

UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

EMPLOYEE TRAINING AND PRODUCTIVITY:
A CASE STUDY OF WEST AFRICAN MILLS COMPANY LIMITED
(WAMCO)

BY

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

I hereby declare that this dissertation is the result of my own original research and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Signature..... Date

Name:

Supervisor's Declaration

I hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of this dissertation laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Supervisor's Signature..... Date.....

Name:

ABSTRACT

The quality of the human resource of an organization is essential to its success. As such, every organization must seek to improve the quality of its workforce through training. Training has a direct impact on the performance of employees hence improving the company's output and productivity. Therefore this study sought to analyse how employee training programs influence performance of West African Mills Company Limited. Data was derived through questionnaires administered to sampled employees of West African Mills Company Limited.

The results revealed that West African Mills Company Limited had various comprehensive (planned and systematic) in house training programs for different departments of the company to help improve both individual and organizational performance. Almost all employees without respect to educational background had benefited from in house training program. Training for supervisors was more frequent than subordinates. Also employees preferred on job training more than other forms of training schemes implemented by WAMCO. Lastly supervisors confirmed that training always improved performance and efficiency of their subordinates; hence productivity.

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DEDICATION

I dedicate this report to my parents, siblings and loved ones who have been of great support.

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the study

Training is defined as a systematic process of acquiring knowledge, skills, abilities, and the right attitudes and behaviours to meet job requirements (Gomez-Mejia, Haynes, Núñez-Nickel, Jacobson, & Moyano-Fuentes, 2007). In ancient cultures the apprentice system was practiced as unskilled workers learn from their master craft-men. The apprentice system was then transformed into vocational education (Allmendinger, 1989). Training has become an inevitable activity in since the dawn of the industrial revolution. As most individuals, companies, organizations and countries realized its importance and embarked on training programs for employees to be more competitive or skilful in the global market (Kefela, 2010).

It is evident that to achieve any task or goal, training programs relating to that area is required. Stone (2002) asserts that training has a clearly noticeable role in the achievement of an organization's goal by incorporating the interest of organization and the workforce. Also, Partlow (1996) claims that trained employees perform well as compared to untrained employees. The core competence of an employee is very important to the performance of the company. Employees need to be trained to improve their abilities. Employees have different skills and abilities and also come from different backgrounds with different attitudes towards work.

Companies can build a strong team by bringing together all these skills, which is possible through training (Maznevski & DiStefano, 2000). Performance emerges when goals and resources are effectively and efficiently used. Training gives many benefits to the individual, organization and the country as a whole but as said by Cole (2002) the degree of training that is given to employees depends on how management view training as a motivating factor.

Inspite of all the advantages of training, not all companies are able to undertake such programs for their employees. Companies who are in the primary production sector tend not to have adequate training programs and facilities to their workers (Bailey, & Waldinger, 2010). This has been the case for some companies in the cocoa processing industry. The main reasons has been attributed to limited revenue, cost of training, time constraints, high rate of employee layoffs and ability to have tailored made training programs for their workers.

Statement of the problem

West African Mills Company Limited is a cocoa processing company in the Western Region of Ghana. The company has a sole aim of reducing export of raw cocoa beans to semi-finished processed goods. In order to achieve this goal the company has a well organised Human Resource Department which deals with employment, welfare and undertake employee training programs to enhance productivity.

Unfortunately, Human Resource Department are besieged by several challenges in the organisation of training programs for employees because of the

various sections and departments within the organisation. These sectors or sections include the transport/haulage, storage, processing, and packaging of processed cocoa beans. This presents the Human Resource Department with a great challenge of identifying the specific training needs of the various departments. Also educational levels of the employees in even specific departments differ has it hinders the ability of Human Resource Department to develop training materials considering these educational challenges.

West African Mills Company Limited knowing the importance of training has undertaken some programs for employees such as safety training for drivers and operators of machineries and equipment's. The issue has to do with the frequency of these training programs by the company. The company per its human resource strategy has schedule a training program at the end of every quarter within a year. Unfortunately this hardly adhered to as the company in recent times are faced with numerous financial problems. Financial ability of the company to undertake constant training programs have reduced as revenue and profits has dwindle because of government policies which force them to buy cocoa at international prices within the country. Also the cedis depreciation has contributed to limited revenue making the company cut down on training programs to reduce cost of operation.

Lastly, the ability to easily evaluate the impact of training programs on productivity had been one of the reasons the company had relented on consistently embarking on training programs. This is because some supervisors and management members had argue that performance of some trained employees had

not been encouraging. This issue demands a research into these assertions to understand whether there is any effect of training on employee productivity. Also is essential to understand the type of training being offered as not all training has a direct influence on productivity if it's not tailored made to the specific need of the employee.

Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to evaluate training programmes for employees at West African Mills Company Limited (WAMCO).

Specific objectives are to:

1. Analyze the training policies in operation at WAMCO;
2. Assess the training practices and processes of monitoring and evaluation of training needs of employees at WAMCO;
3. Assess the effect of training designs on employee productivity at WAMCO.

Research questions

1. What is the purpose of training programmes at WAMCO?
2. What are the training policies and practices in use at WAMCO?
3. To what extent does training programmes affect employee productivity at WAMCO?

Significance of the study

The study can help firms understand the importance of training programs. It will also enable them structure their training programs to make them more effective in terms of helping to improve the efficiency of the workforce which leads to better performance. This also ensures the existence of a pool of skilled workforce who could be utilized for national development. Labour is a major input to the success of the company.

If labour is efficient it will help improve productivity. As companies perform better they are able to increase output and contribute more to the economy. They are also able to grow and hire more people thus helping to decrease the level of unemployment. As companies perform better, they are also able to compete better enabling the economy to remain vibrant. This work will help to explore the best training methods and processes available to optimize productivity.

It will also help identify the lapses in the training management systems used by WAMCO. Employees are investment centres and not cost centres and they are tools through which organizations can achieve their goals and targets. This will therefore enable the company derive optimum results from its employees by improving upon training management systems.

Limitations of the study

This study, which intends to assess the impact of training on employee performance, is limited to just West African Mills Company Limited .The

research was supposed to cover many manufacturing companies in Ghana but because of resources the researcher had to limit it to one that is WAMCO hence there was no comparison with other manufacturing companies. Operations came to a halt from the beginning of the year till now so the researcher had to go an extra mile with data collection since some workers felt reluctant in providing the needed information. With this the researcher assured them of confidentiality.

Organization of the study

Chapter One comprises the introduction to the study. This chapter deals with the background, the problem statement, research questions objectives of the study significance of the study and the limitations of the study. Chapter Two presents on relevant and related literature concerning this study. The literature reviewed entailed the definition of concepts, importance of training programs, and theoretical framework adopted in this study.

The methodology employed in the study was discussed in Chapter Three. This was structured into research design, target population, sampling and its procedures, data collection and analysis and ethical considerations. Chapter Four presents the findings from the survey, using the statistical tools and methods chosen for data analyses. Lastly the findings of the research were summarised in Chapter Five. In addition conclusions were drawn from the findings which helped informed appropriate recommendations to help WAMCO in improving training programs to enhance productivity.

Suggestion was also given on areas for further studies on employee training programs. The specific areas looked at were training and correlation with output and sustainability of training within an organisation. This will help managers and entrepreneurs to better frame training programs to achieve the most output and productivity. Results from these areas can also be replicated within the public sector to enhance the sectors output to help the country at large meets its developmental goals.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

Introduction

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of relevant literature in the area of employee training programmes. Specific areas reviewed were definition and the concept of employee training programmes, importance, types, training cycles, design of training programmes, administration and evaluation. It also discusses adopted theoretical framework used in the conceptualisation of the issues this research tried to unravel.

