

**"ON-THE-JOB TRAINING VERSUS FORMAL TRAINING: AN EVALUATION OF  
ITS IMPACT ON EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE"**

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## **ABSTRACT**

The success or downfall of any organisation is highly sustained by the quality and performance of its employees. Hence, in order to stay ahead in the today's competitive market, to grow and to be successful, organisations must train its employees with the appropriate training method. In many companies, employees are considered as the backbone of the firm, they are highly significant and are accountable for accomplishing most of the task. Furthermore, without the right training technique, it would not be possible for an employee to gain to relevant competencies and knowledge needed to perform their duties to their full capacity (Elnaga and Imran, 2013). The aim of this research is to evaluate the impact of on-the-job training versus formal training on employee performance. The primary research will be carried out in a B2B Telemarketing company called IDG Direct through the consent of the company. A quantitative research design will be used for this research with an attempt to evaluate employees' opinion on which method of training has more impact on their performance. As there was no previous scale that measures OJT and formal training on employee performance, the researcher created some questions with the aim of answering the research question. The data was distributed to 256 employees in the company through a web-based structured questionnaire with a total of 110 responses. The findings that were derived pointed out that both on-the-job training and formal training has an impact on performance but OJT has a greater impact. It was suggested and recommended the training provided by companies should be tailored to each individual needs. Furthermore, the training session should be constantly evaluated to ensure that the employee have learnt or gained the relevant skills.

### **Key Words:**

Training, Employees, Performance, On-the-Job Training (OJT), Formal Training.

# DECLARATION

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# **CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION**

## **1.1 Background of Research**

As a result of today's highly competitive business world, many expectation is placed on the effectiveness and efficiency of employees in terms of their job performance. In order for an organisation to be highly competitive, to survive and grow, its employees must be able to perform their jobs with maximum results and minimum errors. Hence, an employee who is not appropriately trained to perform their job will be seen as a burden to the organisation and instead of producing a certain quality or amount of output, the employee will produce less and this in return is referred to as inadequate use of resources (Medina, 2006). As employees' talent reflects on the success of many organisations, it is therefore acknowledged that in order for organisations to adequately compete, they must take learning as a continuous process for their employees (Eddy, D'Abate, Tannenbaum, Ginens-Skeaton and Robinson, 2006).

Lorette (2016) stated that when organisations invest in training its employees, it can reflect either favourable or negatively on the performance of its employees. However, the training technique used by the company will determine whether the training will reflect positively or negatively on its employees' performance.

According to Garavan, Hogan and Cahir-O'Donnell (2003), it is highly important that companies invest in training because it contributes to the long-term performance of employees. The reasons why companies should invest in training can be justified by the fact that training enables employees to quickly gain the relevant standards, employees that are involved in training programmes tend to produce the best quality products and services, employees that are provided with the appropriate training tend to stay within the company for a long time and will therefore obtain better job satisfaction.

Training is one of the mechanisms that managers can use to connect the gap across employees' current performance level and their desired performance level. However, the difficulties that most organisations face is to establish training techniques that will provide employees with the relevant information and competencies (Bianca, 2016). The two most popular methods of training used by organisations are on-the-job training and formal training. OJT is a training technique that occurs in the workplace environment. Either a supervisor, colleague, manager or a team leader normally train the employee by showing him/her how to perform their job. This training technique includes coaching, mentoring, job rotation, apprenticeship and many more. On the other hand, formal training is a training technique that occurs in a classroom

environment. Within this method, individuals learn through the aid of lectures, readings, case-studies, presentation slides and many more.

It has also been noted that OJT includes one-to-one direction given by a trainer to the trainee in the workplace. In addition, this training covers the appropriate skills and knowledge needed to correctly perform the job. Formal training which is also referred to as off-the-job training takes place far away from the workplace and it is normally provided either by the training department in the company or by an external training company (Buckley and Caple, 1996).

## **1.2 Research Problem**

Unfortunately, many organisations do not realize the importance of training as a tool for enhancing the productivity of their employees and sadly, when there is economic downturn or when the company is low on profit, the first move that most companies take is to reduce the budget of their training which may however reduce the organisation's productivity (Imran and Elnagol, 2013). It is further emphasised that due to training that are badly designed, many companies have wasted their money (Noe, 2010).

The topic of on-the-job training and formal training is seen as a topic of controversy. Some authors such as Crawshaw (2006) and Khan, Khan and Khan (2011) have argued that OJT is more effective than formal training when it comes to training employees while other authors such as Kainen, Begley and Maggard (1983) have also argued that formal training is more effective than on-the-job training. So therefore, in order to clear this argument, this research aim to evaluate whether on-the-job training or formal training has more impact on employee performance.

Previous academic literatures have shown the impact of training on employee performance. Hafeez and Akba (2015) carried out a research on the impact of training on employee performance in pharmaceutical companies that is based in Pakistan. The study showed a remarkable correlation between training and performance and it also revealed that if employees are constantly trained, the more effective their degree of performance becomes. Similarly, another previous study was carried out by Iqbal, Ahmad and Javaid (2014) whereby they investigated the impact of training on employee performance based on a Telecommunication sector that was situated in Pakistan.

However, there is no previous research or very little research has compared OJT and formal training to observe which method has more impact on employee performance. Furthermore, no previous research has compared the two methods of training based in a B2B Telemarketing

sector. So therefore, the objective of this research is to narrow the gap by reviewing relevant literatures and thus, illuminate this area of study.

### 1.3 Background of the company



IDG DIRECT which was established in 1964 is a subsidiary of International Data Group and it's a top leading technology and market research organisation. The company operates in Ireland, UK, Boston and many other countries. IDG Direct provides a huge range of multilingual B2B telemarketing as well as services to IT sector/clients such as DEL and IBM. The company currently has approximately 256 employees and it also has a 24 hours' outbound contact centre with a multilingual team of approximately 30 different languages including English, German, French, Mandarin, Japanese, Dutch and many others. The 24-hour outbound call centres enables agents to carry out market research in different languages across different countries. The company's aim is to provide the best quality branded conversations to its client (IDG Direct, 2016).

IDG invest and focus so much in training programmes, hence, training plays a very important part in all aspects of the business. Its contact centre agents are continuously trained on a regular basis in order to improve their quality in terms of their phone calls as well as their general performance and therefore brining out their full potentials. IDG train its staffs so that they can become sales professionals and also to give them the relevant skills required to become experts in the IT field. The company's training programme emphasis on every key aspect to deliver effective campaigns and also to stay ahead in the competition within the industry (IDG Direct, 2016). The company utilises both formal training and OJT as well as coaching and mentoring and all other forms of OJT and formal training.

### **1.3 Research Question and Objectives**

"On-the-job training versus formal training: An evaluation of its impact on employees' performance".

#### **Aims of research/sub-objectives**

- To compare and contrast the differences between on-the-job training and formal training.
- To evaluate employees' opinion of on-the-job training versus formal training on their work performance in terms of improved work quality.
- Is either on-the-job training or formal training more beneficial to employees' in terms of assisting their performance?

#### **Hypothesis:**

Alternative:

H1: Formal training impacts positively on employee performance.

H2: On the job training has more positive impact on employee performance.

Null:

H3: There will not be any difference in the impact of on the job training and formal training on employee's performance.

### **1.5 Worth of Research**

This research is worth investigating because training is a vital tool for all organisations. This research is going to help organisations to not just understand the relevance of training but to also acknowledge the significance of training employees with the appropriate training methods so as to have an effect on their performance. Finally, this research will help to show how on-the-job training and formal training impacts on employee performance.

### **1.6 Overview of Research**

Chapter one of this dissertation introduces the general information of the research topic. Furthermore, these information includes the research problems, background details of the company where the primary research will be conducted, research question and objectives and the worth of research.

Chapter two provides a review of the academic literature on training in the organisation, employee performance, how training is linked with performance and the benefits and

drawbacks of training. Finally, this chapter compares both OJT and formal, its strengths and limitations as well as its various methods.

Chapter three identifies the research methodology used to carry out the research.

Chapter four and five presents the analysis, findings and discussion based on the primary research as well as the implication of study.

Finally, chapter six provides a conclusion and recommendation of the study.

## **CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW**

### **2.1 Training**

Many organisations are continuously spending more fortunes on training because they believe that training will enable them to gain a competitive edge both in the local and international market (Edralin, 2004). In other words, as a result of competition in the business environment, many organisations are now investing in training so that they can gain competitive advantage over their competitors. According to Khan (2011), competitiveness is built on the notion of performance which is closely associated with training. Hence, in order for companies to compete with their competitors, they must first improve their performance.

Employees' should be provided with continuous training in order to revamp their competencies and knowledge which will enable them to stay competitive and effective in the organisation. Furthermore, in order for an organisation to gain competitive advantage, its employees must be able to perform magnificently (Sila, 2014).

According to IBM (2014), many high performing companies do not recognise the significance of their people as well as the essence of providing them with the appropriate skills. Today, there is now a need for companies to increase their human capital by providing the appropriate skills at the right time for the right set of people.

As training is considered as a very crucial aspect of human resource management and as HR is the foundation of all organisations, it is very important that companies invest in employees because the performance of employees primarily boosts the performance of the organisation (Khan et al., 2011).

Training is very crucial in order for an organisation to prosper and to grow. Furthermore, changes in products, technology, customer's expectation, materials and techniques means that individuals have to learn continuously so that they can be kept up to date. To stay ahead in a certain marketplace, both the organisation and its employees will need to identify new concepts and ways of doing things.

Nevertheless, without training or if training doesn't exist in an organisation, it can result to a number of consequences and downsides. Without training, individuals will be unable to reach their full potentials, they might become frustrated which may therefore lead to a range of consequences. Lack of training might result to employees leaving the organisation and even if they decide to stay with the organisation, they might spend unreasonable time off work, they might not perform their tasks appropriately and they might struggle which in turn might destruct or damage employee's self-esteem and customer relations. Without training, both the organisation and group performance will suffer. However, without a sustained, focused and coordinated team, organisations will most likely not going to succeed and thus, effective training is essential (Hackett, 2003).

Elnaga and Imran (2013) also stated that in most organisations, as employees are mainly responsible for carrying out majority of the tasks as well as satisfying customers and ensuring quality products and services, without appropriate training, employees will be unable to gain the knowledge and competencies needed to accomplish their tasks to their full potentials. In other words, training is very crucial in every workplace and without it, employees would not understand their responsibilities or duties.

According to Garavan, Costine and Heraty (1997), every author has their own definition of training and there is no standard definition of what training actually is. However, training is described as a systematic and planned attempt to improve or enhance skills, attitude and knowledge during learning experiences so as to gain effective performance. Furthermore, Hackett (2003) argued that training is not going to change an individual's aptitudes and personality but however, it can reinforce some factors such as performance, knowledge, skills and competencies which might therefore improve their ability to perform.

Lewis, Goodman, Fandt, Michlitsch (2007) defined training as an effort that is planned in order to help employees with learning behaviours that are job-related and thus helping them to enhance their performance.

Training is referred to as a methodical approach that impacts on an individual's knowledge, attitude and skills and therefore enhance individual, team and organisational effectiveness (Shenge, 2014 as cited in Aguinis and Kraiger, 2009). However, Goldstein and Ford (2002) also described training as systematically obtaining concepts, skills and rules that will result to an improvement in performance in another environment.

Training is argued as a way in which an organisation utilises a systematic technique to improve employee's skills, behaviour and knowledge so as to enable them achieve their objectives. Training is task-oriented because it emphasis on the work that is performed in an organisation based on the job description (Erasmus et al., 2006).

Furthermore, Edralin (2004) outlined that training is an organisational intervention with sets of activities that are aimed to encourage learning of skills, knowledge and attitudes of individuals in the organisation so that they can contribute to the attainment of the organisational goals and to also enhance their job performance.

An investment in training for both employees as well as managers in an organisation can have a positive and negative impact on employee performance. The negative or positive impact of the training on employee performance will vary depending on the training execution and approach (Lorette, 2016).

## **2.2 Performance**

According to Brown (2008), performance is referred to as how effectively and efficiently an individual accomplishes tasks and also the behaviour with which this individual accomplishes the tasks. In terms of job performance, Hersen (2004) explains that job performance can be assessed based on weighable results of work attitudes such as the number of sales, sales amount and in addition, consideration is given to behavioural dimensions which may comprise communication relating to work, managing, finding solutions to problems among other skills.

According to Khan (2012), performance management is a tool that organisations use to verify that its employees are contributing towards the production of a better quality services and products. In addition, it is a procedure of constant enhancement within the supply of quality production or services through efficiently and effectively using of materials. When employee's performance is being managed, it inspires them to involve themselves in making plans for the organisation and thus, they feel motivated to perform at an intense level.

Employee performance also relates to how an employee work consistently to achieve great results in a particular organization with these results being measured in terms of how valuable it is to customers.

