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EFFECT OF PRICE PERCEPTION AND BRAND FAMILIARITY **- A study**

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Research Abstract

The consumer buying behavior has changed drastically. Earlier the majority of people had a mindset of going in for cheap products. But now the scenario has changed. As the standard of living has increased people have become status conscious. They are more inclined towards branded products. Companies must remember that when they bring out a new product it should match the expectations of the customer.

We undertook a study to determine to what extent price affects a product and to what extent brand matters in purchase of nail polish by consumers in Ernakulam (Kerala). The outcome of the study could persuade lead companies to make a detailed study of consumer buying behavior. They can then understand the various factors affecting consumer buying behavior and how these factors influence the buying decision process. This will help companies decide how best to price their products so as to meet the needs and expectations of customers. Moreover this will give a clear idea as to how much importance people give to price and brand – in this case, nail polish.

This study deals with the effect of price perception and brand familiarity on brand preference. Brand preference is taken as an independent variable, so also price perception and brand familiarity.

Brand preference is the degree of brand loyalty in which a customer prefers one brand to competing offerings. Price perception is about how customers see a product's price, as high, low or fair. It refers to the reasonableness of price; reasonableness reflecting the way the price is perceived relative to that of the

competitors. *Brand familiarity is the extent to which a brand or brand name is recognized by potential buyers and correctly associated with the particular product in question. It is the act of creating public awareness of a specific brand in order to maximize its recognition.*

In short, the study deals mainly with the importance of price perception and brand familiarity for brand preference and how both these factors significantly affect brand preference.

Introduction

Customers preferred higher priced products only when

- Price was the only information available
- When there was a belief that quality of available brands differed significantly
- Price differences between choices were large

Initially customers gave more importance to price. In course of time brand name became more important than price perception. People started looking for branded products. Brand became a symbol of status and quality. However customers also compare price differences while purchasing various products.

The study takes into consideration price perception and brand familiarity as independent factors and their impact on brand preference in the case of cosmetic products and specifically in the case of nail polish. Here price perception is taken up in two broad areas: one, the price sensitivity case and the other, the non-price sensitive case.

Problem statement

There are various factors which affect consumer buying behavior. While making any purchase price plays a dominant role. People think twice before buying. But the scenario is changing. With the increase in standard of living, people are becoming status conscious and as a result they come to prefer branded products. Most of the people go in for products that they are more familiar with. People rarely try new products. It therefore becomes important to find out the effect of price perception and brand familiarity on brand preference.

Objectives of the study

Primary objectives: To find out the effect of price perception and brand familiarity on brand preference.

Other objectives

1. To study brand preference.
2. To study price perception.
3. To study brand familiarity.
4. To study the effect of price perception and brand familiarity on brand preference

Hypothesis

H1: price perception affects brand preference.

H2: brand familiarity affects brand preference.

H3: price perception and brand familiarity have a significant effect on brand preference.

Research Design & Methodology

Research design

The study was descriptive. The study was done among users of nail polish in Ernakulam. The main target was ladies who use nail polish. Primary data were collected with the help of questionnaires and based on these, analyses and findings were attempted.

Sampling design

Sample size taken was 150.

Sampling design is random sampling.

Sampling unit is those who use nail polish.

Data source

Primary data were collected with the help of a questionnaire. All the research process was done with the help of the parent study “The influence of price difference and brand familiarity on brand preference” and another study “The variability of prices on brand choices”. A lot of articles were used as reference.

Data collection method

Data were collected by means of questionnaire and also with the help of face-to-face conversations. The data were collected mainly among ladies who use nail polish. In order to have accuracy in analysis, ladies in different age groups were considered.

Literature Review

In the study “**The influence of price difference and brand familiarity on brand preference**” by **Kent B Monroe** the author talks about the significant effect of price perception and brand familiarity on brand preference. Customers preferred higher priced products only when

- Price was the only information available.
- When there was a belief that quality of available brands differed significantly.
- Price differences between choices were large.