Overview of training

One significant activity at the disposal of human resource managers to ensure productivity of human resources is through employee training. The 21st century workplace is a fast paced environment with its techniques, knowledge and opportunities. It is critical to keep employees updated on the latest developments of their fields and the only way to do this is through training and development. In as much as companies upgrade their software's to bug free versions with the highest functionalities, companies need to upgrade their employees so that their skills are at their peaks and they can provide maximal value to the company. Effective training which aims at updating the KSA's and perspectives of new and existing workforce on regular basis has been identified as the best way to facilitate the ongoing change in the workplace.

According to Hung-Chun (2001) the educated and well trained employees are prerequisite for an organization's competitive advantage. This has been the reason why most companies invest huge sums of money in training of their human resource. Although, Henle, Reeve & Pitts (2010) postulated that employee performance also depends on many factors like job satisfaction, knowledge and management he concluded that there is a positive relationship between training and performance. Even though training can be costly both in terms of money but the many benefits to the company are far huge in terms of increased efficiency creativity, employee loyalty and better coordination between departments.

Meaning of training

Training is an organized activity aimed at communicating information or an instruction to better a person's performance or knowledge, skills, abilities and others (Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001). That is, teaching a person a particular skill or type of behaviour through sustained practice and instruction. Training refers to a planned effort by a company to facilitate employees' learning of the job-related competencies. These competencies include knowledge, skills, or behaviours that are critical for successful job performance (Raymond, 1999). Training is a deliberate attempt to help employees gain knowledge, skills, abilities that will enable them perform a task or job.

Training takes place through or when a person learns. Learning can be defined to mean a relatively permanent change in human capabilities that is not a result of growth processes (Raymond, 1999). Training is all about learning in order to gain specific knowledge, skills and abilities to perform a specific task. In

view of this when an individual or organization show a permanent change in behaviour or exhibit skills to perform an activity, training has taken place. Development means growth or changes or advancement in something. Employee development refers to the step taken within a company to encourage each professional and personal growth.

Training and development

Training and development are both processes for enhancing employee skills. Development was usually used for skill enhancing process for managerial-level personnel whereas training was generally used for skill-enhancement process for jobs in lower level in the organization (Salas, Weaver & Shuffler, 2012). Cascio (1993) said traditionally, lower level employees were trained while higher-level employees were developed.

According to Bohlander & Snell (2004) many experts distinguish between training and development based on motive and time frame of the training. Bohlander & Snell (2004) believes that training tends to be more narrowly focused and oriented toward short terms performance concerns while development is oriented more toward broadening an individual's skills for the future responsibilities. In addition, the difference between training and development is that whilst training usually implies preparation for an occupation or specific skills thus it is job oriented rather than personal.

Development usually suggests a broader view of knowledge and skills acquisition, it is less job oriented, centered more with employee potential than with immediate skill; it sees employees as adaptable resources (Cole, 2002).

According to Cascio (1993) despite the distinctions between training and development, they are often used synonymously. Most managers tend to use these words interchangeable with the aim of improving the skills of employees.

Benefits of training and development

Training has helped individuals, organizations and nations as a whole in many ways. There are so many advantages that an organization enjoys or receives when it undertakes training and development programs (Cascio, 1993). Potential returns from training and development programs are hefty.

Training helps deal with employee weakness. Most employees have some weaknesses in their workplace skills. Through training employees are able to strengthen those skills they need to improve. There are many ways to overcome deficiencies in human performance at work and training is the only one of them (Cole, 2002).

Training improves employee performance. Training helps a person to perform a job better because through training the employee becomes aware of the safety practices and proper procedures for basic task at the work place which increases their confidence due to a stronger understanding created by the awareness. Training programs improve performance at the individual, group and organizational levels (Cascio 1993). Employee satisfaction also emerges through training. Employees who are trained by their companies have advantage over other employees in other companies who undertake training programs using their own money as training comes with a huge cost.

For this reason employees trained by their organization get a perception that the organization cares about their improvement which makes them satisfied. Employees feel more satisfaction when they are appreciated and challenged through training opportunities (Freeman, Boxall & Haynes, 2007). Training helps maintain the image of the company. Training programs like ethics training, sexual harassment training and others helps an organization to reduce risk as training would give employee the knowledge about sexual harassment and business ethics which makes them act according.

Training cycle

Organizations spend about one-third of their payroll on training their employees. Even though training has many benefits, an organization can waste huge sums of money if training is not well conducted.



Figure 1: Systematic training cycle

Source: Cole, 2004

Lastly, there is the need for evaluation of the training program to help assess its the programme's effectiveness and making adjustment for further or future training. Cascio (1993) said while potential returns from well conducted training programs are hefty considerable planning and evaluation are necessary in order to realize these returns. Figure 1, shows that in training an organization must first set policy for the training followed by establishing training organization then the needs assessment which identifies the needs of employees. Afterwards, it is important to design a training program which will be followed by implementing the details of the design.

Training policy

Training policies are therefore rules and procedures which govern the standard and scope of training in an organization. Policy statement sets out what the organization is prepared to do in terms of developing its employees (Cole, 2003). Training policy helps the organization to make sound and consistent training decisions. Just like a person without rules is like a city with broken walls so a training program without policies will lead to loss of huge sums of money hence every organization needs to have an elaborate training policy. Policies are ideas or set of principles of what to do in particular situations agreed by the management.

Establishing training organization

Unfortunately, too much emphasis is often placed on the techniques and methods of training with little attention to what the employee should learn in relation to the desired job behaviours (Cascio, 1993). Organizations need to identify what deficiencies their employees have before choosing a training method or organizing a training program for them as training involves huge amounts of money. Selecting effective training can vastly improve the business' chances of success. It will help build competitive advantage and equip employees with the skills that businesses need for prosperity.

Pinpointing individual and team training needs will ensure that the training budget is spent wisely and that people have the right skills to effectively contribute to the business. Need assessment is what will help organizations determine or know employee deficiencies and also which area training is needed. According to Raymond (1999) assessment is the process used to determine if training is necessary. Need assessment involves gathering information to identify areas where employees can improve their performance to their benefit and that of the business.

The need assessment phase has three level of analysis namely; organizational analysis, task analysis and personal analysis. Bohlander and Snell (2004) believe that managers should approach needs assessment systematically by utilizing the three different types of analysis: organization analysis, task analysis and person analysis. Organizational analysis involves determining the appropriateness of training, given the company's business strategy, its resources

available for training and support by managers and peers for training act. Personal analysis involves identifying if current performance or expected performance indicates a need for training.

Task analysis includes identifying the important tasks and knowledge, skill and behaviour that need to be emphasized in training for employees to complete their task. Task analysis involves four steps, first by selecting the jobs to be analysed. Secondly, develop a preliminary list of tasks performed on the job by interviewing and observing expert employees and their managers and talking with others who have performed a task analysis. Third by validating or confirming the preliminary list of tasks and lastly identify the KSA's necessary to successfully perform each task.

Program design

The program design is the second stage of the training cycle. It is important for an organization to design the training very carefully. It is important to know the needs of employees however the success of a training program is not solely dependent on it only. The success of training programs depends not only on the organization's ability to identify training needs (Bohlander & Snell 2004). Once the organization identifies the needs of employees there is the need to transform these needs into a program design.

This phase has four related areas; instructional objectives, trainee readiness & motivation, principles of learning and characteristics of instructors. There are four related issues of the program design (Bohlander & Snell 2004).

Instructional objective describes the skills or knowledge to be acquired and the attitudes to be changed. It provides a sound basis for choosing the methods and materials and for selecting the means to assess the instruction (Bohlander & Snell, 2004). This means that the instructional objective informs you the kind of methods and materials for training.

