve the following objectives:

1. to determine the degree of the trainees' satisfaction with the training program in terms of the benefits of the training, trainers' performance, organizational

- effectiveness and any difficulty the trainees encountered.
- To find out whether the trainees' opinions differ according to the number of previous training courses they have already had.

Accordingly, this study attempts to answer the following main question:

What is the effectiveness of the training program on non-Arabic speaking faculty members from their point of view? The following sub-questions are derived from this question:

- How satisfied are the trainees with the offered training program in terms of the benefits of training, the trainer's performance, organizational effectiveness and difficulties they encountered?
- Are there any differences in the averages of the trainees' responses based on the number of previous training courses the trainees attended?

METHOD

Research Design

To achieve the objectives of this study, both quantitative and qualitative designs were used. The quantitative design was implemented by calculating the arithmetic average, standard deviation, and Likert scale to answer the first question of the study. Moreover, a one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to answer the second question. The descriptive qualitative design was implemented by observing the training program and interviewing the trainees. The interview consisted of an open ended question asking the trainees about the benefits of the training and what it has added to them. The methodological limitation of this study is that the results are limited to the extent of the validity of the response of the study sample to the study tool.

Population and Sample

The study population consisted of 100 native and non-native speakers of Arabic (61 native and 29 non-native speakers). A sample of 29 trainees were selected intentionally because they are all non-Arabic speaking faculty members, who attend the offered training program at the training unit in the university of Hail. They are all males and have an academic rank of

lecturers. The study was conducted in the second semester of the academic year (2020-2021).

Data Collection Tools

The training unit at the Deanship of the Preparatory Year prepared a special questionnaire consisting of 24 items for the evaluation of the training program by surveying the trainees' opinions about four aspects: the benefits obtained from the training program, the trainer's performance, the organizational effectiveness of the training program and the difficulties the trainees encountered. The arithmetic average and standard deviation were calculated for the questionnaire items and for the entirety of the four aspects. The opinions and attitudes of the trainees were determined according to Likert scale, as shown in Table 1.

To verify the validity of the study tool, the questionnaire was presented to 10 professors in the field of management, planning and human development. They were requested to express their opinion on the suitability of the questionnaire items for the four aspects and for the study purpose. They were also encouraged to provide any other opinions they deem fit. They have unanimously agreed that the tool is valid to achieve the purpose of the study, with the need to make some modifications in some paragraphs.

The questionnaire had been tested for reliability by a group of experts before it was administered. A reliability test was conducted on the questionnaire's items which are distributed over four aspects with six items for each aspect. Table two below shows the reliability and validity values of the items, which were calculated using Cronbach's alpha. The values were all high approaching the value (1), which indicates the reliability and validity of the questionnaire significantly (Table 2).

Table 1: Likert Five Scale

<i>Weighted average</i>	<i>Level</i>
From (1.00) to (01.79)	Weak
From (01.08) to (02.59)	Satisfied
From (02.06) to (03.39)	Normal
From (03.04) to (04.19)	Agree
From (04.02) to (05.00)	Totally agree

Table 2: Questionnaire reliability test - Cronbach's alpha coefficientz4

<i>No</i>	<i>Field</i>	<i>Number of phrases</i>	<i>Reliability</i>	<i>Validity</i>
1	Trainee benefit from the training program	6	0.937	0.968
2	Performance of the trainers in the training program	6	0.949	0.974
3	Organizational effectiveness of the training program	6	0.979	0.989
4	Difficulties encountered by the trainees	6	0.993	0.996
	Total	24	0.911	0.954

Data Analysis

The data for the first question of the study is classified into four categories according to the four aspects given in this question, which are ‘the benefits of the offered training’, ‘the trainers’ performance’, ‘the organizational effectiveness of the training program’ and ‘the difficulties encountered by the trainees during training’. Arithmetic averages and standard deviations were extracted for each aspect, and the results of Likert scale were also stated. The data relevant to the second question was analyzed using ANOVA, as seen in the second section ‘evaluation based on number of courses.’ The (F) test and the (LSD) test were used to determine whether there are differences in the average of the trainees’ responses according to the number of previous training courses.

FINDINGS

The Trainees’ Satisfaction with the Training Program

The arithmetic average, standard deviation, and the result of Likert scale, related to the four aspects (benefits of the

course, trainers’ performance, organizational effectiveness and difficulties encountered by the trainees) were calculated and given in tables 3-6, respectively.

