Learning and Development: A Conceptual Study

Shoeb Ahmad*

ABSTRACT

Learning in diverse workplace conditions reach beyond practices that create a valuable learning environment for the employees. A workplace that values the learning and development of its employees helps them to interact comfortably with the systems, explore innovative concepts, resolve difficulties and implore learning procedures from a variety of sources. Learning and development have become an important component of the competent global market which has resulted in an increased emphasis on learning within organizational boundaries. This has increased the interest of researchers in their studies and the practices of management bodies in organizations to explore the dynamics of individual development in the workplace. If learning and development are performed efficiently, organizations shall benefit in terms of more efficiency, better engagement and employee retention. Successful learning turns employees satisfied and motivated and, they experience a high level of self- esteem. Employees also become skilled and competent to thrive well in their professional lives. The study tries to briefly discuss the concept and importance of learning and development at the workplace. It also aims to explain what managers should do to increase the prospect of diffusion of learning at the workplace and, to identify certain aspects that are crucial for both the organizations and managers.

***Keywords:** Learning, Training, Workplace, Motives, Team, Transfer, Job security*

INTRODUCTION

Learning is an exercise for attaining ability, experience, beliefs or principles throughout training, knowledge or coaching. It creates a change in the behavior of an individual that is persistent, measurable and specified and professionally motivated. Further, permits a person to devise the latest psychological concept otherwise alter a previous psychological concept. The phrase 'learning and development' in due course of time has fundamentally transformed the concept of 'human resource development' for the managers, though in reality, both these terms are complementary to each other. These two terms are intermittently used amongst the corporation stressing upon the usage and importance of learning. Edmondson (2017) says that HRM systems must be created to ascertain individuals in need of some proficiencies and to match them to actual assignments to support learning in addition to development. The ways of acquiring break new ground. The specialists of learning, as well as development, must obtain complete gratefulness that whatever does the situation mean. Simultaneously, how it can be used to improve the performance as well as to facilitate the learning of an establishment.

In a study, Cunningham (2006) asserts that persons gain knowledge in different ways which are often referred to as learning styles. The classroom is an inferior learning environment for most people as it does not adapt to

*Dept. of Managerial and Financial Sciences, AL-Zahra College for Women, Muscat

such variations in learning styles. The trainers conduct an exercise at the beginning of a course using one of the instruments of learning style showing how people learn in different ways. But, one amazing thing for concentration is that they ignore this evidence in the rest of the courses. In a study conducted by Barrow & Loughlin (1992) establishments necessitate their workforces to have an extraordinary measure of coaching as they could manage the latest machinery, realize the involvement of their function to the enterprise furthermore take over judgments fitting to their roles. Employees have knacks to serve organizations that have horizontal constructs with not many levels of supervision. Ahmad (2017) affirms that if the workforces of an enterprise perform well then it will follow the safe and virtuous organizational performance, thus making an organization accordingly more flourishing and effective. Further, they appreciate managing crossing points between customers and departments. In order to proceed with its' motive employees need a respectable level of interpersonal skills. Development is an acquiring activity that is aimed at an oncoming influence of a role or a job that may be performed by a personality. Development is always modified by human knowledge and skills. Therefore, modern organizations pay more attention to the development of their employees. Material learnt during training is related to job situations.

Creating a learning environment aims to discern in what way to handover a person's learning addicted to workplace learning. In straight scholastic situations, both teachers plus learners hold expectancies concerning their jobs. The instructor or teacher is identified as per the basis of education and the learner is identified as the recipient of knowledge provided by the instructor. Kaplan & Norton (2004) upgrades the value of learning by assigning several viewpoints to 'Learning & Growth' in their Balanced Scorecard (BSC) tool which is planned expertise, planned knowledge, civilization, management, alignment and teamwork. Thus, from the point of view of success learning and development are important factors. The organizations are expected to harmonize their approaches to employee growth and developments with changes. The employee's training and development have to be attached to the organizational aims and policies. Currently, employee's training and development are seen as an executive challenge since it implements the new requisites of the setting. There is a necessity to evaluate the employees of the organization from a tactical viewpoint. Next, monitor regularly as well as support the developments of the latest expertise and experience as a foundation of organizational developments. Du Plessis & Sukumaran (2015) states that organizational accomplishment rest on affiliating business-related policy alongside a human being income policy that sets the real talents in the suitable functions carrying out in the correct means. The executives of the concerns are expected to be attentive plus reactive to the changing aspects of business settings in order to add new skills and superior stages of performing. They are respected as pillars of the organizations and are accountable to increase the transfers of learning to the workplace accordingly. Further, healthy discussions are needed to encourage for resolving managerial crises. The following section of the study deals with important constituents of learning and development with reference to employee development. The study explores the possibility of transfer of learning at the workplace as well as certain things that are relevant for the organizations and their individuals for healthy performance.