Mwita (2000) described performance as a main element to realize the goals of an organisation. Performance improves the effectiveness and efficiency of an organisation which is supportive for the realization of the organisation's goals. Now the question that, in what manner can an employee work efficiently and effectively to improve the productivity of the organisation? The answer is to provide the key element which supports the employee's work which includes training. It is important for an organisation to structure training very flexibly and the structure of the training must fit the demand of the employees.

Leonard-Barton (1992) explains that a firm or an organisation that values knowledge as a means of obtaining a competitive advantage over its competitors must construct a system that enables constant learning and the efficient way of achieving this is by training. Training is described as a procedure of empowering employees in order to accomplish the task more effectively, therefore training is considered to be an essential part of managing employee performance. Pfeffer (1994) indicated that an adequately trained workforce is more competent of meeting performance goals and obtaining competitive edge in the market.

### **2.3 Correlation between training and performance**

Sila (2014) outlined that training is an integral role in enriching employee performance. The reason is that through training, expertise and know-how are transferred from the trainer to the trainee particularly on the latest products and services as well as technology. It is during the training process that an employee develops the right character towards work and ignores the negative approaches. When training is rendered, it generates efficiency in service delivery, builds the confidence of employee during work and as a result, job satisfaction is accomplished. Training gradually improves employee commitment to the organisation and customers which will in turn yield a better employee performance.

According to Khan, Khan and Khan (2011), in today's modern world, training is considered as the most essential aspect of the business environment due to its increase in value and efficiency for both employee as well as the corporation. Employee performance is sustained by a variety of element. Thus, training is the most vital aspect of employee performance. These authors further stressed that the performance of an organisation is sustained by the performance of employee and this is because employee take part in the growth and performance of the

organisation. So therefore, in order to enhance the performance of an organisation as well as employee performance, training should be provided to employees.

All organisations must be comprised with trained, skilled as well as experienced individuals so as to perform different tasks. In addition, training includes the attainment of skills, principles and attitudes that boosts the performance of employees (Geet, Deshpande, Deshpande and Prakashan, 2009).

Khan (2012) also emphasised that training is needed in order to boost the performance of employees thus, if employees are well trained, they will be familiar with their job description, the competencies required to adequately perform their job and they will also be able to utilize advance technology. In addition, their level of motivation will grow which will be advantageous in increasing performance, their working environment and manging of attitude will also raise performance to a maximum level which will therefore enable the organisation to achieve their goals. Still quoting from the same author Khan (2012), when employees are provided with training, they feel a sense of advancement in their performance and therefore, they feel motivated to work hard in order to gain personal as well as organisational goals.

#### **2.4 Benefits of training and its drawbacks**

Training is an activity that enables organisations to get access to resources such as human resources, money as well as materials that will enable them to plan and design activities, reach their perceived goals and also to successfully compete in a changing environment (Shenge, 2014 as cited in Krishnaveni and Sripirabaa, 2008).

Successful training helps both organisations and employees to correct any deficiencies that might arise. Furthermore, a poor and unsuitable training can also cause frustration within employees as well as the organisation so it is therefore crucial that employees are provided with the relevant training so as to result to greater individual and organisational performance (Shenge, 2014).

Buckley and Caple (1996) also outlined that a well-structured training can help provide a number of benefits for the organisation as well as the people that are being involved in the training programme.

Training has a number of purposes. Its purposes help to reduce organisational risks, it promotes organisational change, it teaches new staffs and build teams, it enhances communication, it disseminates information and knowledge and it also helps to develop skills (Shenge, 2014 as cited in Nickols, 2000).

It is also emphasised that the purpose of training is that it gives employees the competencies required to boost the business in general. In addition, employees that are well trained can attain good quality products and services within a short time frame and therefore, this will result to improved customer service skills (Lorette, 2016).

Despite all the benefits of training, Patrick, Smy, Tombs and Shelton (2011) also noted that some training do not have the necessary outcome because of a number of reasons. These reasons could be because of training programmes that are not properly designed, unproductive trainers and employees not able to apply the training into the organisation.

According to Silverman (2012), in 2011, companies in the U.S spent approximately \$150 billion on employee training. Furthermore, many of these organisations commit their time and effort into training without getting much to show for it.

A research was carried out by a Psychologist called Eduardo Salas and he stated that there is a folk tale that companies have in regards to training. The first tale is that when you send an inexperienced employee to training, they will return with immediate improvement in their skills. However, that myth is just an inaccurate/misleading assumption as training is much more multiplex than that and in today's business world, organisations in general still have a very shallow outlook of training (The Wall Street Journal, 2012).

#### **2.4.1 Individual benefits of training**

Training has a number of benefits for both individuals and the organisation. The benefits of training for individuals are divided into two groups such as Intrinsic and Extrinsic benefits. Garavan et al., (1997) stated that the intrinsic benefits are grouped as non-tangible and are integrated with the achievement of individual satisfaction. The Intrinsic benefits helps to improve individual status at workplace, it provides opportunities to develop talents and skills, it provides individuals with a sense of achievement and growth, and it gives individuals a great feeling of belonging in the organisation as well as a sense of recognition.

The Extrinsic benefits of training for individuals is that it increases capabilities, it boosts both internal and external job mobility, it results to great employment security and it increases aspects of promotion.

Buckley and Caple (1996) also stated that individuals that are involved in the training are most likely going to gain some personal benefits. Being able to complete a task and to utilise new skills, procedures and techniques provides individuals with greater personal satisfaction which can result to a higher of confidence, morals and team spirit.

According to Lorette (2016), when money is invested in employees' training, employees will achieve a great sense of satisfaction, worth, loyalty and empowerment. As a result of achieving a great sense of loyalty, this will encourage employees to get their heads down so as to make the business successful. Furthermore, a high sense of empowerment ensures that employees put in their best in order to ensure that they get their work done.

#### **2.4.2 Organisational benefits of training**

According to Hackett (2003), training helps to enhance the capabilities of an organisation. It enables everyone to perform their duties in such a way that improves the organisations chances of achieving its objectives. Organisations benefit from training as it enhances the performance and productivity of employees, it reduces learning time which as a result can lessen the cost of training and therefore enables employees to learn quickly, training results to fewer accidents and it reduces absenteeism, employee turnover and it ensures greater customer satisfaction (Buckley and Caple, 2007).

Training helps to increase organisations ability to block and tackle any challenges that is being imposed by the external environment and changes in technology, it improves organisations ability to cope with intense competition and it also promotes greater flexibility in the workforce (Garavan et al., 1997).

If employees are properly trained, this means that their quality and productivity levels are most likely going to increase as a result of being able to perform their tasks more accurately and will therefore result to less time and materials being wasted. Furthermore, good quality products and services are most likely going to minimise customer's complaints and hence improve the reputation of the company (Buckley and Caple, 1996).

## **2.5 On-the-job training versus formal training**

Bianca (2016) stated that managers have distinct perspective as to the amount of training that is required for employees to produce the coveted performance level. Furthermore, it is very essential to recognise that majority of employees did not arrive at their job with all the experience and skills needed for them to perform appropriately. Hence, managers need to choose the right training technique. Geet et al., (2009) further emphasised that if the appropriate training technique is provided to employees, it can enable them to utilise materials and equipment appropriately and therefore reduce waste and regular supervision.

Training has a number of methods. Nevertheless, the two most popular forms of training are on-the-job training (sometimes referred to as informal learning or informal training) and formal training which impacts on the performance of employees and the quality of their work. According to Blanchard and Thacker (2004), the different training methods are divided into cognitive and behavioural methods. The cognitive approach is related to formal training in which both verbal and written information are used to encourage learning and it is more effective for development of knowledge. Whereas, the behavioural approach is related to OJT in which the trainee gets to practice behaviour in an actual or stimulated manner. This method encourages learning through behaviour and it is more effective for development of skills and change of attitudes.

Employees obtain skills on the job in a number of ways: they can be trained either formally in a classroom setting, informally by a manager or a colleague or they might learn without an actual training due to learning-by-doing (Frazis and Loewenstein, 2007).

According to a research carried out by a United State of Labour Study, approximately 70% of employees' understanding of their jobs accounts from OJT (Painter, 2006).

Buckley and Caple (1996) outlined that OJT involves one-on-one instructions whereby the training occurs in the trainee's workplace and it covers the relevant knowledge, attitudes and skills required to perform the task correctly. Conversely, formal training or off-the-job training is a form of training that occurs away from the job location and it generally includes courses that are provided by the company's training department or by an external training company.

Levine (2005) stated that every person has their own interpretation of what OJT means. Substantially, OJT is described as a just-in-time training technique used to provide training for employees when required. In addition, OJT is one of the oldest forms of training and it's defined as when two individuals work very closely with each other so as to ensure that one individual learn from the other. Majority of organisations use OJT practices and there is always someone in the organisation that teaches another person how to operate a machine or carry out their duties. Comparable, Saks, Haccoun and Belcourt (2010) identified OJT as the most commonly used form of training whereby trainees are given instructions at their workstations from their manager or from a colleague that has experience in dealing with training. Medina (2006) argues that OJT positions employees in an actual work environment whereby he/she is shown or provided with demonstrations on how to perform their duties under the direction of the trainer. Within this method of training, employees tend to learn rapidly through "watching and doing".

Noe (2010) emphasised that OJT is when a new or less experienced employee learn within the work environment and also during work by watching his/her colleagues or managers perform their task and hence try to copy their behaviour. OJT is also considered among the oldest and most used form of informal training and it is highly effective when training new employees, enhancing the skills of employees when a new technology is being introduced to the company and also for cross-training staffs around a work unit. Noe (2010) also stated that learning might fail to occur if OJT is too informal. Nevertheless, OJT is considered informal as a result of it being conducted by managers, mentors and peers who are not trainers and also because it doesn't take place as part of a training initiative/program. (Wang and King, 2009 as cited in Hrimech, 2005) emphasised that informal learning means acquiring advanced skills, knowledge and attitude which individuals manage with their own initiative and which isn't designed or organised in a formal environment/background for instance, schools, workplaces or colleges.

Saks et al (2010) illustrated that OJT has been in use since the World War II and it is particularly beneficial to small corporations as a result of the limited investment required to coordinate the training. Furthermore, survey discovered that approximately 43% of SME's utilises informal training techniques such as tutoring, mentoring, and on-the-job training meanwhile, 2% utilises formal training methods such as workshops, classrooms and seminars while the remaining 43% use both OJT and formal training technique. Blanchard and Thacker (2004) similarly stated that OJT is particularly the most used training technique in small businesses and it takes place

when a more qualified and experienced employee such a supervisor or co-worker trains a less qualified and experienced employee.

Practical training programs are developed to supply employees with specific skills, knowledge and techniques that relates to their job. Furthermore, OJT is carried out while employees perform tasks that are related to their jobs and it supplies employers with rapid returns in aspects of improved performance (Lewis et al, 2007). Formal OJT is entirely different as they are coordinated by employees that have a higher level of technical skills or knowledge and who are also capable of effectively utilising a one-on-one instruction technique (Blanchard and Thacker, 2004).

A research carried out by the American Society of T&D, revealed that majority of individuals keep information better when it is conveyed in shorter segments. Furthermore, the type of training that occur when an experienced colleague teaches a new employee to perform his/her job tends to be more successful than training that takes place in a formal classroom environment because the information that is provided can be put into practice and will therefore boost the level at which an individual acquire advanced skills and experience (Crawshaw, 2006). Khan et al., (2011) similarly argued that OJT effectively enables employees to gain the knowledge required for their jobs. In addition, these authors further stated that individuals learn better as a result of practical experience in comparison to knowledge that is derived from book or academic sources.

On the other hand, formal training is also known as off-the-job training, off-the-job learning, formal learning or off site training. Wang and King (2009) described formal learning as a learning that takes place as a result of educational activities that are accredited by some sort of formal recognition. Nevertheless, this training program depend on professional authorities who makes a decision in advance in terms of the content and objectives of the training. Formal training courses normally have a set of scope whereby the contents, length and all the relevant information about the training are stated clearly for both the trainee and the organisation (Nassazi, 2013).

According to Hackett (2003), off-the-job learning might be seen as the only method needed to gain background information required for some certain jobs and this method of learning in terms of academic study is most likely going to be categorised as part of an employee's job description for recruitment processes so it is very essential that individuals are aware of the principles and theories that governs certain types of jobs.

In comparison to OJT, off-the-job training method can be conducted one-on-one by the trainee's manager or colleagues by making use of equipment's that are far away from the actual workplace. Furthermore, this form of training includes computer based learning, stimulation exercises, lectures, reading and many others. In addition, Buckley and Caple (1996) also similarly stated that off-the-job training occurs outside the job location and this training technique is provided in form of curriculum or lectures that are usually given by the company's training department or an external training provider. Medina (2006) also outlined that off-the-job training also includes demonstrations in the classroom, role play, films and videos, case studies and management games. Billet (2001) stated that majority of formal training and teaching are referred to as synonymous as a result of the ubiquitous speculation that learning comes from teaching. However, he powerfully contests with this concept stating that there is a significant contrast between teaching that is derived from expert knowledge and learning derived by a person trying to make meaning out of an experience. Bajak (2014) wrote an article in which he titled 'lectures are not only boring but they are also ineffective'. Nevertheless, he carried out a study which found that students that are involved in traditional in class lectures are most likely going to fail compared to students that are involved in stimulating active learning. He further emphasised that stimulating active listening might be done by demanding students to answer questions with the aid of clickers or by randomly picking on students or groups to answer questions.

