Institute of Social Studies

Graduate School of Development Studies

RECONCILING ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE AND EMPLOYEE SATISFACTION THROUGH TRAINING:
The case of Soroti District Local Government.

A Research Paper presented by:

SIMON PETER OKANYA
(Uganda)

in partial fulfilment of the requirements for obtaining the degree of
MASTERS OF ARTS IN DEVELOPMENT STUDIES

Specialisation:
HUMAN RESOURCES AND EMPLOYMENT
(HRE)

Members of the examining committee:

Dr. John Cameron
Dr. Freek Schiphorst

The Hague, The Netherlands
December, 2008

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Inquiries:

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List of Acronyms

ACAO	Assistant Chief Administrative Officer
CAO	Chief Administrative Officer
DLG	District Local Government
HCT	Human Capital Theory
HOD	Head of Department
HR	Human Resource
HRBV	Human Resource Based View
HRD	Human Resource Development
KSAs	Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes
LG	Local Government
NGO	Non Governmental Organisation
SDLG	Soroti District Local Government
SHRM	Strategic Human Resource Management
TNA	Training Needs Assessment
TNs	Training Needs

Abstract

In this study I explored the link between human resource training and organisational performance in a complex Public Service organisation.

Drawing from a wide range of theoretical literature and also basing on my personal experience as an employee of the district, the study focuses on the complexities involved in reconciling organisational performance and employee satisfaction through training.

Using the theoretical insights of the Human Capital Theory, the Human Resources Based View and the Capability Approach and the Universalist, Configurational and Contingency models of training, the main findings of this study indicate that there are overlaps in the theories and models in relation to training and these can facilitate or inhibit the development and utilisation of organisational or human potentials. Also, contrary to the existing literature on training, the research findings suggest that training episodes and returns can not simply be reduced to a dichotomy of general or specific, rather a more subtle differentiation is paramount.

CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

This study explores the link between human resource training and organisational performance. It examines the relevance of the current training strategies and analyses the impact of these strategies to both employees and the organisation.

Drawing from the existing theoretical literature and basing on my personal experience as an employee of the District, the study shows how practical training episodes reflect on theory.

1.2 Indication of Problem/ Area

Training is one of the most significant processes in Human Resources Management function in organisations. It has the potential of both developing and damaging the capabilities of individual employees and the organisation as well as in contributing or destroying the vital process of organisational change.

In this ever changing and competitive era, some researchers consider that organisations both private and public must consider and plan strategically to have an edge over their competitors. In order to do this, they need to have people (human resources) who are innovative, flexible to market demands and are knowledgeable compared to other organisations and this can not be satisfied unless they invest in developing skills and competencies (Armstrong 2001).

This implies that training is central in human resource management functions since its role is to achieve better performance and thus a well designed and executed training programme should improve individual and departmental performance by way of producing desired impact.

The Constitution of the Republic of Uganda (1995 amended 2006) and the Local Government Act (1997) amended 2006 cap 243) provide a legal frame work for decentralisation and confer wide ranging political, legislative and administrative powers and functions to District Local Governments (DLGs). Prior to decentralisation, training was centrally organised by parent ministries

for their line managed staff who were located in the districts but directly under their jurisdiction.

At the onset of decentralisation, roles and responsibilities of Local Governments(LGs) greatly changed from being exclusively administrative units to development entities with managerial powers and functions for planning, decision making and personnel management(Republic of Uganda 2005a), (Republic of Uganda 2006). District Local Governments were accountable solely to the District Local Councils comprising elected councillors from the various sub counties in the Districts. Therefore, decentralisation as devolution became significant in human resource development because there was a need for having in place human resources that were responsive to the local context.

This increased responsibility saw the need to train staff to be able to match the challenges of decentralisation for effective service delivery. Some of the trainings were broader and more general going beyond the immediate requirements of the district which were more specific as per the mandate given by the Constitution. A case in point are the sub county chiefs and Assistant Chief Administrative Officers (ACAOs) who are required by the Public Service Person Specifications guidelines issued by the Ministry of Public Service to posses a Post- graduate diploma in Public Administration and a certificate in law yet they actually carry out routine general administrative functions that may not necessarily require these qualifications. According to the Ministry of Local Government, this category of employees were required to have this qualification because their jobs had been upgraded and that there was need to have a standardised qualification across the national Public Service (Republic of Uganda 2005a). Whereas the Public Service person specifications require them to possess these qualifications for purposes of tenure in office by way of retention in service and also argue that some of the knowledge gained may be utilised when these people are promoted to higher positions, it remains difficult to establish as to whether such training helps in carrying out their immediate functions.

While the spirit of the these requirements seems that it helps groom people for other responsibilities in case of changing jobs or promotion, it still remains unclear as to whether organisations should prioritise specific training

for short term gains or prioritise more general capabilities development. This then poses the research question; should we have people who are better skilled at their jobs or those who are more flexible and adaptable to pressures of organisational and technological changes?

However, despite numerous government interventions to train employees with hope that this would improve on their efficiency and effectiveness, it (training) appears not to have had a positive effect on their capabilities. Local Government staff is weak in terms of capacity, knowledge, commensurate skills and requisite attitudes(Republic of Uganda 2005a). One government report observes that there is still persistent "workers failure to do what they are trained to do. They have remained unable to develop effective strategies to deal with the work environment and they are unwilling to work under low morale conditions"(Republic of Uganda 2005a:34). In this regard, a number of questions come to mind; why is there still a continuous failure to improve staff attitudes towards work despite training provided? Why don't staff who have undertaken training apply the knowledge acquired? How come that the other 'hidden' capabilities such as relational, deliberative and creative skills are less evident? It appears that there are problems to deal with a balance in mix between individual and institutional training needs. While individual employees may look at what impact the training will have on their future chances of employment and promotion, the District managers may consider what impact such training has on immediate performance. This study therefore sought to examine the extent to which human resource training is linked to organisational performance and employee motivation.

1.3 Relevance and Justification

Decentralisation empowered Local Governments to determine the staffing structures appropriate to their needs and demands. To match these new responsibilities, there was need for new competencies and skills from staff to shoulder their responsibilities and the need to train LG staff prompted by the revised work load in service delivery(Republic of Uganda 2005b),(Republic of Uganda 2006).

Global oriented academic research by Kozlowski et al.(2000) tended to focus on training and individual level analysis, by considering the relationship between training and individual performance. Others have tried to look at knowledge management in view of their survival and profitability in the knowledge economy(Tharenou et al. 2007),(Hafeez and Abdlemeguid 2003).

Such previous researches are relevant to the debate on training and performance and this research also focused on the relationship between training and organisational-level performance. While such previous studies mainly looked at the relationship between training and organisational performance in private and profit making firms, this research explored this relationship from the decentralised Public Service angle. It is thus anticipated that this study will help employees to come up with issues to consider before undertaking training and policy makers to review training policies and programmes which may be useful in guiding management on decision making in respect of training strategies.

1.4.1 Research objectives and questions

The study aimed at achieving the following objectives:

- To establish the relationship between training and organisational performance.
- To examine the relevance of the current training strategies for the LG immediate needs.
- To analyse the impact of training on employees and the organisation.

1.4.2 Research Questions

i) What is the relationship between human resource training and organisational performance?

ii) Why may training fail to improve immediate performance?

iii) Why may some organisations prioritise specific training for short term competency gains and others prioritise general capabilities development with long term implications?

iv) Is there a contradiction between developing people's capabilities generally and developing their skills to do a particular job?

1.5 Hypothesis

There is tension between training for immediate needs (human capital) and training for long term benefits (human development).

1.5.1Sub hypotheses.

1. Training oriented towards short- run gains (human capital) is favoured by the organisation and will be resisted by the employees.

2. Training oriented towards human development will be favoured by the employees and will be resisted by the employer.

1.6 Operational definition of terms

Training

Different people have defined training differently, but what clearly comes out is the fact that it involves acquisition of skills, knowledge capabilities and change in attitudes in order to improve on a given task.

In view of this and for the purposes of this study, training was taken to mean a specifically funded process where skills, knowledge and attitudes are provided to employees in order to improve on their service delivery.

This is because this definition captures the core elements of what training is meant to provide.

Performance

This was regarded as a perception by employee or manager of improved employee output, productivity and morale. This is because ordinarily, training should be able to enhance the employees' ability to perform better.

1.7 Structure of the paper

The paper is divided into five chapters. Chapter one deals with background information and statement of the problem. It spells out the relevance and justification of the study, objectives and research questions, hypothesis, operational definition of key terms and the structure of the entire paper. Chapter two discusses the key concepts and the theories that are used in the paper in order to place the problem in a broader perspective of literature. Chapter three is on methodology while chapter four deals with presentation and discussion of research findings. Chapter five summarises the main findings and gives conclusions.

CHAPTER TWO: Theoretical/ Conceptual Framework

2.1 Introduction

This chapter reviews some of the most important concepts used in the study to analyse training and organisational performance. These concepts guide the analysis of the findings drawn from the field. The chapter also contains the context and conceptual frame work for the study.

2.2 The case study context: Soroti District

Soroti district is found in Eastern Uganda. Formerly, it was part of mother Teso district covering Kumi, Soroti and Katakwi districts. It lies approximately on latitudes 1 33 and 2 23 north of the equator and borders Kamuli, Kumi and Pallisa districts and Lake Kyoga in the south, Kaberamaido district in the west and Katakwi district in the north east. The district covers approximately a total land area of 2662.5 sq km of which 2256.5 sq km is land and 406 sq km is water. The growth of Soroti dates back as far as 1904 when the then District Commissioner of Mbale sent Kakungulu (Chief) to open up administrative posts in Serere, Gweri and Soroti areas. In 1912 Soroti attained the status of the permanent headquarters of Teso region as a result of recommendation by Sir Fredrick Jackson (Soroti District 2007).

Currently, the district is administratively divided into three rural counties of Kasilo, Serere and Soroti and one municipality, Soroti Municipality. There are a total of 17 sub counties (including three divisions of the municipality), 67 parishes and 517 villages. The district has established political and administrative structures up to village level. It is composed of nine departments each headed by a Head of Department based at the head office in the district head quarters. Some of the staff however, are field based (Soroti District 2007). The following table shows the staff establishment for the district for staff who are based at the head quarters.

Table 1: Staff establishment for Soroti District

Department	Number of staff
Management and administration	37
Finance and Planning	17
Education	12
Production and Marketing	18
Works and Technical Services	19
Community Based Services	13
Natural Resources	19
Internal Audit	8
Health	9

Source: Soroti District Development Plan 2007/08-09/10.

