

## **EMPLOYEE SUSTAINABILITY AND SKILLS ACQUISITION THROUGH LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT IN THE INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY SECTOR**

**Julie Jose,**

*Ph.D. Research Scholar (FT), PG & Research Department of Commerce, St. Joseph's College  
(Autonomous), Tiruchirappalli, affiliated to Bharathidasan University Tiruchirappalli.*

**Dr. F. R. Alexander Pravin Durai,**

*Head and Associate Professor, PG & Research Department of Commerce, St. Joseph's College  
(Autonomous), Tiruchirappalli. Affiliated to Bharathidasan University.*

### **Abstract**

*Skills, abilities, and knowledge are the most significant factors for the efficient conduct of organizations through human capital. Effective learning and development can increase and enhance these valuable ingredients. The focus of this study is to develop a framework for employees' sustainable futures by acquiring new skills and advancement through Learning and Development. The study was conducted among IT professionals. The framework proposes that employees who are ready and open to the learning and development initiatives acquire skills, understanding, and knowledge and progress in their future.*

**Keywords:** Skills Acquisition, Learning, and Development, Sustainable future, Employees

### **Introduction**

Learning and Development is a process that fosters the acquisition of new techniques and technological advancements to perform the job with effectiveness and efficiency. A successful learning and development initiative fulfills the organizational strategic goals and satisfies the individual needs of the employees in their work. Effective learning programs help the workforce to concentrate and improve their individual and professional advancement which ultimately results in the achievement of organizational objectives. The acquisition of valuable knowledge and skills is the need of the employees to succeed in their current job and their future career progression. Besides having thorough knowledge in performing particular duties, procuring a specific skillset is the prerequisite to performing at higher levels. Acquiring skills creates an effective path toward developing new abilities and enhancing commitment and expertise with efficacy.

### **Review of Literature**

Learning and Development is a search or research in a systematic manner of acquiring new skills and knowledge for the future advancement in the work the employees do. Learning new skills and enhancing the existing knowledge brings light to the past experiences by exploring, learning, discussing, and solving the real-world phenomena of work (McCormick and Kiss, 2015). Learning and Development provide the learners with bidirectionality of skills and knowledge. Learning how to unlearn what is already known is the key to the perfect acquisition of skills and abilities. And that is the point of making room for new knowledge (Grosemans et al, 2015). Learning and Development systematically develop the existing skills, knowledge, and abilities that are required by the employees to perform well in their given duties or job (Michel Armstrong, 2001)

The term learning indicated the process of enhancing the skills, aptitudes, and abilities of the workforce to perform a specific task. Learning and Development help in updating the existing talents and patterns and replace with new and advanced skills and knowledge. Successful employees are the ones who have actively and willfully participated in the learning and development initiatives of the organization (Aswathappa, 2000). The main purpose of learning and development is to assure the availability of a skilled workforce in the organization for attaining the individual, organizational, functional, and social objectives (Chaudhuri, 2004). The acquisition of skills and abilities brings a difference in the aptitude of the employees. Those who acquired much from the L&D initiatives were able to excel in their duties, those with less aptitude produced poor performance and those employees with a middle range of aptitude fell at an intermediate level in their performance (Fox, Wayne, et al, 1969).

### **Significance of the study**

Skills acquisition is an important factor for any professional who wishes to obtain a good position in the IT industry. Skills and talents can only be enhanced through proper learning and development initiatives of the organizations.

Every IT employee has the desire to reach heights in their professional career. Unfortunately, some fail to perform well, get downsized, and leave the organization. Skills acquisition is one of the sources to prepare and perform well with more knowledge and expertise and become an efficient employee with a safe and sustainable future.