Initially customers gave more importance to price. In course of time, brand name became more important than price perception. People started looking for branded products. Brand became a symbol of status and quality. However customers also compare price differences while purchasing various products.

The main purpose of this research was to isolate specific price and cognitive effects on brand preference and to analyze the effect of price difference and brand familiarity on brand preference. This, however, depends on the products that we buy. Price perception is considered in two extremes here: one is the price sensitive case and the other is the non-price sensitive case. When we consider cosmetic products people are not price sensitive to a great extent. They look upon the brand name rather than the price. But this is different with respect to other products.

The major finding of the research was that brand familiarity played a more dominant role than price in brand preference when we consider cosmetic products. People are not much concerned about price in the case of cosmetic products. People go for branded products rather than cheaper products. So brand familiarity greatly affects brand preference rather than price perception.

The study **“Price perceptions and Consumer shopping behavior”** by **Donald R Lichtenstein, Nancy M Ridgeway and Richard G Netemeyer** talks about seven price constructs – five consistent with the perception of price in its “negative role” and two consistent with price perception in “positive role” are used as independent variables to predict market place responses / behaviors in five domains: price search, generic product purchases, price recall, sales responsiveness and coupon redemption. The price-related constructs explain a significant amount of variance in five domains, providing evidence of predictive validity. Results of higher order factor analysis designed to assess the validity of positive-negative price perception of price taxonomy are also given.

Here the various factors influencing consumer behavior and the effect of these factors on consumer buying process are discussed. Also discussed are the importance of price and its significant effect on consumer shopping. This varies from product to product and hence all positive-negative aspects of price perception figure in the study. Shoppers are shown to be very heterogeneous in terms of their attention towards price and price promotions. The study explains some of this heterogeneity by offering further elaborations of the perception of price in its positive and negative roles. Some will be price sensitive whereas some others will not be. So this study considers the entire range from the extreme price sensitive case to the extreme non-price sensitive case.

The study **“Measuring the determinants of Brand Preference”** by **Denford Chimboza and Edward Mutangwa** talks about the important determinants affecting brand preference in the case of the dairy product market. The study says that brand awareness, price of the brand, product quality and packaging are the important factors affecting brand preference. Awareness about the brand makes the brand more familiar. The authors discuss promotional aspects involved in making the brand more familiar. The study also talks about the importance of branding and pricing products. The products must meet the expectations of customers. So pricing and promotion

policies must focus on that. Quality is also an important factor to consider. The study is mainly concentrated on ARDA dairy products in Zimbabwe.

Price and product quality are the dominant factors affecting brand preference. Thereafter comes brand familiarity. In the case of dairy products people are more concerned with product quality and price. Brand familiarity is only a third consideration.

The article **“A Generic approach of perception and price sensitivity”** by **Isabella Muratore** examines how consumers perceive prices. Why are consumers price sensitive? The objective is to understand the price perception and sensitivity genesis. The article examines the relevance of existing theories of price information processing genesis – the research attempts to contribute to an understanding of the cognitive mechanisms which lead the consumer to take into consideration the product price not only from a structural angle of information processing but also from a developmental angle suggested by genetic psychology. Perception can be viewed from different angles. Price sensitivity can be high, medium or low. It also depends on the products. For certain products customers can be more price sensitive. For certain other products they cannot be so price sensitive. Various extremes of price sensitiveness depend on the products.

The study **“The effect of variability in price on consumer brand choice”** by **B P S Murthi & Ernan Haruvy** dwells on how changes in prices affect brand choice and purchase decision on a brand. The analysis shows that the price insensitive segment’s reaction to price is not much affected by frequent price changes whereas the price sensitive segment is more responsive to price. Therefore, frequent price promotions over time will lessen the impact of any given promotion on price insensitive shoppers. Even though behavioral literature suggests that price variability affects consumers’ decisions, most brand choice models have not focused on the consumers’ response to such variability.

The study attempts to remedy this omission and examines the effect of price variability on consumer brand choice. Scanner data are used to show that price variability affects consumers’ price sensitivity. We also find that accounting for the effects of price variability in brand choice models improves the model fit as against conventional benchmark models.