2.3 **Training**

Training has been defined differently by different authors. It has been defined as

> "a systematic acquisition and development of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required by employees to adequately perform a task or job or to improve performance in the job environment" (Tharenou et al. 2007:252)

Others regard employee training and development as any attempt to impart new knowledge and skills based on employee and organisational needs which should result in improved job performance, reflected in organisational outcomes such as high productivity, improved quality and service (Salas et al. 1999).

Other scholars view training as,

> "a planned process to modify attitude, knowledge or skill behaviour through learning experience to achieve effective performance in any activity or range of activities. Its purpose, in the work situation, is to develop the abilities of the individual and to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation" (Beardwell and Holden 2001:324).

This definition is however inadequate given the changing nature of the environment organisations operate in. Besides, this implies that trainers would simply provide knowledge and skills to the employees and this would automatically translate into individual and organisational performance.

In organisations today, this definition has some weaknesses. First, it should be appreciated that skills and knowledge that employees need are changing rapidly so much so that what is currently relevant may not be relevant in future. Second, there is the tension between being able to know and 'own' their learning. This means employees should be aware of their own needs for

both the organisation's requirements and their own long term development (Holden 2001).

These divergent views, makes it difficult to generate a mutually acceptable definition of training. However, all the scholars seem to point to one fact that the training process is aimed at improving performance by employees though the time horizon of improvement differs and therefore the distribution of training benefits between employer and employee.

2.4 Training: The Ugandan context

The task of training in the Public Service was by statute entrusted to the Ministry of Public Service (MOPs). The Public Service Act No.18 of 1969 mandated the ministry to formulate coordinate and implement training policies relating to the Public Service.

The ministry was entrusted with responsibility of coordinating training once individual ministries had identified their needs (Banyenzaki 1991).

The 1995 Constitution article 166 (1) (c) assigned the Public Service Commission (PSC) an advisory role in relation to training and HRD when it asserted that it was mandated,

> "to review the terms and conditions of service, standing orders, training and qualifications of public officers and matters connected with personnel development and management of Public Service and to make recommendations on them to government".

The Public Service in Uganda can not be said to be perfect. Training faces numerous challenges, problems and short comings. These challenges are said to play a crucial role in undermining the effectiveness of training.

Training in the Uganda Public Service has been criticised for its irrelevant content in relation to the work environment (Nalule 1990). This criticism was echoed by another person who asserted that training programmes tended to bear little or no relationship with the reality in the field because institution based lecturers or tutors had little touch with field realities (Bagyenda 1993).

Training in the Uganda Public Service has also been criticised for having been tailored to meet the individual wants rather than agreed organisational performance needs (Republic of Uganda 1990). The report further says that

the desired out put of most training was to provide qualifications as opposed to improving performance in the job.

Training was also criticised for having been largely supply driven rather than driven by demand or need. Emphasis was on knowledge first then skills. None of these studies reviewed attempted to link training to career development planning and organisational performance.

In the circumstances, it becomes very difficult to ascertain if a linkage exists.

2.5 Types of training

The type of employee training which is best suited to a particular organisation depends on a number of factors. Some of these factors are the skills that are called for in the job that have been filled, the qualification of the employees and the types of problems faced by the organisation. According to Kempton, the approaches that can be used in implementing training fall broadly into; on-the job and off-the job techniques, notwithstanding that some of the training techniques cut across(Kempton 1995).

2.5.1 On-the job training techniques

On- the job training is one of the approaches to training. It has been defined as,

'training that is planned and structured that takes place mainly at the normal work station of the trainee-although some instruction may be provided in a special training area on site-and where a manager, supervisor, trainer or peer colleague spends significant time with the trainee to teach a set of skills that have been specified in advance. It also includes a period of instruction where there may be little or no useful output in terms of productivity' (Holden 2001:332).

Some of the on-the job training techniques include job enrichment, job rotation, special project, secondment, coaching, mentoring and planned experience. The effectiveness of the on- the job training depends mainly upon immediate supervisors and qualified trainers.

On- the job training has also been argued to be the most useful but equally the most abused and most unsuccessful method of training (Kenny and Reid

1986). In this study, I have used on-the job training as a proxy for more specific training.

While people do learn best by doing, that doing needs careful planning and control in order to get full learning value out of it. One advantage of training on- the job is that there is no learning transfer problem. Furthermore, learning is reinforced and rewarded while invalid learning is corrected.

2.5.2 Off-the job training

Off-the job training includes group discussion, individual tutorials, lectures, reading, training courses and workshops (Kempton 1995). This type of training has been used as a proxy for more general training in this study. While there are many forms of off-the job training, this study focuses on training courses and this is because courses permit individuals to leave the day to day demands of their jobs behind so that they can concentrate on analysing past behaviours and reflecting on what has been successful and what has not. This is also because training courses fall in the longer term training episodes that are the main focus of this research.

According to Kempton (1995), this kind of training offers an opportunity to impart knowledge and skills that can be learnt or practiced in a safe environment.

He further states that if training is conducted in an organised and systematic way it should be able to develop new attitudes and experiences that contribute to the success of the organisation, improve employee morale which would lead to better performance and greater productivity and create a psychological climate which orients the activities of each employee towards achieving the goals of the organisation. In line with these assertions, this study interests itself in investigating whether such training episodes actually translate into improved employee performance and motivation. In doing so, I have for the purpose of this study and practical reasons categorised the 47 training episodes into more specific and more general as indicated in table 2. It is also on this basis that I have premised the discussions with regard to training episodes.

Table 2: Categorisation of various training episodes

Course	Duration	Typology	Category
Energy and environmental management	9 months	More specific	Off-the job
Gender and development	6 months	More general	Off-the job
Human Resource Management	9 months	More general	Off-the job
Public Administration and Management	9 months	More general	Off-the job
Public Procurement Processes and Management	6 months	More general	Off-the job
Rural Energy Project Planning and Environment Management	8 months	More specific	On-the job
Land Use Management	7 months	More specific	On-the job
Financial Management in Public Sector	9 months	More specific	Off-the job
Property and Asset Management	6 months	More general	On-the job
Gender, HIV and Reproductive Health	10 months	More specific	On-the job
Records Management for Local Authorities	6 months	More general	On- the job
Managing Community Water and Sanitation	10 months	More specific	On-the job
Clarias Breeding	10 months	More specific	On-the job
Soil and Water Conservation	12 months	More specific	On- the job
Budgetary Management and Expenditure Control	6 months	More specific	On-the job
Occupational Health and Safety	7 months	More general	On-the job
Project Planning and Management	9 months	More general	Off-the job
Public Health Management	15 months	More specific	Off-the job
Applied Tropical Floriculture	12 months	More specific	Off-the job
Agribusiness Management	15 months	More specific	Off-the job
Agricultural Extension Education	13 months	More specific	Off-the job
Secretarial and Information Management Studies	24 months	More specific	On-the job
Wood Science and Technology	20 months	More specific	On-the job
Environmental Health Services	12 months	More specific	Off-the job
Public Health Nursing	24 months	More specific	Off-the job
Fisheries and Aquaculture	18 months	More specific	On-the job
Animal Production Technology and Management	20 months	More specific	Off-the job
Adult and Community Education	9 months	More general	Off-the job
Entrepreneurship and Small Business Management	6 months	More general	Off-the job
Animal Nutrition and Commercial Feed Production	16 months	More specific	Off-the job
Special Needs Education	15 months	More specific	Off-the job
Physical Planning	18 months	More specific	Off-the job
Micro-finance Management	9 months	More specific	On-the job
Life Skills Training	6 months	More general	Off-the job
Psycho-Social Counseling and Guidance	8 months	More general	Off-the job
Children and Youth Development	6 months	More general	On-the job
Social Work and Social Administration	24 months	More general	Off-the job
Public Policy Management	9 months	More general	Off-the job
Veterinary Services Management	24 months	More specific	Off-the job
Social Mobilisation and Development	9 months	More general	Off-the job

Participatory Learning and Action	6 months	More general	On-the job
Leadership and Good Governance	6 months	More general	Off-the job
Social Gerontology	9 months	More general	Off-the job
Plant Operation and Maintenance	12 months	More specific	On-the job
Certified Public Accountancy training	24 months	More specific	On-the job
Front Desk Management	12 months	More general	On-the job
Information Technology	6 months	More general	On-the job

Source: Field data.

2.6 Purpose and objective of longer term training

The activities aimed at improving the human capital in organisations, which training is translated to mean depends on the ability of organisations to develop the skills and knowledge of its employees to do present and future jobs.

A number of authors recognise the purpose of training as being to develop capacities of employees and by extension represents an investment in human resources (Ulrich and Lake 1990),(Pigors and Myers 1981).

Armstrong asserts that training is done to help the organisation achieve its purpose by adding value to its key resource- the people it employs (Armstrong 1996). To this end he is alluding to the view that an investment in human resource is one of the most important investments for organisations.

Another scholar observes that training is concerned with developing corporate capability to enable the company perform well immediately and develop in the future in such a way as to improve its market position (Cassels 1991). One problem with this view is that the author only looks at training from the organisational point of view and ignores the individual benefits of training yet training should create synergies for both the organisation and individual.

Other authors maintain that trained employees contribute to competitive advantage in the market place and as such in order to have an edge over others organisations, it is imperative for organisations to have well trained and competent personnel (Drafield et al. 1996). While this may be true, it should be recognised that other factors such as the level of technology and nature of

management contribute to competitiveness in the labour market and as such, this can not be reduced to employees alone.

Further, some have reasoned that to succeed, an organisation needs staff who are committed to meeting its aims and objectives, equipped by adequate training and motivated by management to achieve their potential (Dia 1996),(Roger and Roger 1995). True, management has a role in motivating staff but what motivates staff varies and training may be one but not the only way of motivating staff.

2.7 The concept of psychological contract

The concept of psychological contract helps us understand more about the employment relationship between employers and employees especially with respect to training. The psychological contract has been defined as,

> 'the bundle of unexpressed expectations that exist at the interfaces between humans…(which) are greatly influenced by the personal history and individual self- image of the parties to the relationship…(and) creates emotions and attitudes which form and control behaviour' (Holden 2001:546).

When used in terms of training, the psychological contract helps us understand that some employers invest in training as a sign of trust in their employees and also as a way of 'buying' their commitment and loyalty. It also shows that they are valued by the organisation. This concept might be helpful in explaining why employees proceed for more specific training yet they are aware that such skills may not provide them with potential to advance in career or change jobs and why employers may still be willing to offer more general training whose benefits may not be immediate enhanced productivity.