MOTIVES FOR LEARNING AND DEVELOPMENT

Any learning process cannot be a success without persistent and purposeful motives as it has far-reaching implications for learning procedures. Identification of learners' motives and their responsibility for learning mutually depends upon both the educator and the learner. Managers in the organizations should be up breast with the significance of learning processes and try to adopt them in their organizations from time to time. The main aim of learning and development from the organizational viewpoint is to support the unified growth of the employees by the cooperative, proficient and moral inspiration, in addition, locating the information that enables business goals, increase individual's knowledge, and identify and build on multiplicity (Jovanovic, 2016). In a study, Dutton (2018) insists that for individual growth there are two objectives necessary for employee learning that is individual growth and social pressure.

INDIVIDUAL GROWTH

Individual or personal growth is considered an intrinsic trait. In this area the employees are more interested and committed and as such demonstrates higher levels of performing as output.

SOCIAL PRESSURE

The second aspect of social pressure is an extrinsic trait. In fact, the employees are not interested to ascertain for themselves. Therefore, they don't care for organizational learning occasions. This is the only reason that they do not look as auspiciously upon them. Lerner & Tetlock (1999) states that social pressure arises when results and performance evaluation are identified by others. This may trigger anxiety or a fear of failure in an individual.

COMPONENTS OF LEARNING

Components of learning refer to how the learning processes are executed, what is the motivational force behind it and how it influences human behavior. The process of learning always involves change, whether it be positive or negative and may be temporary or permanent. Learning comprises of participation and concentration irrespective of time and place and is highly concerned with the behavior of the individual. For an organization, the learning and development activity of employees becomes mandatory to achieve both the organizational and personal goals. Some specific factors that influence and direct the learning process in an organization as represented in figure I:
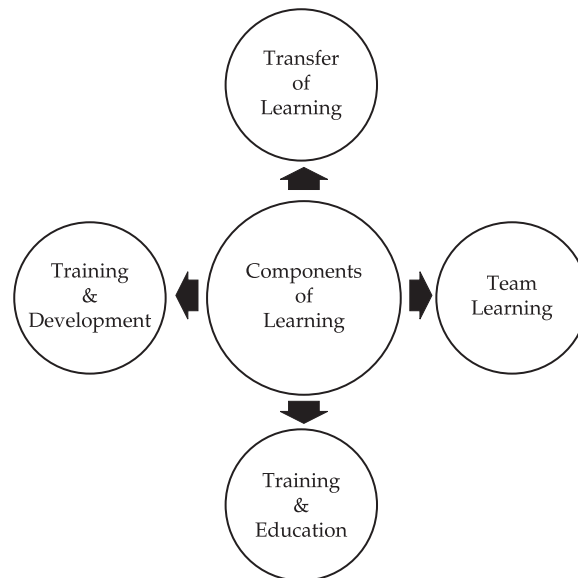

Fig 1: Components of Learning

TRANSFER OF LEARNING

Transfer of learning changes the personalities as their knowledge or skill set is altered. If there is a criterion to lessen the positive transfer of learning it requires taking an attempt under a variety of conditions and situations. Further, helps us to acquire new opinions on a topic focusing on the task from a different style, which reinforces our perception of the subject matter. When employees are satisfied with learning

curriculums, the effective transfer of knowledge is likely to take place. Knowledge can be attained through formal education as well as through practical learning. In the case of learning, the knowledge gained is an ongoing process whereas in the case of education the knowledge gained is at a particular time as in school life or college life. Learning is considered an informal process and education is taken as a formal process. The knowledge gained in the case of learning is through experience while in the case of education the knowledge gained is through teaching. Kolb (2004) in a study recognized that a learning sequence depends on four phases as shown in figure II:
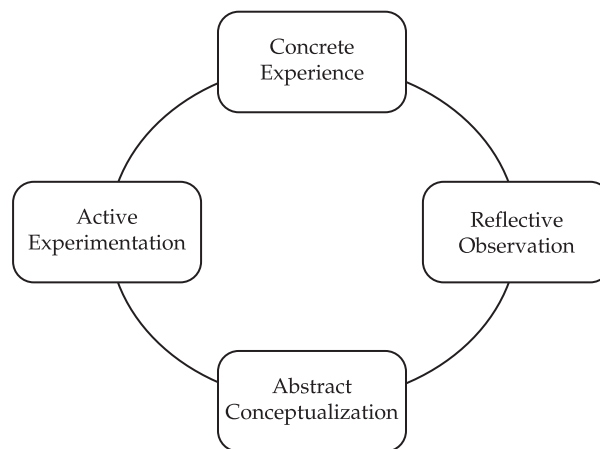
Fig II: Kolb's Learning Cycle

