

A STUDY ON TRAINING FACTORS IN AVIATION INDUSTRY: DETAILING TRAINING EFFECTIVENESS

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ABSTRACT: Human resource development is that part of management practices which creates, develops and manages the human element. Employees are the lifeline for any organization. Training to employees is like vitamins to the human body. More vitamins help in smooth working of the body, so same is in the case of training programs organised by the companies for facilitating the smooth and effective operations of the organization. Service industry is mainly human resource oriented, where training programs plays crucial role for standing the competitive markets successfully. As aviation industry is amongst the booming industries of the world, so this study is conducted on the Indian aviation industry. Introduction and growth of low cost carriers have changed the face of Indian aviation. Cabin crew are the face of airline. This study aims on identifying the factors associated with cabin crew training in the aviation industry. The initiative has been taken to evaluate the impact of these training factors on training effectiveness. Data collection was done through self designed questionnaire on five point Likert's scale and Cronbach's alpha for checking the reliability of the designed instrument was applied. Further descriptive statistics is used for representing the demographic information gathered of the respondents and with the help of exploratory factor analysis, the data has been analysed. Through simple random sampling technique, total 61 cabin crew were identified as the potential respondents for conducting this research study. Results show that there is a significant impact of training factors on the training effectiveness of cabin crew.

Keywords: Training Programmes, Aviation Industry, Cabin Crew, Training Effectiveness

INTRODUCTION

Employee is considered as the major element of every firm and their success or failure mainly is based on their performance. Human resource development is that part of management practices which creates, develops and manages the human element. At all phases of HR development, the value of training cannot be ruled out. It has been demonstrated by numerous studies that, there are sound associations amongst training practices and distinct measures of employee performance. In today's era employees are not keen to join an organization where their knowledge and skills are not upgraded. Many organizations are providing opportunities for learning and development of employees for using it as a retention tool. A large number of organizations use this strategy of proper & effective training, by increasing their training budgets to retain and get quality output from the employees.

Employees are delegated with different role & responsibilities and training helps them to accomplish these roles & responsibilities, also further prepare them for the future responsibilities as well. Employee is a key element of the organization. Organizations round the globe, are competing and striving for success with the aim of out-competing those in the same industry. In order to do so, organizations have to obtain and utilize its human resources effectively. Organizations need to be aware of the face more realistically towards keeping their human resources updated. In doing so, managers need to pay more attention, specially to all the core functions of human resource management as this plays an important role in different organizational, social and economically associated areas among others which are influential for the attainment of the organizational goals and thus organizations successful continuation in the market.

Therefore, it is every organization's responsibility to enhance the job performance of employees and implementation of training and development, which is one of the major steps that most companies need to achieve.

Training and Development:

Training and Development is a structured program with different methods, which can be on the job training methods and off the job training methods, designed by professionals for enhancing the skills to perform a particular job. It has become a continuous task of organisations, for updating skills and knowledge of employees in accordance with the changing needs and environment. Cost optimization in contrast to the available resources has become pressing need for every organisation which will be possible only by improving efficiency and productivity of employees, by providing proper employee training and development with a condition that it should be provided by professionals.

Training is a detailed process of learning in a sequence of programmed behaviour. It is the application of knowledge & gives people an awareness of rules & procedures to guide their behaviour. It helps in bringing positive changes in the knowledge, skills & attitudes of employees serving in organization. Therefore, training process tries necessarily to improve the skills or add on to the existing level of knowledge so that the employees are equipped in a better way to do the present job and to mould him to be fit for a higher job involving higher responsibilities. So, it bridges the gap between what the employees have & what their job demands.

Training has been as defined by different researchers in the field of management. Some important definitions of training are as under:

- In the words of **Dale S. Beach**, "Training is the organised procedure by which people learn knowledge and Improve skill for a definite purpose."
- In the words of **Michael J. Jucius**, "Training is a process by which the aptitudes, skills and abilities of employees to perform specific jobs are increased."

Training process has following steps, the detailed process starts with need identification of the particular type of training, then next level is where which type of training should be adopted i.e., on the job or off the job as per the organizational requirements. Then third stage is where the goals and objectives of the designed training program are set and next step is when this designed training program is implemented in the company. Last stage is when this training program is evaluated for finding out if the desired goals out of the implementation of this program are met or not. Continuous feedback from starting till end makes the program more effective as there is a scope for further improvement wherever required with the help of effective feedback by various stakeholders.