The table above shows that the arithmetic average of the trainees’ responses to the first aspect is equal to (04.63) with a standard deviation of (0.635). According to the five-point Likert scale, we note that the result of the trainees’ responses is “Totally agree”. These findings indicate that the trainees believe in the importance and usefulness of the training program and are satisfied with it.

This table shows that the arithmetic average of the trainees’ responses to the items of the second aspect (trainer’s performance) is (04.61) with a standard deviation of (0.588). According to the five-point Likert scale, the result of the trainees’ responses to the items of this aspect is “Totally Agree”, which indicates the satisfaction of the trainees.

It can be seen from the table above that the arithmetic average of the trainees’ responses to the items of the third aspect (organizational effectiveness) is equal to (04.63) with a standard deviation of (0.719). According to the Likert scale,

Table 3: Arithmetic average and standard deviation of the items related to the benefits of the training course

No	Statement	Arithmetic Average	standard deviation	Likert scale
1	The course helped me get the skills I needed in teaching.	04.67	0.694	Totally Agree
2	The course included new information and teaching skills.	04.57	0.817	Totally Agree
3	The course contributed to the development Of my scientific and intellectual skills.	04.56	0.783	Totally Agree
4	I gained useful ideas and information from the course.	04.65	0.623	Totally Agree
5	The course kept pace with scientific and Technical modernity.	04.54	0.866	Totally Agree
6	The course was very clear.	04.77	0.527	Totally Agree
7	The result of the first aspect	04.63	0.635	Totally Agree

Table 4: Arithmetic average and standard deviation of the items related to the trainer’s performance

No	Statement	Arithmetic Average	Standard deviation	Likert scale
1	The trainer presented the scientific material in a motivating manner.	04.62	0.614	Totally Agree
2	The presentation was sufficient and clear.	04.06	0.634	Totally Agree
3	The trainer interacts with the trainees and helps them.	04.62	0.661	Totally Agree
4	The trainer used a variety of methods in training.	04.52	0.701	Totally Agree
5	The trainer had the ability to communicate information and used body language for that.	04.64	0.628	Totally Agree
6	The trainer has adhered to the course topics and has the ability to manage time appropriately	04.61	0.707	Totally Agree
	The result of the second aspect	04.61	0.588	Totally Agree

the result of the trainees' responses to the items of this aspect is "Totally agree". These results indicate that the trainees are highly satisfied with the performance of the organizing committee and the level to which it is organized.

This table shows that the arithmetic average of the trainees' responses to the items of the fourth aspect is (01.67) with a standard deviation of (1.186). According to the Likert scale, the result of the trainees' responses to the items is "weak", which indicates that the trainees did not face any difficulties during this course.

Evaluation Based on Number of Courses

This section presents the results related to the second question relying on ANOVA. The null hypothesis (H0) was tested: the number of previous training courses for the trainees and the alternative hypothesis (Ha). The results showed that there are differences in the average responses according to the number of previous training courses. Table 7 shows a comparison of the averages through the (F) test.

It becomes clear from this table that there are no statistically significant differences for the first three aspects

given in the questionnaire according to the number of previous training courses. The significance values of the axes for these aspects are (0.623), (0.224) and (0.096), respectively and all of them are greater than (0.05). However, the table shows that there are statistically significant differences for the fourth aspect- difficulties encountered by the trainees based on their previous training courses, where the value of (P) was equal to (5.349) with a significant probability value of (0.002). To determine this difference, the LSD test was performed. Table 8 shows the result of this test.

The arithmetic mean difference is statistically significant at the significance level (0.05).

It is noted here that there are no statistically significant differences at the significance level (0.05) due to the number of courses- having one, two or three previous courses makes no difference.

The Pearson linear correlation coefficient was calculated between the four aspects of the questionnaire to determine the relationships that link them. Table 9 shows the Pearson linear correlation coefficient between these axes.