Upon reviewing the Kolb's study, it was inferred that:
Concrete skills may be strategic or unintentional.
Reflective observation helps in experiential learning where the learner enriches his skill and experiences by observing others.
Abstract conceptualization represented a broadened view to improving a variety of conceptions and thoughts which may be directed once the same circumstances are faced.
Active experimentation is concerned with examining the views with reference to the current circumstances to keep up breast with the real experiences and continuity of the cycle .

Managers play a critical role as transfer agents when they use their managerial proficiencies and understanding to support and motivate the transfer of learning. The consideration needs to be given that how the organizations are generally managing their people and what managers perceive their roles to be. As we know that every organization has matchless characteristics one of which is they have places of knowledge generation and learning. Once places of work establish plans that force staff to ascertain continually, modify and accept modern ways of own development. Organizations expect each employee to know how things are done and how to interchange on the requirements. Further, sharing employees' knacks and expertise is likely to enhance structural capabilities in knowledge management and revitalization, consequently to produce over and above desirable work outcomes (Liu et al., 2012). Each employee is assumed to be skilled means there must be an observable improvement in the staffs' talent record and a higher stage of execution. Managers can furthermore assist employees to put their learning addicted to practice by validating that the means and openings are available (Yemeshvary & Upadhyay, 2012).

With the aim of ongoing organizations demand to learn and adjust to the varying and altering certainties. The fact is the organizations are the user of knowledge as well as its creator. The modern and challenging

establishments of the time ahead will be known for their experience and expertise. There are certain things that are relevant for the organizations and their individuals for healthy performance such as to inspire commitment and enlarge the developing ability on each and every organizational level that may possibly be followed by the resulting facts.

TEAM LEARNING

As we all know that learning changes individuals as their knowledge or skill set is changed. Workable and verified gain may be guaranteed merely as a result of those enterprises that improve the skill to acquire quicker than the opposition (DeGenus, 1988). An establishment or place of work affords excellent use to clients when its procedures, culture and environment inspire learning and strengthen activities that go-ahead to advancements in competence along with effectiveness. Business strategy stresses HR challenges promoting a team or group tasks, enriching administrative culture and developing client relations throughout empowerment and involvement. Likewise, includes organizational techniques for instance participative management, team building, modern culture-redesign, quality circle movement, cross-cultural direction and organizational advancement agendas (Wang, 1999). 'The efficiency of the market depends upon the high based performance of science and technology in adoption of the modern pattern of thinking, living and working processes in the widened form' (Ahmad, 2003, p.355).

Team building is a form of practical learning and acts with a group having some purpose, focused on a mission and committed to success. Successful team-building activities generally begin with a pre-program assessment of the team and the involvement of the team in designing the curriculum. This process reveals if a strong foundation is in place and it determines the approach of the program. Jovanovic (2016) argues that members should be skilled enough and come to know from others. Actually, they should be trained by means of participants of teams coupled with contact through their executives of different levels. The members of current entrepreneurs face different interaction assignments in traditional teams who do not have to struggle for coordination assignments throughout the boundaries of time, space, and manifold layers of cultural intricacy (Ahmad, 2014). Organizations ought to set up their specific sets of planned knowledge necessities. Planned as well as strategic analysis helps to set up the appropriate learning requirements and may possibly help those requisites. In addition, might be beneficial to investigate the allocation of modern instruction and learning supports. Furthermore, there is a need to identify which positions maintain the utmost altering skill needs and in what way fine and satisfactory recent contributions stay united along with strategic necessities. Work organizations based on teams in certain conditions may be considered supportive of learning which is reasonable to presume as the members work together toward a common goal. The people ought to be involved in uninterrupted learning and developments and think to complement and support one another. They must be engaged suitably to renew their competences and attain others that wish to be required in the time ahead by their existing or different employers of their choice.