Trainee's readiness and motivation refers to both maturity and experience factors in the trainee's background. Bohlander & Snell (2004) believe that it is important to determine trainee's background to help develop contents of training programmes. They continued that trainee motivation is a pre-condition for learning. Principle of learning refers to the laws of learning. Training is aimed at solving employee deficiencies which in turn will solve the deficiency of the organization as a whole. The principle of learning has a significant influence on knowledge acquisition, skill enhancement and competence development it is therefore necessary to give noticeable importance to how employees learn. According Bohlander & Snell (2004) it is important to give full consideration to the psychological principles of learning.

The fourth component of the four related issues is characteristics of instructor. How successful a trainee will be depends on both the trainee and the trainer. The trainer plays a major role in training. According to Bohlander & Snell (2004) the success of any training effort will depend to a large extent on the teaching skills and personal characteristics of those conducting the training. They stressed the following characteristics as necessary to identify a good trainer;

knowledge of the subject matter, adaptability, sincerity, sense of humour, interest in the subject, individual assistance and enthusiasm.

Program implementation

A good strategy without good implementation leads to failure. It takes a good strategy coupled with good implementation to achieve success. Delivery style is a very important part of training (Diaz-Lazaro & Cohen, 2001). There are many methods and techniques that can be used to execute a training program. According to Decouza, David, Robbins and Stephen (1996) training methods can be in two groups on the job training which are orientation, apprentice, coaching mentoring, job rotation, lectures and seminars, distant and internet based and special assignment trainings. Secondly off-the job methods includes vestibule training, case study, lectures and demonstrations and examples. Each method or technique to be selected depends on the program design chosen by the organization as any of the methods above yields results.

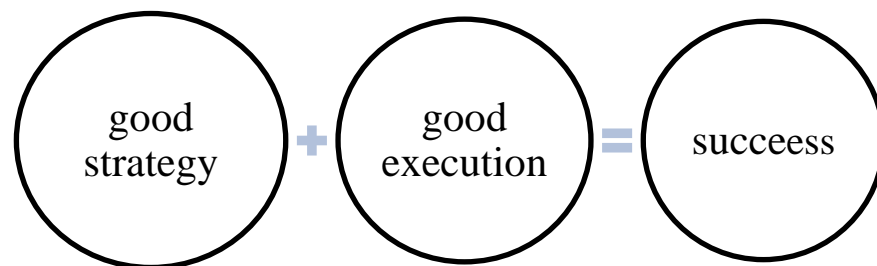


Figure 2: Implementation process

Source: Authors Construct

Program evaluation

Evaluation has to do with measuring the success of a training program. It is assessing if the set objectives or outcome expected has been achieved. Evaluation helps the company to determine whether it is necessary to revisit the needs assessment or not. It plays a pivotal role in the training process. Beech and Leather (2006) asserts that there are four levels of training evaluation namely, reaction, learning, behaviour and results evaluation.

Theories in training and productivity

Knowledge and skills of workers acquired through training have become important in the face of the increasingly rapid changes in technology, products, and systems. Most organisations invest in training because they believe that higher performance will be the end result (Kozlowski & Klein, 2000). However, the theoretical framework for the relationship between training and firm performance has been subjected to considerable debates. Devanna and Tichy (1984) proposed a model which emphasizes the interrelatedness and coherence of Human Resource Management (HRM) policies and performance. According to their model, training and other HRM activities aim to boost individual performance. Thus, the result leads to higher firm performance.

Guest (1987) also came out with a theoretical framework to show how HRM policies have effects on human resources and organisational outcomes. The strength of Guest's (1987) model is that it is a valuable analytical framework for studying the relationship between HRM policies and organisational performance

because it is more careful, clear and easy for empirical testing. Guest (1987) sees commitment as a vital outcome, concerned with the goals linking employees with firm performance. The goal of quality is important to ensure the high quality of products and services. Therefore, training and development policy play an importance role in HRM and contribute to improved strategic integration, employee commitment, flexibility and quality.

HRM outcomes then lead to high job performance, high problem-solving, high cost-effectiveness, and low turnover, reduced absence, and fewer grievances. Another theoretical model emphasizes the interrelatedness and the coherence of HR practices, firm strategy and firm-level outcomes (Wright & McMahan, 1992). They present six theoretical models altogether from the fields of organisational theory, finance, and economics. Three of them (resource-based view of the firm, cybernetic systems, and behavioural perspective) consider the relationship between training and firm performance. First, in the resource-based view, firm resources include physical capital, human capital and organisational capital that enable the firm to improve its efficiency and effectiveness. Its resources determine the strength of a firm in the long term.

In order for a firm's resources to provide sustained competitive advantages, however, it must have four attributes: valuable, rare, imperfectly imitable, and cannot be replaced with another resource by competing companies (Barnes & Kennard, 2002). Therefore, human capital is a primary source of sustained competitive advantage to a firm because apart from the criteria mentioned above it cannot be duplicated or bought in the market by competitors.

Applying the resource-based view to training suggests that training can provide knowledge and skills for employees and in turn this may lead to high firm performance.

Second, in the behavioural perspective models, employee behaviour plays an important role as a mediator between strategy and firm performance (Salas, Weaver & Shuffler, 2012). The models do not focus on knowledge, skills or abilities of employees, but focus only on employee role behaviours because the employee's attitudes, behaviours, and commitments could affect the firm performance. Thus, the employee role behaviour can be instrumental in the creation of a competitive advantage. HRM practices can be considered as an option to promote the role behaviour more efficiently and effectively, especially HR training policy.

Thirdly, a popular theoretical model applied to HRM literature is the cybernetic model of HR systems. It is based on the general systems models and includes input from the environment (i.e., inputs of HR knowledge, skills, and abilities), through (HR behaviours) and output systems (productivity, sale, job satisfaction, turnover, etc.). This model focuses on two major responsibilities competence and behavioural management. Competence management (deals with individual skills required to implement a given organisational strategy) and behaviour management (activities that seek to agree and coordinate attitude and behaviour of individuals for organisational strategy and goals).

Therefore, training will improve knowledge, skills, abilities and behaviour of employees. This in turn leads to positive organisational outcomes. Recently, an excellent analytical framework which uses a multilevel approach to training has been offered by Kozlowski et al. (2000). The multi-level model bridges the gap between theoretical models of training needs assessment, design, and evaluation, and the higher levels at which training must have an impact if it is to contribute to organisational effectiveness (Kozlowski & Salas, 1997).

It is focused on training transfer and embedded in two distinct transfer types: horizontal and vertical transfer. Horizontal transfer concentrates on traditional models of training effectiveness. Kozlowski and Klein (2000) proposed “top-down contextual effects” which they described as a group and organisational factors that have direct and moderating effects on learning and transfer.

These effects have been the source of recent theory and research addressing the influence of organisational factors on motivation to learn, transfer, and training effectiveness at the individual level of analysis. Vertical transfer examines the link between individual training outcomes and organisational outcomes.

There are two distinctive forms of vertical transfer processes that is, composition and compilation. Composition concentrates on individual contribution at the same content, while compilation focuses on individual contribution at the different or diverse content. To summarize, first, it is obvious that similarities exist between the normative models of HRM, whether it is the US or the British (Guest model). They have put training on a set of HRM policies and

consider training as an important and vital policy for improving knowledge, skills, attitude and motivation of employees.

Second, the HR system is a complex set of policies designed to manage labour in the organisation and integrate into organisational strategy in order to create high performance for organisation. Third, this review of theoretical models linking training to firm performance also suggests that it is explicitly recognized that no organisation can attain its goals or organisational strategy without labour that has the right knowledge, skills, abilities, behavior, and attitudes. Therefore, training plays an important role in improving the quality of employees directly and effecting on firm performance through HR outcomes.