It has been argued that organisations that recognise the importance of psychological contracts and have invested in lifelong learning characterised by long term, high trust, HRD strategies embracing education, training and career development have had positive responses from employees even in conditions of adversity (Graeme et al. 1999).

2.8 The Training Needs Concept

It is agreed by a number of authors that a training need occurs when there is an existing or anticipated shortfall or problem in performance where training is

considered the most appropriate and effective remedy (Kempton 1995), (Cole 1993),(Marthur 1983).

Also, it has been held that identifying needs properly is an important part of the training cycle. If the analysis at this stage is wrong then later training activity will also be focused on a wrong need. This could result in wastage of funds and demotivation of staff and it can also set up negative attitudes towards future training (Malcolm and Tricia 1977).

2.8.1 Identification of training needs

According to Boydell (1983) and Kempton (1995), training needs (TNs) can be identified at three levels; organisational level, occupational level and individual level.

2.8.2 TNs at organisational level

TNs at organisational level focus at identifying where within the organisation training is needed. Training needed is identifiable at this level through the performance appraisal system. This provides the key channel for feeding back organisational needs as perceived by individuals. It is the general weakness which is highlighted where training is most needed in the organisations.

Information from both levels needs to be processed by HR professionals in order to plan the over all needs of the organisation.

2.8.3 TNs at Occupational level

TNs at occupational level for the organisation attempts to identify the content of training, that is, what an employee must do to perform competently a given task or job. It is concerned with raising the performance in specific occupations.

It is about establishing standards of performance that is, the knowledge, skills and attitudes an employee in a specific occupation must acquire so as to perform to the set standard. Job analysis can be used to determine the knowledge and skills required in specific jobs and information can be supplemented by analysing the results obtained from the assessment of individuals.

2.8.4 TNs at Individual level

TNs at the individual level begins with a profile of the individual and a job description, which provides a list of skills and knowledge required to match the two (Kempton 1995). This is intended to discover the deficiencies in particular skills, knowledge and attitudes on the part of the individual (Boydell 1983). Needs at the individual level can also be identified by looking at critical incidents for example, over the previous six months that were particularly challenging or stressful, a manager may identify TNs of his/ her subordinates. This can be matched through appraisal interviews.

2.9 Performance

Performance is a term that can be interpreted broadly or narrowly. Rogers considers performance as an inter- related process which ensures that activities and people in local authority contribute as effectively as possible to the objectives. Further, all activities and objectives are systematically reviewed in a way which enables a local authority to learn and thereby improve it's service to the community (Rogers 1990).

2.10 Theoretical models of the relationship between training and performance

Although there is a strong belief that training is related to organisational-level outcomes (Kozlowski et al. 2000) , the theoretical rationale and empirical evidence for this relationship has seldom been the focus of training research. As noted by Kozlowski et al. (2000), most models of training end with transfer of individual-level knowledge in the training context and there is little theoretical development or research on how individual-level training outputs result in organisation-level outcomes. Thus, they concluded that, " there is a levels gap in the training literature in which, although the goal of training is to enhance organisational effectiveness, the models, methods and tools of training focus on the individual level" (Tharenou et al. 2007:253).

The literature on Strategic Human Resource Management (SHRM) provides a number of models to explain how training might lead to improved organisational performance. For example, Wright and McMahan (1992)

provide a conceptual framework that incorporates six theoretical models for the study of SHRM (Tharenou et al. 2007).

Of the six theoretical models described in their framework, three of them are relevant for understanding training and organisational performance. First, according to the Human Resources Based View (HRBV), an organisation's resources can be a source of competitive advantage when it possesses resources that add positive value to the firm, are unique, imperfectly imitable and can not be substituted with another resource by competitors. Accordingly, human capital is considered to be a resource that can provide competitive advantage to the extent that HR practices produce skilled employees who provide value to the firm and have unique inimitable skills. Applying the HRBV to training suggests that,

> "training can be viewed as an investment in human capital that provides employees with unique knowledge, skills and abilities that add value to the firm and enable the performance of activities required to achieve organisational goals, thus resulting in positive organisational-level outcomes" (Tharenou et al. 2007:253).

The second theoretical model is the behavioural perspective which focuses on employee role behaviour as a mediator between strategy and organisational performance. Accordingly, HR practices should elicit and reinforce the behaviours required by the organisation's strategy. Along these lines, it is necessary to identify the HR practices that will be effective in eliciting desired role behaviours. The desired role behaviours should then lead to positive organisational outcomes. Applying this perspective to training suggests that training will result in positive organisational out comes to the extent that it results in employee behaviour that is required by the organisation's strategy.

The third framework is represented by a set of models, described as cybernetic systems model or input-throughput-output models (Wright and Mcmahan 1992). Open system models portray organisations as transforming inputs from the environment into outputs. Wright and McMahan (1992) present a cybernetic open systems model of HR in which inputs consist of employees' knowledge, skills and abilities (KSAs); the throughput is employee behaviours; and the output includes productivity, satisfaction and turn over. Included under the cybernetic approach is an open systems model of the HR

system in which employee competencies (inputs) lead to behaviours (throughputs) which then lead to effective and performance outcomes (outputs). Thus, when applied to training, cybernetic models suggest that training leads to organisational performance to the extent that it results in competencies, that is knowledge, skills and abilities that are necessary to perform the behaviours that will impact organisational performance (Tharenou et al. 2007).

Kozlowski et al. (2000) provided a theoretical framework to develop a multilevel model of training effectiveness to bridge the micro-macro gap in training literature .They proposed that, "training effectiveness involves the linkage between micro training outcomes and macro objectives at higher organisational levels"(Kozlowski et al. 2000:199). They focused on training transfer, "because it is the primary leverage point by which training can influence organisational effectiveness"(Kozlowski et al. 2000:159) and present a theoretical framework to guide research on vertical transfer across different levels of the organisational system.

In sum, the models reviewed here suggest that the effect of training on organisational performance is mediated through direct effects of training on employee attitudes, behaviours and KSAs. It has also been theorized that,

> "an HR system is a complex set of practices designed to influence employees'
> collective satisfaction, commitment, motivation, behaviour and skills; these
> attributes are thought to be the mediating mechanism that links HR practices and
> firm performance" (Ostroff and Bowen 2000:217).

Therefore, based on the models which link HRM practices to organisational-level outcomes, a theoretical framework shown in figure 1 is used to show links between training and organisational outcomes.

2.10. A Theoretical model linking training to organisational-level outcomes

Training has a direct effect on HR outcomes and an indirect effect on organisational performance that is mediated through HR outcomes. I have used Ostroff and Bowen's (2000) classification of employee attributes to represent HR outcomes because it encompasses all the variables in the various models: attitudes (e.g., collective employee satisfaction) and motivation,

behaviours (e.g., performance-related), and human capital (e.g. workforce KSAs). According to Ostroff and Bowen (2000), employees' collective attitudes, behaviours and human capital should influence organisational performance. From figure 1, the comprehensiveness of the training needs assessment has a bearing on what kind of course the employees will attend, it also determines how long the course will be and whether it will be on-the job or off- the job. The results from these trainings are then translated into job related behaviours which collectively have a bearing on the performance of the organisation. These linkages are illustrated as shown in figure 1.

Figure 1: Theoretical Framework
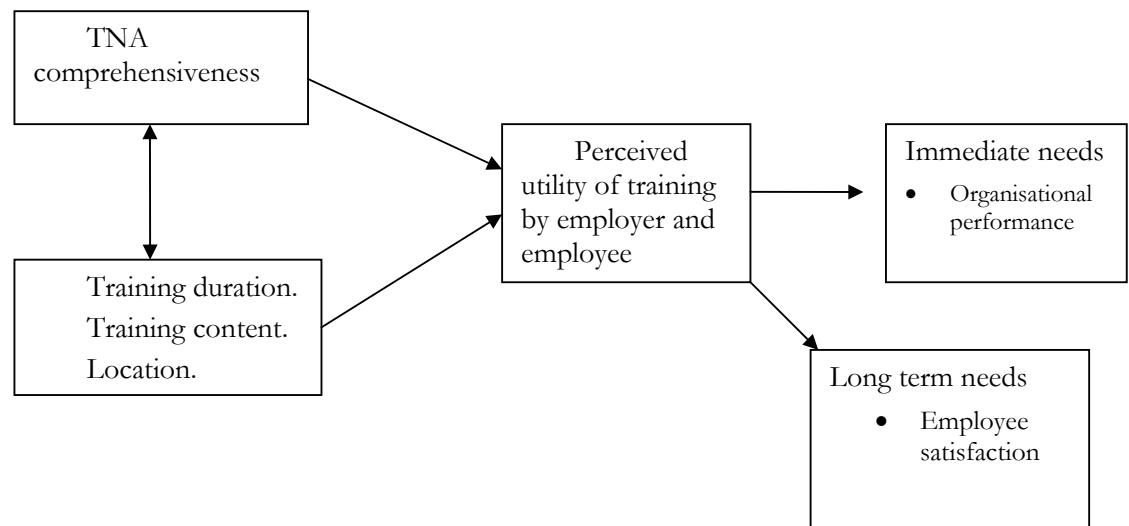
Source: Adapted from Eerde et al. (2008).

In order to create a link between training and performance, there is need to carry out a Training Needs Assessment (TNA). This therefore implies that for any training to be effective there is need to find out the gap between the desired and actual performance. Without this assessment, training may not bring about the desired change.

One publication observes that in the Public Service of developing countries, training needs are seldom assessed accurately or tend not to be acted

upon. This plays an important role in undermining the efficiency of training (Reilly and Clarke 1990).

A training need has also been regarded as a gap between the current and desired results (Watkins and Kaufman 1988).

In light of what a need is, various scholars have attempted to define training need. A training need is "any shortfall in the employee performance which can be remedied by appropriate training"(Cole 1993:372).

While appreciating the above view, another scholar has further regarded a training need to be,

> "the difference between the actual and required performance in some specific area of operation where improved training is considered the most appropriate and economical way of eliminating the difference"(Ssonko 1998:1)

As can be observed from the above definitions, training is intended to fill a performance gap. However, not all performance gaps can be bridged by training. A performance gap indicates a training gap (training need), only if the development of appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes would help to improve performance and therefore close the gap. This requires that the lack of appropriate knowledge, skills and attitudes by the employee is a primary or contributory cause of the performance gap (Stewart 1999).

The main task of assessing the training need of employees is to determine what the job entails and break it down into sub-tasks which will help in designing training programmes. If this is done, it will enable training to be correlated to performance (Dessler 2001).

However, much as the authors above considered the importance of carrying out a TNA, in order to design an appropriate training strategy, they left out certain more dysfunctional factors. An employee may be forced to attend training or attends it as an opportunity to be away from work, such an individual may not think of the training experience as an opportunity to learn new skills and approaches that can be applied in the work environment.

