

# Influence of Employee Training and Satisfaction on Organisational Performance at Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority, Takoradi

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## ABSTRACT

The study examined training of employees and its effect on organisational performance, focusing on Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA), Takoradi. Cross sectional survey design was used. The study used the census method to capture all the 285 permanent employees of GPHA – Takoradi. However, 264 respondents were those that returned completed questionnaires as expected, which was used for the analysis. Questionnaire with a Cronbach alpha reliability co-efficient of .811 was the instrument used to collect the data. The data was analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The results show that permanent staff view employee training as an effective tool for both their personal and organisational success. It also boosts their satisfaction in the work and the organisation's performance as a whole. It is, therefore, recommended that management should organise biennial in-service training programmes in the form of workshop for employees to update employees' competencies and to ensure that maximum efficiency exist in GPHA–Takoradi.

**Keywords:** Organisational performance, training design, on the job training and delivery style

## INTRODUCTION

Employee training often plays a significant part in achieving an organisational objective by fusing the workforce's and the organisation's interests. Because it promotes the productivity and effectiveness of individuals and the company, training is currently the most crucial aspect in the corporate sector (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021). There are several variables that affect an employee's performance. However, employee performance is most heavily influenced by training. According to Ismael et al. (2021), training is crucial to boosting an employee's capabilities. Because of the increased abilities and competences brought about by greater work experience, people with more on-the-job training perform better (Satomi, Abba & Bukar, 2023).

The return on investment is impacted by training as well. This is so because human resource capital of a company plays a significant role in growth and organisational success, organisational performance is dependent on employee performance. Therefore, training is provided to organisation employees in an effort to increase both organisational performance and employee performance. According to Mohammed Said, Abdul Halim, Abdul Manaf and Adenan (2022), employee performance is considerably increased through training and development (TD). This makes TD a crucial activity that aids in boosting both employee and organisational performance (Satomi et al., 2023; Shanmugathasan & Thirunavukkarasu, 2023).

According to the majority of researches (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021; Ismael et al., 2021; Mohammed Said et al., 2022; Satomi et al., 2023), training improves or develops management abilities and also improves organisational performance in general. Despite emphasising effectiveness and cost reduction, firms should

invest more on training. Despite emphasising effectiveness and cost management, firms should spend more on training since these programmes help staff become more successful and efficient (Armstrong, 2012; Mark & Gryphon, 2013). This makes it obvious that TD is the crucial element. Employee development and self-fulfilling skills and abilities are encouraged by training (Bibi et al. (2018); Thomas, 2011; Baum & Devine, 2012; Seamen & Eves, 2013; Flynn, Schroeder & Sakakibara, 2013). Employee development also reduces operational costs and limits organisational liabilities.

Recently, there seems to have been a lot of interest in the activities of Ghana Ports and Harbours Authority (GPHA). This is as a result of the current significant developments, difficulties, and shortening of business cycles in the shipping industry as well as other port services (Laing, 2019; GPHA, 2022; Shanmugathan & Thirunavukkarasu, 2023). Since the implementation of the free zone agreement and other agreements in the sub-regions and those with the World Trade Organisation (WTO), which have a common effective preferential tariff on the activities of the organisation, it is necessary to strengthen GPHA from a variety of viewpoints such as technological, employee skills, and government support.

The GPHA will be succumbed to face drastic competition if care is not taken to eliminate or narrow the challenges caused by these agreements and the competitions from the enamouring countries (GPHA, 2022). In Ghana, TD of employees is practised by many organisations, including those in the public sector, and departments, units, and sectors are in responsibility of training and development. One of these groups, the GPHA, has been using TD ever since it was founded and especially during the past ten years (GPHA, 2022).