Finally, organizational researchers studying training and firm performance need to consider the impact of various dimensions of employee training programmes, the type of training methods and design, the type of employees trained, and time spent by employees in training on firm performance.

Conceptual framework

Theories on training and productivity show strong relationship between employee training, productivity and economic growth, hence the development of a conceptual framework for the study. To achieve the objectives of optimum productivity, there is the need for input factors that will shape the quality of human resources in the organisation in order for us to achieve higher employee outcomes. The input factors come under resources and logistics, skill/competence needs, requisite work attitudes, motivation, and monitoring and evaluation.

These input factors properly integrated will lead to equipping employees with adequate competences in performing their roles. This can lead to employee outcomes namely high performance, increased productivity and improved income/wage. The overall outcome will be higher profits and competitiveness of the organization with decreased turnover among employees.

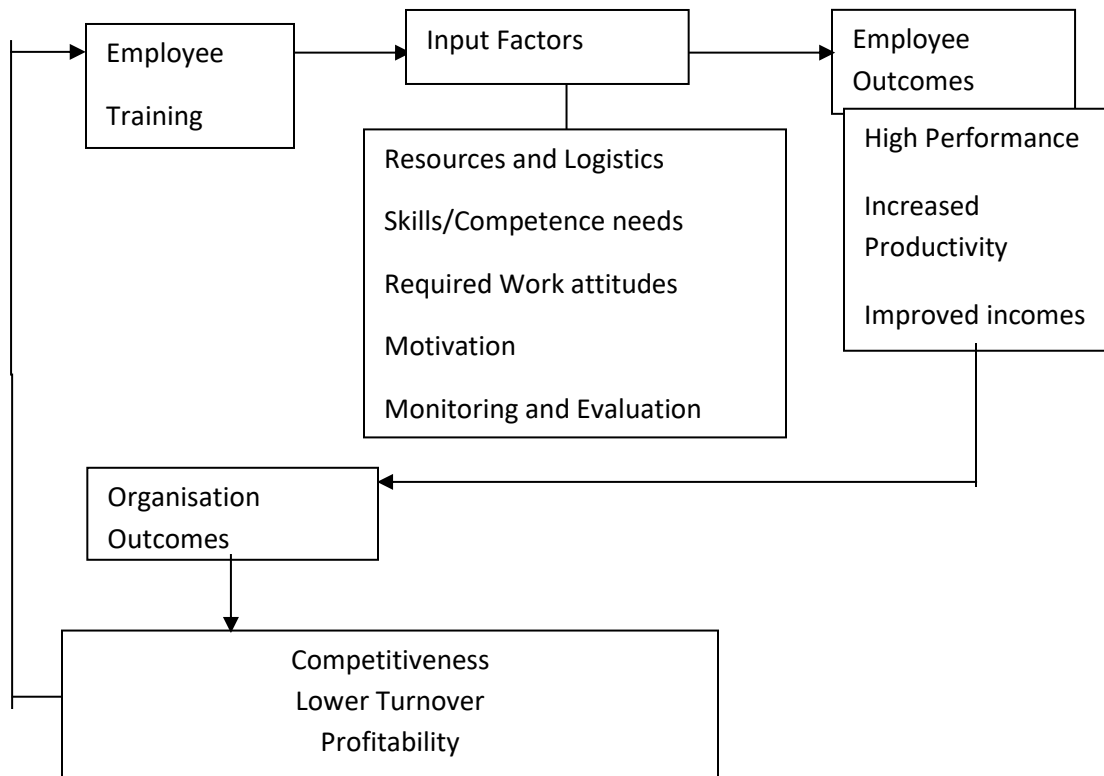


Figure 3: Employee training and outcome relationship

Source: Authors construct, 2015

Operationalisation of variables

Employee training refers to programmes and materials used to transfer new knowledge or improve on old knowledge of employees. Training can be in the form of developing skills of employees in the usage of new equipment's.

Skills and competence needs was conceptualised as what employees learned that can make them carry out specific tasks. This also includes ability to do something which is usually highly cherished by managers as specialisation of employees enhances productivity. Required work attitude refers to acceptable behaviour needed to carry out jobs. It has a large influence on employee moral and social cohesion.

Motivation looks at reasons or the cause which spur employees to behave the way they do towards work. Such behaviour can be positive or negative depending on for action the reason or drive. Organisation with well enhance package and employees welfare at heart is much more likely to motivate employees to a greater output. Lastly organisational outcome refers to the results desire by the firm to meets its targeted output. The outcomes desire by managers or organisations are mostly competitiveness, lower turn out and profitability.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter discusses the methodology employed in this study. The chapter is organised under the various heading research design, study area, study population, sampling procedure, data collection and procedures and data processing and analysis. The various sub-heading gives vivid account of what transpired to enable the researcher meet the intended objectives of this study.

Research design

A research design is a plan of study (Wornell & Oppenheim, 1996). Bryman (2004) states that research design provide the framework for the collection and analysis of data. A choice of research design reflects decisions about the priority given to a range of dimensions of the research process. This study used the cross-sectional survey design in which data was collected across a population through sampling. The survey approach is acceptable in the literature in relation to this type of research.

Survey is a data collection technique in which information is gathered from individuals, called respondents, by having them respond to questions (Monette, Sullivan & Dejong 2002). Monette, et al, (2002) revealed that, it is probably the most widely used research method in social science research. According to

Monette, et al, (2002), many techniques available for conducting a survey make it a versatile tool. Nonetheless, all surveys share certain characteristics.

First, surveys involve collecting data from large samples of people; therefore they are ideal for obtaining data representative of populations too large to be dealt with by other methods. Secondly, all surveys involve presenting respondents with a series of questions to be answered. These questions may tap matters of fact, attitudes, opinions, or future anticipations (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2007).

Study organisation

West African Mills Company Limited (WAMCO) Free Zone Enterprise (FZE), formerly known as West African Mills Ltd. (WAMCO), is the oldest cocoa processing factory in Ghana. Its main vision is to become a world leading cocoa processing company. With a mission to produce optimal quality products that guarantees customer satisfaction and ensure maximum returns.

The company was established in 1947 by Gills and Dufus of London, Great Britain, but full production began in 1949. WAMCO was granted Ghana Free Zone Board Status and was registered as a Free Zone Enterprise on 23rd December 1997, hence its name West African Mills Company Limited (FZE). It can be located at Takoradi in the Western region of Ghana. The company has a seven member board of directors made of three Ghanaian and four foreigners. At the factories level the management consist of a Managing Director who is a member of the board, assisted by two general managers; one for operations and the other for finance and administration.

Executive managers are heads of line departments, their sectional heads, supervisors and operatives as indicated in the organogram below. The technical manager (level of a head of department) however reports to the office of the Managing director. The Takoradi branch comprises of three factories: Expeller Plant, Cocoa Liquor Plant and the Hydraulic press Plant. These plants has a capacity to process about 230 tonnes of cocoa beans processed per day (i.e. about 75,000 tonnes per annum). Major outputs of WAMCO are deodorized cocoa butter, expeller cocoa cake, shea cake, natural cocoa liquor. Most of the outputs of the company are exported to Germany and other European countries.

Sources of data

The data for this research came in two forms namely primary and secondary sources. The existing data on performance and productivity of employees of (WAMCO) for the past ten years of the training programme were used to evaluate how training has affected output of employees. Primary data were gathered from the respondents using the questionnaire survey.

Study population

All employees of West African Mills Company Limited comprising, administrative staff, operational/ field staff and drivers constituted the target population. In all the study made use of a representative sample of the workers in the three major departments at (WAMCO). The workers in the three major departments were distributed as follows: administrative (18); operational/ field (249); and drivers (9). Thus in sum the entire staff is 276.