According to Kainen et al., (1983), OJT receives insignificant recognition in the training literature. Studies have shown that OJT in comparison to a structured training program is less efficient in terms of teaching employees the relevant skills. The viewpoint of many trainers is that OJT is the least effective method of training available to most businesses.

The researcher disagrees with this statement because based on the academic research carried out within this field, it been found that OJT training is well recognised in almost all the training literatures compared to formal training. In addition, since 1983 there have been many research in the field of OJT.

From the researcher's viewpoint, formal training is very essential for learning a language. For instance, in order to speak a language, an individual will have to understand the lexical structures of that language and therefore, the best way to learn that language is to do that academically which implies that one will need to enrol for a school where they have to be lectured and be taught the lexical structures of that language.

## **2.6 Strengths and Limitations of on-the-job training versus formal training**

When organisations utilise on-the-job training and/or formal training, they experience a number of advantages as well as disadvantages. So therefore, organisation will need to choose an appropriate and suitable method of training that is most likely going to enhance employee performance and the quality of their work. Some of the strengths and limitations of these training methods are as follows:

According to Blanchard and Thacker (2004), OJT is a useful technique for improvement of skills and it enables trainees to gain knowledge, skills and abilities in a real working environment, hence, the skills are transferred and they tend to occur more naturally. Noe (2010) likewise stated that because OJT takes place at work and it is also done using real job tasks, the skills that are being learnt on the job can be simply transferred to the job.

Furthermore, OJT enables employees to quickly learn about the organisation and how it operates, it has the capabilities of developing good relationships between both old and new employees and as well as among the supervisors and employees (Blanchard and Thacker, 2004).

OJT takes place in the same environment as the actual job itself and furthermore, the trainee will have no issue in understanding what is learnt as well as transferring the learning back to the job and OJT can be conducted just-in-time at exactly when it is required instead of during predetermined situations and there might be little or no need to provide special materials or equipment (Hackett, 2003).

As stated by Noe (2010), OJT has a number of advantages compared to other methods of training. He concluded that OJT can be personalized to the abilities and knowledge of the trainee. As a result of OJT being conducted using real devices and equipment, the training can be instantly applied to the job and therefore the trainees are encouraged to learn. Finally, as a result of trainees being supervisors or colleagues, they will always be available to conduct the training at any time.

Blanchard and Thacker (2004) outlined that if OJT is conducted effectively, there could be a number of cost advantages as both the trainee and supervisor are performing their duties on the actual job. In addition, even though both the trainee and the supervisor are not producing outputs at their full potentials, but at least they make an attempt to still produce something. Whereas, in other training methods such as formal training, neither the supervisor nor the trainee are involved in producing outputs for the organisation while the training takes place. Furthermore, when conducting OJT, it is not necessary to buy training materials for instance,

games, stimulators and many other materials because all materials are already among the actual work equipment. Noe (2010) outlined that because the person conducting the training and the trainee are both working on the actual job while the training takes place, this can lead an organisation to save the cost of taking the trainee to an entirely different location, employing trainees and hiring facilities for the training. Blanchard and Thacker (2004) also stated that OJT accelerates the process of learning as there is no delay when it comes to putting the training into application within the work environment and some evidence has also shown that one-on-one training provides a faster learning outcome. So therefore, the more successful the training is, the less cost involved.

According to Koltookian (2012), the benefits of formal training is that a large number of participants are taught in the same way and are given the same information at the same time over a specific period of time. In addition, the contents in formal training are usually in-line to meet up with the latest and updated information about the course. Furthermore, the author also pointed out that on the completion of formal training, the trainees usually hit the ground running once they start their jobs as a result of being taught the technical know-how and the theoretical aspects of the job. Still quoting the author, formal training that are properly structured, encompasses different methods that meets up with all learning styles and blends to formal learning concepts. Nassazi (2012) pointed out that in contrast to OJT programmes, formal training programmes are structured on time. Furthermore, employees can take part in these courses or programmes even though they have been away from work for a certain period of time or they can also work part time hours while attending these courses. In addition, formal training is argued to be the most successful because employees concentrate fully while they are being trained away from their place of work.

Duggan (2016) stated that using off-the-job training technique enables employees to be more attentive to the training activities. Furthermore, conducting curriculums/lectures, seminars or workshops in an entirely different environment from the workplace helps employees to concentrate on gaining advanced knowledge, skills and behaviours without being obstructed by inbound telephone calls and notifications from emails. In addition, the benefits of off-the-job-training is that it may come to an end with some sort of award ceremony which is normally granted by a business expert and hence, making the training program a momentous occasion which leads to an improvement in employee's satisfaction and loyalty.

Wang and King (2009) similarly argued that public recognition is obtained after achieving a formal learning and completion of the training can be verified by an authority for use in employment certification or licensure. Blanchard and Thacker (2004) also comparably stated that firstly, off-site training ensures that trainees are not interrupted and secondly, it provides trainees with a change of environment. For instance, going to a conference or a hotel is completely different from going to work and most trainees do associate staying in a hotel as a break or holiday. Furthermore, this change of environment is very essential especially if the job is stress related. Formal programs enhance efficiency because it emphasis more on the instructions and content of the training instead of the learning (Wang and King, 2009).

In the article of Todd (2014), Chris Lennon made a contribution of how “Classroom Learning Still Has a Place”. He emphasised that classroom learning which relates to formal training is the most constructive method to educate soft skills. He also stressed that soft skills are important across numerous areas of development. According to a research conducted by Millennial Branding which is a consulting firm and America Express Corporation, it was discovered that over 60% managers concur that soft skills are the most crucial when analysing the performance of an employee whereas, 32% of other managers consent that hard skills are the most relevant.

Existing literatures and authors within the field of OJT have proved/provided very similar points on the disadvantages of OJT. According to Blanchard and Thacker (2004), one major anxiety of OJT is the skills and competencies of the trainer. The trainer must have specialised skills, competencies for training and the motivation to train in order to be able to appropriately train others. Without these training qualities, the training is not going to be effective. Hence, organisations must ensure that the trainer is given time aside from their jobs in order to be able to conduct the training. In return, this doesn't only result to improved training but it also shows that the organisation is dedicated to its OJT techniques.

Saks et al., (2010) stated that even though OJT is that most popular method of training, it is also known to be the most misused (used in a wrong way) because it is usually unstructured and unplanned. The authors also stated that the issue with this training technique is that most trainers that are training people on the job did not receive any training on how to train others or how to be a trainer and as a result, the supervisors and subordinates lack the relevant knowledge and competencies required to train successfully and they are also not able to recognise relevant learning principles such as feedbacks.

Finally, another issue with OJT is that trainees are taught some unappealing habits and attitudes. Furthermore, the normal style of doing things will be transferred to new staff which simple means that some issues such as bad attitude and misconduct will continue to occur.

Furthermore, another major concern with executing OJT is the cost that is involved in training the trainers as all the trainers will need to be trained.

Garavan, Costine and Heraty (1995), also outlined that the disadvantage of OJT is that the new employee might learn some bad habits from the trainer, the learning environment might be too noisy and less favourable, trainees might be under too much pressure to meet a number of performance standards and feedbacks might be provided in an open environment. Nevertheless, Noe (2010) pointed out that the downside of OJT is that supervisors and colleagues are most likely not going to use the same procedures in terms of completing tasks, they may transfer unpleasant habit and they might not realise that feedbacks are essential aspect of on-the-job training. He also noted that as a result of OJT being unstructured, it can lead to badly trained employees who will produce goods and services of different quality as a result of utilising ineffective production methods.

Instructions that are provided by managers and colleagues on the job usually happens in an informal manner and it's not proper prepared, OJT is conducted in an ad hoc approach whereby there is no fixed process or content, there are normally no set of goals or objectives set during the training process, trainers are selected based on their technical skills rather than on their ability to train and finally, trainers are not trained on how to conduct training (Blanchard and Thacker).

Chong (2005) further stated that a situation that might make OJT to be less effective is when they learn by scrutinizing others, listening to other co-workers as well as doing things by themselves without no further assistant.

Lennon (2014) supported that being formally trained without putting it into practice with regards to time, retaining this knowledge from the training becomes a challenge or concern. According to the University of Waterloo's Curve of Forgetting Study, students fail to recollect 50-80% of what they have learnt after one day. This percentage increases to 97% after a month. But the best way to address this is to constantly practice what was taught in class preferably in a working environment regularly in order to ensure that the training is a part of the trainee.

From the researcher's viewpoint, without on-the-job training, formal training seems impractical because not having an opportunity to practice and commit errors and then learning from those mistakes doesn't help an individual to get better. For instance, on-the-job training provides an avenue to learn from mistakes when one is made and it increases an individual's

awareness of the job and its experience, it also builds the confidence of that individual to be able to deal with a difficult situation whenever it occurs in workplace. For instance, in Ireland, experience is needed as an added advantage in a job employment. Formal training in Ireland is well recognised. However, without an experience in the job field that an individual intends to apply for, the chances of the individual getting the job is very slim and that is the reason why job internships is very necessary for starters in order for them to gain an experience and understand the practical concept of how that job is done.

From the researcher's viewpoint on the other hand, formal training with no doubt is very structured and systematic, but however, many individuals loose interest and focus after a short period when being taught in the classroom. In addition, they also find it difficult to remember most of what has been learnt after they leave the classroom because they are being overloaded with information and also as a result of the training/learning being too long.

In the survey conducted by IBEC in 2013, employee training plays a vital part in building the potential and competence of an organisation. 70% of training is derived from OJT learning, 20% is derived from feedback while the remaining 10% is derived from courses and study (IBEC, 2013 as cited in Lombardo and Eichinger, 1996).

## **2.7 On-the-job training methods**

**2.7.1 Coaching:** In today's organisations, coaching is becoming much more popular, it is very essential for boosting skills and performance, it is also beneficial for helping individual's put what they have learnt in the classroom into practice on the actual job. The process of coaching includes using opportunities that is in the workplace settings to increase employee strengths and capabilities (Saks et al, 2010).

Coaching is generally considered as a technique in which an individual's concealed resources and implied knowledge are brought to the top (McLeod, 2003). According to CIPD (2015), coaching is directed at boosting performance and improving work by concentrating on particular competencies and goals. Hence, it might have an effect on a person's attributes such as social communication. Wilson, Branson and Whitmore (2014) similarly stated that coaches helps to improve the performance as well as the welfare of individuals by setting goals, examining values and principles and also assisting these individuals to create plans of action. Nonetheless, this can be done not by telling but by asking questions so as to improve

understanding and self-directed or independent learning. Coaching can be performed one to one as well as with any sort of groups.

Maguire (2008) argued that coaching is equipped towards enabling individuals to think and perform by themselves instead of them being reined. Coaching conversations improves an individual's understanding of how they can attain best performance and it also involves enabling individuals to play the game within the rules.

However, if coaching is used appropriately, it can help to boost individual and organisational performance. Some of the advantages of coaching includes personal growth, it results to greater motivation and commitment, it ensures efficient execution of skills acquired, it ensures flexibility and it increases productivity.

Saks et al., (2010) also found that coaching is valuable for both individuals as well as organisations. Individuals that take part in coaching gain substantial skills and it benefits organisations as it results to increased customer service, quality, productivity and it decreases complaints from consumers. Despite how a training is delivered, it must be aided by a superior through performance coaching (Crawshaw, 2006).

**2.7.2 Mentoring:** There has been a number of confusion in relation to the term 'mentoring'. Wilson et al., (2014) outlined that in some corporations, mentoring is also referred to as coaching. However, a more general definition is that mentors are individuals that pass on their advice, experience and learning to people who are still new to a certain field. Mentoring in the workplace is generally argued as a correlation whereby an experienced employee uses his/her knowledge of the job or the organisation to facilitate the development of the inexperienced employee (CIPD, 2015).

According to Megginson et al., (2006), mentoring is referred to as an off-line assistant provided by one individual to another in order to enable changes in an individual's knowledge and the way they think. These authors also pointed out that mentoring is not usually a manager's duty. However, a mentor is more knowledgeable and usually of a higher status than the person who is learning.

Mentoring is also similarly pointed out as a type of coaching excluding the fact that its normally not conducted by the employee's manager and it is also not a continuous process like coaching. In addition, the practice of mentoring involves a top manager giving instructions or teaching a lower ranked manager (Blanchard and Thacker, 2004).

