

ORGANISING OF EMPLOYEE TRAININGS RELATED TO DOCUMENTATION AND DATABASES

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Abstract: The aim of the article is to establish whether the level of organising level of employee trainings within the scope of creating and using internal documentation and databases of the enterprise (the so-called cold knowledge resources) is related to the level of formalisation of work in the enterprise. The opinions of respondents were studied with the use of a survey questionnaire and then they were analysed with the use of the Kruskal-Wallis and the Mann-Whitney tests. The existence of the relationship between the form of employee training organisation and the level of formalisation of work in the enterprise (grouping variable) was confirmed. The differences between particular pairs of levels of organising of employee training due to a grouping variable were also indicated.

Keywords: employee trainings, knowledge management, documentation, databases.

1 Introduction

Employee trainings in enterprises are a solution which is, above all, supposed to develop employees' competences (Matwiejczuk, 2018). The effects of their implementation may be as follows: more accurate performance of employee's duties by persons employed in the organisation, growth of personal engagement of employees and a greater tendency to manifest an initiative as well as wiser acting (Wolniak, Grebski, 2018). Therefore, from this perspective, employee trainings constitute a solution within the scope of learning of employees which is part of a subsystem of hot knowledge in the enterprise and they are perceived as a form of its support by an organization (Karaś, 2012). The description of development of employees' soft and hard skills frequently appears in the reference books (Gajdzik, 2018), the issue of conducting trainings in enterprises within the scope of creating, circulation and use of the resources of codified knowledge and information which already exist in the organisation, and which are, in turn, an element of the subsystem of organisational cold knowledge, is much less popular among researchers. Any works within this scope treat the issue as an element which accompanies detailed managerial issues, e.g. safety management (Warwas, Sołtys, 2018). It should be emphasized that creating knowledge resources in the enterprise may depend on the process of sharing knowledge as well as on the existing and arising organisation documentation (Andreeva, Kianto, 2011). Especially due to the fact that these processes are related to, among other things, making predictions and coordinating collaboration within the enterprise (Komańda, Sowa, 2014), and the technologies applied in the enterprise often even force an appropriate codification of knowledge and information (Dziubińska, Woźniak, 2015). Documentation in such case is a necessity for assignment of tasks, spread of results (Da Silva Wells et. al., 2011) and their duplication (Nosál, Porubán, 2016). A crucial aspect of these issues is accepted and motivated use of databases (Marler, 2006).

1.1 Employee trainings vs. knowledge resources in the enterprise

At the beginning of the consideration of the issue raised it should be noticed that the issue of employee trainings is not only an economic or organizational problem but also a legal one. Legal regulations introduced impose a duty on an employer to enable employees to develop their professional qualifications (Pisarczyk, 2003) and they are still a significant element of the labour code (Polish Labor Code, 2018). This multidimensional nature of employee trainings results in consequences which affect the functioning of the organization, especially within the scope of human resources management. It is an important observation since employees may connect professional work with the possibility to pursue formal education (Komańda, 2015). Lack of properly integrated attitude to this challenge leads to low efficiency of trainings conducted in the enterprise

(or on its commission) (Róžański, 2012). Moreover, the necessity to formulate clear rules and criteria in this respect is emphasized (Balcerzyk, Smal, 2017). At the same time, the fact that employees attend trainings, especially when trainings meet their expectations, is, in turn, related to their level of motivation and attachment to the organisation (Owoyemi et. al., 2011), and, as a result, to the development of their potential (Mlkva et.al., 2017).

The above-mentioned challenges related to the issues of organising of employee trainings and support of the functioning of the enterprise as well as simultaneous development of individual employees are connected with hot and cold knowledge in the organisation. Cold knowledge represents a fundamental system of mutual interdependencies (Gobillot, 2013) between particular parts of the organization as well as between their individual members. Therefore, it is based on the organisational formalism the basis of which is the source of understanding for what should be done and why. These interdependencies may also be considered between enterprises, especially in case of the existence of a legal and organizational correlation. As the results of the studies show, dependence/independence of a business entity may influence the applied forms of trainings within the scope of cold knowledge which is expressed, among other things, by work regulations as well as organisational routines (Komańda, 2017(a)). These aspects become particularly significant in the context of establishing procedures and using further resources of cold knowledge of the enterprise, i.e. internal documentation of the enterprise as well as organisational databases (Komańda, 2017 (b)).