The study “**A relational study on consumer promotion, price perception, product quality perception and brand loyalty in the context of detergent markets**” by **Mohammed Mashfiq Huq** is about exploring the relationship between consumer promotion, price perception, product quality perception and brand loyalty in the detergent market of Bangladesh. Overall when it comes to consumer promotions, general views of people about consumer promotion and price perceptions have a great impact on product quality perceptions. Price perception shows a positive correlation to brand loyalty. This depends on how we perceive price.

When it comes to brand loyalty of a promotional brand, perceived quality plays an important role in addition to general views on consumer promotion and price perception. So all such factors or elements that could have an impact on consumer promotion, price perception and quality perception should be considered very important.

In the article “**Brand preference monitoring debated**” by **Radosevich & Lynda**, brand preference is clearly defined as also certain antecedents and consequences.

Brand preference is a measure of whether someone prefers one brand to another. Brand preference research aims to uncover both the rational and emotional factors that lead to a purchase decision over a competitor. Some of the antecedents can be quality, price, brand awareness, brand favoritism, brand popularity, brand reputation etc and consequences are brand loyalty, purchase decision, product preference etc.

From the above literature it will be seen that there exists a deep relationship between price perception, brand familiarity and brand preference. And it differs from product to product.

Analysis and findings

With the help of questionnaires, data that were collected among the users of nail polish were analysed with the help of SPSS. In order to find out the relationship between price perception, brand familiarity and brand preference, correlation and regression were used.

Hypothesis was

H1: Price perception affects brand preference.

H2: Brand familiarity affects brand preference.

H3: Price perception and brand familiarity have a significant effect on brand preference.

Dependent Variable: Brand Preference.

Independent Variables: Price perception, Brand familiarity.

Hypothesis H1 analysis

That price perception affects brand preference.

From the SPSS; correlation and regression values which are obtained are given below:

	BP	PP
BP Pearson Correlation	1	.393
Sig (2 tailed)		.002
N	150	150
PP Pearson Correlation	.393	
Sig (2 tailed)	.002	
N	150	

R	R square
.393	0.154

The correlation value obtained is 0.393 and R square is 0.154 which show a positive correlation between price perception and brand preference. This shows that people are not much price sensitive as far as a particular brand is concerned since the correlation value is less than 0.5. People are not much concerned about price when they go in for a brand. Nevertheless, since positive correlation exists between price perception and brand preference, we can say that price affects brand preference not to a great extent, but to a certain extent.

Consider the case of Lakme

	BP	PP
BP Pearson Correlation	1	.256
Sig (2 tailed)		.012
N	70	70
PP Pearson Correlation	.256	
Sig (2 tailed)	.012	
N	70	

R	R square
.256	0.06

Lakme is considered to be a premium brand. Here also there exists a positive correlation between price perception and brand preference since the correlation value is 0.256. Here people are not concerned about price to a great extent. Since Lakme is a premium brand meant for high society people they would not be overly concerned about price.

Consider the case of Elle 18

	BP	PP
BP Pearson Correlation	1	.324
Sig (2 tailed)		.002
N	45	45
P	.324	
P Pearson Correlation	.002	
Sig (2 tailed)	45	
N		

R	R square
.324	0.105

Elle18 is not a premium brand compared to Lakme. Here a better positive correlation between price perception and brand preference exists when compared to Lakme. Here the people are more concerned about price compared to Lakme.

There exists a positive correlation between price perception and brand preference. But the correlation value is less than 0.5; we can say that the hypothesis that price perception affects brand preference is true only to a certain extent. It depends on the brands that we use.

Lakme mainly targets upper class people and Elle 18 targets middle class people. Most probably that is the reason for the difference in the R and R squared values.

In effect the hypothesis is true to certain extent and not to a great extent. R square expresses the moderately good fit of the model.