However, it appears that training at GPHA has been haphazard, unplanned, and unsystematic for some time now, and many of its employees, including machine operators, junior and middle level engineers, accounts clerks, computer operators, secretaries, drivers, and many other categories of workers, have not been eligible for any kind of training or a systemic process of staff development (Sung & Choi, 2018; Osiesi et al., 2022). Most public organisations in Ghana, including GPHA, seem to views the cost associated with the purchase and upkeep of machinery and equipment as more important than the cost associated with the TD of its employees (Laing, 2019; GPHA, 2022; Satomi et al., 2023).

Employees who are not provided with tuition reimbursement by GPHA management pay for their own continuing education in order to get professional or higher-level qualifications. Anecdotal reports and other information suggest that GPHA employees who show a desire to seek higher education do not get any financial aid, such as paid study leave (Laing, 2019; GPHA, 2022). Their requests for study leaves are denied. Persistent individuals are urged to resign. The management says that those who enrol in part-time programmes are disenchanted after completing their studies since their degrees are not applicable to the workplace. The few people that are kept do not receive promotions that reflect their increased skills and abilities. This is said to have contributed to the organisation's excessive labour turnover.

The study organisation (GPHA) is generally seen as being less competitive and finding it challenging to control the market in the sub-region (Laing, 2019; GPHA, 2022); as a result, GPHA must be strengthened from a variety of angles, including technical, employee skills, and development. According to GPHA (2022), GPHA personnel are less informed, less skilled, and unable to compete with large firms in the industry. Therefore, in order for GPHA to achieve a competitive edge and improve its performance, staff training is required.

## **Objectives of the Study**

The main objective of the study is to examine employee training and its effect on organisational performance. The specific objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine employee views on training design, on the job training and delivery style.

2. Examine the effect of training design, on-the-job training and delivery style on organisational performance.

### Significance of the Study

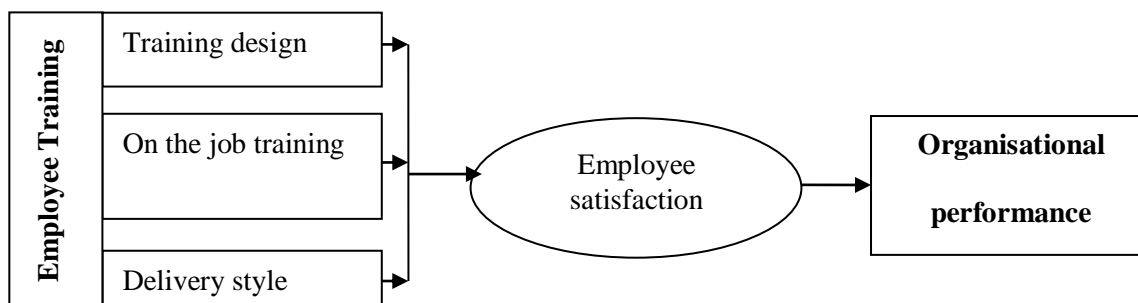
This study finally will answer the relationship between GPHA’s investment in employees’ training and the organisation’s performance. The study will also answer the relationship among training design, on the job training, delivery style and organisational performance. Bibi, Ahmad and Majid (2018) highlighted that the commitment of employers to invest in workplace learning for their employee is important for the performance of a company. The bigger the investment, the more resources are allocated to develop the skill of employees. Bibi et al. (2018) further pointed out that the development of firm’s human resource policies is critical to long-term success of GPHA. These human resource policies cover a wide range of human resource development functions. One of the functions is related to the employees’ training and development. As a result, this study can be used as a guideline to GPHA to expand its business and compete with other organisations in the sub-region. By knowing the effect of employees’ training programme on the performance of organisation, the management is able to make the necessary adjustment to the training contents and supporting facilities to further improve the training programme. Finally, it is to aid management of GPHA to introduce modern schemes for training and development, to be able to meet the challenges of change in the future.