Table 1: Summary statistics of respondents

Departments	Population distribution	Sample size (n*30%)	Approximation of Sample size	Representation of Sample Size (%)
Administrative	18	5.4	5	3
Operations;/ field	249	74.7	75	90.4
Drivers	9	2.7	3	3.6
Total	276	82.8	83	100.0

*n= population size.

Source: Field survey, 2015

The grouping of the population into the various categories was to make sure that all the departments in the company were represented in the research. This helped in knowing the different types of training being carried out per departments. As giving the same training to different workers might not be useful to some if the training is not tailored to the department's needs. Also it enabled the research to solicit specifically training based on the needs on each department.

Sample size and sampling techniques

Sampling defines the method by which the researcher selects a representative group from the population under study (Neumann, 2002). According to Neumann (2002), an entire population tends to be too large to work

with and a small group of participants must act as a representative sample. The study employed purposive, stratified and quota technique. The workers in the various departments were stratified according to sex. After that quotas were assigned to each stratum in order to obtain a representative sample.

As stated earlier, WAMCO has three (3) major departments and a total workforce of 276. Neumann (2002) recommends a large sampling ratio (about 30 percent) for small populations (under 1000); a small sampling ratio (about 10 percent) for moderately large populations (1000); and about 1 percent for very large populations. Using Neumann's (2002) approach, a large sampling ratio of 30% was required in this study. Therefore a sample of 83 workers was selected and the quotas are distributed as follows: administration (5); Operations/ field (75); and drivers (3).

Data collection instruments and procedures

The study used questionnaires to gather data from respondents. The use of questionnaire is very common in social researches. In most cases questionnaires is the only method of data collection. In other cases they are used in addition to other methods. In either case they are administered to the respondents by mail or personally by the researcher.

The main characteristic of this method is that data are offered by the respondents, with limited interference on the part of researcher Monette, Sullivan & DeJong (2013). In spite of the fact that they do not allow probing, prompting and clarification of questions, questionnaires are still the most appropriate research instrument for this study because they offer greater assurance of

anonymity, less opportunity for bias and errors and a stable, consistent and uniform measure variation.

The questionnaires were used to solicit information from the eighty-three (83) respondents from the various departments. It included both closed-ended and open-ended items. It sought demographic information of respondents, their training experiences, their levels of performance and productivity. The total questionnaires administered were hundred (100), but after collection and editing, 83 valid ones were used for the study.

Data processing and analysis

The Statistical Product and Service Solution (SPSS) version 0.6 statistical package was used to analyse the data. The SPSS package was used because it was the most suitable for the type of data analysed. The questions in the questionnaires were coded into variables or fields in the SPSS. This helped the administered questionnaires to be entered or coded. The entered data was cleaned for consistency, completeness of data and also validity.

In order to analyse the data the research used simple descriptive statistics tool within the SPSS software to generate simple frequencies, means and sum. The results were represented as tables to support the discussions in chapter four.

Ethical considerations

Ethics in research gives the researcher the guidelines on how they should conduct research. The guidelines ensure that research is carried out in a way that is in the best interest of the respondents. It is the researcher's responsibility to act

in an ethical manner (Gall, Borg & Gall, 1996). In this study, attention was paid to ethical issues of informed consent, confidentiality and anonymity.

Respondents were informed about the objective of the study and their participation was non-compulsory. The researcher adhered to strict confidentiality of the information received from respondents and the information from the respondents was used only for the intended purpose. To ensure anonymity, survey items were assigned unique identities in order not to expose the identity of the respondents.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Introduction

This chapter discusses the results of the data collected for this study. The chapter again explores the employee training programmes in the study organisation and how respondents have experienced these programmes. In addition, the relationships between the training programmes and job performance are examined. Lastly, the challenges faced by employees in accessing training programmes are discussed.

Sex and age of respondents

A total of 83 people responded to the questionnaire out of the 100 employees who collected them. The data show that there were more males than females in the selected sample 92.8% were males with only 7.2% females. Regarding age, majority of the respondents were within the 33 year bracket. Age structure of the respondents were 22 (26.5%) were within the 20-29 years age group, 47 (56.6%) were within the 30-39 age group, 11 (13.3%) fell within the 40-49 age group and 3 (3.6%) were within the 50-59 age group. Thus the sample constitutes employees in their very youthful ages. Table 2 presents information on age and sex distribution of the respondents. As depicted in Table 2, majority of the male respondents (43) fall within the 30-39 age group, 22 fall within the 20-29 age brackets, 10 fall within the 40-49 age brackets, whilst only 2% fall within the 50-59 age brackets.

Table 2: Sex and age distribution of respondents

Age group	Male	Female	Total
20-29	22	0	22
30-39	43	4	47
40-49	10	1	11
50-59	2	1	3
Total	77	6	83

Source: Field survey, 2015

Similarly, majority of the female respondents (4) fall within the 30-39 age group with just a handful in the other age brackets. One observes that whereas there were more males than females, there were relatively younger females than their male counterparts in the sample.

Educational and status of respondents

Majority of the respondents had secondary school qualification. Out of were 18 (21.7%) respondents had basic education, 46 (55.4%) secondary, 9 (10.8%) with higher diploma, and 10 (12.0%) had bachelor's degree. A disaggregation of the respondents by position showed that majority of the respondents in supervisory positions namely quality control officers (QCOs) and quality control assistants (QCAs) hold higher educational qualifications such as diploma and degree than those in subordinate positions.

This information is illustrated in Table 3. In Table 3, the majority of respondents had secondary education with a total of 46 respondent's qualifications. Basic education was the send highest education respondents had showing that majority of the respondents had little education background. This can be justifiable in the sense that the company is in the primary production sectors which demand little education to be successful. Respondents with diploma education were the least with a total of 9 respondents while tertiary education was only 10 respondents in managerial position.

Table 3: Educational qualification and status of respondents

Status	Basic	Secondary	Diploma	Degree	Total
QCO	-	3	-	9	12
QCA	1	9	6	1	17
Driver	-	3	-	-	3
Sampler	17	28	2	-	47
Secretary	-	3	1	-	4
Total	18	46	9	10	83

Source: Field survey, 2015

Thus from the above table, the workers must be trained well in other to meet the challenges of the day as the literature specifies that workers with good training and development skills would survive in this challenging world.

Out of the 83 respondents, there were 29 (34.9 %) supervisors and 54 (65.1 %) subordinates. Regarding the number of years spent in the organisation, the data revealed that majority of the respondents have spent relatively shorter periods in the organisation.

Table 4: Tenure and status of respondents

Tenure	Supervisor	Subordinate	Total
<5 years	3	31	44
6-10 years	11	16	27
11-15 years	3	4	7
16-20 years	1	3	4
21+ years	1	-	1
Total	29	54	83

Source: Field survey, 2015

About 53% of the respondents had worked for 5 years or lesser in the organisation. Again, only about 4.8% have worked for between 16 to 20 years and just a handful (1.2%) had worked for 21 years and beyond. That observation notwithstanding, for those who have worked beyond 10 years, there were more supervisors 5 (17.1%) compared with 7 (13.0%) in the subordinates category.

Another observation from Table 4 is that majority of the subordinates have worked for few years compared with the supervisors. This observation might probably account for the positions held by the respondents, since longer tenure partly accounts for statuses held by employees in an organisation. Data from the

above table suggests that the longer one stays in the organisation, the higher his chances of getting training. This is clearly in line with the literature.

Employee training programmes at WAMCO

Respondents showed a high degree of awareness of training programmes in the organisation. About 72 (86.7%) of respondents said they were aware of the existence of training programmes in the organisation. Only 11 (13.3%) respondents said were not aware of any training programmes in the organisation. A breakdown of this information into supervisors and subordinates showed that supervisors tend to have slightly higher knowledge of training programmes than subordinates in the organisation.