For training to be effective there is need to ensure that it responds to a known skill gap. When training is used to solve a problem that is not related to skill deficiency, it will fail to be effective (Marthur 1983). Besides, within any organisation, tensions may exist that can cause outcomes unintended by any of

the interested parties for instance there may be a tension between an immediate calculated benefit of the training (human capital view) which may be favoured by the employer on one hand and potential for changing roles in the organisation or potential of joining another organisation (HRD view) on the other hand favoured by the employee. This kind of tension poses a problem on both the employer and employee of identifying the type of training that result in a win: win scenario.

Also, even if the trainees are well chosen and motivated to attend the training, there may be no change in behaviour if such trainees return to an environment that is hostile to change where what they have learned in class may not be re-enforced practically.

2.11. SHRM perspectives and implications for training

In the previous section, I described models to explain how training functionally and dysfunctionally is related to organisational-level outcomes. Most of the models imply a positive relationship between training and organisational outcomes. However, theories of Strategic Human Resource Management (e.g. HRBV and behavioural theory) indicate that more complex types of relationships also need to be considered in addition to those in the theoretical model above. The literature on SHRM provides alternative perspectives of the relationship between HR practices and organisational level outcomes that are generally referred to as Universalist, Contingency and Configurational perspectives (Delery and Doty 1996),(Ostroff and Bowen 2000).

According to the Universalist perspective, some HR practices such as formal training are work practices that are believed to be linked to organisational effectiveness for all organisations that use them (Ostroff and Bowen 2000),(Delery and Doty 1996). The basic premise of the Universalist perspective is that greater use of particular HR practices will result in better organisational performance. Thus, organisations that provide more extensive training will be more effective. This is in effect the primary perspective taken in most studies on training and organisational-level performance in which training

is predicted to have a positive relationship with organisational performance. The model shown in figure 1 corresponds to this perspective.

The second perspective is the Contingency perspective. It is premised on the belief that the relationship between a specific HR practice and organisational performance is contingent on contextual factors, notably an organisation's strategy (Delery and Doty 1996). Thus, organisations adopting particular strategies require certain HR approaches that will differ from those required by organisations with different strategies. This perspective is more complex than the Universalist perspective because it implies interactions between HR practices and organisational factors. Organisations with greater congruence between their HR practices and wider strategies should have superior performance (Delery and Doty 1996). When applied to training, the contingency perspective suggests that extensive formal training will be most effective when used in a combination with certain organisational strategies (Schuler 1989).

A third perspective is the Configurational perspective. The Configurational perspective suggests that there are ideal types or configurations of HR practices that form HR systems that lead to superior performance (Ostroff and Bowen 2000). In high performance systems, HR practices need to be complementary and interdependent, working together to develop valuable, unique human capacities to increase organisational effectiveness (Barney and Wright 1998). When applied to training, the Configurational perspective suggests that training will enhance organisational effectiveness when it is used in conjunction with other, complementary HR practices than when used independently. Therefore, when organisations invest in training, it must be consistent with other HR practices. HR practices consistent with training include careful screening of applicants for potential and trainability, practices to decrease turnover, use of promotion from within and use of performance-contingent incentive systems, defining jobs broadly and providing opportunities for employee participation (Baron and Kreps 1999), (Lepak and Snell 1999).

In short, the SHRM literature suggests that the nature of the relationship between training and organisational performance might be universalist as

suggested in figure 1 such that HR outcomes mediate the relationship between training and organisational performance; and or it might be moderated by organisational factors such as organisational strategy (Contingency perspective); and or it might be other congruent HR practices (Configurational perspective).

2.12 Linking training and career development

There are many misconceptions about the term 'career'. In popular usage, it means advancement, a profession or a life long sequence of jobs. It has been defined as "a succession of related jobs, arranged in a hierarchy of prestige, through which persons move in an ordered, predictable sequence"(Beardwell and Holden 1997:314).

It is also a sequence of positions occupied by a person during the course of a life time.

There are two perspectives of career development, that is, organisational career and individual career development. From an organisational or managerial point of view, career development involves tracking career paths. This is to ensure that the capable managerial and technical talents will be available to meet the organisation's needs. Individual career development focuses on assisting the individual identify their major career goals and determine what they need to achieve these goals.

2.13. Other factors affecting individual / organisational performance

Effectiveness is important to all organisations and it can be achieved through the use of resources of which the human resources are the most important.

In the process of performing a given task, individuals are confronted with performance problems, which, if not rectified, could be detrimental to the organisation. The solution may not lie in training but in other factors which are discussed below because there could be situations where one has the skills but performance continues to deteriorate despite training and constant practice.

2.13.1 Individual/ personal factors

Motivation

Motivation is one of the factors which affect individual performance. It is what makes people put effort and energy into what they do. It is also seen as a goal directed behaviour that addresses issues that energize and direct behaviour towards the goal (Armstrong 1996). These issues can be referred to as motivating factors, which give rise to good feelings and raise performance by influencing the 'will to work well'. Individuals at work should be induced to keep on working well. It has been observed that managers ought to be aware of the issues that boost employee morale. On the one hand, it is important to have a conducive and comfortable work environment for employees to work well and on the other, it is imperative for managers to show a sense of recognition of their employees. Workers need to feel that they are recognised, that their jobs help them achieve their aspirations and that there are prospects of advancement in terms of career. These are what have come to be known as the satisfiers, that is recognition, achievement and advancement (Herzberg 1966).

Motivation of employees is key in that it boosts the psychological contract between the employees and the organisation in that by showing employees that they are recognised, they tend to show commitment and loyalty to the organisation which can be translated into improved organisational performance. This may partly explain why some workers may be reluctant to leave their parent organisations. To this end, motivation remains a key factor determining the psychological contract between employees and employers.

Performance success depends on motivated individuals who become committed to the organisation's objectives. Motivation is however very difficult to determine because people differ. It is management's task to help put back the stimulus at work regardless of the level of training workers may have.

Recruitment

Recruitment is one of the HR functions that closely has implications for employee training. When an organisation recruits staff with the right skills, knowledge and competencies to perform their tasks, such an organisation is likely to have a lesser demand for training. This is because there is a likely trade-off between good recruitment and training.

2.13.2 Organisational factors affecting performance

Performance can be reduced or improved due to factors beyond the control of the individual. The organisation itself may be setting barriers to performance or uncooperative workers and managers may contribute to reduced performance. The factors which may affect performance at organisational level include remuneration, communication, equipment and tools and management style (Armstrong 2001).

2.14 Human Capital Theory

The Human Capital Theory (HCT) is premised on neo-classical analysis of labour markets, education and economic growth. It assumes that people are productive resources and explores whether more highly educated people are more productive than others (Brennan 1993).

More importantly, the HCT is a cost and benefit analysis of educational investment. From this viewpoint, training represents an investment in human capital that can be justified if net returns are generated in terms of better skills and increased productivity (Tharenou et al. 2007). In this sense, the HCT distinguishes the modalities of more general and more specific training. The former at its most general generates competences and professional qualifications that are useful to many organisations, even those belonging to different activity sectors (Garcia 2005). It should be pointed out that the transferable nature of the qualifications provided by more general training has a number of consequences for organisational behaviour.

On the one hand, because the qualifications acquired are potentially useful to a number of organisations, this kind of training leads to an improved

position of the employee in the labour market. Within a competitive framework, this increase in value means that the organisation supplying the training will have to offer the trained employee salary and wider incentives similar to those offered by rival organisations (Garcia 2005).

On the other hand, the existence of working positions that demand from people occupying them costly qualifications and knowledge, transferable between organisations, promotes free rider conduct oriented towards reducing the organisation's participation in the financing of training. There are options available to achieve this purpose and they need not be incompatible,

> "First, the firm supplies general training, but its financing is assumed totally or in part by the worker through reduced salaries during the training period. Second, the firm develops training policies which give priority to external recruitment over internal promotion and make the possession of certain transferable as well as costly professional competences become a prerequisite necessary to obtain the job and turn general training into an exclusively individual responsibility of the worker that aims at professional promotion within the firm" (Garcia 2005:1693).

This view however, may not be applicable to the Public Service in which training whether specific or general is provided by the employer. This theory was useful in finding out how far the staff were involved in decision making to undertake the training, whether they thought the training had any immediate effects on their jobs and whether there were scenarios where they had not put in practice what they had acquired from the training.

The theory also suggests that human capital accumulation can lead to employee-led innovation but ignores the fact that returns to education and training is highly uncertain. The HCT considers that more specific training is characterised by provision of competences that can hardly be transferred from one organisation to another. This non-transferable nature also has consequences that affect organisational behaviour. Since more specific training only benefits the organisation providing it, there is no reason for rival organisations to make pay offers to employees (the individual employee's status in the job market will not increase in value) and on the other hand,

> "as workers do not receive any significant pay rises related to their higher productivity after specific training period, there will be no incentives for them to finance their own specific training. On the contrary, the firm will indeed have reasons to assume those training-related costs, since it will receive nearly all the benefits derived from the improved productivity generated by the new specific professional skills"(Garcia 2005:1693-1694).

By focusing on a rational investment in education or training that is firmly rooted in Neo-classical economics thinking, the theory looks at the demand for training (by employees) and the supply of the training (by the employer). Here, we can clearly recognise some tensions. On the part of the employees, they may be interested in general training that can help them in the long run and thus would consider possibly resourcing training for long term development while the employer may be interested in providing a short term training to enable employees to perform specific tasks. These competing interests between the employees and employers call for negotiation in order to achieve a win: win consensus. It may result in a dysfunctional outcome in the event that the objectives of the employees and the employer are in tension. This cannot easily be solved as each party may have different interests for instance the employees may have different aspirations, may want certain training routes envisaging career change or progression and may have time horizons within which to complete the training while the employer may not be willing to provide training that will lead the employee to move away to other competitors. In the end, the training provided may be from the vantage position of the employer if they meet the total costs.

This can be a real challenge because it may result in a situation where staff is dysfunctional even after training has been provided. Some scholars have observed that dysfunctional training occurs because,

> "the type of training content, the match of training content with organisational-level outcome, the type of training methods and design and learning principles, the type of employees trained and the implications for the transfer of training are not congruent with organisational objectives" (Tharenou et al. 2007:270).

Others have pointed out that dysfunctional training may be,

> "due to the fact that the manifestation of training learning outcomes in subsequent job behaviours and organisational indicators may be a function of favourability of post training environment for the performance of learned skills. Environmental favourability is the extent to which the transfer or work environment is supportive of new skills and behaviours learned or acquired in training. Trained and learned skills will not be demonstrated as job-related behaviours if incumbents do not have the opportunity to perform them " (Edens and Suzanne 2003:242).