Cold knowledge is contrasted with the so-called hot knowledge which is related to the experience of individual persons. It has been defined as "people's skills acquired through education, life and professional experience" and its tight connection with individual motivation is pointed out at the same time (Materska, 2005). The enterprise in the matter of hot knowledge is therefore interested, above all, in the development of soft and hard competences of employees and choice of appropriate solutions within the scope of their motivation (Komańda, 2016).

1.2 Issues of employee trainings organisation

These observations make it possible to state that the organisation of trainings in the enterprise has to be aimed at creating conditions for full use of the potential of employees as well as the organization itself, which is a challenging task (Róžański, 2012). It needs to take into consideration mutual relationships between a formal system as well as less obvious and less formal relationships which occur parallelly in the enterprise (Rokita, Dziubińska, 2017). It is related to the necessity to perceive these issues also through the prism of the conversion process of the forms of knowledge (Mikula, 2006) (in a two-way manner between practical, individual knowledge – the so-called hot knowledge and the so-called cold knowledge which is formalized and widespread in the enterprise).

In the source literature, the issue of trainings conducted in the enterprises is related, above all, to the issue of efficient work and its improvement (Billett, 2001). The issue of learning, which is considered in a multi-dimensional manner is also a part of these considerations. Learning in the enterprise is presented as a process conditioned by undertaken actions (activity) of the members of the organisation as well as the organisation itself, their individual and organisational situational context (Kim, 1998) and prevailing organizational culture (Evans, Rainbird, 2002). To a large extent, the organisational culture is from this perspective expressed by a way of collective thinking characteristic for a given organisation (Bučková, 2017). With reference to the issue of efficient work it should be noticed that trainings may concern particular aspects of conducted work or they may be of a general nature. As the results of the studies show, trainings of a general nature seem to translate into the engagement of employees to a greater extent, and, as a result,

into their work efficiency (such types of trainings are perceived as a specific form of motivation) (Barrett, O'Connell, 2001). It is worth mentioning that apart from specially organised employee trainings in the enterprise there is also a form of practical knowledge acquisition. However, this form of training is frequently used by the management of the enterprise as an unstructured and low-cost one, although from a formal point of view it should rely on a clear curriculum, prepared workout handouts related to the scope of performed vocational duties and specific individual support of the trainer offered to the employee attending the training (Jacobs, 2003).

2 Method

The aim of the conducted study was to establish the existence of relationships between the power of formalisation of work in the enterprise and implementation of trainings in the enterprise of a specific level of organising within the scope of databases and internal documentation. Therefore, two hypotheses were formulated:

H1: There is a relationship between the indications of respondents concerning the level of organising of trainings related to internal documentation and their opinion on the level of formalisation of work in the enterprise.

H2: There is a relationship between the indications of respondents concerning the level of organising of trainings related to databases present in the enterprise and their opinion on the level of formalisation of work in the enterprise.

The following research questions were also posed:

1. Between which levels of organising of trainings related to internal documentation are there significant differences due to the respondents' opinion concerning the level of formalisation of work in the enterprise?
2. Between which levels of organising of trainings related to databases are there significant differences due to the respondents' opinion concerning the level of formalisation of work in the enterprise?

The Kruskal-Wallis test was applied in order to verify the hypotheses. The Mann-Whitney test was applied for the purposes of the posed research questions to compare the variables in pairs in order to detect their statistically significant difference towards each other (therefore, the hypotheses of their statistically significant difference were tested for each pair of variables).

The method of sampling for the study was of non-probability nature. It assumed the form of convenience sampling, which made it possible to obtain a relatively large group of respondents for the study. In this way, a high ratio of return of Paper Self-Administered Questionnaires (PSAQ) was ensured. The number of questionnaires that were filled out and qualified for further stages of the study amounted to 215. Each respondent represented a different enterprise, these were also persons occupying various positions in the organisational hierarchy.

The largest group of respondents (184 persons, 85.6%) represented enterprises located on the territory of the Silesian Voivodeship. As many as 13 enterprises (6%) were from Lesser Poland Voivodeship. In the remaining cases the percentage of enterprises from particular voivodeships did not exceed 2.3% of the studied group.

The questions the respondents were asked concerning the level of organising of trainings existing in the enterprise both within the scope of creating and using internal documentation and database resources contained the following answer versions (according to the level of organising from the highest to the lowest one): special trainings (dedicated trainings based on a formally defined curriculum and conduction procedure), mixed form of trainings, learning in the course of performance of professional duties (lack of formal support for the learning of an employee, there is, however, informal support from co-workers)

and lack of trainings (lack of any kind of formal and informal support for the learning process of an employee). It should be noticed that the mixed form of trainings was assigned according to the theory of the issue of organising of trainings in the form of performance of professional duties as well as simultaneous support for this process through workout handouts and appropriately conducted supervision (the so-called training on-the-job) (Jacobs, 2003).

