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Training Reactions as Predictors of Autonomous and Controlled Motivation to Transfer

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HINWEIS

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IMPRESSUM

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A. Abstract

Previous training research conceptualized motivation to transfer as a one-dimensional construct that varies in amount (high versus low motivation), not in kind (different qualities of transfer motivation). In recent years, research groups started to re-conceptualize motivation to transfer as a two-dimensional construct: autonomous and controlled motivation to transfer. To date, still little is known about the predictors of autonomous and controlled motivation to transfer. The present study addresses this gap and examines the relative importance of six training reaction scales in predicting transfer motivation. In addition, the study examines the moderating effect of age, gender, and work experience on the reaction—motivation relationships. The study sample consisted of 64 training participants. Analyses include exploratory factor analysis and multivariate regression. Analyses are ongoing. The outcomes of the study will be discussed in terms of their significance for theory development and their practical implications for training evaluation.

B. Extended Summary

1. Introduction

Previous training research conceptualized motivation to transfer as a one-dimensional construct that varies in amount (high versus low motivation), not in kind (different qualities of transfer motivation). Based on self-determination theory (Deci & Ryan, 2012), different research groups started to measure two qualities of motivation to transfer: autonomous and controlled motivation to transfer (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009; Tonhäuser & Büker, 2016). As a contribution to this emerging strand, the present study examines how six different scales of training reactions predict two different scales of motivation to transfer. For this

purpose, training reactions were conceptualized in six dimensions: satisfaction, perceived difficulty, content validity, perceived knowledge gains, as well as perceived and objective workload. In addition, the study examines the moderating effect of participant age, gender, and years of work experience on the relationships between training reactions and motivation to transfer.

Two research questions were addressed. The first research question was: What is the relative importance of training reactions (satisfaction, perceived difficulty, content validity, perceived knowledge gains, as well as perceived and objective workload) in predicting autonomous and controlled motivation to transfer training? The second research question was: How do participants' demographic characteristics (age, gender, work experience) moderate the influence of training reactions on motivation to transfer?

2. Methods

2.1. Participants

To address these two research questions, a study was conducted that consisted of 64 participants of on-the-job training programs. A total of 43% of the participants was female. Mean age was 31.33 years (±6.01) and mean work experience was 13.10 years (±8.18). Participation in the study was voluntary. Anonymity and confidentiality were guaranteed for all responses.

2.2. Instruments

Participants completed an online survey at the end of the training program that measured training reactions, objective workload, and demographic characteristics. Training reactions included scales measuring (a) satisfaction (Warr et al., 1999), (b) perceived difficulty (Warr et al., 1999), (c) content validity (Holton et al., 2007), (d) perceived knowledge gains (Chiaburu et al., 2014), (e) perceived workload (LePine et al., 2004), as well as (f) autonomous

and (g) controlled motivation to transfer training (Gegenfurtner et al., 2009) using a four-point Likert scale. Table 1 presents details of all scales. Objective workload was assessed with the amount of hours invested in the training program. Demographic characteristics included age, gender, and years of work experience.

Table 1.

Psychometric Properties and Example Items of All Scales.

Scale	Number of Items	Cronbach's Alpha	Sample Item
Satisfaction	5	0.92	I enjoyed the training program.
Perceived Difficulty	5	0.84	The level of difficulty was high.
Content Validity	5	0.90	The training content was useful for my job.
Perceived Knowledge Gains	5	0.87	I have learned a lot in the training program.
Perceived Workload	5	0.85	The workload was high.
Autonomous Motivation to Transfer	5	0.81	I am motivated to transfer the trained knowledge and skills because I can improve my job performance.
Controlled Motivation to Transfer	5	0.84	I am motivated to transfer the trained knowledge and skills because because I can impress my colleagues.

2.3. Analysis

At the time of writing the proposal, analyses are ongoing. Final outcomes will be presented at the conference. Analyses follow a two-step procedure. As a first step, explorative factor analysis with maximum likelihood as extraction method and Oblimin as rotation method will identify the underlying factor structure. As a second step, multivariate regression will estimate the relationships between the independent variables (satisfaction, difficulty, content validity, knowledge gains, perceived and objective workload) and the dependent variables (autonomous and controlled motivation to transfer training) along with the moderating effects of demographic characteristics (age, gender, work experience).

3. Results and Discussion

The roundtable presentation will outline the outcomes of the study analyses. The study outcomes can be relevant in two respects. First, the outcomes can have implications for theory development as the study is, to our knowledge, among the first research endeavors to systematically compare the influence of different dimensions of training reactions on autonomous and controlled motivation to transfer. As such, the study contributes to refining the measurement of motivation to transfer (Tonhäuser & Büker, 2016) and to establishing the nomological network with regard to the relative influence of five training reaction scales (Chiaburu et al., 2014).

Second, the outcomes can have implications for training practice as they can inform training officers and human resource developers about the predictive validity of different scales to estimate participation reactions to training. The findings can thus inform the practices of training evaluation in reconstructing existing scales used in companies for training evaluation (Holton et al., 2007;

LePine et al., 2004). And finally, the findings can also inform training evaluators to consider and acknowledge the moderating effects of age, gender, and work experience when interpreting evaluation outcomes.

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