Hypothesis H2

That brand familiarity affects brand preference:

From the SPSS: correlation and regression values obtained are given below:

	BP	PP
BP Pearson Correlation	1	.545
Sig (2 tailed)		.000
N	150	150
PP Pearson Correlation	.545	
Sig (2 tailed)	.000	
N	150	

R	R square
.545	0.297

Here the correlation value obtained is 0.545 and R square value is 0.297 which are positive showing a good correlation between brand familiarity and brand preference. That is to say, if a brand is more familiar, people go for that brand or prefer that brand.

Consider the case of Lakme

	BP	PP
BP Pearson Correlation	1	.59
Sig (2 tailed)		.000
N	70	70
PP Pearson Correlation	.59	
Sig (2 tailed)	.000	
N	70	

R	R square
.59	0.34

Here the correlation value obtained is 0.59 and R square value is 0.34 which is positive, indicating a good correlation between brand familiarity and brand preference. Since Lakme is more familiar as a premium brand, people go for that brand or prefer that brand. Here people give importance to brand rather than price since Lakme targets the upper segments.

Consider the case of Elle18

	BP	PP
BP Pearson Correlation	1	.5675
Sig (2 tailed)		.002
N	45	45
PP Pearson Correlation	.5675	
Sig (2 tailed)	.002	
N	45	

R	R square
.5675	0.32

Here the correlation value obtained is 0.5675 and R square value is 0.32 which is positive, indicating a good correlation between brand familiarity and brand preference. Since Elle18 is more familiar, people go for that brand or prefer that brand.

In effect there exists a good positive correlation between brand preference and brand familiarity. So the hypothesis that brand familiarity affects brand preference is completely true. R square explains a good fit of the model.

Hypothesis H3

That there is a significant effect of price perception and brand familiarity on brand preference:

Consider the value obtained from SPSS;

R	R square
.469	0.219

Here the correlation value obtained is 0.469 and R square value is 0.219 which is positive, showing a good correlation to a certain extent. The decrease in the correlation value can be due to the effect of price perception. In short price perception and brand familiarity have a significant effect on brand preference.

Consider the case of Lakme

R	R square
.42	0.179

Here the correlation value obtained is 0.42 and R square value is 0.179 which is positive indicating a good correlation to certain extent. The decrease in the correlation value can be due to the effect of price perception. In short price perception and brand familiarity have a significant effect on brand preference. For premium brands, people consider brand more important than price.

Consider the case of Elle18

R	R square
.444	0.1975

Here the correlation value obtained is 0.444 and R square value is 0.1975 which is positive, showing a good correlation to certain extent. The decrease in the correlation value can be due to the effect of price perception.

In effect the hypothesis is true. Anyway, brand familiarity has a great effect on brand preference, but price perception affects brand preference to a certain extent. R square denotes a good fit of the model.

In the case of price perception it has 2 parts, either the people would be price sensitive or people would not be price sensitive. When people prefer a brand there are less chances of price sensitiveness. That is why the correlation value of price perception and brand preference is less. This depends on the brands. The correlation value will be less if they prefer premium brands, but it will be slightly high if people prefer a cheaper brand. This is what we saw in the case of Lakme and Elle18.

But brand familiarity will have a greater effect on brand preference. We got the correlation value positive and high in all cases. Even if it is a premium or cheaper brand, people prefer the brand when it is more familiar.

Results

1. Hypothesis H1 is true to a certain extent only. That is price perception affects brand preference to a certain extent. R square value expresses a moderately good fit of the model.
2. Hypothesis H2 is true completely: that brand familiarity affects brand preference. If a brand is familiar people prefer that brand. R square value explains a good fit of the model.
3. Hypothesis H3 is also true. There is a significant effect of price perception and brand familiarity on brand preference. Here brand familiarity has a significant effect on brand preference, but price perception does not have a significant effect. R square value expresses a good fit of the model.

Suggestions

- As studies highlight that brand preference is very much influenced by brand familiarity in the case of cosmetic products, especially nail polish, companies must try to focus on the issues of brand building. Customers are not at all price conscious in this case. Rather, they are more concerned about the brand.
- If the brand is more familiar to a customer, he will go for that brand. For that proper promotional strategies should be adopted by the companies. Companies must focus more on lower and middle segments and proper promotional strategies must be adopted so that people will automatically recognize the brand and hence will show preference for it.