**2.7.3 Job Rotation:** Job rotation is significantly utilised by different companies. A research was carried out in 1992 by Osterman (1994) in which he found that approximately 26% of companies had over half of its staffs take part in job rotation. A further research later found that this percentage had risen by a 50% in the year 1997.

According to Saks et al., (2010), job rotation is a training technique whereby an individual receiving training is open to a variety of jobs and tasks inside the organisation. Nevertheless, it widens trainees' knowledge and competencies by giving them numerous outlook and areas of skills. These author further stated that the aim of job rotation is for employees to gain a number of competencies as a result of taking part in different tasks as well as scrutinizing other people's performance. Job rotation is also considered as a productive way of training employees that want to gain a range of skills. Furthermore, if employees are provided with OJT practice, they will obtain the competencies needed to perform their present-day job and also their future work functions. Job rotation does not only lead to an increase in knowledge and competencies, it also has a number of benefits such as increased work satisfaction as well as more openings for career progression (Saks et al., 2010).

Job Rotation is also pointed out as part of work practice whereby employees are moved or taken from one job to another so that they can get involved in dissimilar tasks compared to the last position. Nevertheless, job rotation is also classified as working in a divergent position and getting involved in divergent tasks in an organisation so as to grasp a variety of competencies and knowledge (Hodgson, Al Shehhi and Al-Marzouqi 2014 as cited in Jorgensen et al., 2005). As claimed by (Ortega, 2001), job rotation is a fascinating technique because it allows organisations to scrutinize its employees in various positions and will therefore help to discover which job best suits each employee.

This author further stated that the theory of employee learning outlined that when an employee has gained adequate understanding of the job, he/she should be rotated. However, when an organisation adopts advanced technology, it will take longer for that employee to learn about the present tasks/duties.

## **2.8 Formal training methods**

Saks et al., (2010) outlined that instructional methods usually takes place off-the-job. Nevertheless, these instructional methods are known as the techniques used to communicate the content of the training within the training program such as lectures, case studies and many others.

**2.8.1 Lectures:** According to Noe (2010), a lecture is considered as an inexpensive and systematic method to successfully present huge amount of information. Nevertheless, lectures are normally adopted to assist other training techniques. For instance, a lecture might be utilised to communicate information in relation to the reason why the training program is being done and theoretical models. In addition, Landy and Conte (2010) also noted that lecture as one of the training methods is the most popular, it is the least expensive method of training in comparison to other methods and it is more effective when the objective of the learner is to acquire knowledge.

Geet et al., (2009) also noted that lecture as an off-the-job training technique is one of the oldest and historical method of training. In addition, a lecture is seen as a simple way of conveying the relevant knowledge to the learner.

Using lecture as a training techniques has a number of advantages and disadvantages. Thiagarajan (2005) outlined that the advantage of lectures is that a huge number of individuals can be communicated with at the same time and will therefore save time and reduce the cost of training, lectures does not demand a huge preparation, lectures boosts the trainer's self-esteem and learners feel that the lecture will provide them with accurate and vital information.

Geet et al., (2009) also noted that some of the merits of lecture is that the modules are introduced appropriately, it provides a primary conceptual knowledge, and it is easy, systematic and productive. It is a training technique whereby theories are taught within a shorter duration of time in comparison to other training techniques.

As noted by Noe (2010), the disadvantage of lectures is that they tend to be insufficient participation and feedback and as a result, this may hinder the process of learning and the transfers from the training, lectures make it tough for the person providing the training to rapidly form an opinion in regards to the learner's understanding of what is being taught. Furthermore, in order to conquer these issues, lectures are usually complemented with class/group discussions, reading of case-studies or questions and answer session. However, Geet et al., (2009) also similarly stated that some limitation of lectures is that the learning technique does not involve "learning by doing".

Lectures are one-way communication because in most lectures, the learner sits and listens to the trainer with little or no feedback and therefore, this might lead the learner to be submissive rather than being an active contributor. If the trainer is inexperienced and if they are not appropriately trained this might cause he/she to waffle or provide too much information that are not even relevant to the course and therefore, learners might become bored of the lecture. If individuals are not motivated, they will not focus on the lecture or get involved in discussions. Additionally, lectures emphasise more on gathering and memorising information and it focus less on applying the knowledge obtained. It is also noted that within a range of an hour, individuals might only listen for approximately 3 to 20 minutes and if lecture continues for longer, learners might lose concentration.

**2.8.2 Role Play:** According to Blanchard and Thacker (2009), role plays are deliberately placed in training so that skills can be practiced. Within this training technique, scenarios are presented in a case-study format and this could be based on real situation, made-up scenarios or verbal description. Examples of role play scenario would be a sales representative making sales to a customer, a supervisor organising interview and many others. Geet et al., (2009) also emphasised that because role play involves two or more individuals communicating within a real-life context, trainees can gain interpersonal skills. This training technique stresses “learning by doing”, it enables development of skills and the capacity to apply all the knowledge that has been obtained and it also modifies the behaviour of the trainees.

Armstrong (2015) argued that role plays are normally done in terms of written briefs which explains the circumstance from each member’s view point and in order for them to have a knowledge or experience what it feels like be involved in the other member’s position. Furthermore, the members are then told to perform the roles and their performance is later judged by their fellow members.

Role play is essential because it enables trainees to be able to use their initiative and enables them to be able to think fast in real life situations.

## **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

### **3.1 Research Design**

The main goal of this research is to evaluate the impact of on-the-job training versus formal training on employee's performance. For the purpose of this research, a descriptive research design will be utilized. According to Kothari (2004), the usefulness of the descriptive research is that it describes the situation as it exists. The main attribute of this method is that the individual carrying out the research cannot control the variables but however, he/she may only provide a statement or a report of what is currently happening. Researcher's use the descriptive studies if they are trying to measure/evaluate items for example, people's preference or similar statistics/information and different sort of surveys are usually used when carrying out a descriptive research.

According to Kothari (2004), a research is defined as a hunt for knowledge, it is also a methodical and systematic search for relevant information on a particular subject matter or topic. In addition, it is a technique for factual investigation. Ghauri and Gronhaug (2012) further noted that research method is known as an organised, attentive and systematic collection of data so as to gain information and to answer a certain research question/problem.

When conducting a research, there are different potential methods of gathering the data: these data can be gathered by either using qualitative research, quantitative research or both qualitative and quantitative research methods.

According to Shields and Twycross (2003), a quantitative research technique can be used to measure something. On the other hand, if a question needs to be explained and explored to a certain degree, then a qualitative research technique will be utilised. In addition, the two research techniques are also utilized collectively to produce a measurement for comparing as well as for evaluating and to also provide a comprehensive clarification of what an idea means. In other words, still quoting from the same authors, a quantitative research method normally includes figures, statistics and percentages, it is very crucial when measuring an individual's opinion, emotions and also their way of reasoning whereas a qualitative research technique is utilised when trying to find the definition of something. Furthermore, a qualitative research technique does not involve measurement or figures. However, it utilises words and illustration to investigate meaning. Zawawi (2007) comparable stated that quantitative research is mainly statistical and it is tailored to establish objectivity and dependability. Furthermore, one key component of quantitative research methods is that the data gathering procedure is different from the analysis. On the other hand, qualitative research includes data that consists of different kind of words and it is referred to as an arrangement of explanatory techniques which aim to

understand, discuss, interpret or else come to an agreement with the meaning (Zawawi, 2007 as cited in Maanen, 1983). Quantitative method involves the use of survey/questionnaire while qualitative method involves focus groups, interviews, observation and many others.

Choy (2014) also emphasised that a quantitative research commences with an overall field of study or theme of interest. In addition, it can assist with creating relationships among variables and results whereas, a qualitative research commences with a reflection and evaluation of one's attitude. Qualitative research does not emphasis on certain question but instead, it studies the conceptual rational in a curious manner while acquiring a perspective.

According to Zawawi (2007), despite all the positive aspects of quantitative and qualitative research methods, they still have a number of limitations. Quantitative deals with different situations and it is inexpensive. This technique is appropriate when there is restricted time and resources and it is suitable when the numerical results are being emphasised. However, its disadvantage is that it is inflexible and faux, it does not apprehend the actions shown by individuals and for that reason, it makes it hard to anticipate future changes. Still quoting from the same author, on the other hand, because qualitative involves interviewing and observing, this technique produces a superior comprehension of individual's meaning and also, because qualitative method produces an adequate number of valuable statistic, the information, concept and problems can be modified as they arise. As a result, this method is an appropriate tool which can be utilized by researchers who are willing to generate propositions at the end of their research. Furthermore, the idea of observing and interviewing people occurs naturally in its own atmosphere instead of occurring in an environment that is created artificially. The disadvantage of qualitative method is that gathering the data takes a lot of time and resources as it involves thorough interviewing and observing. So therefore, this method won't be appropriate for a research that demands limited time.

A quantitative research design which has proven to be successful has been used in most of the previous studies that investigates the impact of training on employee performance. So therefore, in order to clarify the answers to the researcher's proposed research question, a quantitative research method will also be utilized.

### **3.2 Rationale for research method**

According to Ghauri and Gronhaug (2012), there are some debates on which research method is more appropriate and it has been occasionally stated that a well-organized quantitative method is better. Hence, because quantitative research method is suitable for measuring/examining opinions, this will be appropriate for carrying out the aims of this research. The rationale for choosing this research method are as follows:

The research method used is based on pragmatic paradigm. Pragmatism does not execute only one method of philosophy. In addition, it covers a mixed method of research in the sense that the researcher adequately extracts quantitative and qualitative assumptions when they undertake a research. Furthermore, pragmatists do not view the world as one integration (Creswell, 2003 as cited in Cherryholmes 1992 and Murphy 1990). According to Saunders et al., (2012), pragmatists acknowledge that there are variety of techniques that can be used to interpret the world and carry out research, no particular point of view can ever provide a whole picture and there might be numerous realities. However, it does not signify that pragmatists usually utilize different methods, instead, they utilize method/methods that are dependable, justifiable as well as method/methods that enables appropriate data to be collected that strengths the research (Saunders et al., 2012 as cited in Kelemen and Rumens, 2008).

Pragmatism argues that the research question is the most substantial research philosophy adopted, furthermore, it relates to a feasible approach which combines different outlook to enable gather and interpret data (Saunders at al., 2012).

After considering past research that has been conducted on training and its effect on employee performance, some researchers such as Tahir et al., (2014) have used a quantitative research technique. Furthermore, because quantitative is very crucial when measuring opinion, emotion and attitude, this approach will be appropriate for the objectives of this research.

A quantitative research was suitable for the researcher because of time restrictions and because the objective of this research is to investigate employee's perception of how OJT and formal training have an effect on their performance, it would have been irrational to interview the entire employee in the organisation. Instead, this method was appropriate as it is a rapid way to gain asses to a huge number of individuals.

Quantitative method was chosen as a result of its objectivity. Quantitative technique is based on objectivity in the sense that it examines and contrast participant's opinions and attitudes, it does not attempt to control responses and it ensures that both the researcher and participants are separated from each other. It is very crucial that the participant remain objective and attempt not to dominate the research by adding their values and thoughts.

The aim of this research is to provide reliable response and so therefore, quantitative technique is appropriate because it reduces the chances of prejudice which can make threat against the validity of a research.

### **3.3 Sample size**

Sampling is referred to as selecting a part of a certain group or a totality with the goal of gathering complete information (Khan, 2011).

A sample size indicates the number of employees that took part in the study. A total of 256 questionnaires were distributed and 110 participants completed the study and of which 60 were females and 50 were males and their age ranged between 18 – 45 years and above. The participants were gathered from an Irish population within IDG Direct which represented the research sample.

This sample is justified by the fact that the employees of IDG has all the desired information to answer the research question as most of the employees have been engaged in both on-the-job training and formal training. Therefore, it would be interested to see each individual's opinion in relation to which method has more effect on their performance.

### **3.4 Sample technique**

According to Saunders et al., (2012), sampling technique ensures that an individual decreases the number of data required to be gathered by taking into account only data that comes from subgroup instead of all possible section. As soon as a survey design has been identified, the next move would be to select a sampling technique. Nevertheless, there are two types of sampling and they are known as non-probability and probability sampling (Reis and Judd, 2000). For the purpose of this research, the sampling technique that the researcher selected was a probability sampling and a simple random sampling. Reis and Judd (2000) further emphasised that probability sampling is known as a selection method whereby components are picked randomly from a sampling frame and all component has a known possibility of being chosen. Simple random sampling includes “choosing a random sample from a sampling frame by either using a computer random number tables” (Saunders et al., 2012, pp 273).

Sampling frame is the population from where the sample will be taken out from and also where the sample data will be generalized (Nicholas, 2009).

### **3.5 Population**

A population is defined as “the complete set of cases or group members” (Saunders et al., 2012, p. 678). The population from which the sample was drawn is from all the B2B Telemarketing companies that are based in Ireland.