### Conceptual Framework

Employee training in GPHA is classified into three thematic areas: training design, on the job training and delivery style. The general argument is that, these three thematic areas when put in place, used and implemented effectively on employees, they will influence employee training positively in the organisation. This will in turn lead to high organisational performance as depicted in Figure 1.

However, this influence is not direct as it seems, and that the influence of employee training on organisational performance becomes more potent when employees are satisfied with the various forms of training that employees are exposed to. In other words, if GPHA are able to adopt or adapt appropriate training design, training employees on the job appropriately and are able to design and use appropriate and effective delivery style in training its employees, the organisation is likely to achieve effective employee training which will in turn lead to employee satisfaction.

Figure 1: Conceptual framework on the effect of employee training on organisational performance



Source: Author’s construct, 2023.

Training of employees based on these three thematic areas will increase employees’ satisfaction and also employee performance and in the long run increase the organisational performance. This means that organisations with training design, on the job training, and delivery style will have effective and efficient employee training which will boost employee satisfaction. This will in turn leads to increase in organisational performance in the long run.

## RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The research design used was cross sectional survey design. The target population for the study was all the 927 permanent employees of GPHA, Takoradi. Specifically, 21 of the permanent employees were management staff, 113 senior staff while 793 were junior staff (GPHA, 2022). The study used the census method to capture all the 285 permanent employees of GPHA – Takoradi. The census method was used because the study employees are perceived to be dynamic with different mandates, and also relatively small.

The main instrument used in gathering data for the research was questionnaire. In finding the reliability of the instrument, it was pre-tested on a sample of 65 at GPHA, Tema. The number of respondents used for the pre-test was sufficient to include any major variations in the population as confirmed by Ary et al. (2006) that for most case studies using questionnaires, a range of five to ten percent, of the sample size, for pre-test is sufficient. These employees of the GPHA, Tema were selected because they share similar characteristics as those in Takoradi. The employees of GPHA, Tema were also selected due to their closeness and easy accessibility to the researcher. The Cronbach alpha of the instrument generated was .811, which was deemed appropriate.

Prior to the administration of the questionnaire, an informal familiarisation visit was made to the study institution that is GPHA, Takoradi for the confirmation of the number of permanent employees in the institution and to seek for more information concerning the institution. The heads of the various departments were written to for permission to carry out the study in their respective departments. The questionnaires were self-administered, but with some support from the heads and some senior staff of the departments. Other questionnaires were sent to the respondents through an e-mail and they were able to answer and send back to the researcher through the same means. Out of the 285 questionnaires distributed, 264 provided completed questionnaires. However, the remaining questionnaires were given back uncompleted. This resulted in 92.6 per cent response rate. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used for analysing the data collected.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

### Employees view on training design, on the job training and delivery style

The first substantive objective of the study was to ascertain how positively or negatively employees view the training design, on the job training and training delivery style of the various training programmes available to them and also on those that they have participated before. These three main variables are what constitute employee training in this study. Multiple items were used to elicit data on each of the major variables which were later pooled together to form each main variable. These items were measured with five-point scales ranging from strongly agree to strongly disagree such that one represents the least agreement to the issues while five represents the strongest agreement to the issues. After the pooling process, descriptive statistics such as mean, median, standard deviation and skewness were used to tackle the first specific objective of the study. The results are presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Employees' View on Training Design, On-The-Job Training and Delivery Style

Variables	Mean	Median	Std. Dev.	Skewness
On the job training	3.421	3.000	0.666	0.537
Training design	3.401	3.000	0.703	-0.260
Delivery style	2.895	2.000	0.744	0.474

Source: Field work, 2014. Where Std. Dev. = Standard Deviation (N = 264)

As depicted in Table 1, respondents viewed both on the job training (Mean = 3.421, Std. Dev. = 0.666) and

training design (Mean = 3.401, Std. Dev. = .703) in positive terms. However, respondents viewed on the job training more positively than training design. In relation to training design, the results mean that most of the permanent employees of GPHA – Takoradi agreed that the various TD policy in GPHA – Takoradi is applicable to all employees, and that the equipment used in training employees is similar to the equipment found on the job. Similarly, the results mean that employees who used their on the job are given preference for new assignments. In all, it is clear that GPHA has full-fledged TD department manned with competent professionals.