Training Effectiveness is an indication that the training efforts taken up the organizations are making a visible difference and a positive impact in those areas of application after the training is completed or not. Training effectiveness is that study of characteristics of the individual, training and organizational that affects training processes in whole. It focuses on the learning systems as a whole thus providing a macro view of training outcomes. Effectiveness is the measure of the degree to which the organizations output correspond to the need and wants of the external environment that include customers, suppliers, competitors and regulatory agencies. It is a measure of the appropriateness of the goals chosen and the degree to which they are achieved. So, to measure the effectiveness of training is very important post training to analyse the impact of training program.

Aviation Industry and Cabin Crew:

Aviation industry is considered to be amongst the booming industries of the world. Airlines are one of the major modes of transportation for people. The history of Aviation in India traces back to 18 February 1911, when the first commercial civil aviation flight took off from Allahabad for Naini over a distance of 6 miles (9.7 km). Indian aviation industry is controlled and managed by DGCA (Directorate General of Civil Aviation). All the required guidelines and governing regulations are framed by this regulatory body. For the civil aviation in the world the ruling body is IATA (International Air Transport Association).

Indian Aviation industry can broadly be divided into military and civil aviation. According to the International Air Transport Association, India has the fastest-growing aviation market. On the basis of market size, India is the ninth largest civil aviation market in the world having a potential of becoming third largest aviation market by 2020. The major players in Indian Aviation industry can be described under two broad categories i.e. full service and low cost airlines. Full service airlines in India are Air India (the only public sector undertaking), Jet Airways and Vistara. Low cost airlines include Indigo, Spicejet, Go Air, Jet Lite and Air India Express. All the above mentioned airlines are of Indian origin.

Indigo Airline, registered as Inter globe Aviation Ltd., is a low-cost airline headquartered at Gurugram, Haryana, India. It is the largest airline flying in Indian skies in terms of passengers carried and fleet size, with a market share of 38% as on August 2017. It is the largest Asian individual low-cost carrier (LCC) in terms of fleet size and passengers carried, and the Seventh largest carrier in Asia with over 41 million passengers carried in 2016. The primary hub of the airline is Indira Gandhi International Airport, Delhi. The airline was founded by Rahul Bhatia and Rakesh Gangwal in 2006. Twenty dots arranged in the shape of an aircraft serve as the logo of the airline. On all the aircrafts of Indigo, it uses a two tone blue livery on a white background with the belly of the aircraft painted in name of Indigo with the logo in white.

There are many job profiles associated with airlines mainly pilots, cabin crew, airport customer service agents, aircraft maintenance crew, aviation doctors, airport operations team, airline rostering, airline fare construction and ticketing, crew instructors and managerial departments like human resources, finance, marketing, operations and others.

Cabin Attendants are known as the "FACE" of an airline. A Cabin Attendant is a trained person who is responsible for looking after the passengers on board. In addition to make passengers comfortable, Cabin Attendant is also responsible for seeing that safety regulations are obeyed and passengers know what to do in case of an emergency. It is the impact of training programmes that a Cabin Attendant is confident enough to take care of the safety of so many passengers at 36,000 ft. Which is not at all a easy job. A job of a cabin attendant to people generally, is perceived as cabin crew members are bearers in sky who serve food and look after comfort of the passengers. With all practicalities, the actual paramount duty of the cabin crew is to look after the safety of the passengers on board which is not an easy job when you are responsible for so many lives.

Training is considered to be very rigorous as it is not just customer service which we see as passengers and perceive the job profile of cabin crew, but it is more of taking care of passenger's safety and security on board. The standardised type of trainings for cabin crew conducted in almost all the airlines operating in India includes:

- Initial Training
- Type Training/ Conversion Training
- Differences Training
- Familiarization Training
- Recurrent Training
- Refresher Training

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of literature is used to create a platform and justification for research or to demonstrate knowledge on the current state of area. A training and development programme facilitates the learning process (Koontz, 1980). It has been proved that absence of a systematic training and development programme generally results in higher training costs because the employee will not use the best operating methods (Flippo, 1971).

Training affects employees' performance positively and it is a motivational factor which enhances the knowledge of employees towards the job and effective results are produced. This study is intended to measure the level of performance in terms of imparting training and evaluation of impact of training on employees' performance. (Bhat, Zahid H., 2013).

The distinguishing features of training and development, as given by Noe (2008), are: focus, use of work experiences, goal, and participation. In training the focus is current, use of work experiences is low, goal is to gain skills for the present job, and participation is mandatory if initiated while vice versa is applicable for development initiatives. Therefore, training and development is a techniques use to transfer to the employees relevant skills, knowledge and competence to improve employees performance on current jobs and future assignment.