Out of the 29 supervisors 96.6% of them were aware of training programmes in the organisation as compared to their subordinate counterparts where 81.5% were aware of such programmes. Table 5 illustrates this information. With regards to awareness of training programme, 86.7% of the respondents were positive. This is a good sign for the organisation as it has made training an important part of its rudiments.

This obviously adds to what the literature say about the importance of training and development in the competitive world. Table 5 also shows that supervisors rather than subordinates tend to have more knowledge of training programmes in the organisation. This observation might not only be to the fact that supervisors are closer to management than the subordinates. Also it can be because of their huge responsibilities which demand adequate skills and training.

Table 5: Knowledge of training programmes by status of respondents

Knowledge of Programme	Supervisor	Subordinate	Total
Yes	28	44	72
No	1	10	11
Total	29	54	83

Source: Field survey, 2015

This observation does not defeat what the literature say about the responsibilities of line managers and supervisors as the overall performance of their direct reports have a bearing on their total productivity.

Employee training experiences of respondents

Even though some of the respondents said they were unaware of training programmes in the organisation, further probing revealed that all 83 respondents have experienced one form of training or another.

Respondents were asked the number of times they have had programmes that introduced them to new knowledge. It became clear that respondents have had training sessions since joining the organisation and that training seems to be frequent in the organisation. About 67 (80.7%) had some training session between the last 6 months to 1 year, 15 (18.1%) had some training about 2 to 3 years ago and 1 (1.2%) respondent had some training about 4 years ago. Table 6 gives more details about the above discussions.

Regarding the number of times they have received training; it was observed that training programmes were frequent. Of the 83 respondents, 35 (42.2%) have had training many times, 18 (21.7%) have had training twice while 30 (36.1%) said they have had training just once. Table 6 which disaggregates this information into supervisors and subordinates shows an interesting observation. The observation above thus shows the seriousness the company attaches to its training and development needs which are very vital for organisational growth and survival in the turbulence time of intense competition from industry players.

Table 6: Employee training experiences

Last training experience	Response	(%)
Over 6 months	67	80.7
Over 2 years	15	18.1
Over 3 years	1	1.2
Total	83	100.0

Source: Field survey, 2015

The observation therefore does not deviate from the point raised by the literature as the survival of organisations depend on effective training and development of their human resource as the training will equip the staff with the technical knowhow in the current work environment.

Table 7: Number of times respondents trained

No. of training periods	Supervisor	Subordinate	Total
Once	6	24	30
Twice	6	12	18
Many Times	17	18	35
Total	29	54	83

Source: Field survey, 2015

From Table 7, it is observed that supervisors tend to receive training than the subordinates. Indeed, majority of the supervisors 17 respondent had received training for a number of times. Only 6 respondents said they have received training once. In contrast, the subordinates' training experiences were mixed.

Most of the subordinates about 24 respondents have had just one training programme although about 12 have had two training programmes. In addition about 32 (38.6%) said they have had orientation or induction, 30 (36.1%) said they were trained for performance improvement, and 21 (25.3%) believed that their training programmes were for acquisition of new skills.

In contrast, subordinates tend to experience training programmes with the aim of inducting or orienting them into the task of the organisation (Table 8). About 14 of the supervisors had undergone training for performance improvement with over 9 of who had programmes dealing with acquisition of new skills.

Table 8: Objectives of training programmes by status of respondents

Objective	Supervisor	Subordinate	Total
Orientation/induction	6	26	32
Performance improvement	14	16	30
Acquisition of new skills	9	12	21
Total	29	54	83

Source: Field survey, 2015

About 14 of the supervisors had undergone training for performance improvement with over 9 of who had programmes dealing with acquisition of new skills. In contrast, most of the subordinates mainly receive training through induction or orientation programmes 26 (48.1%), although a few undergo performance improvement 16 (29.6%) and skills acquisition 12 (22.2%) programmes.

Training procedures and forms of selection

In general, selection for training in the organisation takes the form of mandatory requirement as compared with recommendation from a superior. Out of the 83 respondents, 52 (62.7%) said their training experienced was a mandatory one compared with 31 (37.3%) who said they were recommended for training. Again, no major differences were observed in the training selection procedure for both supervisors and subordinates.

Majority of supervisors (51.7%) were selected for training on mandatory basis although a substantial number of them (48.3%) were recommended for training. In the same vein, majority of the subordinates (68.5%) received training through mandatory selection compared with those who were recommended for training. Thus, training processes in the organisation are usually mandatory. This might partly explain why most of the respondents were unaware that they have undergone training programmes.

Regarding the mode of facilitation of the training programmes, the data revealed that facilitation takes varied forms with the dominant mode of training facilitation being seminar. Of the 83 respondents, 47 (56.6%) said they had the training through seminars while 18 (21.7%) each said the training was done through classroom lectures and understudy process (on-the-job) respectively (Table 9).

Table 9: Mode of training facilitation by status of respondents

Mode of Facilitation	Supervisor	Subordinate	Total
Seminar	14	33	47
Classroom	7	11	18
Understudy	8	10	18
Total	29	54	83

Source: Field survey, 2015

As depicted in Table 9, there is preponderance of seminar as a training facilitation procedure for both supervisors and subordinates although majority of subordinates undergo seminar mode of training compared with the supervisors.

Training evaluation techniques in the organisation

Three key evaluation techniques are used to assess employees after they have undergone training programmes. These include problem-solving, application of skills on the job and written examination. Out of the 83 respondents, 32 (38.5%) were evaluated through problem-solving, 39 (47.0%) through application of skills on the job while 12 (14.5%) were through some written examination (Table 10).

Table 10: Training evaluation technique by status of respondents

Evaluation Technique	Supervisor	Subordinate	Total
Problem-Solving	13	19	32
Application of Skills	8	31	39
Written Examination	8	4	12
Total	29	54	83

Source: Field survey, 2015

In Table 10, supervisors are mostly evaluated through problem-solving techniques (44.8%) compared to application of skills on the job (27.6%) and written examination (27.6%). In contrast, subordinates are mostly evaluated through the application of skills on the job (57.4%) compared with problem solving (35.2%) and written examination (7.4%).

This observation could possibly be explained by the fact that supervisors are more regularly confronted with job challenges that require them to sharpen their problems solving abilities. This situation might not be the same for subordinates. In exploring how the evaluation techniques relate to the objectives of the training, the data revealed that application of skills on the job is still the dominant mode of evaluation for the various training objectives (Table 11).

Table 11: Objectives of training programmes and evaluation techniques

Evaluation Technique	Performance	Induction	New Skills	Total
Problem-Solving	10	14	8	32
Application of Skills	14	16	9	39
Written Examination	6	2	4	12
Total	30	32	21	83

Source: Field survey, 2015

Thirty respondents, whose training objective was performance improvement, were evaluated through application of skills on the job. While 32 respondents whose training objective was induction/orientation, being evaluated through the application of learned skills on the job. Lastly, of the 21 respondents whose training objective was acquisition of new skills, through the application of skills on the job. Thus, even though supervisors are often evaluated through problem-solving approach, application of skills on the job remains a dominant technique of evaluation (Table 11).

Managing training programmes in the organisation

Respondents were generally impressed by the arrangements put in place for training in the organisation. Indeed, most of them thought that the training programmes are planned and systematic. Of the 83 respondents, 79 (95.2%) said the training programmes are planned. Only 4 (4.8%) said the programmes are not planned. In addition, 72 (86.7%) of the 83 respondents said the training programmes are systematic. Just 11 (13.3%) said the training programmes are not systematic.

A disaggregation of the data into supervisors and subordinates showed that although respondents generally believe that training programmes are planned, supervisors tend to hold higher opinions on the planning of training programmes than subordinates. On their part, the majority of subordinates (92.6%) believed that training programmes are planned although a handful (7.4%) held the view that training programmes in the organisation are unplanned.