The views of the respondents are consistent with the comments of Laing (2019) who aver that the kind of training designed by organisations is very important and that organisations adopt training packages depending on the main objectives of the organisation and the training itself. Mohammed Said et al. (2022) further posit that companies should have different policies for training depending on the class or level of employment or level of employees to be trained, because training policies are necessary to provide guidelines for those responsible for planning and implementing training, ensure that a company's training resources are allocated to pre-determined requirements, provide for equality of opportunity for training throughout the company, and inform employees of TD opportunities. The findings further support the assertions of Satomi et al. (2023) who asserted that training design and policies of organisations are expressions of the training philosophy of the organisation, and that training policy and design are imperative to indicate the degree of importance the organisation attaches to training. This will if not eliminate entirely, reduce the laissez-faire approach to training. This creates room for the organisation to use equipment that is found on the job in training employees and also being manned with competent professionals.

The results on employees view on the GPHA – Takoradi's on the job training method is also view as relatively simple and less costly to operate as compare to other methods. Meaning, the training places use by the authority and the employee in actual work situations makes the workforce to be immediately productive. The views of the respondents also show that there is a close collaboration between trainer and learner in the organisation.

At GPHA–Takoradi, management in most cases use the learning by doing method to teach new skills and methods to employees. The authority creates room for new employees or employees under training to observe a senior experienced worker and learns what to do. This method allows them to try and test new method in order to fit the requirements of the authority. However, in most cases, senior worker of the authority is not usually trained in the skills and methods of training therefore it can be a process that may be time consuming as a new comer struggles to cope with the senior worker's explanations. The far more successful is to use a senior or experienced worker who has been trained in instruction or training method and whose teaching skills are coordinated with a developed programme linked to off- the- job courses.

The views of the respondents and the manager relatively are incongruent with the submissions of Sung and Choi (2018) who posit that on-the-job method of training has a setback. According to Satomi et al. (2023), although employees learn doing the job, their productivity tends to be low because they do not have the skills and knowledge needed to be effective and efficient. In an on-the-job training method, the emphasis is more on the acquisition of specific, local knowledge in a real situation. Unlike on-the-job method, off-the-job method emphasises developing an understanding of general principles providing background knowledge and generating an awareness of comparative ideas and practices.

With regard to delivery style, respondents viewed it negatively (Mean = 2.895, SD = .744). In other words, they disagreed with it. The views of the respondents mean that supervisors do not tell employees whether they are doing their job as per the training imparted or not, and also GPHA do not link TD with the authority's business strategy. Similarly, respondents disagreed that employees are motivated to learn the concepts that will be covered in the training programme, the subject matter of the training programme is in line with the job, and the programme delivery method is appropriate. Lastly, they disagreed that the quality of the instructors of the programme is standard and that there is opportunity for interaction with other



participants of the programme.

The findings are not consistent with the comment of Laing (2019) who asserts that training is necessary to ensure an adequate supply of staff that is technically and socially competent and capable of career development into specialist departments or management positions. This can be achieved through effective delivery style during training. Delivery style during training should be viewed therefore as an integral part of the process of total quality management. Similarly, the views of the respondents are not in line with the comments of Ismael et al. (2021) who posits that to ensure high competent employees, organisations must ensure that there is effective delivery style during the training process. High competence creates a positive attitude towards learning and development. Through effective delivery style, employees will be motivated to hear, understand and respond to management’s communication relating to the training and organisation of work.