The underline literature is describing the merits of training and its positive influence on employee performance & development areas. There has been many studies conducted on this subject. HRM activities are considered as a gift in the eyes of employees and training is one of them (Mahbuba Sultana, 2013).

The study of Raja Abdul Ghafoor et al (2011) showed that there is a positive correlation between the two variables training & employee performance areas. Also, as per the conclusion results of Afshan Sultana et al (2012) which was investigated in the telecom sector of Pakistan resulted in R square of 0.501 meaning that 50.1% of change in the employee performance can only be achieved by proper training sessions. With the identified T-value, which came out to be 8.58, researcher explained that training is a good explanatory variable to the employee performance.

In the studies, conducted in past in the area of training and development, training effectiveness and training programmes, various factors have been identified which are associated with employee training. So, after extensive review of available literature, some of the factors identified and included in the current research were quality of work, sense of loyalty, value and transferability, motivation, performance improvement, satisfaction out of the training programmes, trainee involvement, training output, degree of participation and competency of the training programmes. Some of the questions asked from the respondents were also related to the management of training programmes, time allocation, duration of training, organization of training sessions and training material provided to the trainees by the company, for assessing the overall satisfaction and impact of the current training programmes organised for cabin crew.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are as follows:

- To identify the training factors associated with cabin crew in Aviation Industry of India.
- To evaluate the impact of these training factors on training effectiveness of cabin crew.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study is descriptive and empirical in nature. For conducting this study, both primary and secondary data was used. Primary data was collected through questionnaire which was filled in by the cabin crew of Indigo airline. The author's professional experience with the Aviation industry and extensive review of published literature has laid foundation for the secondary data used for the purpose of conducting this research.

Tool for Data Collection: For the purpose of primary data collection, self designed questionnaire was used.

Scale for the Questionnaire: The questionnaire was designed using five point Likert's scale where 1 shows Strongly Agree and 5 indicate Strongly Agree.

Sample size: In total, 61 individual responses of cabin crew were included for completing this research study.

Sampling Procedure: The sampling procedure adopted in the study is simple random sampling.

Data Analysis Methodology: Reliability test was applied to check the internal consistency and reliability of the questionnaire with the help of Cronbach's Alpha. Descriptive statistics is used to represent the raw data in a meaningful manner. Exploratory Factor analysis has been applied for identifying the results.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This research study aims at ascertaining the impact of training factors on training effectiveness, operating in the Indian Aviation Industry with special reference to Cabin Crew performance. There are many airlines operating in this competitive Aviation market but this study is restricted to Indigo Airline which is a low cost carrier. Cabin crew responses were recorded in Jaipur. Out of all the employee profiles, only cabin crew were considered and 61 individual responses have been included for conducting this research. This study aims on identifying the training factors for cabin crew in the Indian Aviation industry. Some of the basic limitations faced while conducting this research were like more detail examination will be further more significant with the large-scale sample size and also by selecting more airlines for conducting the research work. There are also different factors involved in cabin crew training programmes which are not concentrated here in this paper because of time limitation.

HYPOTHESIS

H₀: There is no significant impact of training factors on training effectiveness of cabin crew

H_a: There is a significant impact of training factors on training effectiveness of cabin crew

ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

Demographic Information Analysis:

The demographic information analysis of the respondents is as follows-

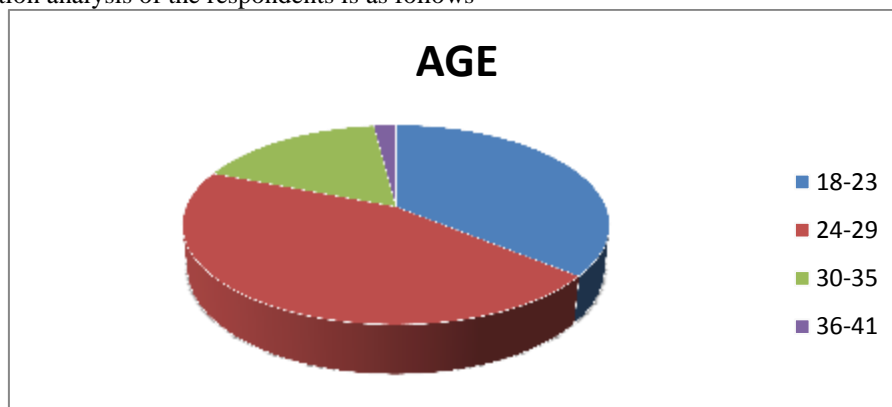


figure 1

Inference- From the above chart, it can be identified that out of the total sample size of 61 employees, 36% of the cabin crew members were from 18-23 age group, 45% were from 24-29 age group, 17% were from 30-35 years age group and 2% crew aged between 36-41 age group.