The authors however, did not point out that this is employer error in training identification. It then becomes important to ask why management

should make such errors. Whereas the Human Capital Theory claims that rational investment in education leads to improved productivity, it does allow for non rational decisions. But to account for apparent non-rationality, it is useful to add on the basic arguments and principles of the Human Resources-Based View to the HCT.

2.15 The Human Resources Based View

The Human Resources-Based View (HRBV) provides another theoretical perspective with human resources being considered as a significant factor of competitive advantage for the organisation.

It is based on the understanding that,

"the organisation possesses capabilities and skills in the form of it's individual employees that are superior to those of it's competitors, which in turn being the factor accountable for it's advantageous positioning in the market."(Ramon et al. 2000:285-286).

In this context, it places emphasis on the value of training. It considers it fundamental since it strengthens the development of the organisation's human resources into a "valuable and unique resource that can neither be copied nor substituted"(Ramon et al. 2000:286).

Within the HRBV framework, the organisation is seen as a nexus of resources and capabilities that are not freely bought and sold in the market (Lado and Wilson 1994). In this sense, capabilities refer to a firm's capacity to deploy resources, usually in combination, applying complex organisational processes to effect a desired end. They are information-based, tangible or intangible processes that are firm specific and are developed over time through complex interactions among the firm's resources (De Saa-Perez et al. 2002). Thus, these firm-specific resources and collective/team capabilities yield economic benefits that can not be perfectly duplicated by their competitors. The HRBV was instrumental in finding out whether training enhanced staff career prospects in the organisation and also their potential for joining other organisations.

Resources and capabilities have been categorised differently by different authors. They have been divided into distinctive competence (Fiol 1991, Reed and De Fillippi 1990), core competence (Prahalad and Hamel, 1990), firm-specific competencies (Pavitt1991), organisational capabilities (Stalk, Evans and Schulman, 1992, Ulrich and Lake1990) and organisational capital (Prescott and Visscher1980, Ranson 1987). For the purposes of this study, organisational competencies describe firm specific resources and capabilities that enable the organisation develop, choose and implement value –enhancing strategies. Organisational competencies include all firm-specific assets, knowledge, skills and capabilities embedded in the organisation's structure, processes and relationships.

Lado and Wilson (1994) argue that organisational competencies are heterogeneous, immobile and form the basis of sustained competitive advantage.

They further add that organisational competencies are heterogeneous when they are unevenly distributed and deployed across firms within a given competitive environment, differences in competency endowments and deployments account for differences in the size distribution and competitive positions of firms. However, if the labour market were purely competitive such that human resources were homogeneous and freely mobile across firms, a market-determined wage rate would provide information needed to attract, retain or replace human resources in the organisation. In this case, an investment in firm-specific human capital (knowledge, skills and abilities) through the firm's human resource policies and practices would not be economically warranted (Steffy and Maurer 1988). The incremental cost of the human capital arising from the various HR activities such as recruitment and selection, performance appraisal, training and compensation would exceed the incremental revenue product of employees (Lado and Wilson 1994). Thus, human resources and HR systems would conceivably not yield competitive advantage for the firm. In reality, however, firms face a heterogeneous demand for and supply of human resources. Human resources are rare because,

"it is difficult to find people who guarantee high performance levels in the organisation due to labour market's heterogeneity. Their inimitability emerges from

the difficulty in duplicating people's knowledge, experience and behaviour, at least in the short term. Moreover, the high transaction costs involved in people recruitment can be a significant obstacle to their mobility or acquisition. Finally, people are a resource difficult to replace because not everybody has the same capacity to adapt to the different environments and technologies, and those who are able to create value in one context may be unable to do so in others" (De Saa-Perez et al. 2002:124-125).

Firm-specific human capital is valuable because it potentially enhances the productive capacity of human resources (Becker 1975), it is not widely available in the external labour market (Dierickx and Cool 1989) and it can not be substituted by other resources without having to incur heavy replacement costs (J. Barney 1991). Accordingly, the HRBV holds that learning takes place when, for a given work- related stimulus, employees respond in different and qualitatively better ways from their responses to similar stimuli in the past (Bower and Hilgard 1981). To this end, such responses lead to reduced variability in the performance of the employee over time or result in increased gains in productivity, thus it is economically efficient. Over time, the individual develops a deeper understanding of specific tasks, duties and responsibilities required for the job and through training,

> "organisational members hone the knowledge, skills and attitudes needed to perform the job and may eventually coalesce into a set of organisational routines and make incremental adjustments to achieve congruence with pre established levels of organisational performance"(Lado and Wilson 1994:706)

On the basis of this theory, this study sought to establish why training may fail to improve organisational performance despite employees being in possession of such capabilities and skills.

2.16 The Capability Approach

The Capability approach has been advanced by Amartya Sen (2006) and Martha Nussbaum (2000) as an approach that aims at considering capacities of people on the basis of everything they are actually "able to do and be". Amartya Sen for his part looks at life as having a set of potential "doings and beings" that are important to assessing the quality of life that one leads. To him, life should be evaluated on the basis of and the capability to choose between functions (Sen 2006).

He argues that "a functioning is an achievement of a person: what he or she manages to do or be, and any such functioning reflects, as it were, part of the state of that person"(Sen 2006:440).

Sen looks at capability as a reflection of a person's freedom to choose between different ways of living. When used in relation to training and work functionings, the Capability approach enables us to appreciate the potential for a generally better life including the prospects of promotion and transfer to another organisation. It also helps us to consider the employability of the human resource, that is, the well-being derived from functioning in the labour market as a result of the position one occupies in the organisation.

Nussbaum in her approach to capability focuses on 'human capabilities' that is, "what people are able to do and be- in a way, informed by an intuitive idea of a life that is worthy of the dignity of the human being"(Nussbaum 2000)

In contrast to Sen's capability approach, Nussbaum's capabilities approach conveys a more concrete focus on specific attainable functionings in life and connects to the ordinary language reference to a person's skills and powers and the current business jargon of 'core capabilities'(Gasper 2006). Within the work environment itself, there are demands for instance the employees may demand for more autonomy, dignity and may consider themselves to have more capabilities than management considers them to possess. This results in conflict of interests between the parties. In some cases, it may result in employers forcing employees to attend training for which they have no interest or which may not be applicable to them. Thus, in line with Nussbaum's capabilities approach, this research sought to establish whether there was a contradiction between developing people's capabilities generally and developing their skills to do a particular job. It also sought to establish whether employees' views are valued regarding their own capabilities development. Further, it sought to find out whether there was any thing that could be done about it.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

3.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the methodology that was used in the operationalisation of the research. It highlights the methods of data collection, area of study, sample size, research instruments, challenges and limitations of the study.

3.2 Methods of data collection

This study adopted a case study approach. This was because it was difficult to establish what goes on in respect of training in the now over 80 DLGs in Uganda and for the reason of effective access, Soroti DLG was selected. This choice was also justified by the fact that being outside the capital Kampala, Soroti, like most LGs faces similar challenges in managing the training function under the decentralised framework.

Data related to the topic was collected combining both aspects of qualitative and quantitative research. The qualitative methods generated information on perceptions and experiences of LG staff while quantitative methods looked at number of respondents by sex, educational qualification and years of service.

3.3 Area of study

The study was conducted in Soroti DLG and in the departments of Management and Administration, Education, Natural Resources, Works and Technical Services, Community Based Services, Health, Production and Marketing, Finance and Planning and Internal Audit. These are all the departments in the district and the respondents were drawn across them.

3.4 Sample size and population

The sample size was determined by looking at an inventory of staff who had attended courses that had duration of between 9 months and 2 years. Only staff who had attended such trainings in the last five years were considered. This was because it was considered as being a period long enough to observe

changes in job related performance and not too long for the respondents to lose track of the out comes from their training. From here, 35 staff were selected. The 35 staff were selected across the 9 departments provided they had attended training whose duration ranged between 9 months and 2 years. This was done in order to avoid respondents who had merely attended training courses of a few days or weeks. The supervisors of the respondents were interviewed as key informants, that is, the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO), Heads of Department and the head of the Human Resources section.

It should be pointed out clearly that permission was sought from the respondents as to whether their official titles could be used in the study and for those who agreed to the request; their official titles have been used. The others however, have been maintained as anonymous.

3.4.1 Sampling procedure

A list of all the staff who had undertaken training in the district was retrieved from the central registry. From this list, samples were purposively drawn from across the departments the employees who had attended courses whose duration ranged between 9 months to 2 years. This was done in order to avoid inclusion of those who attended shorter or longer courses. In effect, the researcher found them to be appropriate for the study. After they had been selected, the respondents were informed and appointments sought with them. This helped to ensure that the data collection exercise was on course and also that the findings reflected a wide ranging sample relating to impacts of substantial training in the LG.

3.4.2 Research instruments and Methods

In the current study, I used two methods for collecting data and this was in order to increase participation rate in the study. Since I was interested in matching the trainees' and supervisors' responses because I wanted to track the various experiences of staff that had undergone training, I considered the use of more than one method relevant and appropriate. In order to increase the response rates, prior appointments were made with staff who had been asked to complete the questionnaires and also with those who were to give

interviews. The response rates were generally good around 98% or better with exception of one incident when it fell to 85%. The response rates fell to this level because the respondents were busy with planning meetings and some of them had impromptu assignments thus making it difficult to access them. On the whole however, the response rates were good and this may perhaps be attributed to the fact that I am a member of staff in the district and as such it was easy to make appointments with the various respondents.

3.4.3 Questionnaires

These were designed in view of the research questions to solicit relevant information from the LG staff. This method helped to delimit the perceptions and sentiments of the respondents that could have had consequences to the subject under study.

This method included closed-ended questions. Respondents were given a range in which to rank their answers and this made analysis easier.

The respondents were staff who had benefited from the various training episodes ranging from 9 months to 2 years. In effect, it can be argued that this category of staff would have felt more positive about the training experience since they were substantial beneficiaries. While some bias is always possible, several factors led me to conclude that it was not a major problem. First, the responses were consistent. Second, the consistency between the supervisors' and trainees' questionnaires reinforced my belief that the results were not an outcome of selection bias since the supervisors might be more objective observers and would probably not be subject to the same bias. Third, the samples were demographically similar to the pre-test population.

This method was selected with due consideration to the busy schedule of most of the respondents, the questionnaires allowed respondents to complete them at their convenient time.