Table 5: Arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the items related to the organization of the course

No	Statement	Arithmetic Average	Standard deviation	Likert scale
1	The facilities were adequate.	04.64	0.756	Totally Agree
2	The projector served the objectives of the program.	04.66	0.739	Totally Agree
3	Support services were available (coffee at break time, toilets, photocopying of documents).	04.66	0.697	Totally Agree
4	The training rooms were suitable for training	04.06	0.776	Totally Agree
5	The course programs were clearly announced	04.56	0.818	Totally Agree
6	The organizing committee could effectively organizes the session	4.61	0.748	Totally Agree
The result of the third aspect		4.63	0.719	Totally Agree

Table 6: Arithmetic mean and standard deviation of the items related to the difficulties encountered by the trainee

No	Statement	Arithmetic Average	Standard deviation	Likert scale
1	I had a hard time mastering some skills.	01.07	1.229	weak
2	I had a hard time understanding some information.	01.68	1.216	weak
3	I had difficulty coordinating study on training course and training.	01.65	1.161	weak
4	I had a hard time dealing with the techniques used in the course.	01.67	1.201	weak
5	Absence of a supportive training environment for training.	01.66	1.235	weak
6	I had a hard time dealing with the trainer.	01.61	1.02	weak
The result of the fourth aspect		01.67	1.186	weak

Table 7: Results of the (F) test for the differences in the averages of the trainees' responses according to the number of the trainees' previous training courses

Questionnaire items	Number of previous training courses for the trainee	Arithmetic Average	Standard Deviation	(F) Value	Indication Level
Course Benefits	zero course	04.71	0.513	0.591	0.623
	One course	04.61	0.802		
	Two courses	04.68	0.05		
	Three courses or more	04.05	0.769		
Trainer performance	zero course	04.51	0.547	1.484	0.224
	One course	04.49	0.822		
	Two courses	04.79	0.298		
	Three courses or more	04.57	0.681		
Organizing the course	zero course	04.64	0.565	2.173	0.096
	One course	04.05	0.966		
	Two courses	04.87	0.284		
	Three courses or more	04.41	0.947		
Difficulties	zero course	01.25	0.666	5.349	0.002
	One course	01.26	0.814		
	Two courses	01.68	1.338		
	Three courses or more	02.34	1.361		

Table 8: Results of the (LSD) test to compare the different responses of the trainees to the fourth aspect items according to the number of training courses

Confidence Interval (95%)		Significance Level	Standard Deviation Error	Arithmetic Average Differences(J - I)	Training Courses Number(I)	Training Courses Number(I)
The highest rate	The lowest rate					
0.6762	-.7028-	0.97	0.34742	-.01329-	One Course	Zero Course
0.1504	-1.0125-	0.144	0.29297	-.43103-	Two Courses	
-.5002-	-1.6845-	0	0.29835	-1.09238-*	Three Courses or more	
0.7028	-.6762-	0.97	0.34742	0.01329	Zero Course	One Course
0.2718	-1.1073-	0.232	0.34742	-.41774-	Two Courses	
-.3805-	-1.7776-	0.003	0.35197	-1.07909-*	Three Courses or more	
1.0125	-.1504-	0.144	0.29297	0.43103	Zero Course	Two Courses
1.1073	-.2718-	0.232	0.34742	0.41774	One Course	
-.0692-	-1.2535-	0.029	0.29835	-.66135-*	Three Courses or more	
1.6845	0.5002	0	0.29835	1.09238*	Zero Course	Three Courses or more
1.7776	0.3805	0.003	0.35197	1.07909*	One Course	
1.2535	0.0692	0.029	0.29835	*.66135	Two Courses	

The arithmetic mean difference is statistically significant at the significance level (0.05).

Table 9: Pearson’s correlation coefficient between the four axes of the questionnaire.

		<i>Benefits of the course</i>	<i>Trainer performance</i>	<i>Organizing the course</i>	<i>Difficulties</i>
The Course Benefits	Pearson significant correlation Coefficient	01.00	.684**	.550**	-.072-
	N	101	0 101	0 101	0.475 101
Trainer performance	Pearson significant correlation Coefficient	.684**	01.00	.744**	-.055-
	N	0 101	101	0 101	0.582 101
Organizing the course	Pearson significant correlation Coefficient	.550**	.744**	01.00	-.126-
	N	0 101	0 101	101	0.208 101
Difficulties	Pearson significant correlation Coefficient	-.072-	-.055-	-.126-	01.00
	N	0.475 101	0.582 101	0.208 101	101

** The correlation is statistically significant at the 0.01 (two-tailed) significance level.

It can be noted from the table above that there is a direct correlation between the benefits of the course and each of the course organization and the trainer’s performance, and the correlation in both cases is statistically significant at the significance level of 0.01 (two-tailed) while there is an inverse correlation between the difficulties encountered by the trainees and the other aspects: the benefits of the course, the performance of the trainer and the organization of the course.