Currently, organizations demand their staffs largely and their superiors especially to exercise sophisticated level judging skills. The hierarchy's emphasis on advanced and refined philosophy and judging abilities. There are many firms and persistent activities, events wherever we agree to gain a little in a more organized manner. Moreover, there exist distance and open education courses that continue as more endorsed and comprehensive methods of knowledge.

TRAINING AND EDUCATION

Basically, there are two different methods of learning like training and education which point to improve an individuals' talent to tackle the intricacies of the life cycle and its contests. No doubt, the styles followed in attaining this goal differ a lot. Education is a good tool and a conscious attempt to promote learning in different people. Education is not the responsibility and dispensation of those in senior ranks and experienced staff rather it is going to be the responsibility and necessity of one and all. Education delivers the necessary basis on

top of which training succeeds. In several situations, training constructs and specify certain fields encompassed in education. Still, there are various differences concerning the two methods of learning. Education recovers the overall proficiency of the workforces away from the occupation they are presently carrying out (Du Plessis & Frederick, 2010). Education is directed more with regard to the future of an individual. It prepares learners for future challenges of life, shapes their career and grooms them for social responsibilities. Training is focused more on proficiency improvement for current specific purposes. Vemic (2007) states that employee education and training are appropriate and a prime response to complex business challenges, the management of human resources is occupying essential function in contemporary supervision. Training and education may be expressed as an organized attempt from the workplace to improve workers' experience, talents and expertise. These have the same philosophies i.e. to develop expertise and overall competence. Training and education are seen as main issues in the course of developing the establishments and inhabitants more worthwhile and competitive intensifying the occupation of the employees (Papadakis, et al., 2012). Thus, training and education programs carry on a constructive impact on both the human being and the organization as a whole.

TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

Employee training and development remains placed within global organizational management, as planned workforce education and development along with the target to help equally the workplace and workforces. Smither, et al., (2005) explicates that personal skill outline links to proficiencies the employees achieve after training and development. Training and development reinforce specific individuals all the way through task surety assurance who have high caliber. The organization needs to concentrate on training and development as these develop the capability of the organization to deal with change, have the potential to improve labor productivity, increase the profit of organizations as well as provide differences within their local market, intensifies retention among employees. In addition, affirmative outcomes of training and development programs comprise better organizational performance like profitability, efficiency and output.

If there are organized training and development programs available for the workforces the organizations will be benefited and stay on spirited in the employment marketplace in the long run. Additionally, the concentration would be on the linkage concerning learning and training and how the training at work has adjusted to adapt the requirements of recent awareness grounded establishments. Organizations have to guide their employees starting from employment till superannuation. Ahmad (2017) states that talented employees must be retained for good career planning and growth and thus creating a good organizational climate. The entrepreneurs continually have to examine the outlay in training and development to assess attainment then expand upcoming productivity (Marchington & Wilkinson, 2000). Actually, management hardly supports training as training and learning are largely considered as interrogations for the future. A logical and sensible training and development program with valuable equipment certainly assist the organizations to retain the most valued human resources especially those who hold extensive experiences with the organizations. Technology and skill is not the exact solution for each and every obstacle. There is a usual myth that learning through the use of technology is the most capable means. Individuals learn better in groups and teams when they always interact with others.

In organizational strategies learning has become highly organized and interlinked with works. Further, the workplace is a place of learning which is worldwide accepted. The organizations bear up that their most valuable assets are the employees along with knowledge. As a result, training and ongoing learning, employee participation and employee developments are becoming norms along with slabs of best practices at occupations. Also, the organizations need to address some of the strategies to make learning and development effective as exhibited in figure III:
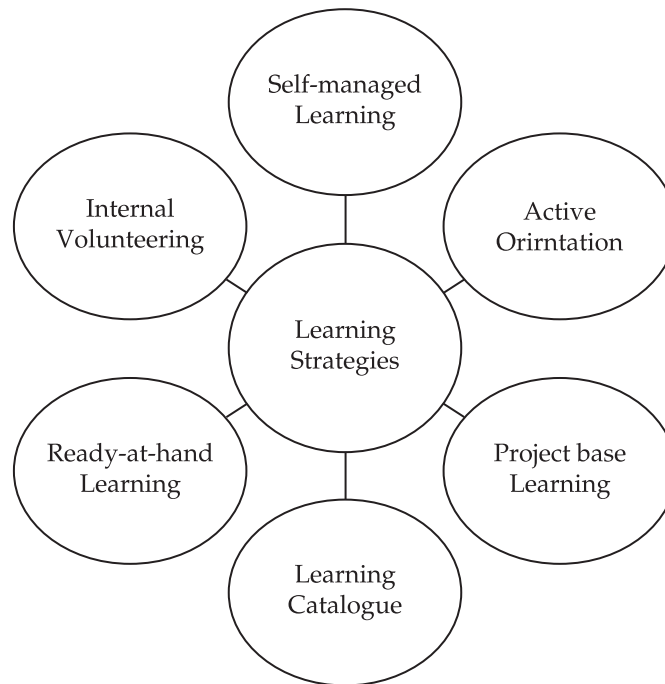
Fig III. Learning Strategies