3.4.4 In depth interviews

An interview guide was used during interview of key informants like the CAO, Heads of Department and the head of human resource section. The interviews helped supplement the answers given in the questionnaires. Owing to the fact

that this category of people is always busy, this method was deemed as the most appropriate to get vital information from them.

It was important not to entirely rely on the perceptions of the trainees. In this regard and bearing in mind that such perceptions should be corroborated by another observer; I included the trainees' supervisors. Through probing, it was possible to generate in-depth responses and crucial results on important issues in the research. In fact, the supervisors actually perceived a slighter greater change due to training than the trainees did. While I note that the sample size was small, the consistency of the results between the supervisors and the trainees' ratings in the questionnaires and the findings from the in-depth interviews led me to conclude that these changes were realistic.

From the use of interviews, I was able to get more elaborate and candid responses as opposed to the questionnaires. While I had expected some problems in eliciting cooperation for the in-depth interviews, this part of the study went smoothly. Interviews of half an hour to one hour were conducted at the work place. I had concerns as to whether individuals would devote time for interviews during working hours. However, most of the respondents were open and forthcoming. Again it may be said that this could have been because I am one of their own. The emerging issue here then is the Hawthorne effect. Whether the fact that people knew that they were being studied may have affected their responses was difficult to assess directly. Knowing that they had to complete questionnaires may have made people more motivated to apply what they had gained in the training. Such a reaction might have come up during the in-depth interviews but I did not get the sense that the respondents were conscious of the interview process. I must point out that owing to the use of more than one method of data collection, triangulation posed a real challenge.

3.4.5 Document review
This included the use of secondary sources of data. Relevant documents from the LG were reviewed to elicit related data to the study in question. The documents reviewed included the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda 1995 (amended 2006), the Local Government's Act (amended 2006), the

National Capacity Building Policy, staff appraisal forms, the District Capacity Building Plans, job descriptions and person specifications, Policy Statements and the District organisational structure. The use of multiple sources of data was critical. Since I had expected to find relatively weak effects, it was important in drawing conclusions for use especially in training policy, that the results from the trainees' own questionnaires be corroborated, both by the in-depth interviews and the supervisors' reports. My experience shows that the use of multiple methods including both quantitative and qualitative data is both feasible and not very expensive.

The use of these documents enabled me to make an informed comparison between interpretation of events and those recorded in the documents.

3.5 Validity and reliability of research instruments

There was a pre-testing of the instruments on 15 respondents before the actual data collection exercise was done in a bid to ensure consistency and comprehensiveness. The pre-test was administered to people who had undergone similar trainings. Though they hailed from different districts, the respondents were all working for the Civil Service in Uganda. The pre-testing helped to detect weaknesses and ambiguities and these were corrected. Some of these weaknesses included unclear and unhelpful questions. This ensured that the questions were sound and in line with the study in question.

3.6 Data processing, analysis and presentation

Data processing was done through different stages. The data collected from different questionnaires and interviews was organised so that order could be created.

Also, editing and cross checking was done so that errors could be detected and corrections made. This helped to find out completeness in the questionnaires.

After editing the data, coding followed. This involved assigning of symbols to answers so that data could be categorised for example by age, level of education and job title.

Finally, individual interpretations, judgements opinions and conclusions on the areas of study were made. Quotations especially from qualitative data were noted. The work was then entered in the computer using an excel spreadsheet especially for quantitative data. This was done to create more meaning in the data collected.

3.7 Challenges faced in data collection

A major challenge faced during the data collection was gaining confidence as an 'insider'. Being a staff member and moreover working in the HR section, some of the respondents felt that I was carrying out an evaluation of one of the functions of the department and it took a lot of confidence building to get respondents appreciate that the study was purely for academic purposes. Also, access to some respondents was not possible at the appointed time due to impromptu work assignments and this called for re-scheduling of the appointments and this explains why the response rates fell during the period when planning meetings were in progress.

3.8 Limitations of the study

The data is in most cases perceptual. Thus, the responses are not objective measures but perceptions of the employees. It was mostly based on what respondents perceived to have happened rather than the actual observation of the happenings themselves. As for the linkage between training and organisational performance, it was not possible to ascertain in clear cut terms if training had caused significant improvements. An attempt was however, made to overcome this limitation by asking respondents to mention some specific job changes as a consequence of training and verifying this information from their supervisors and subordinates.

The data can not be generalised with accuracy to the entire Public Service or all the LGs. This is because only one district was used as a case study.

CHAPTER FOUR. Data presentation and Discussion

4.1 Introduction

This chapter presents the main findings and discusses those findings by reflecting on how they relate to theory. For the purpose of ease of discussion, the major differences between more specific and more general training is how closely the training relates to the present job, that is, everything learned in the training is immediately applicable to the tasks at hand (more specific) and whether anything in the training can be seen as managerial preparation that goes beyond the current responsibilities (more general).

It principally focuses on areas under the following sub headings:

- Initiation of trainings in Soroti LG.

- Links between training and organisational performance.

- Relevance of the current training strategy to improving organisational performance.

- More general Vs more specific training and transferability/ employee mobility.

- Career prospects due to training.

- Contradictions in training requirements.

4.2 Initiation of trainings

When asked who initiates training in the Local Government, respondents indicated that training was initiated at three levels that is, organisational, departmental and individual.

The initiation of training at organisational level was done by the HR department, while at individual departments; it was done by the respective Heads of Department (supervisors) and at individual level by concerned employees. This is in support of Kempton (1995) and Boydell (1983) findings that training can be identified at three levels that is organisational, occupational and individual.

4.3 The links between training and organisational performance

Performance can be defined as" the way in which an activity is accomplished; in particular the level of standard to which a task is accomplished, adapted, carried out or achieved within the working environment" (Kerry 1995:7).

The purpose of training is to increase the competence of employees to perform immediate tasks. The competence gained from training ought to be demonstrated in a work situation by achieving certain particular results or a certain level of performance.

When asked to mention some of the courses they had ever attended, respondents came up with 47 courses. The courses have been categorised as indicated in table 2.

To assess the impact of these training courses on performance, respondents were asked to select any training course undertaken preferably not later than October 2003. The choice of this duration was that five years was a period long enough for trainees and supervisors to be able to reflect on the gains from training. The minimum time was training that had been undertaken one year ago. Basing on this, the following question was put to them; "did you do any thing differently when you returned to work because of what you had learnt from the training?" The results are illustrated in figure 2.

Differences in Responses Between staff who underwent specific or general training
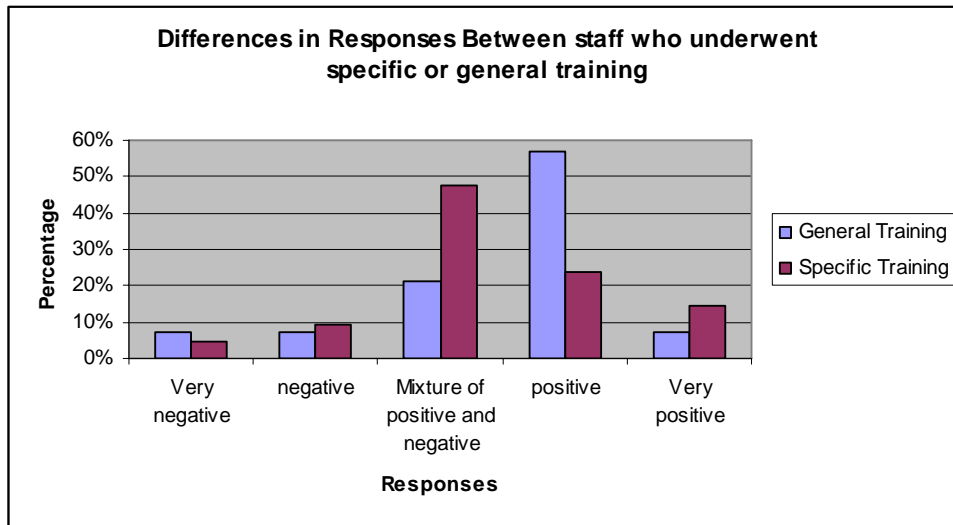
Source: Field data

From the above graph, more general training episodes were appreciated compared to more specific training episodes. Over 50% of the more general training episodes were seen to have contributed to the trainer's ability and potential of doing something positively different compared to only 21% of the more specific training episodes. Another 21% of the more general training episodes had a mixture of positive and negative outcomes while 48% of the more specific training episodes had a mixture of positive and negative outcomes. There is an interesting difference between the appreciation of more general and more specific training episodes. While more specific training episodes were seen to have enabled trainees to do something very positively different, the more general training episodes were seen to have a lesser impact on doing something very positively different. But, regarding doing something positively different, the more general training episodes had higher positive outcomes than the more specific training episodes. Again, the more specific training episodes had a higher percentage of mixture of positive and negative outcomes compared to the more general training episodes. Statistically, the percentage of more positive outcomes from the more general training episodes was higher than for more specific training episodes. These results show that there is a difference between more specific and more general training episodes- that more general training episodes are more highly valued compared to more

specific training episodes and this corresponds to the Universalist model of training which claims that organisations that offer more general training practices will have better performance. This finding is also in support of our sub hypothesis 2.

One Head of Department (HOD) whose subordinate had undergone more general training said,

> "Some of these trainings are really good. I have observed that one of my officers is now more serious when it comes to her work. These days, I do not have to remind her of her roles. I have seen that she now has a positive attitude to work. In fact our relations within and outside the department have greatly improved, her output is good and she meets her targets. I think the training really helped her a lot. I am very happy."[1]

From what this HOD observed about the staff, it is evident that the training helped to improve the skills and attitudes of the employee. It also boosted her morale in as far as she felt valued by the organisation to send her for training and as such it can be argued that this motivated her to perform better. Basing on the observation of the HOD I can conclude that by feeling valued by the organisation the employee's motivation to perform better is enhanced. If this is so, then it corresponds to the psychological contract argument for training which claims that employers send employees for training as a sign of trust in them and also as a way of 'buying' their commitment.

Another HOD whose staff attended more specific training observed thus,

> "for me, I have observed that since the officer returned from training, he is eager to put in place what he learnt. He is always coming up with new ways of handling a number of issues. For example he has made good suggestions of maintaining community roads. I will present these suggestions to the Council and pray that they are adopted. I hope they will not frustrate his efforts. You know… it can be frustrating ….. you make a good suggestion only to be frustrated…."[2]

From what the HOD observed it can be noted that this kind of training resulted in innovation on the part of the employee. In this sense therefore it can be concluded that more specific training episodes do not necessarily lead to being non-innovative. Thus, the outcomes from training may depend on the

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[1] Interview with head of department held on 21/07/2008.
[2] Interview with head of department held on 22/07/2008

nature of interaction between training episodes and the organisational /departmental strategy as claimed by the Contingency perspective of training. This finding contradicts the findings of Becker (1975) who found that more specific training does not lead to innovation and can not be transferable. But, the finding is in agreement with the Human Capital Theory which suggests that human capital accumulation can lead to employee-led innovation.