Generally the respondent had high opinion on the planned and systematic nature of training programmes in the organisation. It was not surprising that the majority of the respondents were satisfied with the training policy in the organisation. Of the 83 respondents, 68 (81.9%) were satisfied with training policy in the organisation. Only 15 (18.1%) were not satisfied with the training programmes in the organisation. When respondents' satisfaction was categorized into status, it was observed that supervisors were more satisfied with the training policy than subordinates.

Satisfaction was high among respondents; more supervisors (93.1%) were satisfied with the training policy than subordinates (75.9%). In a similar vein, more subordinates (24.1%) were dissatisfied with the training policy than supervisors (6.9%). Thus, supervisors hold a very positive impression about the policy than their subordinates.

When asked to give reasons for their satisfaction or otherwise, 60 of the 68 respondents who were satisfied gave reasons. Out of this number, 35 (58.3%) said that one can always learn new skills while 25 (41.7%) said there exist more training opportunities. In contrast, of the 17 respondents who were not satisfied with the training programmes in the organization, 12 (80.0%) said the content of the training programmes were inadequate for them while the remaining 3 (20.0%) said the programmes have very short durations.

Suggestion to improve training programmes

Respondents were asked to make suggestions about the training policy in the organisation. About, 58 of the respondents gave responds on questions about training policies (Table 12). Of this number, 21 (36.2%) said longer training periods are needed, 21 (36.2%) said there was the need for more training incentives while 16 (27.6%) said the content of the training programmes must be made adequate to help employees acquire useful skills.

Table 12: Suggestion to improve training programmes

Suggestion	Supervisor	Subordinate	Total
Longer training programmes	8	13	21
More training programmes	10	11	21
Adequate content	10	6	16
Total	28	30	58

Source: Fieldwork survey, 2015

It can be observed that even though respondents have positive opinions about the training policy in the organisation and are thus satisfied, they still require more improvements in the training policy for it to make significant improvements in the abilities and working life of the employees in the organisation.

Effect of training programmes

Respondents believed that the training programmes have greatly improved their job performance. Out of the 83 respondents, 77 (92.8%) said the training they received had improved their performance on the job while 6 (7.2%) said the training did not improve their job performance. When the respondents were categorized into supervisors and subordinates, it was observed that more supervisors see improvement in their job performance through training than the subordinates.

All the supervisors believed that training has improved their job performance. In contrast, 88.9% of the subordinates see improvement in their job performance through training with a handful (11.1%) said there was no improvement in their job performance from the training programmes in the organisation.

Thus, respondents generally see greater improvements in their job performance through training the supervisors tend to be the most affected employees. When asked about the ways they use to identify how training has affected their job performance, 75 of the 77 respondents who have seen job improvement from the training programmes gave a number of indicators. Out of the 75, 32 (42.7%) said they have increased their output, 27 (36.0%) said they have witnessed increased efficiency while 16 (21.3%) said they have received positive supervisor ratings.

Again, training has affected their output per hour, 73 (88.0%) of the 83 respondents believe training has improved their hourly output while 10 (12.0%) said training has not improved their hourly output. In exploring how training has affected their hourly output, 71 out of the 73 respondents gave reasons. Of the 71 respondents, 34 (47.9%) believed they experience higher output, 21 (19.6%) said their speed of work has increased while 16 (22.5%) said they have received higher efficiency. When the respondents were categorized into supervisors and subordinates, the supervisors were the most positively affected group.

About 29 supervisors believed that training has improved their daily output. On the other hand, 81.5% of the subordinates said training has improved

their daily output while nearly 18.5% said they did not see any improvement in their daily output from training.

Table 13: Quantifying output by respondents

Output per day	Supervisor	Subordinate	Total
High	10	4	14
Beyond Average	14	10	24
Average	6	13	19
Total	30	27	57

Source: Field survey, 2015

Furthermore, respondents were asked whether they can quantify their output per day. Of the 83 respondents, 57 (68.7%) said they can quantify their output while 26 (31.3%) could not. Of the 57 respondents who could quantify their output, 14 (24.6%) produce a very high output per day, 24 (42.1%) said they produce beyond average per day. Only 19 (33.3%) produce an average output daily.

Respondents job performance ratings

Most of the respondents thus about, 70 (84.3%) believe that their supervisors rate them very good and only 13 (15.7%) said they would be rated fairly good by their supervisors. Regarding, supervisor ratings of work efficiency in terms of speed/quantity 72 (86.7%) of the 83 respondents said they would be

rated very good and only 11(13.3%) said they would be rated fairly good for their speed of work.

In rating respondents own work performance using quality work, 78 (94.0%) of the 83 respondents rated their own performance as very good with just 5(6.0%) rating their quality of their work as fairly good. Lastly, respondents ranked their performance in relation to their co-workers. Seventy-six of the 83 respondents rated their work as very good with just 7 (8.4%) rating their performance as fairly good.

Once again, respondents were categorized into supervisors and subordinates. It was observed that supervisors have higher rating of their job performance than the subordinates. Twenty-nine supervisors said their performance in comparison with co-workers is very good. In the case of the 54 subordinates, 87% of them rated their performance as very good even though 7 (13.0%) of them rated the quality of their performance as fairly good.

In sum, one observes that the respondents have very good job performance ratings of themselves; they know the impression their supervisors have about the quality or otherwise of their work and also how their supervisors would compare them with their co-workers.

Improving training programmes for employee performance

Although, awareness of the training projections in the organisation is generally high, it is higher for supervisors (69.0%) compared with subordinates

(57.4%). In a similar vein, more subordinates were unaware of the projections (42.6%) compared with their supervisors (31.0%).

This might probably be due to the fact that supervisors are closer to management than subordinates and are privy to such information than subordinates. When the respondents were asked whether they had sponsored themselves for training purposes before, majority of them said they have never done that before. Indeed, only 17 (20.5%) of the 83 respondents had ever sponsored themselves for training in new skills and techniques. The majority, 66 (79.5%) respondents have never sponsored themselves for such programmes.

Only a few of the respondents had been sponsored by the organisation to further their skills or education. Most of the respondents were willing to sponsor themselves in future to train for new skills. Of the 76 respondents who responded to that question, 56 (73.7%) of them were willing to sponsor themselves while 20 (26.3%) were unwilling to sponsor themselves for training in new skills. It could be deduced that respondents value the importance of training and are more likely to pay for the cost of training for new skill. Some of the respondents offered suggestions that could help management of the organisation to improve upon its training policy and practices. Of the 83 respondents, 45 made some suggestions.

Table 14: Suggestion to improve training programme

Suggestion	Supervisor	Subordinate	Total
Need for regular training	15	14	29
More training programme	6	4	10
More training tools	3	3	6
Total	24	21	45

Source: Field Survey, 2015

Out of this number, 29 (64.4%) said there is the need for regular training programmes, 10 (22.2%) called for more training incentives to motivate workers to train while the remaining 6 (13.3%) said more training tools should be at their disposal for use. Thus, respondents believe that when these training needs are put in place, they can realize the full benefits of training.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the entire work. It gives brief information about the study and key findings. Based on the findings, conclusions are drawn and recommendations for improving the training processes and practices at West African Mills Company Limited, Takoradi. Also, the chapter makes suggestions about priority areas for further research on employee training and job performance.

Summary

The rationale behind this study was to assess the role of employee training on their job performance at West African Mills Company Limited, Takoradi. The specific objectives were to evaluate the major purposes of employee training programmes at (WAMCO); to analyze the training and development policies in operation at (WAMCO); to assess the training practices and processes of evaluation of training needs of employees at (WAMCO); and to assess the effect of training designs on employee job performance at (WAMCO).