### **3.6 Research Instrument**

There are a number of research instruments used for carry out research. After considering a couple of options, the researcher has chosen to utilize a questionnaire/survey. The word ‘survey’ and ‘questionnaire’ tend to be used interchangeably by many authors. The reasons for choosing this instrument is because it is appropriate for collecting data from a large population and it also ensures that answers are unbiased. Finally, the researcher chose this instrument because it is very essential that a justified opinion is specified and nevertheless, questionnaires/surveys are not recognised for manoeuvring answers that are specified.

A systematic online questionnaire and also a manual questionnaire (only for the researcher’s pilot study) will be used to gather the data that answers the question of whether on-the-job training versus formal training has an impact on employee’s performance.

According to Creswell (2013), a survey presents a quantitative illustration of different outlooks or opinions of a certain population by investigating the samples from that population. Nevertheless, the individual carrying out the research will then establish a conclusion to the population. Bird (2009) also outlined that questionnaires are well-known and are essential instruments used to gain knowledge, information and perception from the public and they also produce practical guidance or information to management for development systems. Responses derived from questionnaires can be specified by using by utilising different statistical methods (Munn and Drever, 1990).

There are a range of advantages associated with using questionnaires. Noe (2010) stated that questionnaires are less expensive, data can be collected from a large number of population and these data can also be summed up easily. Munn and Drever, (1990) similarly stated that questionnaires are well liked, easy to comprehend and also a low-cost method of gathering data from a large number of people. Saunders, Lewis and Thornhill (2012) further stated that using a survey strategy in research is distinguished as dependable by individuals and it’s simple to interpret and to understand. Nevertheless, the survey strategy enables individuals to gather quantitative data which can be examined quantitatively by utilizing an inferential and descriptive statistics. In addition, utilizing a survey strategy to gather data can help to provide

suggestions in relation to the reasons for certain correlation among variables and to create models of these correlations.

According to (Munn and Drever, 1990 as cited in Adelman, 1980), the following were further considered as advantages of using questionnaires:

- Questionnaires tends to save a lot of time as they can be outlined and filled in by participant at their own convenient time.
- Response from participant can be kept anonymous.
- Questionnaire produce a high rate of response.

Despite all the advantages of using questionnaires, there are still a number of limitations associated with using this research design. Questionnaires demand a lot of time, inappropriate responses could be provided, and it lacks sufficient details (Noe, 2010). According to Moore (2001), individuals might not make any effort to return back the questionnaire and it might be difficult for participants to thoroughly fill in the questionnaires if the questions are not straightforward.

Mitchell and Jolley (2012) also pointed out the following as the disadvantages of using questionnaire:

- Problems that derives from questionnaire cannot be amended because the researcher and participants are not communicating with each other. For instance, if a question is not fully clear or if it has more than one interpretation, the researcher would not be able to explain to the participant what the question really means.
- Respondents might not be focused when completing the survey and might not read the questions carefully.
- Respondent might not finalize the survey.
- Self-administered questionnaires produce a low rate of response.

### **3.7 Questionnaire Design**

The questionnaire was created using Google Forms. Google Forms which can be accessed at <https://docs.google.com/forms/u/0/> was selected because it is a quick, easy and less expensive way for designing a survey compared to other survey designing tools. It is very versatile as it permits different formatted questions. The utilisation of unlimited questions, checkboxes, multiple choice, linear scale, multiple choice grid, dropdown list, long and short paragraph response are made available while using Google Forms which will boost the data analysis. Furthermore, this survey designing tool permits the researcher to view the number of individual responses and also allows the analysis of data with the aid of diagrams such as pie chart and histogram even when the survey is still active.

The questionnaire was created based on the information found or gathered in the literature review. The first part of the questionnaire was based on the demographics of participants. Demography is an area of study whereby the researcher investigates quantifiable data of a certain population (Connelly, 2013 as cited in Vogt and Johnston, 2011). Demographic questions are very important in questionnaires because they help to point out some key elements that might affect participant's choice of answer. In addition, it helps to divide respondents into groups and to scrutinize how the answers of each group differs. Connelly (2013) further stated that demographic information is usually collected by researchers so as to characterize the sample of the individuals or organisation in the studies.

The demographic questions that was asked in the questionnaire included gender, age, length of service and position within the organisation. These questions are very essential because when the data is being analysed, it will help to point out different individual viewpoint.

Using a multiple choice option, the second part of the questionnaire then asked participant to provide information as to when last they were trained, which method of training they prefer, whether they received any training, which method of training they felt was beneficial in assisting with their work performance in terms of improved quality of work and as well as their skills and knowledge.

The final part of the questionnaire was designed using Likert scale questions. Likert scale was established by a psychologist called Rensis Likert. This method introduces participants with a set of attitude features in which they are questioned in terms of how strongly they disagree or agree using a five-point scale (Yilmaz, 2013). Furthermore, the idea of using a disagree/agree technique to measure opinion has for many years been pervasive in many sort of questionnaires (Johns, 2010). The participants were presented with a number of statement that was derived from academic literatures based on on-the-job training and formal training. In addition,

participants were asked to pick an answer based on their level of agreement and were also given an opportunity to make recommendation as to which method of training they think most organisations should utilise.

### **3.7 Procedure adopted**

After the self-administered questionnaire was designed, the researcher sent out the link of the questionnaire via email to all the employees in IDG Direct. The email began with a short message in relation to the background details of the researcher, why the research was being carried out and how long the questionnaire was going to be active for. Participants were assured that their identity will be kept confidential and anonymous and that the result derived from questionnaire will only be disclosed to the dissertation supervisors. Assuring participants that their information will be kept anonymous is very essential in order for the researcher to collect truthful answers to confidential questions (Mitchell and Jolley, 2012).

In order to avoid confusion, before participant filled in the web-based questionnaire, they were presented with a very short description of the difference between on-the-job training and formal training. Prior to the data collection, in order to produce a high rate of response. The researcher sent out a couple of emails to remind employees to fill out the survey.

### **3.8 Data Analysis**

The data were collected through google forms and in order to analyse the results, the data were placed into an excel spread sheet which helped to generate pie charts and histogram. In addition, the researcher observed each individual response and analysed only the appropriate information that were provided into themes.

### **3.9 Pilot Study**

Conducting a pilot study is a very important part of any research project. A pilot study is referred to as a minor study carried out to experiment the research draft, the data collection tool and other research methods so as to be well composed for the large study (Hassan, Schattner, Mazza, Keluarga and Lumpur, 2006).

The researcher developed her own questions because a number of research have been conducted on how training impacts on employee performance. However, no research has been carried out comparing on-the-job training versus formal training and to scrutinize it impacts on employee performance. In order to test how valid or feasible the researcher's own questionnaire

was and to also gain accurate results, a pilot study was carried out on Thursday the 14<sup>th</sup> of July 2016 and was tested among some employees in IDG Direct.

Hassan et al., (2006) also noted that a pilot study is also carried out to discover possible problems and any shortfall associated with the research instrument. In addition, pilot study emphasises on testing the entire approach of utilising a questionnaire in a small-scale sample of the actual participants prior to the main research (Meadows, 2003).

After the researcher conducted the pilot study in form of questionnaires, it was found that all participant read different meanings to some of the questions that wasn't quite clear and some of the questions were left blank. However, in order for the larger study to be more successful, the researcher readjusted the questionnaire and the feedback of the participants were taken on board.

### **3.10 Reliability/ Validity**

As noted by Yilmaz (2013), reliability is defined as uniformity or the level at which a research tool weighs a set of variable constantly whenever it is utilized under identical condition within identical theme. Furthermore, it is very essential to remember that reliability is concerned with data not to measure instrument. From another aspect, researchers can assess the level at which their mechanism produces dependable data. Reliability has different types and they include parallel form reliability, internal consistency reliability, inter-rater reliability and test-retest reliability.

Still quoting from the same author, validity is defined as how accurate a research data is. A research is considered as valid if accurate results are derived from the research measurement procedure. In order words, a measurement tool is considered as valid to the level whereby it quantifies what is meant to be measured. Types of validity includes construct validity, conclusion validity as well as internal and external validity (Yilmaz, 2013).

Reliability is the main attribute of a research quality. Saunders et al., (2012) equally emphasised that reliability is the level at which a person's data gathering method and analytic strategy provides a consistent result if they were to be reused in a different circumstance or if they were to be recreated by another researcher. These authors further explained that construct validity is the level at which a person's research literally weighs what it is meant to assess. In addition, construct validity is linked with quantitative method and positivist. Internal validity is created when the research shows a casual correlation among 2 variables. For instance, in a questionnaire, internal validity would be set where a number of questions appear numerically to be related to an analytical feature or result. External validity is the level at which a research

outcome can be generalised to another applicable environment or groups. There is some evidence from the findings to show that there is a relationship between employee training and performance with males being 50 and females being 60.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

According to Marshall (1988), ethics in research is referred to as the implementation of ethical rules and professional codes of behaviour in order to report, publish, gather and analyse the information about participants with regards to anonymity, right to privacy and consent. The aim of ethics in research is to safeguard participants, to certify that the research is carried out in a manner whereby the participant's interests are served, to review the research and its ethical accuracy by examining issues such as risks, protection of privacy and technique of informed consent. Resnik (2015) stated that it is very vital to follow ethical standards when conducting a research as it helps to develop the research aims. Furthermore, because the research requires a substantial deal of corporation between a variety of individuals, ethical norms boosts the values that are important to collective work. For instance, a number of ethical standards in research such as copyright policies, policies for data sharing, rules of confidentiality are created to secure the interests of intellectual possessions.

The human resource department of IDG Direct granted the researcher the permission to carry out the research within the company. With the consent of the company, the researcher was able to distribute a self-administered online survey to the employees through their work email. In the email, the researcher provided the participants with information such as the purposes and aim of the research, why the research was being carried out and it was clearly stated in the survey that their identity will be kept confidential and anonymous and that the results derived from the survey will not be revealed to any third parties apart from the thesis supervisor or the people who will be involved with scoring the thesis.

### **3.12 Limitations of Research**

A number of limitations occurred during this research and they are as follows:

As a result of limited time, the research was only conducted among the company employees that were located in Ireland. The answers derived from the questions are not applicable to all organisations around the globe. It was found that participants were not answering the questionnaires appropriately as most of the answers they provided in the open ended questions didn't relate to what they were asked.

In addition, the researcher was only permitted to send out 2 survey reminder emails to the employees because during that period, the company also distributed its own survey to its employees. Furthermore, out of the 256 questionnaires that were distributed, the researcher was only able to gain access to 110 responses and this might have affected the result of the study as all employees didn't get to contribute their input to the research.

## CHAPTER 4: ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

### 4.1 Response rate

The data was collected in August 2016 through the aid of self-administered questionnaires. A total of 265 questionnaires was distributed to all employees in IDG Direct with a response of 110 participants.

### 4.2 PART A

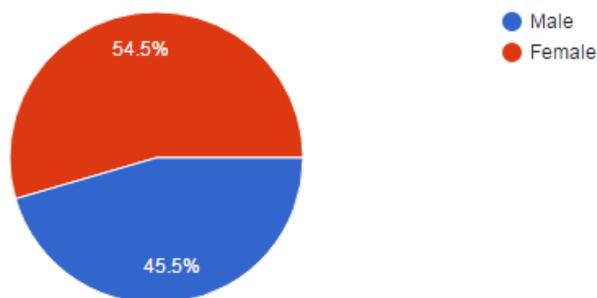
#### 4.2.1 Demographics

The first part of the survey was based on demographics. Participants were asked questions such as their gender, age, how long they have worked for and their position within the company. The aim of the researcher was to obtain basic information of the participants.

The questionnaires included 21 questions but only the most relevant questions will be analysed in this section.

**Figure 4.2.2**

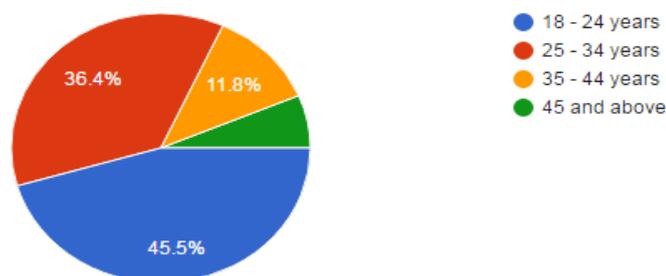
1. What is your gender? (110 responses)



Based on the diagram above, it is clearly shown that a higher percentage of females responded more than the males. The female participants were 60 which represents a rate of 54.5% while the male participants were 50 which represented a rate of 45.5%. The female participants were more than the male participants due to the fact that more females are employed in the company. This finding suggests that training has more impact on the female participants than males.