- This field should be explored by the marketers more fully. For that, this study can be used as a frame work. The earlier concept of the buying process has drastically changed. People are now becoming more status-conscious and hence prefer branded products more in their day-to-day life. Another reason can be that they are more status-conscious. They are ready to pay more for better quality products. Hence companies should also pay attention to this aspect.

Conclusion

The main purpose of this research was to isolate specific price and cognitive effects on brand preference and to analyze the effects of price difference and levels of brand familiarity on brand preference. That was mainly to analyze whether brand preference gets affected by price perception or by brand familiarity.

It is found that price perception has a less significant effect on brand preference especially in the field of cosmetic industry. When people prefer a brand there are less chances of price sensitiveness. That is why the correlation value of price perception and brand preference is less. The correlation value will be less if they prefer premium brands, but it will be slightly high if people prefer cheaper brands. This is what we saw in the case of Lakme and Elle18. It depends on brands that people prefer.

But brand familiarity will have a greater effect on brand preference. We found the correlation value to be positive and high in all cases, so that even if it is a premium or cheaper brand people prefer the brand if it is more familiar.

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AN ASSESSMENT OF TRAINING METHODS AND TECHNIQUES

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Abstract

This paper empirically examines the application of different methods and techniques that are employed in the training programmes of managers. A survey conducted by the Department of Studies in Commerce, Post Graduate Centre, Hemagangotri, University of Commerce (Shantigrama, Hassan) dealt with a variety of methods and techniques that are used in such training programmes to create, maintain and sustain interest and curiosity in the learner towards learning objects and to facilitate learning. The study found that the most widely used training methods and techniques were case study, lecture, role play, seminar and business games. These training methods and techniques were found to be variously effective appropriate and facilitating learning.

Introduction

Training aims to change behaviour at the workplace in order to stimulate efficiency and higher performance standards. It is concerned with work-based learning. In turn, learning is seen as a form of behavioural change (Alan and Chloe, 1990). Training has been usefully defined as:...'the systematic development of the attitude, knowledge and skill and behaviour pattern required by an individual in order to perform adequately a given task or job' (Glossary of training terms, 1971).

A training programme normally uses a variety of training methods and techniques to create, maintain and sustain interest and curiosity in the learner towards learning objects to facilitate learning. A number of training techniques totaling more than 300 are available (Andrzej 1984). But none of these techniques may be deemed as the best because they have different degrees of effectiveness depending on various factors like training objectives, the background, knowledge level and attitude of

trainee and trainer and the training environment. The aim of the study conducted by the authors was to assess the training methods and techniques usually applied in training programmes of managers.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the main methods applied in the training programmes of managers in Indian organizations.
- To rank the most effective training methods.

Hypotheses

- Case study, lecture method, role play, seminar and business games are widely used methods in the training programmes of managers and they are found to be effective methods.

Methodology

Sample

Manufacturing and service organizations having well defined training schemes were included in the study. Only managers of these sampled organizations were taken as subjects of the study. For the selection of respondents the study followed the convenience sampling method, which is a non-probability sampling technique. Around 600 respondents were selected from 200 organizations across India. Out of these, 455 responses were received representing a response rate of 76 per cent as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Responses by type of organization, sex, age and managerial position

A. Type			B. Sex		
	n	%		n	%
Manufacturing	272	60	Male	398	87
Service	183	40	Female	57	13
Σ	455	100	Σ	455	100
C. Age			D. Managerial Position		
	n	%		n	%
31-40	207	45	Junior Management	135	30
41-50	163	36	Middle Management	234	51
51-60	85	19	Top Management	86	19
Σ	455	100	Σ	455	100

The demographic data of the respondents show that 60% came from manufacturing industry and the remaining 40% from service industry. Of these 87% were males and 13% were females. All of them were over 31 years and 51% of them belong to middle management level while 30% belong to the junior management level with 19% being at top management level.