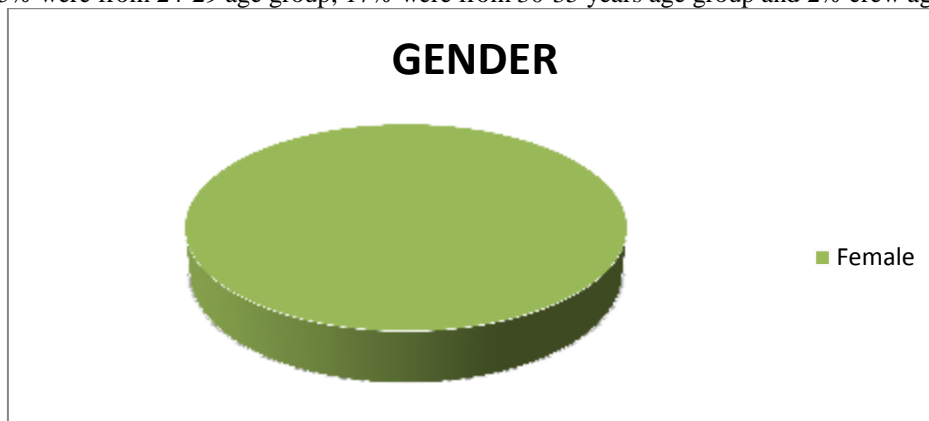


figure 2

Inference- The above mentioned chart indicates the gender of the respondents. The respondents were 100% female as Indigo airline supports girl power so only female cabin crew are hired to fly with their in-flight team.

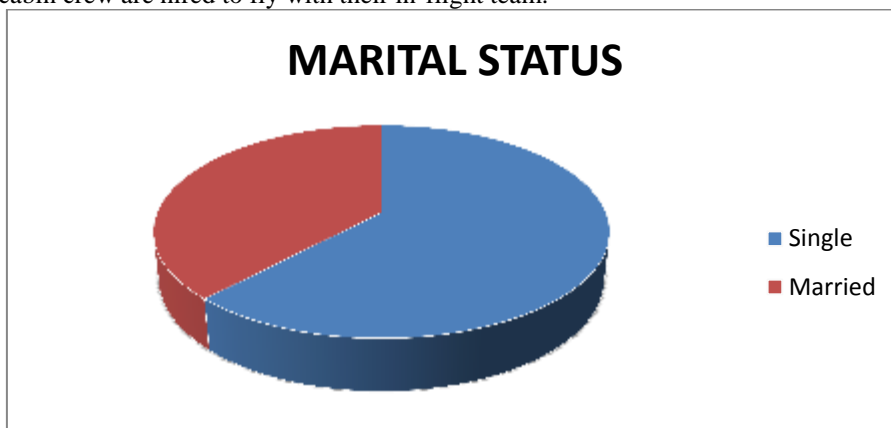


figure 3

Inference- Out of the total sample size, 62% cabin crew are single and 38% were married as shown in the above chart, indicating the marital status of cabin crew.

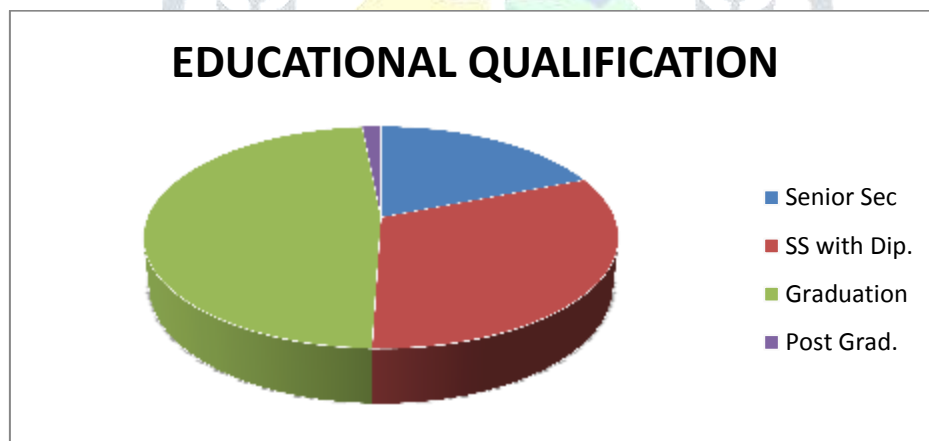


figure 4

Inference- Figure 4 shows the educational qualification of the respondents participated in this research study. Out of 61 cabin crew, 15% crew passed their senior secondary and joined flying, 25% were senior secondary qualified with a diploma specialised in aviation and hospitality industry. 38% cabin crew were graduates and 22% joined in flight team after qualifying post graduation.