**Figure 4.2.3**

2. Please specify your age (110 responses)



The figure above illustrates that the majority age group ranged between 18-24 years. In addition, the participants were 50 which represented a rate of 45.5%. The next popular age ranged between 25-34 years with the total participants of 40 and a response rate of 36.4% and then followed by the age range of 35-44 years with a total of 13 and a response rate of 11.8%. The least popular age ranged between 45 and above with a total of 7 and a response rate of 6.4%. According to Suttle, (2016), an individual's work performance does not certainly suffer because he/she is getting older. Nevertheless, there seem to be some relationship between work performance and age. Furthermore, according to an article by BBC News which was titled "How ageing affects your ability", ageing allegedly has an impact of job performance if it involves using physical strengths, processing information, paying attention and memorising information (Suttle, 2016).

From the researcher's outlook, age has an impact on employee training in the sense that younger generations are more active when it comes to learning because they have less responsibilities compared to older generations. On the other hand, younger generations are just

entering into the workforce in contrast to older generation who are working towards their pension.

**Figure 4.2.4**

3. How long have you worked for your company? (110 responses)

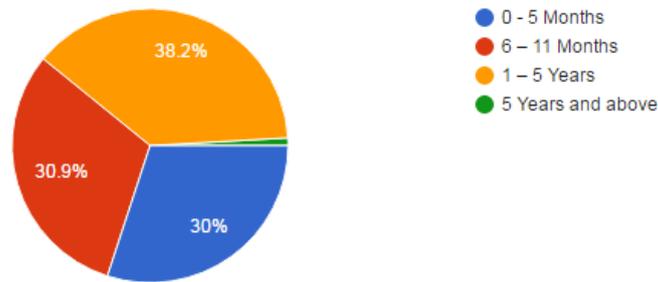


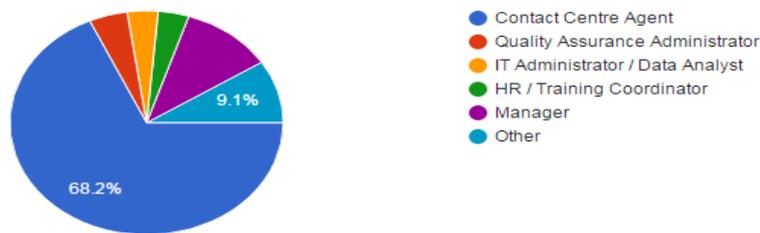
Figure 4.2.4 illustrates that most participants have worked for a period of 1-5 years. In addition, the total participants were 42 with a rate of 38.2%. The next group of participants have worked between 6-11 months which represented 34 participants with a rate of 30.9%. Another group have been in service between 0-5 months which represents 33 participants with a rate of 30%. The least group of participants have worked in the company for 5 years and above which represents 1 participant with a response rate of 0.9%.

Length of service has an effect on how people perceive training. The longer individuals stay within an organisation, the more experience and knowledge they will obtain. The perception, opinion and attitude of employees that have worked above 5 years in a company may be totally different from that of an employee that has only worked for few months. Nevertheless, individuals that have been in an organisation for a long time might not see training as a valuable tool or may feel that the training is not necessary when compared to an entrant. In addition, due to this, they might have a negative outlook of training.

Training has more impact on new employees because they feel the need for training is necessary so as to fit into the position. However, the training is also necessary for individuals that have worked for a longer period of time in order to upgrade their skills for instance, development or change of new technology.

**Figure 4.2.5**

4. What is your current position within your company? (110 responses)



Job position	Frequency	Percentage
Contact Centre Agent	75	68.2%
Quality Assurance Administrator	5	4.5%
IT Administrator / Data Analyst	4	3.6%
HR / Training Coordinator	4	3.6%
Managers	12	10.9%
Others	10	9.1%
<b>Total</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>100%</b>

The pie chart and table reveals some of the positions that were held by the participants in the company. The contact centre agents formed the largest group of participants with a rate of 68.2%, Managers formed 10.9%, other unspecified roles formed 9.1% and Quality Administrator formed 4.5%. The least group of participants were IT Administrator and Data Analyst which formed 3.6% while HR and Training Coordinator equally formed 3.6%.

The perception of training of the contact centre agents might be different from that of the managers in the sense that the managers in the company are far more experienced and might not take training too seriously. Whereas, the contact centre agents are sort of ranked lower in the company's organisational structure and are still gaining experience, however, they might feel

the need for more training so as to increase their performance which might lead them to progress to managerial positions.

It is vital for participants to identify their position within the company because it helps to recognize the various training needs for different positions in the company. Only some of the positions that were identified in the study are shown in the table above.

### 4.3 PART B

In this section, participants were asked general questions about training and how OJT and formal training impacted their performance.

**Figure 4.3.1**

5. When last were you trained? (109 responses)

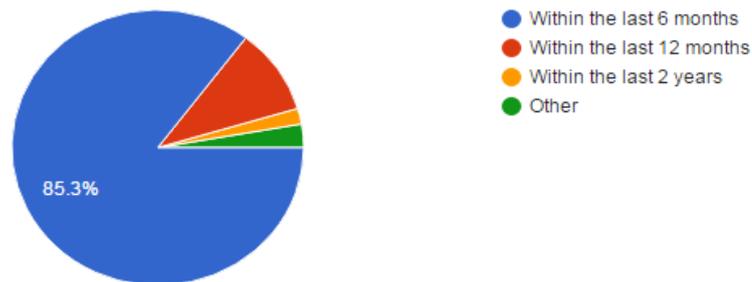
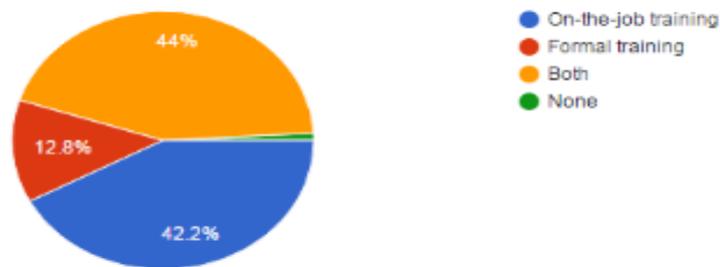


Figure 5.3.1 illustrates that majority of participants in the company were trained within the last 6 months. 93 participants which represents a rate of 85.3% were trained with the last 6 months, 11 participants which represents 10.1% were trained within the last 12 months. The least group of participants were trained within the last 2 years. In that group, there were 2 participants with a percentage of rate of 1.8% while 3 participants which represents a rate of 2.8% failed to identify when last they were trained. As majority of employees were trained within the last 6 months, this shows good results as training is a continuous process in the organisation which also means that the company is progressing. According to previous literature by (Sila, 2014), employees should be provided with continuous training in order to revamp their skills and knowledge which will allow them to remain competitive and effective in the organisation. In

addition, companies that invest in training tends to be more developed as there will be an increase in productivity.

**Figure 4.3.2**

7. Which method of training do you prefer? (109 responses)



The diagram above illustrates that a larger proportion of 44% which represented 48 participants preferred both OJT and formal training. The next form of training that most participants preferred was OJT which represents 46 participants with a rate of 42.2%. 14 participants which represents 12.8% stated that they preferred formal training. Only 1 participant which represents 0.9% stated that none of the training was preferred. Even though a larger population preferred both methods of training, a larger portion of the participants still preferred OJT in comparison to formal training.

As majority preferred both methods of training, their reasons are as follows:

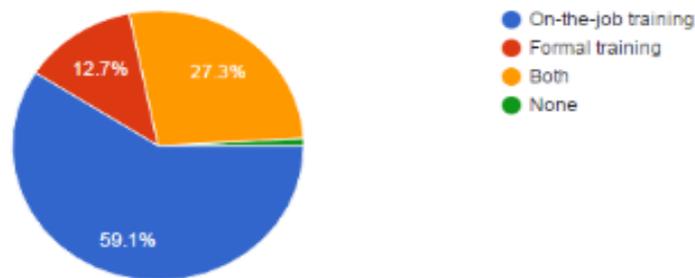
Formal training can do so much to have a better understanding of the theoretic of one's professional career. Furthermore, the research also supported that individuals pick up skills such as interpersonal skills which cannot be transferred through formal training. For example, in the case of a participant that is a contact centre agent, skills such as tone of voice, conversation flow and instinctive thinking was learnt while working on the actual job. According to Lewis et al, (2007), OJT programmes are established to provide employees with certain skills that are linked with their jobs and also, because OJT is being conducted as employees complete the tasks that are specific to their jobs, they will grow rapidly in aspects of their performance.

Majority of participants found OJT to be more effective as compared to formal training. Furthermore, OJT allows the employees to make mistakes and perfect their skills. Therefore, the experience gradually improves the confidence and accuracy of employees. Nevertheless, most participants found formal training to be boring as it mostly involves more listening. Comparably, they found OJT to be more stimulating as it involves practicing what is being taught. Participants also conceded that OJT is more superior to formal training as it is tailored to meet each individual needs of employees while working in their respective fields as formal training mostly involves being trained as a group and it's not specific to meeting each needs of the individuals.

**Figure 4.3.3**

8. Which method of training do you find more beneficial in assisting you with your performance?

(110 responses)



As shown in figure 5.3.4, a huge rate of 59.1% which represents 65 participants stated that they find OJT more beneficial in terms of assisting with their performance. 30 participants which represents 27.3% stated that both methods of training are more beneficial while the least popular group of 14 participants with a rate of 12.7% feel that formal training is more beneficial. Only 1 participant feel that none of the training method is beneficial to his/her performance. With no doubt, OJT carries twice the percentage as compared to formal training.

The response that participants gave in this question was very repetitive and very similar to the previous answer in figure 4.3.2.

Participants felt that OJT is more beneficial to their performance because “it’s more practical as it gives individuals a chance to practice what has been learnt and immediate feedback in terms of their performance is provided at the end of the training by the trainer, OJT boosts their learning and it’s easier to learn by doing or learning by example. For instance, a contact centre agent might learn more by making phone calls on the job. OJT helps individuals to identify their strengths and weaknesses and therefore, provide them with an opportunity to improve. OJT is normally specific to the job compared to formal training which doesn’t relate to the job and is completely different from the work environment. OJT helps to gain useful ideas from colleagues as it is better to learn by observing others rather than through explanation (classroom base). In addition, learning from the experience of someone that does the same job as you is very relevant than formal training which is very broad with huge amount of subjects”

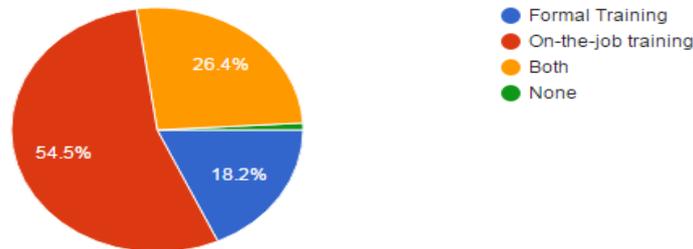
Some participants stated that “a mixture of both methods is beneficial because they both cover a variety of areas. If an employee is not given formal training, they will not be inducted to the company and they won’t be given a chance to settle into their new position whereas, OJT give employees an opportunity to learn on the job experience and they will be well knowledgeable about the position that they are employed for. OJT is more beneficial because it provides a one-on-one interaction between the trainer and the trainee whereas formal training on the other hand is also beneficial as it shares best practices. Overall, the two methods of training are beneficial because they both provide opportunities for improvement”

Based on the research, formal training is beneficial because it provides an understanding of how the company operates and what exactly it does. Learning that takes place in a classroom is less distractive/noisy compared to learning that takes place in the working environment. As a result of formal training being taught by an experienced coach, it helps to improve the quality of their calls.

The findings from the research supports the alternative hypothesis 1 and hypothesis 2 in which formal training impacts positively on employee performance but OJT has more positive impact on employee performance. Therefore, the alternative hypothesis stands because the Null hypothesis doesn’t support the literature.

**Figure 4.3.4**

9. Which method of training do you feel improved your work quality the most?  
(110 responses)



The pie chart above illustrates that a higher proportion of 60 participants which represents a rate of 54.5% felt that OJT improved their work quality the most. The next group which represents 26.4% of 29 participants felt that both OJT and formal training equally improved their work quality. The lowest proportion of 20 participants which represents a rate of 18.2% stated that formal training improved their work quality the most. Only a proportion of 0.9% participant identified that none of the methods of training improved their work quality.

OJT improved their adaptability to the working environment as well as improvement in confidence and understanding the system of the workplace. OJT helps to increase individual standards, it quickly builds employees' experience and self-confidence. OJT enables employees to improve the quality of their technical skills which enables them to reach their full capacity. It improved the quality of their communication skills for instance, their call quality and the ability to interact appropriately with customers. OJT helped agents to improve the quality of their lead generation as they were constantly coached by their team leaders and the quality administrators and as a result, their performance rate was boosted. It enabled employees to manage their time properly and as a result they reached their daily targets.