Research Instrument

A structured questionnaire was used in this study. The questionnaire consists of fifteen training methods and techniques which were widely used in training programmes. The respondents were asked to state the methods applied in the training programmes that had been attended by them during the last five years. They were also asked to rank five methods which they considered most effective and rate their usefulness in facilitating learning on a five point Likert-type scale.

Data Collection and Analysis

Primary data were collected from 455 respondents by administering the above research instrument. The frequencies for all the fifteen training methods were presented in percentage of preference for each training method.

Results and Discussion

The results of the study are presented in this section. The respondents were asked to indicate, from among several methods, the main methods applied in the training programmes that they had attended during the last five years. The percentage of preference for each training method is presented in Table 2; their effectiveness is presented in Table 3, and facilitation of learning by these training methods and their appropriateness are presented in Table 4 and 5 respectively.

Table 2. Methods Applied in Training Programmes

Training methods applied in the training programmes attended by the respondents during the last five years	Percentage of preference for each method
1. Case Study	73
2. Lecture	70
3. Role Play	55
4. Seminar	49
5. Business Games	45
6. Movie Films	37
7. Sensivity	25
8. Group Discussion	23
9. Programmed Instruction	21
10. Television Lecture	16
11. Simulation	16
12. In Basket Exercise	10

Table 3. Effectiveness of Training Methods

Effectiveness of methods applied in the training programmes attended by the respondents during the last five years	Percentage of frequency
1. Case Study	60
2. Lecture	52
3. Role Play	42
4. Seminar	40
5. Business Games	31
6. Group Discussion	23
7. Movie Films	22
8. Programmed Instruction	18
9. Simulation	15
10. Television Lecture	14
11. Sensivity	12
12. In Basket Exercise	12

Table 4. Facilitation of learning by training methods and techniques

Statement	Percentage of frequency				
	Very High Extent	High Extent	Medium Extent	Low Extent	Very Low Extent
1. Use of training methods and techniques facilitates learning.	19	53	26	2	0

Table 5. Appropriateness of training methods and techniques

Statement	Percentage of frequency				
	Very High Extent	High Extent	Medium Extent	Low Extent	Very Low Extent
1. Training techniques appropriate to convey the lessons of the topic.	17	42	33	6	2

1. Case-study :

Table 2 reflects that 73% of the sample cited case study method as the most widely used method in the training programme they attended. 60% of the respondents believed that the case study method was effective (Table 3). Case study involves examination of events or situations – often real life- usually aimed at learning by analyzing the detailed material or defining, and posing solutions for, problems (Margaretanne Reid, et al. 2004). Opportunities exist for both exchange of views on ‘what matters’ and problem-solving.

There is general agreement on what explains the success or failure of the case-study as a method of training managers. First ,the case itself. It must be rich in facts, as close to reality as possible, be well narrated, have some dramatic interest and a carefully chosen cut-off point. The second variable is the trainee. The third variable is the trainer. The trainer must restrict his role to asking questions, generating discussions, and acting as a catalyst.

2. Lecture:

Table 2 also reflects that 70% of the respondents adjudged lecture method as the second most widely used method as the training programme. 52% of the respondents termed the lecture method as effective (Table 3). Lecture is a structured and planned talk, usually accompanied by visual aids, e.g. slides, OHP foils or flipchart. Lectures are suitable for large audiences where participation is not wanted. Content and timing can be planned in detail. Lively style is needed. Communication of material may be limited if there is no provision for feedback to the lecturer.

3. Role Play :

Majority of respondents (55%) said that role play was the third most used method in the training programmes. 42% of the respondents thought that the role play was effective (Table 3). Role play involves enactment of role(s) in a protected training environment. It is mainly used to practice face-to-face skills (e.g. selling) combined with review critiques from trainers and/or other learners. Unless disciplined, role play can cause embarrassment. Realism of set-up is important.

4. Seminar:

49% of the respondents said that the seminar method was applied in the training programmes that they had attended, but only 40% agreed that it was effective. Seminar method is used in long duration training programmes. Participants are asked to choose a topic, prepare a paper and present it before all the participants, followed by discussion.