SELF-MANAGED LEARNING

It is useful for managers which not only keeps managers busy rather also enables them (particularly those who do not prefer formal training and development plans) to improve themselves with the influence of their knowledge.

ACTIVE ORIENTATION

Useful from three-point of views. Firstly, accelerates interacting between recent employment; make acquainted new staff to the organizational assets and significant individuals; involves new hires straight away with a helpful atmosphere of the workplace.

PROJECT-BASED LEARNING

The project involves skilled and experienced people as the business problem may be resolved easily. Actually, this type is determined and beneficial learning that is rooted in the work environment and fosters analytical business expertise.

LEARNING CATALOGUE

Developed by learning professionals that display catalogue lists which is useful for a person if interested to learn any skill, just can check the catalogue and make contact with an associate if accessible to support.

READY-AT-HAND LEARNING

Permits employees to choose what they want to learn and ignore what they understand. They can finish units at their place of work as per the convenience.

INTERNAL VOLUNTEERING

The workers provide their expertise to other teams in the organization for common profit.

PERSONAL CHARACTERISTICS FOR LEARNING

The personal characteristics are big requisites because of their influence such as initiative, motivation and commitment, which are crucial within an online learning context. No doubt, these are our customary designs of actions, nature and sentiment. Moreover, the abilities, conversely, are the learned competence to perform particular duties. Heaton (2017) in his study configures that learning and development depend upon the state of consciousness of an individual and it becomes void if someone is in an unconscious state. As a matter of fact, a person is not aware of himself or any objects of experience until and unless he is in a completely conscious state of mind. Similarly, another worker stated that the effectiveness of the knowledge acquired largely depends on the states of consciousness of the knowers – 'how free from stress, how balanced and integrated, how rested and alert, how logically the brain is functioning' (Dillbeck, 2011, p. 47). Also, the organizations need to address some of the strategies to make learning and development effective as:

Self-managed learning – Especially useful for managers which not only keeps managers busy rather also enables them (particularly those who do not prefer formal training and development plans) to improve themselves with the influence of their knowledge.

Active orientation – This has advantages from three perspectives. Firstly, accelerates interacting between recent employment; make the new staff acquainted with the organizational assets and significant individuals; involves new hires straight away with a helpful atmosphere of the workplace.

Project-based learning - Project involves skilled and experienced people as the business problem may be resolved easily. Actually, this type is determined and beneficial learning that is rooted in the work environment and fosters analytical business expertise.

Learning catalogue - Developed by learning professionals that display catalogue lists which is useful for a person if interested to learn any skill, just can check the catalogue and make contact with an associate if accessible to support.

Ready-at-hand learning - Permits employees to choose what they want to learn and ignore what they understand. They can finish units at their place of work as per the convenience.

Internal volunteering - Workers offer their expertise to other teams in the organization for common profit.

CONCLUSIONS

Individuals are significant to the workplace. The role of an institution is important as it decides the individuals' talent along with viewpoint. The organizational processes for upgrading personalities requires an integration of learning & development processes in addition to operations following relationships. Learning and development focus on increasing the proficiencies required for the policy as well as strategy implementations. Individuals have to develop enhanced personal competencies coupled with adaptability and employability. Besides, motives and consciousness play a very vital role in learning and development. Organizations must be attentive and approachable to the changing aspects of corporate situations. Hence, there are needs to constantly take along the latest plans to revive and develop prevailing worthwhile procedures.