***Figure 4.3.5***

**10. Which method of training do you feel has more effect in teaching you the relevant skills and knowledge required for your job?**

(110 responses)

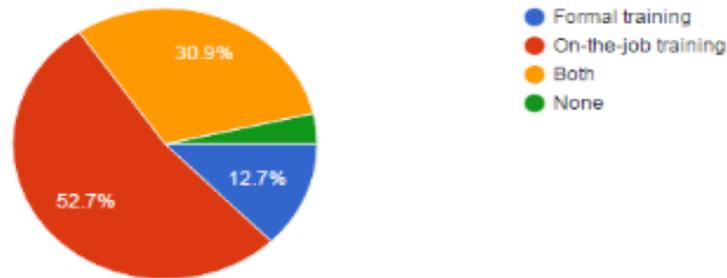


Figure 5.3.5 shows that 58 participants with a response rate of 52.7% felt that OJT again has more effect in teaching them the relevant skills and knowledge compared to formal training which represents 14 participants with a rate of 12.7% while 34 participants which represents a rate of 30.9% felt that both method of training equally have more effect in teaching them the relevant skills and knowledge. 4 participants which represents a rate of 3.6% felt that none of the training methods taught them the relevant skills and knowledge required for their job. The findings from this research actually supports previous academic studies. Based on the research conducted by a united state of labour study, about 70% of staffs gained the knowledge required for their jobs as a result of OJT (Painter, 2006).

**Figure 4.3.6**

11. How effective was your last on-the-job trainer? (110 responses)

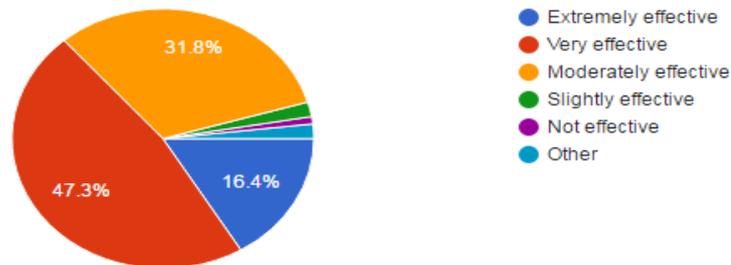


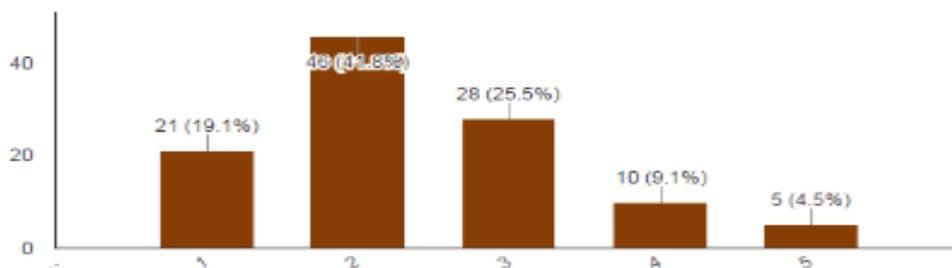
Figure 5.3.6 above illustrates that majority of participants which represents a rate of 47.3% felt that their last on-the-job trainer was very effective. 35 participants which represents a rate of 31.8% felt that their last on-the-job trainer was moderately effective, 18 participants which represents a rate of 16.4% felt that their trainer was extremely effective, 2 participants which represents 1.8% felt that their trainer was slightly effective, only 1 participant with a rate of 0.9% felt that their trainer was not effective while the remaining 2 participants which represents 1.8% didn't give a specific answer. Based on the literature review, on-the-job trainers have been criticised because of insufficient skills of being a trainer. Blanchard and Thacker (2004) noted that one major concern for on-the-job trainers is their skills and competencies. Nevertheless, trainers must be trained with the right skills and competencies in order to effectively train others. In addition, because OJT trainers are not trained on how to become trainers, they lack appropriate knowledge and skills and are unable to identify appropriate learning principle (Saks et al., 2010). So therefore, the findings from this research has surprisingly contradicted the findings from the literature review. This studies have some evidence to show that on-the-job trainers are very effective whereas the literature stated that OJT trainers are not effective.

## 5.4 PART C

In this section, participants were given some statement and were asked to identify to what level at which they agree or disagree. 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3= No opinion, 4=Agree, 5= Strongly Agree. The vertical axis represents percentages.

**Figure 4.3.7**

**15. I feel that some circumstances of on-the-job training may distract me from the training**  
(110 responses)

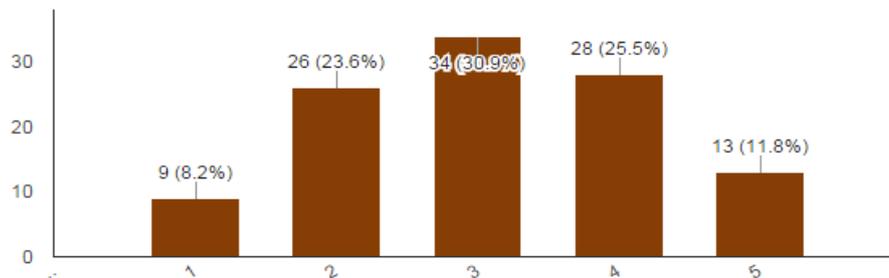


The figure above illustrates that majority of participants disagrees with this statement. A huge proportion of 46 participants which represents 41.8% disagree with this statement while 28 participants which represents 25.5% had no opinion. Although 21 participants which represent 19.1% also strongly disagree, 10 participants agree while the remaining 5 strongly agree. Comparing this result to formal training, formal training enables individuals to remain attentive without being distracted by on-the-job telephones, emails and messages (Duggan, 2016). Therefore, this finding/study has contradicted the review from academic literature.

**Figure 4.3.8**

**16. Majority of what is learnt in the classroom is usually forgotten after a short time**

(110 responses)

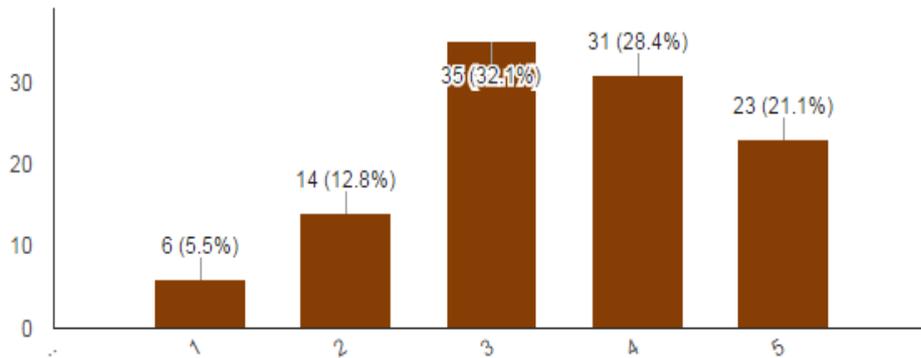


It is surprising to see that most people which represents 34 participants with a rate of 30.9% had no opinion about this statement. 28 participants which represents 25.5% agreed with this statement while 13 participants which represents 11.8% strongly agreed. Another group of 26 participants which represents 23.6% disagreed while the remaining group of 9 participants with a rate of 8.2% totally disagreed. From this finding, as a higher portion of participants agreed with this statement, this finding therefore supports findings from the literature review. According to Lennon (2014), based on the study found in the University of Waterloo's Curve of Forgetting Study, individuals tend not to remember more than half of what they have learnt after a day but it is recommended that the best way is to continuously practice what has been learnt in a working environment.

**Figure 4.3.9**

**19. As a result of on-the-job training being unstructured, it can lead to badly trained employees**

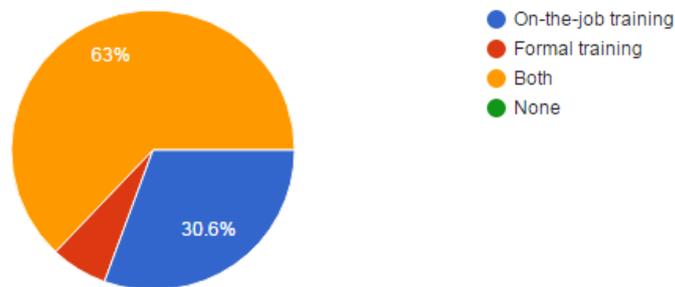
(109 responses)



Most of the participants which represent 32.1% could not tell whether OJT leads to badly trained employees. But however, among the other results, a larger rate of 31 participants which represents 28.4% agreed with the above statement while 21.1% also strongly agree. Even though the study disagree that some circumstances of OJT might obstruct the training (See figure 4.3.7), It is fascinating that most participants agree that OJT being unstructured can result to badly trained employees. Noe (2010) emphasised that the drawback of OJT is that colleagues or supervisors providing the training might convey appalling habits to other employees (trainees). In addition, it was also stated that because OJT is unstructured, it can result to employees being badly trained which might lead them to produce products or services using ineffectual production techniques. This study has therefore agreed with the findings in the literature.

**Figure 4.3.10**

20. Which method of training do you recommend for most organisations?  
(108 responses)



A massive percentage of employees which represents 63% of the sample suggested that organisations should use both method of training. It is clear that OJT still carries more percentage compared to formal training. The reasons why the participants recommended both method of training are as follows:

Having both types of training enhances performance. In addition, as knowledge is powerful, the more knowledge an individual has about their job, the more skilled they will become. Furthermore, applied learning is the only means of efficiently getting the work done. Both OJT and formal training cover different training requirements and they both provide flexible learning styles. For instance, as each individual have different ways of thinking, learning and adopting information, both methods enables employees to learn in diverse ways.

OJT and formal training provide the tools that are essential for achieving daily day to day work activities and they have different approaches. Formal training only teaches the theoretical aspects of the job whereas OJT is outstanding when it comes to putting application and software system into practice. But however, OJT ensure more productivity because it's done one-to-one, it is more confidential and personal compared to learning in the classroom. It is much more difficult to grab someone's attention while learning in a classroom. Thus, in order to teach someone how to use excel, it would be more appropriate to use formal training but in order to learn what is required for an everyday job, training that is provided by a colleague would be more appropriate. Formal training is more required for newcomers that are new to a specific field as it teaches them the basics of the job whereas OJT helps to enhance and update certain skills and so therefore, they both complement each other.

A blended method is recommended because it boosts the effectiveness of the training. Even though formal training enables one to learn about the company's background, formal training is still not suitable for every individual and it applies to different people. So therefore, OJT is therefore recommended.

## **21. Do you have any suggestions in relation to training within an organisation?**

Participant's suggested that "as each individual are different and to ensure that everyone gets the right training, instead of providing a generic training, the training should be specific and tailored based on each individual's needs, attitude, strengths or weaknesses. Furthermore, it is suggested that training should be a constant or regularly supporting tool for all organisations and it should be provided with sufficient time so as it boosts competencies and to ensure that employees are confident".

According to the research, participants also noted that "many companies fail to assess the employees' that are being trained and the trainer who is providing the training. However, after employees are trained, it is suggested that the training should be reviewed so as to ensure that the employees' have learnt from the training session and to also ensure that the training has covered all relevant aspects of the job. On the other hand, trainers also need to be assessed and updated with new training procedures and processes"

Participants suggested that the "training provided should be made interesting and innovative by including more roleplays that are specific to each individual role. In addition, the training should be well structured that is, a step by step guide should be provided to employees on what the role expects from them and how to successfully perform their tasks. Furthermore, the training information should include the difficulties that are associated with the job as well as what they shouldn't do in regards to their job".

## **CHAPTER 5: DISCUSSION**

This interpretation is based on the information that were gathered in the analysis and findings. The research objective was to find out the impact of on-the-job training versus formal training on employee performance and therefore, the analysis are as follows:

According to the findings, as most employees in the organisation were last trained within the last 6 months, this shows that training is a continuous process and also an essential part of the organisation. According to Sila (2014), organisations should continuously train their employees so as to increase their competencies which will therefore also enable the firm to gain competitive advantage over its competitors. Employees that are provided with constant training will have a better understanding of their job. Furthermore, the training will boost their confidence and therefore enable them to perform effectively and efficiently. If employees are not trained continuously, they will not be able to perform to their full capacity and will therefore be unable to accomplish their tasks (Sila, 2014).

Based on the findings, OJT receives the most recognition and therefore this research supports the findings from the literature review which states that OJT is the most popular form of training. According to Noe (2010), OJT is the oldest and most common method of training. Hence, it is remarkably effective when used to train employees that are new to the organisation and to also revamp their competencies when an advanced technology is being introduced. On the other hand, the findings also disagree with Kainen et al., (1983) who argued that OJT has received insignificant recognition in the training literature. Furthermore, these Authors also emphasised that OJT compared to formal training is less efficient when it comes to teaching employees the appropriate skills. This research found OJT to be more popular and its justified by the fact that it was mostly preferred by employees, employees found it more beneficial in assisting them with their performance, employees found that it improved their work quality the most and it is more effective in terms of teaching them the relevant skills and knowledge required for their jobs.