Reliability Test:

The reliability measure of questionnaire was computed, result of which is as follows-

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.868	.872	23

The Cronbach's alpha test gives us an indication that the instrument we are using is reliable or not. The questions would lead to our objectives or not. In total there were 23 questions asked by the respondents which included questions based on factors associated with cabin crew for assessing the impact successfully. Generally, score of 0.7 or above is considered good. In this study, the Cronbach's alpha score is 0.868 which shows that the questionnaire is perfectly reliable and in relation with the objectives of this research study.

Exploratory Factor Analysis:

<u>Factor Loadings for Training Factors</u>		
(Factors)	Initial	Extraction
VAR00001	1.000	.857
VAR00002	1.000	.894
VAR00003	1.000	.826
VAR00004	1.000	.853
VAR00005	1.000	.728
VAR00006	1.000	.978
VAR00007	1.000	.571
VAR00008	1.000	.915
VAR00009	1.000	.875
VAR00010	1.000	.841
VAR00011	1.000	.913
VAR00012	1.000	.930
VAR00013	1.000	.751
VAR00014	1.000	.970
VAR00015	1.000	.937
VAR00016	1.000	.939
VAR00017	1.000	.939
VAR00018	1.000	.907
VAR00019	1.000	.909
VAR00020	1.000	.880
VAR00021	1.000	.721
VAR00022	1.000	.922
VAR00023	1.000	.838

Interpretation-

The above table shows the results of factor analysis. As, Factor 1: The training programmes were well managed along with comfortable venues. The factor loading is 0.857 which shows that this is an important criterion for the success of training programs. The cabin attendants feel that the programs are managed properly keeping in mind their comfort. Factor 2: The duration of the training programme was appropriate as the factor loading is .894. Factor 3: The program was well structured and sufficient time was allocated for each subject/module/session is .826. Factor 4: Required training material & assistance were given, is .853. Factor 5: During the program, lot of new ideas were generated, which are useful has .728 factors loading. Factor 6: Incorporation of case studies and exercises useful is .978. Factor 7: Practice during training session is .571. Factor 8: High degree of participation and involvement is .915. Factor 9: Outcome of training for understanding the current requisite of the aviation industry is .875. Factor 10: Training programmes for updating with the latest

technology/practices/policies is .841. Factor 11: Improvement in knowledge and understanding levels of trainees is .913. Factor 12: Training has taught to create & maintain a cordial inter personal relationship in the organization is .930.

Factor 13: Contribution of training towards improving the overall performance is .751. Factor 14: Openness of senior line managers towards juniors for any informal training is .970. Factor 15: Trainee's feedback during and post training is .937. Factor 16: Training has given a thrust to my positive thinking is .939. Factor 17: Highly satisfied with the present training programmes is .939. Factor 18: Highly motivated to perform job after training is .907. Factor 19: Knowledge gained during training has improved the quality of work is .909. Factor 20: Value and transferability to the workplace is .880. Factor 21: Workplace of the training is physically well organised is .721. Factor 22: The merit based promotion gives a higher sense of loyalty to me is .922. Factor 23: Happiness to work for the organization is .838.

As from the analysis of the responses of cabin crew members we can say that there is a significant impact of training factors on training effectiveness of cabin crew. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis is accepted and null hypothesis has been rejected.

CONCLUSION

Human resources are considered to be the life blood for any organization. When we analyse service industry especially, majorly the performance, growth and success of an organization depends on the qualitative and quantitative performance of its employees. In this study cabin crew were the respondents which are also known as "Face of the Airline" as on board they are the only representatives of that airline irrespective of any certain or uncertain situations like medical emergency, disruptive fellow passenger and others. This study was an initiative for finding out the factors related to cabin crew training and assessing the impact of these factors on training effectiveness. Results show that the factors considered for analysing the training effectiveness in this study have significant and positive impact on cabin crew. Cabin crew members of this airline are really delighted to serve and fly with this airline as the airline is taking so many initiatives for providing better working environment, conditions and resources to the crew. Majority of crew feels the high sense of loyalty towards the airline and they are happy to work here.

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