**Effect of training design, on the job training and delivery style on organisational performance**

The last objective of the study assessed the effect of training design, on the job training and delivery style on organisational performance. However, employees’ satisfaction in their job was treated as mediating variable to see its effect on the dependent variables. The measurement and derivation of the individual variables have been discussed earlier. First, training design, on the job training and delivery style were used as the independent variables while employees’ satisfaction and organisational performance were treated as mediating and dependent variables respectively. The study argues that the independent variables influence or contribute to the dependent variable in GPHA – Takoradi. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Effect of Training Design, On-The-Job Training and Delivery Style on Organisational Performance

Variables	Model One			Model Two		
	Beta	SE	Sig.	Beta	SE	Sig.
Training design	0.234*	0.061	0.024	0.049	0.051	0.078
On the job training	0.341**	0.032	0.000	0.335**	0.031	0.000
Delivery style	0.195**	0.083	0.003	0.109*	0.054	0.031
Employees’ satisfaction				0.469**	0.042	0.000
Constant	2.175			1.405		
R	0.625			0.802		
R <sup>2</sup>	0.481			0.672		
Adjusted R <sup>2</sup>	0.463			0.564		

Source: Fieldwork, 2014. \*\*p<0.01 \*p<0.05 (n = 264)

Where the dependent variable = Organisational performance and SE = standard error

As contained in Table 2, the first model shows that training design, on the job training and delivery style were entered as independent variables with organisational performance operating as dependent variable. The results as shown in Table 3 indicate that the standardised beta co-efficient for all the independent variables were statistically significant. The most significant independent variable was on the job training (Beta =0.341 (0.032), p = 0.000), followed by training design (Beta = 0.234 (0.061), p = 0.024) and delivery style (Beta = 0.195 (0.083), p = 0.003) respectively. This means that training design, on the job training and delivery styles do contribute to organisational performance significantly. In addition, the unique proportional contribution of the three variables to organisational performance in GPHA – Takoradi was 0.481 with an adjusted R<sup>2</sup> of 0.463.

This means that the more GPHA – Takoradi has a TD policy applicable to all employees, ensuring that the

equipment used in training is similar to the equipment found on the job, and also having full-fledged TD department manned with competent professionals; the higher would GPHA – Takoradi increase its market share in the sub-region, quality services delivered, effectiveness in achieving its mission, purpose or goals, and optimal use of its resources. This would further ensure that GPHA – Takoradi would become financially viable and relevant to its stakeholders and their changing needs.

The finding that on the job training has a positive influence on organisational performance means that if GPHA – Takoradi encourages its trained employees to share what they have learned with other employees, creates room for trained employees to use what they have learned on their current job, ensuring that resources are available on the job to support what employees learned in training, giving room for trained employees to try-out their training on the job immediately, and helping employees set realistic goals for performing their work as a result of their training; there will be a corresponding increase in the return on investment and market share of GPHA – Takoradi in the sub-region. This would further boost the authority's ability in achieving its mission, purpose or goals.

Also, the result means that with effective supervisor-employee relations, efficient link of TD with the organisation's business strategy, motivation of employees, ensuring that the subject matter of the training programme is in line with employee's job, programme delivery method is appropriate, the quality of the instructors of the programme is standard, and also there is opportunity for interaction with other participants of the programme; there will be a corresponding moderate increase in organisational performance as a whole in terms of human resource, technical and financial (Shanmugathan & Thirunavukkarasu, 2023).

The findings corroborate with the assertions of Anwar and Abdullah (2021) who posit that the quality of employees and their development through training are major factors in determining long-term profitability and optimum performance of organisations. To hire and keep quality employees, it is good policy to invest in the development of their skills, knowledge and abilities so that individual and ultimately organisational productivity can increase. Traditionally, training is given to new employees only. This is a mistake as on-going training for existing employees helps them adjust rapidly to changing job requirements. Ismael et al. (2021) also asserted that training of employees help in altering the behaviour and or attitudes of employees in a direction to increase the achievement of organisational goals systematically. This means for any organisation to succeed in achieving the objectives of its training program, the design and implementation must be planned and systematic, tailored towards enhancing performance and productivity.