The respondents could tick one selected answer version related to the form of training. For the purposes of the conducted statistical analysis during data processing a code from a four-level ordinal scale of measurement was assigned to each answer version. The respondents were also asked about their opinion on the level of formalisation of performance of professional duties in the enterprise. In this case the answer was given directly on a five-level Likert scale, where 1 indicated a low level, whereas 5 – a high level.

3 Results

The numbers of particular variants of the respondents' answers are presented in the table below (Table 1). In case of "the level of formalisation of work" variable the largest number of respondents indicated the following variants: rather high (38.13%) and medium (34.41%). In case of organising of trainings within the scope of internal documentation the respondents most often indicated learning through performance of duties (48.84%) and special trainings (23.26%). The most popular answers to the trainings within the scope of creating and using databases were as follows: through performance of duties (41.39%) and lack of trainings (28.37%).

The Kruskal-Wallis test was applied in order to find out whether the level of organising of trainings within the scope of internal documentation in the opinion of the surveyed respondents occurs independently from their opinion concerning the level of formalisation of work or not. The Chi-square test value (at three degrees of freedom) in this case amounted to 14.873, whereas its significance to 0.002 ($p < 0.01$). Therefore, it was necessary to reject the hypothesis about the equalisation of distribution in the compared subgroups. Thus, it was possible to make a conclusion that the indicated levels of organising of trainings within the scope of the rules governing the creation and usage of documentation of the enterprise depend on the perceived level of formalisation of work. The following values were obtained in case of the level of organising of trainings within the scope of databases (three degrees of freedom again): Chi-square value 18.011, and the value of the significance level 0.0001 ($p < 0.01$). It was possible to state also in this case that the levels of organising of trainings within the scope of databases depend on the level of formalisation of work.

In order to determine between which levels of organising of trainings the actual differences occur, the decision was made to apply the Mann-Whitney test and compare in pairs particular levels of organising of trainings concerning internal documentation of the enterprise (Table 2), as well as databases (Table 3) as tested variables. It was done with regard to the assessment of the respondents concerning the level of formalisation of work in the enterprise (grouping variable).

While making an analysis of data presented in tables 2 and 3 it is worth noticing for which cases the level of significance is lower than 0.05 (it is indicative of a statistically significant difference between the levels of organising of trainings with regard to the grouping variable).

From the values of average ranks, the information about the level of formalisation of performance of professional duties stated by the respondents can also be read out. The higher the rank at a given level of organising of trainings, the higher the level of formalisation of work in the enterprises in the opinion of the respondents (these issues should be considered within the framework of the pairs of variables).

Table 1. Distribution of answers obtained from the respondents

Area of trainings	Level of organising of trainings	Perceived level of formalisation of work					Total
		low	rather low	medium	rather high	high	
Documentation	special trainings	0	2	17	26	5	50
	mixed form	0	3	6	15	11	35
	through performance of duties	3	17	37	37	11	105
	lack of trainings	2	1	14	4	4	25
Total		5	23	74	82	31	215
Databases	special trainings	0	1	10	22	7	40
	mixed form	0	4	2	12	7	25
	through performance of duties	1	10	34	33	11	89
	lack of trainings	4	8	28	15	6	61
Total		5	23	74	82	31	215

Table 2. Results of the Mann-Whitney test for the variables tested in the area of the form of trainings within the scope of documentation

Pairs of variables	Z value	Significance	Average rank
mixed form	-1.862	0.063	48.53
special trainings			39.13
mixed form	-3.299	0.001**	89.21
performance of duties			64.26
special trainings	-2.084	0.037*	88.26
performance of duties			73.11
mixed form	-2.633	0.008**	35.30
lack of trainings			23.78
special trainings	-1.923	0.055	41.18
lack of trainings			31.64
performance of duties	-0.367	0.714	66.06
lack of trainings			63.14

*Significant at the 0,05 level; **Significant at the 0,01 level.