In figure 4.3.2 and based on the research, OJT was mostly preferred as it is more effective in comparison to formal training. OJT was also preferred because it enables employees to make mistake and then improve their skills while slowly enhancing their confidence. Furthermore, it was also stated that, OJT is more stimulating in comparison to formal training which is considered to be boring. According to Medina (2006), OJT takes place at workplace where employees are shown or given demonstration on how to perform their tasks. OJT is stimulating

in the sense that it is interesting and fascinating as it involves two individuals interacting in terms of how to do their job compared to formal training which involves listening with little or no communication. In the research carried out by Bajak (2014), students that take part in lectures have higher chances of failing than students that are involved in active learning. Furthermore, formal lectures (**lectures are also part of formal training method**) were classified as boring and ineffective and therefore, a more stimulating active learning was recommended.

Based on personal experience and after taking part in both methods of training, the researcher indeed finds OJT to be stimulating as it involves communicating while learning and doing or practicing. Whereas, formal training is boring and ineffective in terms of it being long in length and it involves little or no one-to-one session with the trainer. Lectures (**which is also considered as part of formal training**) provided as part of a module takes approximately 1-2 hours with little or no breaks and most of the time, the course contents are usually provided in a haste in order to meet up with specific deadlines and as a result, some students might not understand what is being taught because they are being bombarded with too much information and in many occasions, the lecturer fail to ensure that the students have gained something meaningful as a result of taking part in the lecture. According to Crawshaw (2006), based on the research conducted by the American Society of T&D, it was revealed that most people keep information better when it is delivered in shorter segments and also based on this research, as most participants have agreed that most of what is learnt formally in the classroom is usually forgotten after a short while, therefore, this research blends with the literature review (See figure 4.3.8).

Even though the study found OJT to be effective, it was also considered to be ineffective as it leads to badly trained employees. According to the literature, because OJT is not systematic, trainers tend to convey terrible habits to employees which can result to employees being poorly trained (Noe, 2010) and Garavan et al., (1995). This finding therefore supports the review from the literature. Nevertheless, based on the literature review, Saks et al., (2010) stated that on-the-job trainers are seen as a concern because most of them lack the knowledge and skills required to be trainers. These authors also emphasised that even though OJT is well liked by many people, it is still considered to be misused. However, this research disagrees with the literature because nearly half of the participants found their on-the-job trainers to be very effective.

As this research disagrees that some circumstances of OJT may distract or obstruct the training it has therefore contradicted the information based in the literature. Duggan (2016) emphasised that formal training enables employees to be focused on the training while gaining relevant skills in the sense that it occurs outside the workplace without being distracted from messages and email notifications on the job. From the researcher's viewpoint, as most companies in Ireland are designed in an open space, OJT could be distractive sometimes because of the background noise from colleagues and it also lacks confidentiality as it is conducted in an open office environment. However, the distraction from OJT might not necessarily have a negative impact on employee's overall performance.

In terms of which method of training mostly improved the quality of employees work performance, over half of the participants choose OJT in comparison to formal training. Employees stated that OJT improved their work quality the most because it boosted their standards and well as the quality of their technical skills and communication skills (see figure 4.3.4).

According to this research, among the two methods of training, a huge percentage of employees also stated that OJT was more beneficial to them in terms of assisting with their performance as well as it being more effective in teaching them the relevant skills and knowledge required for their jobs (See Figure 4.3.3 and 4.3.5 for more details). OJT was more beneficial to their performance because they got to practice what was being taught and were given opportunities to improve their weaknesses. Furthermore, OJT was also considered to be the best way to learn as it involves scrutinizing other employees rather than learning through explanation (formal training). This research agrees with literature review in which Khan et al., (2011) argued that OJT is more effective as it enables employees to gain the knowledge required for their jobs. Furthermore, learning that occurs through practicing tend to be better than learning that is done formally (formal training). Formal training to some level is still beneficial because it enables employees to gain background information before putting their skills into practice but however, OJT is still considered to be more beneficial.

From the researcher's viewpoint, formal training still has a positive impact on individuals but sometimes, majority of the concept and theories learnt formally in the classroom is irrelevant to each individual's career path or desired profession and when these individuals enter into the workforce, they soon realise that what they learnt is completely different from the nature of the job.

### **5.1 Implication of study**

For organisational implications, training is very essential for organisations to compete in today's changing world. This study will allow organisations to acknowledge the relevance of different training techniques as well as to apprehend the factors that are essential to bear in mind while providing the training. It will also help them to deliver the appropriate training technique so as to enable employees perform effectively.

For future research, a qualitative research method should be utilized so as to get employees opinion through interviews rather than through questionnaires. Based on the literature review, more information was found in the field of on-the-job training as compared to formal training which has a number of information but not as much as the information gathered on on-the-job training. So therefore, more academic literature is still required in the field of formal training so as to shed more light within that area. In addition, future research will be required in order to find out to what extent formal training impacts on employee performance or alternatively, as compared to on-the-job training, to what extent does formal training impacts performance?

## **CHAPTER 6: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATION**

### **6.1 Conclusion**

Training is a very essential tool for all organisations as well as its employees, it helps employees to grow as well as to revamp their skills and knowledge. Training is considered as the only mechanism that can help organisations and employees to reach their full potentials and there achieve their objectives. In order to stay ahead in today's competitive market, it is very crucial that employees are provided with an effective and appropriate training technique as there is now a need for organisations to strengthen their human capital by providing them with the right skills at the right time. Without training, employees will not be able to perform to their full capacity, it might leave them feeling frustrated and therefore lead to employee turnover. Training is process of creating activities with the aim of encouraging the skills and attitude of employees in the organisation in order for them to contribute to the achievement of goals in the organisation and also to improve their job performance. Furthermore, when employees are provided with training, they feel a sense of growth in their performance and thus, it motivates them to work harder so as to obtain person and organisational goals. Employee performance is referred to as how an employee effectively and efficiently perform his or her duties. Furthermore, it also relates to how consistent an employee works towards obtaining better results in the organisation as well as these results being weighed in aspects of how useful it is to customers.

On-the-job training and formal training are considered to be the two most popular methods of training used by most organisations. OJT is an unstructured training technique that occurs at the workplace environment, the training is normally provided by an experienced colleague, supervisor or manager who tells and demonstrate to employees how to perform their tasks. On the other hand, formal training is a structured form training technique that takes place outside the workplace environment. It is normally provided in a classroom based environment by a trained trainer or an experienced teacher or lecturer. They both have advantages and disadvantages which can impact positively and negatively organisations performance.

The advantages of OJT is that because it takes place in the workplace environment, employees learn using real workplace equipment and tasks which therefore enable them to quickly gain some competences that can be transferred on the job. Furthermore, despite its advantages, it is also considered as being misused as a result of it being unstructured. On the other hand, formal training enables employees to gain background information about the company and how it operates, it also allows a large amount of people to be taught at the same time within a certain

period. With no doubt, formal training is a very systematic training technique but however, most individuals in the classroom lose their focus after a short while.

The aim of this research was to evaluate the impact of OJT and formal training on employee performance based in a B2B Telemarketing company. Based on the findings from the primary research which was carried out among the employees of IDG Direct, there was some evidence to show that both OJT and formal training have an impact on employee performance but OJT has the greatest impact in comparison to formal training. OJT seem to have the greatest impact on employee performance as it was mostly preferred and more than half of the employees found it to be more beneficial to their performance in comparison to formal training. Majority stated that it was more beneficial because it involves “learning by doing or observing” and its specific to the job in comparison to formal training. However, minority of employees stated that formal training was also beneficial to their performance because it is less obstructive in comparison to training that takes place at work. The employees also considered OJT to have improved their work quality the most in comparison to formal training. OJT was said to have improved their work quality because it revamped their standards, it rapidly improved the quality of their technical and communication skills and also the quality of their leads generation. To conclude, OJT training has more say in the training literature and therefore, more research still needs to be conducted in the field of formal training.

## **6.2 Recommendations**

As training is a vital mechanism for all organisation around the globe, it recommended that they invest their capital in training to continuously boost employee performance. Before training is provided, organisations should thoroughly think of which training technique will be best suitable for employees. Nevertheless, it should be based on their personal needs in the sense that before an employee is being provided with a particular training, areas where the employee needs improvement should be identified as well as what behaviour needs changes in order to enable them work effectively. After training is being provided, managers need to look back on the training to see if it made any difference to the performance of the employee. Finally, if possible all organisations should use both methods of training.

## **PERSONAL LEARNING STATEMENT**

The topic of training was investigated because it is of interest to me and I hope to pursue a career as a training co-ordinator within the training department of any organisation. Furthermore, as most organisations use both on-the-job training and formal training to train their workforce, I was eager to find out which method of training employees prefer as well as which method have the biggest impact on their performance.

The writing of this dissertation was an entirely new learning experience for me as I have never done any research prior to this dissertation. The research process was the most challenging aspect of the entire HR programme but however, knowledge and competencies were acquired after the completion of this dissertation.

I improved my time management skills as a result of this research experience. In addition, as the research demanded a substantial amount of planning and organising, I learnt to prioritise my work in order of importance. Every day, I would set myself some mini goals (for instance, to complete a certain section and to type a certain word count for a specific time).

My self-confidence was boosted which was achieved through conquering anxieties and interacting with participants in an appropriate manner in order to get them to complete the questionnaire. Primary research skills were also obtained as I designed my first structured online questionnaire which was aimed at answering the research question.

Finally, the whole research experience has helped me acquire critical thinking skills as it involved searching for valuable training literature as well as observing and analysing of information so as to make a judgement.

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# APPENDICES

## Questionnaire

### Training in the organisation

#### Background of Questionnaire

The two most popular methods of training used by organisations are formal training and on-the-job training.

Formal training is a method of training that takes place in a classroom setting. It involves training with the use of lectures, presentation slides, readings and case-studies.

On-the-job-training is a method of training that takes place in the actual workplace environment. The employee is normally trained by a colleague, supervisor, a leader or a manager who shows the employee how to do their job. This involves coaching and mentoring and many others.

For the purpose of confidentiality and anonymity, the identity of the participants will be preserved and not be disclosed to other parties except the research supervisor.

\* Required

#### PART A

#### 1. What is your gender?

- Male
- Female

#### 2. Please specify your age

- 18 - 24 years
- 25 - 34 years
- 35 - 44 years
- 45 and above

**3. How long have you worked for your company?**

- 0 - 5 Months
- 6 – 11 Months
- 1 – 5 Years
- 5 Years and above

**4. What is your current position within your company?**

- Contact Centre Agent
- Quality Assurance Administrator
- IT Administrator / Data Analyst
- HR / Training Coordinator
- Manager
- Other :

**PART B**

**5. When last were you trained?**

- Within the last 6 months
- Within the last 12 months
- Within the last 2 years
- Other :

**6. Which method of training did you receive?**

- On-the-job training
- Formal training
- Both
- None

**7. Which method of training do you prefer?**

- On-the-job training
- Formal training
- Both
- None

**Why do you prefer it? and what is good about it? \***

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_

**8. Which method of training do you find more beneficial in assisting you with your performance? \***

- On-the-job training
- Formal training
- Both
- None

**Please state why \***

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_

9. Which method of training do you feel improved your work quality the most? \*

- Formal Training
- On-the-job training
- Both
- None

How did the training improve your work quality? \*

Your answer \_\_\_\_\_

10. Which method of training do you feel has more effect in teaching you the relevant skills and knowledge required for your job? \*

- Formal training
- On-the-job training
- Both
- None

11. How effective was your last on-the-job trainer?

- Extremely effective
- Very effective
- Moderately effective
- Slightly effective
- Not effective
- Other : \_\_\_\_\_

## 12. Which of the following have you participated in?

Please select one or more

Coaching	<input type="radio"/>
Mentoring	<input type="radio"/>
Job Rotation	<input type="radio"/>
Lecture	<input type="radio"/>
Role-Play	<input type="radio"/>
None	<input type="radio"/>

### PART C: To what level do you agree with the following statement:

#### 13. Training is very important for all employees and their organisation \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree				

#### 14. I am satisfied with the training that I received from my company \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree				

15. I feel that some circumstances of on-the-job training may distract me from the training \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree				

16. Majority of what is learnt in the classroom is usually forgotten after a short time \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree				

17. On-the-job training provided by a colleague is more successful than training provided in a formal classroom environment \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree				

18. Some circumstances of on-the-job training may distract me from the training \*

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree				

19. As a result of the on-the-job training being unstructured, it can lead to badly trained employees

	1	2	3	4	5	
Strongly Disagree	<input type="radio"/>	Strongly Agree				

**20. Which method of training do you recommend for most organisations?**

- On-the-job training
- Formal training
- Both
- None

**Please state why**

Your answer

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**21. Do you have any suggestions in relation to training within an organisation?**

Your answer

**SUBMIT**

Never submit passwords through Google Forms.