Furthermore, there are certain vital aspects in the course of learning, for instance, feedback. Indeed, it is receiving responses to situations in learning situations. Up-to-date learning not only helps organizations but also influences the growth and development of employees in their special lives. Moreover, there are two different approaches to learning such as training and education which aims to develop an individuals' ability to face the complexities of life afterward its' challenges. Organizations cannot survive unless people continue to learn. In fact, it is an ongoing journey.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

- *Ahmad, S., (2003), "Transformation of Human Resources in Building up Employment Competence", Management and Labor Studies, Vol.28, No.4, pp.350-356.*
- *Ahmad, S., (2014), "Team in its contexts: Nature, Structure and Effectiveness", Middle East Journal of Management, Vol1, No.3, pp.213-223.*
- *Ahmad, S., (2017), "Work Stress and Employees' Performance", ZENITH International Journal of Multidisciplinary Research, Vol.7, No.11, pp.48-57.*
- *Andries, J du. P. and Sukesh, S. (2015), The Role of HRM in Leadership Development, Talent Retention, Knowledge Management and Employee Engagement. World Journal of Social Sciences, 5(1), pp.93 – 110.*
- *Barrow, M. J. and Loughlin, H. M., (1992), "Towards A Learning Organization: 1. The Rationale", Industrial and Commercial Training, 24.*
- *DeGenus, A. P., (1988), "Planning as learning" Harvard Business Review, Vol. 66, No. 2, pp.70-4.*
- *Dillbeck, M.C. (1982). Meditation and flexibility of visual perception and verbal problem-Solving. Memory and Cognition, Vol.10, No.3, pp.207–215.*
- *Du Plessis, A. and Frederick, H. (2010), "Local Ontologies and Epistemologies of Leadership in the Rosebank Business Precinct of Auckland", New Zealand. Interdisciplinary Journal of Contemporary Research in Business, Vol.2, No. 7, pp.10-22.*
- *Edmondson, A.C., and Harvey, J.F. (2017), Cross-boundary teaming for innovation: Integrating research on teams and knowledge in organizations. Human Resource Management Review. Vol.3. No.2, pp.1-14.*
- *Feng-chuan, L., Kai-Lin, C., Minston, C. and Hsu-Min, T. (2012), "Team innovation climate and knowledge sharing among healthcare managers: mediating effects of altruistic intentions", Chang Gung Medical Journal, Vol.35, No.5, pp. 408–419.*
- *Heaton, D. (2017), "Consciousness development for the learning organization" The Learning Organization, Vol.24, No.6, pp.401–407.*
- *Jelena, V. (2007), "Employee training and development and the learning organization", Facta universitatis Series: Economics and Organization, Vol.4, No.2, pp.209 – 216.*
- *Jovanovic, Z., Damnjanovic, A. and Dimitrijevic, V. (2016), Learning and development in modern organizations. '6th International Conference' Economics and Management-Based on New Technologies. EMoNT-2016, 16-19 June, Vrnjacka Banja, Serbia.*
- *Kaplan, R.S. and Norton, D.P. (2004), "Strategy Maps: Converting the Intangible Assets into Tangible Outcomes", Harvard Business School, MA: Boston.*
- *Kelly, D. (2018), "Professional development: Investigating the relationships between employee motives, learning opportunities, and activities", Development and Learning in Organizations, Vol.32, No.5, pp.32-35.*
- *Kolb, D. A. Rubin, I M and McIntyre, J. M. (1974), Organizational Psychology: An experimental approach, Englewood Cliffs, NJ, Prentice Hall.*
- *Lerner, J. S., & Tetlock, P. E. (1999). Accounting for the effects of accountability. Psychol. Bull. 125, 255–275.*
- *Marchington, M. & Wilkinson, A. (2000). 'Direct Participation', in S. Back & K. Sisson (eds), Personnel Management, 3rd edition, Oxford, Blackwell.*
- *Nkos, P., Argyris, K., Pokopis, P. & Christos, Z. (2012), "Best Practices in Training of Employees: A Framework for Training the Personnel of Social Partners and NGOs", International Journal of Education, Vol.4, No.2, pp.147-160.*
- *Smither, J. W., London, M., and Reilly, R. R. (2005), "Does performance improve following multisource feedback? A theoretical model, meta-analysis, and review of empirical findings", Personnel Psychology, Vol.59, pp.33–66.*
- *Wang, Z.M. and Mobley, W. (1999), "Strategic human resource management for twenty-first-century China", Research in Personnel and Human Resources Management, pp.353-66. JAI Press Inc., CT: Greenwich.*
- *Yemeshvary, A. and Upadhyay, A. (2012), "Ways of learning - break new ground: Technology also gives a fresh impetus to workplace communication", Development and Learning in Organizations, Vol.26, Vol.2, pp.23 – 26.*