Notably, the impact of training on performance was noticed in the departments of Administration and in Community Based Services, departments which provided more general training and this finding is in line with the findings of Bellmann and Buche (2001) who found that more general training episodes had a positive and significant effect on productivity in German firms (Zwick 2002). However for others, it was difficult to establish tangible and quantifiable impact of training on the job performance. When asked if he ever noticed any improvements in performance of his subordinates as a consequence of training, one HOD whose staff had attended general trainings responded,

"Subordinate staff are always the same. Even if they go for training they are only responsive to clear instructions. They can not do anything on their own until you tell them what to do"3.

Clearly, this illustrates that even the more general training episodes do not necessarily lead to innovation. If this is the case, then we can conclude that training episodes should be consistent with other HR practices as espoused by the Configurational perspective of training and also as it has been argued in the literature, this means that there is a linkage between training and HR practices such as incentive systems, defining jobs broadly and providing opportunities for employee participation (Baron and Kreps 1999), (Lepak and Snell 1999).

In the department of Education, the impact of more specific training on performance was not noticeable save for one case. The only commensurate impact of training on performance was noticed in the Assistant Inspector of schools in charge of Special Needs Education (SNE). She was nominated by

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3 Interview with head of department held on 23/07/2008.

the HOD to attend a sign language course. She was able to pass on to others the knowledge and skills acquired, that is, training teachers in sign language to teach deaf pupils. This finding indicates that training can be more specific training but transferable. This contradicts the findings of Becker (1975) who found that more specific training was not transferable.

4.4 Relevance of the current training strategies

In order to appreciate the relevance of the different training strategies adopted by the District, I classified the training episodes into more general and more specific trainings on the basis of attributes illustrated in table 3.

Table 3: Classification of training episodes

More general training:	More specific training:
Mostly off-the job.	Mostly on-the job.
Mostly administrative positions.	Mostly technical positions.
Previous education is not a significant requirement to undertake training.	Previous education is a significant requirement to undertake training.

Source: Own analysis.

Data from the field indicated that the District was sending employees to pursue training courses that were relevant to their area of work. From the questionnaires and interviews, it emerged that none of the staff who had proceeded for training went to train in an area not directly related to their work. Furthermore, when asked when they would put to use the Knowledge, skills and attitudes (KSAs) acquired from their various training episodes, the responses were as indicated in table 4.

Table 4: Utility of Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes from training episodes

	More general training	More specific training
Immediate use	3	15
Medium term	5	4
Long term use	6	2
Total	14	21

Source: Field data

From table 4, KSAs gained from more general training tend to have an incremental outcome in the medium term and long term and seem to be least used immediately after the training. By implication, such trainings may help prepare employees for promotion both within and outside the organisation. Conversely, KSAs from more specific training tend to have a very high usage immediately after the training and their use dwindles in the medium term

before becoming almost inconsequential in the long term. If we use this finding and factor in the issue of employee mobility and transfer of skills, then we can conclude that more specific training tends to dwindle over time and as thus may not be transferable in the long run as stated by the Human Capital Theory. Again, this kind of training improves job performance in the current job but may also make employees more attractive to other organisations but only in the same occupation-thus becoming occupation specific. Yet, if we factor in employee mobility and career progression across time, we realise that more general training has a longer-term utility and this can pose as an issue of future competitiveness as suggested by the Human Resources Based View.

Utility may be viewed from the perspective of the trainee and from the organisation. Some scholars have distinguished between 'affective' and 'utility' judgements of training satisfaction (Alliger et al. 1997). Affective judgements measure the extent to which the trainee 'liked' the different aspects of the training. On the other hand, 'utility' judgements reflect on the extent to which employees can apply the different KSAs in their work. Alliger et al. (1997) showed that 'utility' judgements of trainees had modest but significant relationships to immediate learning and transfer. Put simply, this means that more specific training has got immediate benefits to the organisation while more general training has longer term benefits for individuals. In this study, this is true particularly for employees who undertook more general training. For those who more took specific training, this contradicts the findings of Alliger et al. (1997). Given such a scenario, it is reasonable to assume that the benefits from more general training have a lagged effect and as results from general training have shown in this study; it may take months or years before the results of this training start to manifest. The benefits may even be recognised by another employer if the employee transfers.

4.5 More general training Vs more specific training

By way of sending staff for training, the different departments sent their staff for training as illustrated in table 5.

Table 5: Type of training by department

Department.	Type of training.
Management and Administration	More general
Finance and Planning	More specific
Internal Audit	More specific
Works and Technical Services	More specific
Community Based Services	More general
Education	More specific
Natural Resources	More specific
Production and Marketing	More specific
Health	More specific

Source: Field data.

From the data collected, there was an indication that the departments of Administration and Community Based Services sent their staff for trainings that were more general in nature while the departments of Works and Technical Services, Health, Production, Natural Resources, Finance and Planning, Education and Internal Audit sent their staff for more specific training. When asked to rank how useful the training was to their performance, the results showed that the staff in Administration and Community Based Services departments who had undertaken more general training indicated very positive results of the training while those of the other departments indicated a mixture of positive and negative.

As explained earlier in chapter 2, it can be said that the positive results in the departments of Administration and Community Based Services are a reflection of the design of the kind of jobs in these departments. The nature of jobs in these departments can be said to be broad requiring a wide range of people skills, communication skills and decision making skills and as such the skills gained from this type of training may be helpful even outside the work environment. To this end it can be seen as preparation that goes beyond current responsibilities. If this is the case, then it corresponds to the Configurational perspective to training which holds that the benefits from training are dependent among other things on the broad definition of jobs and opportunities for employee participation. This finding also illustrates that from more general training, people are able to have a more flexible set of potential 'doings and beings' as advanced by the Capability Approach. On the other hand, more specific training had no significant impact on performance.

Again it can be said that this could be a reflection of the job design of the types of jobs in the departments that sent their staff for more specific training. These departments, it can be argued, are engaged in more technical functions

and if this is the case, then the skills they gained from the training can be said to be 'tied' to the department and even if there is transfer to another organisation, it may only be in the same occupation with limited applicability out side the work environment. If this is so, then it is consistent with the theoretical propositions of the Human Capital Theory that more specific training is non-transferable. A pertinent question then is: why do staff continue to attend such trainings? As pointed out in chapter 2, this may perhaps be explained that some of the trainings improve employee's sense of worth and well being and possibly their productivity as part of a psychological contract. The staff may view such training as a sign of trust and value given to them by the organisation, a view advanced by the psychological contract argument for training. Black and Lynch (1996) also failed to find a significant effect of more specific training. But, found that more general training had positive effects in manufacturing sector- their findings are therefore consistent with ours and this is in support of hypothesis 1 of this research.

4.6 Career prospects

In order to find out the prospects of advancing in career within and even outside the organisation, I asked if the training enhanced their prospects within the organisation and also if it had increased their potential to join other organisations. The responses are as presented in table 6.

Table 6: Prospects of joining other organisations due to training

Department	Prospect of joining another organisation
Management and administration	Very positive
Community Based Services	Very positive
Education	Mixture of positive and negative
Works and Technical Services	negative
Production	Mixture of positive and negative
Finance and Planning	Positive
Internal Audit	Very positive
Health	Mixture of positive and negative
Natural Resources	Negative

Source: field data.

The results indicated that respondents from Community Based Services and Administration departments had very positive prospects of career advancement both within and outside the organisation. It should be noted that these are the departments which sent their staff for more general training. As I argued in chapter 2, the nature of the jobs in these departments tends to be

broad and provides the job holders with more interaction within and outside the organisation. Thus, it can be argued that the reflection of their prospects and potential of joining other organisations has a bearing on their employability and well being derived from the 'functionings' of their positions in the organisation as advanced by Amartya Sen's (2006) Capability Approach.
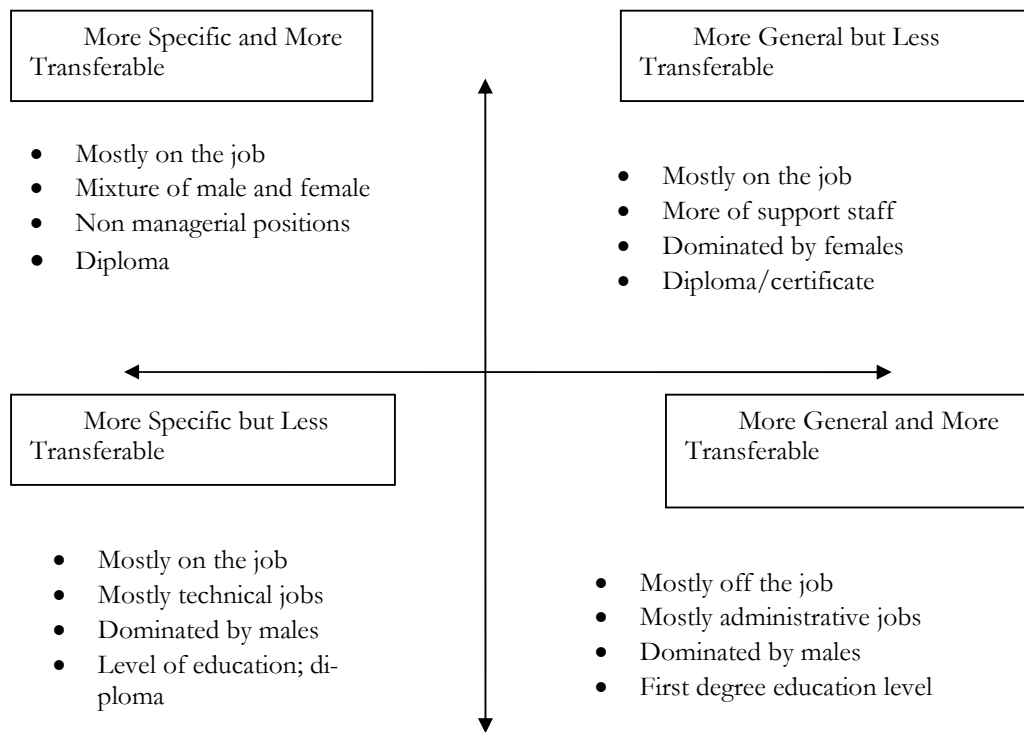
Interestingly, results from Internal Audit Department, which sent their staff for more specific training also indicated a very positive potential for career advancement outside the organisation. This finding suggests that there seem to be some kinds of more specific trainings, at least according to this survey that enable the trainees transfer their KSAs to other organisations. This finding contradicts the Human Resources Based View which says that more specific training of employees does not result in skills being transferred to rival organisations. This finding also contradicts Becker's (1975) assertion that more specific training is non-transferable. Taking on –the job training as proxy for more specific training and off-the job training as proxy for more general training one study found that employees with on-the job training are less likely to leave the current employer while those with off- the job training are more likely to leave their current employer (Lynch 1991). Another study found that employees with company training are less likely to leave their job, whereas those with school training have mobility patterns similar to those with no training (Loewenstein and Spletzer 1996). If on-the job training is more specific than off- the job training as Lynch presumes and if company training is more specific than school training as Loewenstein and Spletzer presume, then their results like ours are supportive of the Human Capital Theory. What comes out clearly though is that there is a transferability of knowledge, skills and competencies within and across organisations and this can not be reduced to simply the nature of training but may be due to a number of other HR practices and organisational factors as claimed by the Contingency perspective of training.