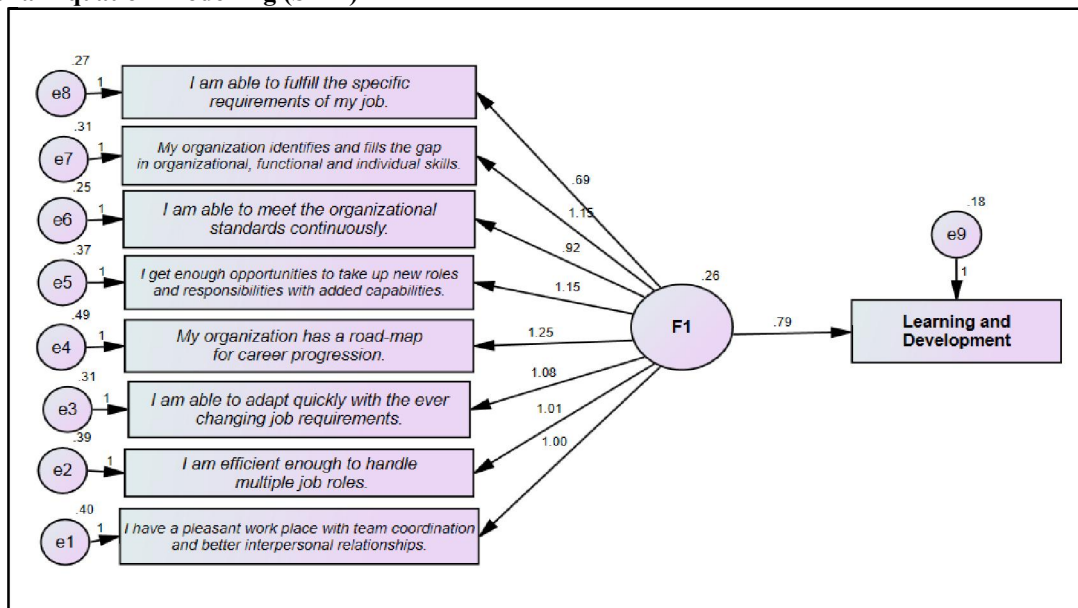
**Objectives of the study**

- To explore the impact of Learning and Development in enhancing the skills and abilities of the employees.
- To examine the influence of skills acquisition in increasing employee capabilities.
- To identify whether the organization has a road map for career progression.
- To investigate the role of skills acquisition in the future sustainability of the employees.

**Hypothesis**

H1- There is a significant relationship between Learning and Development and Skills acquisition in the sustainable future of the employees.

**Structural Equation Modelling (SEM)**



SEM is used to verify the relationship of the variables in the study and to assess the compatibility of the used model. Learning and Development influence skills acquisition to the extent of 0.79.

Skills acquisition influences career progression to the extent of 1.25, utilizing new roles and responsibilities with added capabilities to the extent of 1.15, filling the organizational, functional, and individual skills gap to the extent of 1.15, handling multiple jobs to the extent of 1.01, adaptability with the changing job requirements to the extent of 1.08, team coordination and interpersonal relationship to the extent of 1.00, meeting organizational standards to the extent of 0.92, and fulfilling the specific requirements of the job to the extent of 0.69.

The interpretation is that L&D has a significant influence on skills acquisition. Improved and enhanced skills, knowledge, and abilities equip the employees with efficiency and effectiveness in their work. The organization facilitates the road-map for employees' career progression through L&D. The enhanced skills and abilities help the employees to take up new roles and responsibilities with efficiency, adapt quickly to the changing job environments, make them capable to handle multiple jobs with team coordination and good interpersonal relationship resulting in fulfilling the organizational standards and objectives.

**Table: 1- GOODNESS OF FIT TEST FOR STRUCTURALEQUATION MODELLING (SEM)**

Model	Normed chi-Square ( $\chi^2/df$ )	GFI	AGFA	CFI	NFI	RMS
Study model	4.27	.871	.785	.863	.857	.089

Recommended model	Less than 5	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	> 0.90	< 0.1
-------------------	-------------	--------	--------	--------	--------	-------

For evaluating SEM, the values of Goodness to Fit Index (GFI), Adjusted Goodness to Fit Index (AGFI), Comparative Fit Index (CFI), Root Mean Square Error of Approximation (RMSEA), and Normed Fit Index (NFI), which are shown in the Goodness Fit model in Table: 1. The result of the Goodness of Fit Test is as follows: GFI is 0.90 which is equal to the value of the recommended model. The other values are AGFI is 0.785, CFI is 0.8639, NFI is 0.857 and RMSEA is 0.089 which are satisfactory. Gerbig and Anderson (1992) give the criteria for an acceptable model. Bagozzi and Yi (1988) indicate the absolute fitness of the model. Therefore, it is found that L&D has a significant influence in enhancing the skills of the employees. The acquisition of skills helps them to perform well with more capability and efficiency resulting in their future sustainability in the organization.