In the second model, as presented in Table 2, the mediating variable which was employees' satisfaction was entered into the equation. The theory here is that employees training which is determine by the three independent variables in themselves do not necessarily contribute to organisational performance strongly, and that they do so through employees' satisfaction. When the employees' satisfaction variable was entered into the equation, the beta co-efficient of employee training variables shrank and also became statistically non-significant. Training design lost its significance nature. Also, on the job training and delivery style beta co-efficients shrank from 0.341 to 0.335 and 0.195 to 0.109 respectively. The percentage shrinkages of on the job training and delivery style were 1.8 percent and 44.1 percent respectively.

The resultant shrinkage, increments and non-significance mean is that employee training variables do not directly influence organisational performance in GPHA – Takoradi. They do so only when employees satisfied with their work in the organisation as a result of the various TD policies and programmes available or given to them. In other words, they do so when employees' satisfaction is present. However, it is important to observe that the unique proportional contribution of training design, on the job training, delivery style and employees' satisfaction as a mediating variable to the dependent variable was 0.672 with an adjusted  $R^2$  of 0.564. This means that employee training and employees' satisfaction were able to contribute, predict or explain about 67 per cent of the variances in GPHA – Takoradi performance. It therefore means that besides these main variables identified, other variables not yet in the second model have a chance of contributing or predicting about 33 percent to GPHA – Takoradi's performance.

The significant increase with regard to the unique proportional contribution of the independent and mediating variables on the dependent variable mean that when employees are trained they are likely to be satisfied with their work in the organisation which will in turn influence them to work hard as expected. This situation in the long run will help in boosting the organisation's performance significantly. The finding suggests that employee training without employees' satisfaction in both the training and their work will have any significant effect on the organisation's performance.

The findings support that of Mohammed Said et al. (2022) whose study in America on the impact of human capital investments such as employer – provided training and development, indicated that employer – provided TD raises subjective productivity and performance measure by almost 16 per cent. They added that the returns on TD investments increase productivity by 16 percent. However, this impact becomes more significant when employees are satisfied with the various training policies and programmes and also with their work in the organisation. Training is, therefore, a key element for improved organisational performance; it increases the level of individual and organisational competences (Shanmugathan & Thirunavukkarasu, 2023). It helps to reconcile the gap between what should happen and what is happening, between desired targets or standards and actual levels of work performance.

Although, many employers continue to have reservations about the cost and extent of tangible business returns from training, the development of skills has been identified as a key factor in sharpening competitiveness. Osiesi et al. (2022) asserted that the economic and technological trends, the pace of innovation, change and development are growing faster year-by-year and as a result, provide clear signals that TD are so relevant that both organisations and individual stakeholders must give a serious attention to.

## CONCLUSIONS

Based on the findings of the study it can be concluded that training of employees has positive effect on organisational performance. Discussion of all the results proves that employee training has significant effect on the organisational performance. Specifically, it was found out that training design, on the job training, delivery style and employees' satisfaction have significant effect on the organisational performance. All these variables improve organisational performance of GPHA–Takoradi. Therefore, all organisations, especially GPHA–Takoradi can increase its performance through employee training in the form of designing effective and appropriate training packages, creating room for appropriate on the job training and also ensuring that efficient and appropriate delivery styles are adopted by instructors and supervisor of training.

Therefore, GPHA – Takoradi must take action to correct its TD activities, and make sure the processes involved are duly followed. The findings of this research indicated that GPHA's nature of work depends mainly on high technological and sophisticated equipment. This makes continuous TD of its human resource crucial and vital, taking into consideration the rapid technological advancement. Again, GPHA–Takoradi can strengthen its well-established policy on employee training to invest in the TD of employees. This will help the authority to duly follow the processes involved in training of employees in GPHA–Takoradi.

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