Table 3. Results of the Mann-Whitney test for the variables tested in the area of the form of trainings within the scope of databases

Pairs of variables	Z value	Significance	Average rank
mixed form	-0.493	0.622	34.34
special trainings			32.16
mixed form	-2.092	0.036*	69.10
performance of duties			54.24
special trainings	-2.408	0.016*	76.09
performance of duties			60.02
mixed form	-2.949	0.003**	55.40
lack of trainings			38.62
special trainings	-3.663	0.000**	63.48
lack of trainings			42.82
performance of duties	-1.850	0.064	80.63
lack of trainings			68.01

*Significant at the 0,05 level; **Significant at the 0,01 level.

While making an analysis of data presented in tables 2 and 3 it is worth noticing for which cases the level of significance is lower than 0.05 (it is indicative of a statistically significant difference between the levels of organising of trainings with regard to the grouping variable).

From the values of average ranks, the information about the level of formalisation of performance of professional duties stated by the respondents can also be read out. The higher the rank at a given level of organising of trainings, the higher the level of formalisation of work in the enterprises in the opinion of the respondents (these issues should be considered within the framework of the pairs of variables).

4 Discussion

In case of trainings within the scope of the cold knowledge resources lack of significant difference of the variables tested with regard to the grouping variable was indicated by two pairs of particular levels of organising of trainings. Special trainings and mixed form were one of them, whereas lack of trainings and performance of duties were other one. These are, in a way, two extreme cases of pairs. In case of one of them, one has to deal with two levels of organising of trainings of the highest level of organising, in case of the other – with the lowest level of organising (or even with the lack of formal trainings). It is also important that in case of a statistically significant difference of pairs of levels of training organising in both areas (i.e. within the scope of documentation and databases) the trainings of higher level of organising scored higher ranks, that is the acknowledgment of a stronger influence of formalisation of work in the enterprise.

In case of the variable testing the level of organising of trainings within the scope of documentation, it was impossible to indicate a statistically significant difference for the pair: lack of trainings and special trainings. The unsatisfactory significance level obtained is in this case, however, only 0.005 above the limit value, which could have been caused by the sampling method and the structure of the group of respondents. Descriptive statistics show that in case of lack of trainings 32% of respondents' answers concerned simultaneously indications of rather strong and strong influence of formal rules of work, whereas in case of special trainings it was as many as 62% of the answers.

It is worth emphasizing that the indicated relationship between the level of formalisation of work and the level of organising of employee training is not surprising in the light of the arrangements made in the introduction to this work. Formal decisional procedures and criteria are essential for designing, organising and implementing employee trainings (Singh, Vohra, 2009). However, it is emphasized that high formalisation of work which is expressed by, among other things, bureaucratisation of the procedures in the organisation does not favour building of employee engagement (Bendkowski, 2017). This engagement is crucial for achieving expected results of the training itself as well as enterprise performance and job satisfaction of employees (Lai et al., 2017). Therefore, the indicated lack of statistically significant difference with regard to the level of formalisation of work between pairs of forms of trainings representing the lowest and the highest level of organising seem to be extremely interesting. These facts may indicate two issues. Firstly, even if the enterprise is characterised by low formalisation of work there is a possibility not to use forms of employee trainings organised in the most poorest way. Secondly, in case of the conditions of high formalisation of work in the enterprise the most formalised ways of training personnel are not necessarily applied.

5 Summary

Cold knowledge makes it possible to widespread the understanding of the sense of performed professional duties among employees and make them aware of their connection with other organisational areas and processes. The above-mentioned

issues are undoubtedly related to the knowing and obeying procedures and regulations; therefore, they also constitute a part of the issue related to the level of formalisation of conditionings of undertaken professional duties. From this point of view organising of employee trainings is, on the one hand, an implemented internal procedure in the enterprise which depends on the existing formal organisational solutions, and, on the other hand, it may favour the establishment of a deepened understanding of the essence and interdependencies of formal rules regulating the functioning of this entity.

The results of the conducted study make it possible to assume the hypotheses made in this paper. However, the obtained results indicate that despite a general relationship between the level of organising of employee trainings within the scope of the selected areas of cold knowledge and the level of formalisation of work in the enterprise, in the opinion of the respondents included in the study, there is lack of statistically significant difference in the application of pairs of trainings representing simultaneously two forms of the lowest and two forms of the highest level of formal organising. It may prove a practice applied in the enterprises within the scope of organisation of trainings which would indicate that in specific conditions the forms of organising trainings within the framework of these pairs may be applied interchangeably. It implies an assumption that planners and organizers of trainings may to some extent of freedom decide upon the form of training. It seems important for the need to build the employees' engagement to become a criterion deciding upon a particular form of training within this context. However, due to the applied sampling method the obtained results may only be referred to the studied group.

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