**Table 2: Regression Analysis**

Description			Estimate	S.E.	C.R.	P
I have a pleasant workplace with team coordination and better interpersonal relationships.	<---	L&D	1.000			
I am efficient enough to handle multiple job roles.	<---	L&D	1.012	.062	16.370	***
I can adapt quickly to the ever-changing job requirements.	<---	L&D	1.077	.061	17.638	***
My organization has a roadmap for career progression.	<---	L&D	1.252	.073	17.141	***
I get enough opportunities to take up new roles and responsibilities with added capabilities.	<---	L&D	1.151	.066	17.566	***
I can meet organizational standards continuously.	<---	L&D	.918	.053	17.304	***
My organization identifies and fills the gap in organizational, functional, and individual skills.	<---	L&D	1.153	.063	18.157	***
I can fulfill the specific requirements of my job.	<---	L&D	.686	.047	14.683	***
Overall	<---	L&D	.787	.045	17.326	***

Table 2 depicts the unstandardized measurements and their related test statistics. The unstandardized assessments, their Standard Error (SE), and the Critical Ratio values are provided. P is the probability associated with the hypothesis. And here the hypothesis is accepted.

**Table 3: Standardized Regression Weights**

Description			Estimate
I have a pleasant workplace with team coordination and better interpersonal relationships.	<---	L&D	.625
I am efficient enough to handle multiple job roles.	<---	L&D	.635
I can adapt quickly to the ever-changing job requirements.	<---	L&D	.699
My organization has a roadmap for career progression.	<---	L&D	.673
I get enough opportunities to take up new roles and responsibilities with added capabilities.	<---	L&D	.695
I can meet organizational standards continuously.	<---	L&D	.682
My organization identifies and fills the gap in organizational, functional, and individual skills.	<---	L&D	.727
I can fulfill the specific requirements of my job.	<---	L&D	.555
Overall	<---	L&D	.683

Table 8 portrays the standardized estimate values for the model. The relative influences of each predictor variable on each outcome variable are evaluated using standardized estimates.

According to the analysis skills acquisition through proper L&D empowers the employees with adequate knowledge and abilities to withstand the fluctuating technological environments of the industry. The organizational initiatives

on effective L&D help the employees to fulfill the requirements of their job by making them competent and rewardable, and that ensures their future sustainability. Thus, the statistical analysis and interpretations prove that there is a significant relationship between Learning and Development and Skills acquisition in the sustainable future of the employees in the organizations, and thus, the alternate hypothesis is accepted.

### **Conclusion**

Acquisition of skills and knowledge helps to grow professionally and expands career opportunities. Skills and abilities are acquired through effective learning and development initiatives from the organization. Enhanced skills improve performance and efficiency in work by demonstrating dedication, improvement, and advancement. Talents, knowledge, abilities, expertise, and competency are essential, especially for IT employees. Therefore, L&D has a significant role in developing the skills and abilities of IT employees. When the organizations set up a clear road map for employee career progression, the chances for updating and uplifting the skills and abilities become possible. The enhanced skills increase the capabilities of the employees, and thus the future sustainability of the employee is assured.

### **Reference**

1. Bagozzi RP, Yi Y (1988). On the evaluation of structural equation models. *J. Acad. Mark. Sci.* 16(1):74-94.
2. Chaudhuri, Manodip Ray.(2004) "Employ Training Grooming for a Better Tomorrow". *HRM Review*, Vol.4, No.1, January
3. Fox, Wayne, L. Aptitude level and the acquisition of skills and knowledge in a variety of military training tasks. *Journal of Training and Development* 45.
4. FR Durai, A Pravin, I Adaikalasamy (2014) A Study on Human Resource Audit Practices Perception of Employees in Mando Automotive India Limited. *International Journal of Advanced Research in Computer Science and Management Studies*. Vol 2.
5. Gerbing DW, Anderson JC (1992). Monte Carlo evaluations of the goodness of fit indices for structural equation models. *Social. Methods Res.* 21(2):132-160
6. Grosemans, I., Boon, A., Verclairen, C., Dochy, F. and Kyndt, E. (2015), "Informal learning of primary school teachers: considering the role of teaching experience and school culture", *Teaching and Teacher Education*, Vol. 47, pp. 151-161.
7. McCormick, K. and Kiss, B. (2015), "Learning through renovations for urban sustainability: the case of the Malmö Innovation Platform", *Current Opinion in Environmental Sustainability*, Vol. 16, pp. 44-50.