The study reviewed literature on employee training and job performance which showed that although there are several advantages associated with employee training in organisational settings; these training programmes are

usually not available in most organisations especially in developing countries due to the cost involved.

The information reviewed served as a basis for developing comprehensive questionnaire for workers of WAMCO. The questionnaires were used to solicit information on training conducted by the company. Also respondents were made to give their perception about these training and assess their influence in their productivity. Responses were coded into SPSS which were analysis based on descriptive statistics.

Results showed that training programmes exist, they are usually uncoordinated, unplanned and are unsystematic. The situation therefore makes it difficult for employees to develop new skills and techniques to improve their performance and thus the productivity of the organisation. It was observed that the major purpose of training in the organisation is three folds: induction or orientation, performance improvement and acquisition of new skills. Nearly all employees had undergone training in the organisation. Generally, employees in supervisory positions tend to undergo performance improvement and skill acquisition training while subordinates more often undergo orientation/induction training.

Employees were therefore generally satisfied with the training policy even though they believed there is room for improvement. Also, it was observed that training procedures in the organisation are two folds: mandatory requirement and recommendation by a superior.

It was observed that the training programmes are evaluated in three ways namely: problem-solving, application of learned skills on the job, and written examination. Application of learned skills was the dominant mode of evaluation. Generally, Supervisors were evaluated through the problem-solving approach while subordinates were evaluated through the application of learned skills.

Lastly respondents generally held the impression that their job performance has increased following the training programmes they experienced. Most of them had realized increases in their daily output and the majority rated their quality and quantity of work as very good after having gone through training. They also held positive opinions of their supervisors' ratings of their job performance.

Conclusions

Based on these findings made so far, the study concludes as follows:

- West African Mills Company Limited has a well-functioning training policy that inducts employees into the organisation, provides new skills and improves the job performance of employees. Subordinates had very little training as compared with supervisors. As most of subordinates developed new skills on by learning on the job far better than other means of skills acquisition.
- Monitoring of employee performance after training programmes was difficult for the organisation. Individual assessment of their own performance after training was generally high as employees were

supportive of training schemes and structures. Employees believed training was the only way to improve their skills and productivity in the company.

- Training design had a major influence on employee productivity. As trainings which were much practical and more related to specific works of employees was more likely to enhance and improve productivity. This is because they acquire new skills as they use the tools and machinery in the process of the training. Also when training was more structured employees developed a high level of satisfaction.

Recommendations

Following closely the findings of the study, the following recommendations are made:

- Training programmes should be more targeted to subordinates as they tend to have little education and less training programmes. For supervisors, their training should be more frequent to increase their competence level and guidance to the subordinates.
- Due to the difficulty in the physical measure of productivity in relation to employee training. The company has to take start cataloguing output just after a major employee training. This information will be very useful to compare with months where training was not organised. Also supervisors must be given an evaluation form to help in easy evaluation of employee performance.

- Lastly training designs should be sector specific and more practical. On job training is the most preferred by employees and this employees believe had a direct impact on their performance. WAMCO has to structure about 70% of it trainings to on job.

Areas for further research

This study has attempted to assess the employee training policy, practices, evaluation and job performance in one organisation in Ghana. This makes generalization of findings difficult. It is therefore important to other studies to try to research in three or more organisation in one study. Also, further research in companies output can be correlated with employee training. This will help to know if there relationships are positive or just perceptual.

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APPENDIX A

QUESTIONNAIRE

The study is seeking your opinions on training and productivity in this organisation. The study is being conducted for academic purposes and nothing more. The researcher takes full responsibility for anonymity and confidentiality of any information given out. Your responses will contribute to the success of this study. Counting on your cooperation and support. Thank you.

Direction: Please tick or write where appropriate.

A. Socio-demographic information

1. Age

- a. 20-29 []
- b. 30-39 []
- c. 40-49 []
- d. 50-59 []
- e. 60+ []

2. Sex

- a. . Male []
- b. Female []

3. Highest educational attainment

- a. JHS/ 'O' Level []
- b. SHS/ 'A' Level []
- c. HND []

- d. First Degree []
- e. Others []

‘B’ Information on employee training programmes

4. Your position at WAMCO

- a. Driver []
- b. Sampler []
- c. QCA []
- d. QCO []
- e. Secretary []
- f. Other []

5. How long have you worked in the organisation (year/s)

- a. 1-5 []
- b. 6-10 []
- c. 11-15 []
- d. 16-20 []
- e. 21+ []

6. Are you aware of any training policy in WAMCO?

- a. Yes []
- b. No []

7. Have you had any form of training?

- a. Yes []
- b. No []

8. If your answer to 7 above was yes, when was your last training session?

- a. 6 months-1 year ago []

- b. . 2-3 years ago []
- c. . 4 years and over []

9. How many times have you gone for training if you have been in the employment of WAMCO for more than two (2) years?

- a. Once []
- b. Twice []
- c. . Many times []

10. Mode of Selection

- a. a. Recommendation []
- b. Personal Request []
- c. Mandatory []
- d. Other,
- e. please specify.....

11. What were the objectives of the training?

- a. .For performance improvement []
- b. .Orientation/Induction []
- c. Acquisition of new Skills []
- d. Other (please specify.....)

12. Type/form of training (please specify)

13. Method of facilitation

- a. Seminar []
- b. On the job training []
- c. Understudy Training []

d. Formal lectures/classes []

14. How was the training evaluated (please specify)

.....
.....

15. Do you think training at WAMCO is planned?

a. Yes [] b. No []

16. Do you think WAMCO Training program is systematic?

a. Yes [] b. No []

17. Are you satisfied with the type of training policy available at WAMCO ?

a. Yes [] b. No []

18. Why the above response. Give reason.....

.....

18. What do you suggest.....

.....

‘C’ Performance and productivity

19. Has training improved your performance on the job?

a. Yes [] b. No []

20. If your response to 19 above was Yes, how do you know, specify.....

.....

21. Has training affected your output per hour/day?

a. Yes [] b. No []

22. How has training affected your output, specify

.....

.....

23. Can you quantify the output in terms of bags/tones?

a. Yes [] b. No []

24. If you answered yes to 23 above, specify how you can quantify the output.

.....

.....

.....

25. Has training exposed you to other skills that will help your future development?

a. Yes [] b. No []

26. How would your supervisor rate your quality of work in terms of perfect work outcomes?

27.

28. Free of errors, and of high accuracy?

- a. Excellent []
- b. Very good []
- c. Fairly good []
- d. Not good []
- e. Not at all good []

29. How would your supervisor rate your work efficiency in terms of your supervisor's?

.....
.....

30. Assessment of your work speed or quantity of work?

- a. a. Excellent []
- b. Very good []
- c. Fairly good []
- d. Not good []
- e. Not at all good []

31. How would you rate your own work performance in terms of your ability to complete quality work on time?

- a. Excellent []
- b. Very good []
- c. Fairly good []
- d. Not good []
- e. Not at all good []

32. Compared to your co-workers, how would you rate your work performance?

- a. Excellent []
- b. Very good []
- c. Fairly good []
- d. Not good []
- e. Not at all good []

33. Have you gained some sponsorship from WAMCO for further studies since you were employed?

- a. Yes []
- b. No []

34. If your response to 30 above was yes, please specify the type of sponsorship.

.....

.....

.....

35. Are you aware of any training and development projections available for you?

- a. Yes []
- b. No []

36. . Have you ever sponsored yourself for further training to acquire new skills and knowledge?

- a. Yes []
- b. No []

37. If you answered yes to 29 above, what did you acquire? (Specify)

.....
.....

38. If you answered no to 29 above, do you have plans to sponsor yourself in the future?

a. Yes [] b. No []

36. Any suggestion for management to help improve worker performance and productivity.....