4.7 Contradictions in training requirements

To find out whether there was a contradiction between training typologies favoured by employers and employees, I interviewed both the employees and employers. The CAO indicated that the seven departments whose staff benefited from more specific training also had specific mandates, while for Administration department which was charged with the responsibility of coordinating the activities of other departments, their staff had to be knowledgeable on a cross section of issues that is why they were sent for more general training. He said the same was true for Community Based Services department. Conversely, the staff in the departments which sent them for more specific training indicated that much as the training had immediate relevance to their current jobs, it did not give them the potential to change jobs. If this is so, then we can conclude that the KSAs gained from more specific training can only be utilised in that specific job or department as claimed by the Human Capital Theory.

To appreciate better the contradictions in these typologies of training, figure 3 gives an illustration.

Figure 3: Typologies of training

More Specific and More Transferable • Mostly on the job • Mixture of male and female • Non managerial positions • Diploma	**More General but Less Transferable** • Mostly on the job • More of support staff • Dominated by females • Diploma/certificate
More Specific but Less Transferable • Mostly on the job • Mostly technical jobs • Dominated by males • Level of education; diploma	**More General and More Transferable** • Mostly off the job • Mostly administrative jobs • Dominated by males • First degree education level

Source: own analysis

From figure 3, we can clearly see that even in the different typologies of training, some tend to provide knowledge, skills and attitudes that are more transferable than others. Under more general training for instance positions mostly held by females such as typists and those held by support staff such as drivers and office attendants tend to provide them with less transferable skills when compared with staff who have also undertaken more general training but occupy administrative positions such as ACAOs, Personnel Officers and Sub County Chiefs. Also with the more specific training, some provide more transferable skills than others. Those that are less transferable tend to be jobs which are highly technical and are mostly held by men and the training is usually on-the job. On the other hand, those which are more transferable are non-managerial in nature and much as they also tend to receive on-the job training, they are occupied by a mixture of males and females. This finding

indicates that the benefits from training may depend on many factors and can not be reduced to a simple dichotomy of whether the training is merely general or specific as Becker (1975) claimed. Contrary to the propositions of the Human Capital Theory, both the more general and more specific training were funded by the DLG. Perhaps it may be explained that the Private Sector which tends to be profit oriented and the Public Sector which is not profit oriented have got different strategies as advanced by the Contingency perspective of training and also observed by Delery and Doty (1996).

Given the complex nature of the typologies of training and their benefits, it becomes prudent to identify a middle position in these typologies can lead to optimal use of resources and bring a win: win scenario to both the employer and employee. Table 7 provides a case in which this compromise can be obtained.

Table 7: Towards a win: win situation

Win: win	characteristics
Employee	Employee feels valued. Sense of capability development.
Employer	Labour turn over is low. Immediate productivity is high.

Source: Own analysis.

In order to strike a balance between the employer and employee in regard to training, a win for the employee combines a sense of being valued in their present job plus a sense of capability development that will help them get a more satisfying job/ life in the future- within or outside the organisation and this partly explains their desire to have more general training.

A win for the organisation is higher immediate productivity plus the employee staying with the organisation at least until the cost of training has been repaid from the higher productivity and this partly explains why the organisation would prefer more specific training.

To this end it can be argued that a win: win situation is possible for more specific training provided the psychological contract is involved. It is also possible if the employees view the training as their own capabilities development as claimed by the Capability Approach. On the other hand, more general training will be seen as beneficial to both parties provided the organisation maintains incentives to discourage labour turn over and also has got avenues for promotion.

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As stated in chapter 2, organisations providing more general training will have to offer wider incentives to their employees to keep them at least up to a point when returns from the training have been achieved. More so, this study has also shown that the returns from more general training tend to be felt in the longer term. Thus if the organisation retains the employees for a longer period after the training, the likelihood for them to reap the benefits from more general training is high.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

Over time, training has begun to be considered a fundamental policy for organisational performance. This has been attested to by the fact that research and financial support has been made in various contexts to promote training. However, most organisations do not really know if the money they dedicate to train their staff is an expense or an investment.

The purpose of this research was to analyse the linkage between HR training and organisational performance. To this end, I used multiple approaches in the literature on HRM: the Universalist, Contingency and Configurational approaches. By using multiple approaches, I tried to avoid the possible mistakes previous studies made. It is also for this reason that I based my discussions on three theories that permit it, that is, the Human Capital Theory, the Human Resources Based View and the Capability approach.

The results from this research indicate that more general training has a positive impact on organisational performance as Lado and Wilson (1994) argued. This research has also provided empirical support which allows us to state that training oriented towards human capital development (more general training) has a positive impact on organisational performance and is more appreciated compared to more specific training.

This study has also shown that employees who feel they are valued by the organisation are motivated to perform better, a finding that re-enforces the psychological contract argument for training.

From the findings of this study, it is evident that the theories related to training have over-laps and can not be applied in isolation and as a result, HR practitioners have the challenge of weaving them in different situations. For instance contrary to what Becker (1975) argued, that specific training does not lead to innovation, this study has found that actually, specific training leads to employee-led innovation, a finding consistent with the Human Capital Theory. Further, contrary to Becker's (1975) finding that specific training is non transferable, this study has shown that in reality even more specific training such as that which was provided to Internal Audit department and Education

is transferable. This finding represents a new contribution to the existing literature on training.

Again, Becker (1975) in his seminal work on human capital argued that organisations will only pay for training if the training will not be transferred to rival organisations. On the contrary, this study has shown that this was a false generalisation because in the Public Service, training both more general and more specific is funded by the employer. Consistent with the Contingency perspective, this research found that training depends on the organisational strategy and in this case, it can be said the strategy of the Public Service is to keep employees loyal and committed thus the psychological contract argument to training becomes an important explanation.

From the study, it is evident that KSAs from more general training tend to have an incremental outcome while from more specific training they tend to be put to immediate use. This is consistent with the theoretical propositions of the Human Resources Based View. Further, the study has shown that more specific training may not be transferable in the long run as stated by the Human Capital Theory but that more general training is more transferable as stated by the HRBV and this is also in line with Becker's (1975) propositions. From the findings, the explanation given for this is that more general training enhances flexibility and broadens potential 'doings and beings' as claimed by the Capability Approach. The study findings further attribute this partly to job design. To this end, this research has important practical and academic implications for HR management.

As the study has indicated, a win: win situation is possible for both the organisation and employees. On the part the employees it is about being valued in their current job plus capability development (a desire for training to be more general) while for the employer it is about immediate productivity and retention of the employee after training (a tendency to offer more specific training). It is therefore in the interest of both the organisational management and the employees to ensure that such a balance is struck.

However, the results from this study must be viewed with caution. A major problem and source of controversy and inconsistency has been the type of training measure used. Resultantly, previous studies have failed to show

what it is about training that is most likely to influence organisational performance (e.g. Type, method, content, and amount). It can be argued that organisations that provide more training will have positive attitudes and improved performance, but, it is difficult to understand what it is about training that makes it more or less likely to be related to organisational performance. In the literature reviewed, I did not find any theory that indicated that some measures of training might be better suited to predicting organisational outcomes than others, possibly because researchers tend to use available measures such as archival data rather than being theoretically linked to the outcomes of interest (Tharenou et al. 2007). Future research should consider training constructs that are being measured and provide a theoretical basis for the choice of training measure. Research also needs to match the content of training with the organisational outcomes measured. Stronger effects for training have been obtained when training content is matched to training out comes (Tharenou et al. 2007).

Also, using a sample from only one organisation is a potential limit to the generalizability of the results with accuracy. Beside, a minority of studies examined in this review found that training had a negative impact on some HR and performance outcomes (Wright et al.1999, Wiley, 1991, Shaw et al. 1998, Ngo et al.1998, Deng et al.2003). This may probably be because organisations with HR or performance problems implement training more than those without problems to improve productivity as some studies suggest (Bartel, 1994, Wong et al. 1997, Zwick, 2006). Put differently, the relationship may at times be reversed such that training is the consequence rather than the cause of organisational performance.

It should be borne in mind that many other factors besides training could influence organisational performance. Also, it is possible that there are complex relationships between training and other resources of the organisation such as technology that goes beyond the scope of this work. For this reason, I suggest that further research should attempt to measure the comparative and complementary influence of internal and external factors on organisational performance.

There are a few areas, however, where more attention could be directed in the realm of HRD and training. First, it is apparent that much needs to be done to more rigorously assess the extent of training in organisations and transfer of knowledge. In this study, I have shown that training episodes can not be reduced to a dichotomy as the existing literature suggests. Rather, training episodes can be broken down into occupation specific, capability specific and even promotion specific. For practical reasons and for the purposes of this research I did not delve into this categorisation. Future research should however endeavour to analyse such more subtle categorisations. Also, activities such as on-the job training can not be regarded as leading to HRD but rather more to work place efficiencies (Bhatta 2000). Hence it can be argued that they should not technically come under the rubric of training. There is thus a need for the reformulation of this approach to training. Finally, it is evident that it would help to generate a more complete set of measures of economy, efficiency and effectiveness of training and HRD in Local Governments. The information-if it does exist- is not available to all stakeholders and it would appear that putting focus on measures for which regular, extensive and reliable data is collected would enable a better value for money analysis. Not withstanding these limitations, there is no doubt that training plays a major role in continuous improvement of organisations.

In conclusion, demonstrating the relationship between training and organisational performance remains a challenge, but, a challenge that can be met with a combination of creative research, careful design of measures and persistence in data collection.

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