Findings from the Interview and Observation

From the previous presentation, it is clear that the trainees are satisfied with the training program they attended. The trainees in the interview confirmed that they have added new information and knowledge and acquired new teaching skills. The interview also revealed that the trainees were satisfied with the information they had obtained about the training program before their attendance. They reported that the objectives of the training program were clear to them, the timing of the program was appropriate and the time period was adequate to acquire necessary skills. It was also shown through the observation form that the trainers and trainees are committed to attending on time and that there is a positive relationship between them.

DISCUSSION

This study attempts to answer two questions. The first is ‘How satisfied are the trainees with the offered training program in terms of the benefits of training, the trainer’s performance,

organizational effectiveness and difficulties they encountered? The second question is ‘Are there any differences in the averages of the trainees’ responses based on the number of previous training courses the trainees attended?’ As for the first aspect of the first question ‘the benefits of training’, the findings showed that the trainees benefited from the training. This aspect covers six items. The sixth item “The course was very clear” ranked first, with an arithmetic average of (04.77) and a standard deviation of (0.527). The researchers attribute this to the prior announcement of the training program and the clarity of its objectives and training content, in addition to the fact that the organizer gave attention to the trainees’ opinions about their needs for training from the beginning of the academic year.

The trainees responses to the items of the second aspect ‘the trainer’s performance’ reflects their satisfaction. This can be attributed to the fact that those trainers have courses and long experience in training, which qualified them to be certified trainers. This justification is supported by Mustafa, Omar, Alnair, Gesmalla, Ahmed, Elemam et al. (2022), who asserted that the trainers’ teaching methods and skills were improved as a result of the training course the trainers had attended.

Regarding the third aspect ‘organization of the training course,’ the trainees are satisfied with the organization of the course. Such satisfaction can be explained in terms of the availability of a budget provided by the university to the training unit to support training courses. Also, the university has equipped the halls with the latest equipment and inspected the training halls before each session. The organizing

committee is also keen to provide hospitality through an agreement with a catering company. This third aspect covers important factors leading to better training outcomes, such as facilities, support services and training rooms, which form the training environment and would contribute to the effectiveness of training (Hajjar & Alkhanaizi, 2018).

The trainees' responses to the fourth aspect 'difficulties encountered by the trainees' revealed that the trainees did not face any difficulty during training. The researchers attribute the absence of difficulties and challenges to the fact that those in charge of the training have secured a suitable environment and qualified trainers to achieve the objectives of the training program. The organizers of this training program seem to believe in the importance of providing resources to realize the objectives of training. Giday and Elantheraiyan (2023) showed that the availability of resources is an important factor influencing the employees' performance, and the shortage of which imposes challenges.

The responses to the second question of the study showed that there are no statistically significant differences for the first three aspects. It is also noted that there are no statistically significant differences for the fourth aspect at the significance level (0.05) due to the number of courses. This can be attributed to the specificity of the training program and that the place where training was conducted does not have any relation with any course the trainees already took, in addition to the fact that the trainees did not receive any previous training related to the skills and strategies that the program focused on.

CONCLUSION

The results of the study have shown the trainees satisfaction with the offered training program, which appears to reflect some advantages. The program seems to refine the skills of the trainees at the Deanship of the Preparatory Year, which would be reflected on their performance with the students. The trainees obtained more theoretical and practical knowledge, especially in teaching strategies. Attending such training courses would create an interactive environment wherein qualified trainers and trainees exchange common experiences and feedback, which in its turn would enhance their competences and enrich the training courses. Consequently, trainees would reflect their experiences on classroom environments and would be encouraged to recommend and attend more training courses. This conclusion goes in line with Lasasmah (2021) and Mahmoud (2018), who assert the effectiveness of training in raising the trainees' levels of performance and productivity and acquiring new methods related to their field work.

RECOMMENDATIONS

According to the study results, the researchers recommend to pay attention to field visits related to the training program and to new skills and focus on them in upcoming training courses to create future leaders. The researchers also recommend to interact with the trainees enrolled in the training programs, discuss the problems they face during training, try to solve them through a special department and listen to their opinions and suggestion. The researchers encourage the training supervisors to prepare a comprehensive and clear training plan, which includes an analysis of the actual training needs of the trainees and link them to the work needs. This study suggests that the training period should be carefully planned to allow discussion, practical training and using a variety of methods suitable for the preparation of future leaders.

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