5. Business Games:

45% of the respondents said that the business games were applied in training programmes they attended, but only 31% agreed that it was effective. Business games focus primarily on the processes of interpersonal relations, on *how* decisions are made, and with what consequences, rather than on the substance of the decisions. Games have set rules and predictable results. Often their design is hidden in order to highlight a behavioral process and to dramatize its effects. When the 'secret' is out, repeating that game with the same group would be valueless.

6. Movie Films:

37% of the respondents said that the movie films were applied in the training programmes they had attended, while 22% agreed that the medium was effective. Movie films are 'visual lectures'- but often presented in dramatized form as 'Lectures' – but the addition of moving images and drama can significantly aid motivation. Useful as a precursor to discussion it can be 'stopped' at key points for the discussion. As they are tailor-made products they are a little expensive. Care is needed to ensure that the material, not just the title, is relevant.

7. Group Discussion :

23% of the respondents said that the group discussion method was applied in training programmes they attended, and the same percentage of respondents said that it was effective. This technique examines the behaviour of the individual in a group and helps the trainee to learn the effects of his own behaviour upon others and his own reactions to their behaviour towards him. By simply experiencing the situation, trainees become more enlightened about how and why people at work behave as they do, increase their communication skills and hopefully increase their self-awareness

and power of observation. A group task may be set, or the group is allowed to decide its own way of structuring their time, and the process of what goes on is observed by the trainer. A plenary session at the end allows discussion on how the group felt, and feedback to individual member is given by the trainer.

8. Sensitivity:

25% of the respondents said that sensitivity was applied to the training programmes that they had attended, but only 12% agreed that it was effective. Sensitivity training is a generic term which covers a variety of techniques with some variations. Broadly, it may be defined as a process which uses T-group, in which trainees learn through the actual process of creating an effective group, the purpose of which is to change behaviour so as to contribute towards more effective leadership styles of all participants or more effective group performance by all participants.

This technique is useful in (1) increasing the ability of members to appreciate how others react to their own behaviour, (2) increasing the ability to gauge the relationship between others and (3) increasing the ability to modify the behaviour skillfully, according to situations. Under this technique, groups are formed without prescribed agenda, events or issues for discussion. Events or issues arise spontaneously from the interactions of the group members and are influenced by individual needs, responses and behaviour. Trainer's role is confined only to point out what is happening in the group; he does not provide any leadership but facilitates interpretation and encourages the group to develop their own mini society with its agreed procedures, norms and processes. Thus, this technique employs group participation in such a way as to help trainees become aware of how they affect others and how others affect their own behaviour.

9. Programmed Instruction:

21% of the respondents said that the programmed instruction was applied in the training programmes attended by them, but only 18% agreed that it was effective. Programmed instruction is a formula-based 'teaching' session:

1. Tell – how to do
2. Show – how to do

3. Do – supervised practice
4. Review process and results.

It is useful for introducing skills, usually in line with a planned breakdown of small sequential practice stages. Confidence is built by mastery and link-up of stages. Typically it must follow input of knowledge, the skills to be learned being those of application.

10. Simulation:

16% of the respondents said that simulation was applied in training programmes they had attended, but only 15% agreed that it was effective. Simulations are exercises of replicating or recreating actual business or job environment in a controlled way in the classroom situation. These exercises may deal with an entire operation or with a single function of an organization. For the exercise, a basic organizational environment is created and information about job situation is provided. Thereafter, trainees are asked to play different roles and problems typical to the situation are introduced for them to solve. They make key decisions and follow their decisions, face consequences and further make decisions. Thus, this cycle of action and decision continues till the solution of a problem leading to accomplishment of the learning objectives. The emphasis in a simulation exercise is one of application of the subject contents learned earlier through reading and studying in a structured fashion.

11. In-Basket Exercise:

10% of the respondents said that the in-basket exercise was applied in the training programmes that they had attended, while 12% agreed that it was effective. In-basket is another form of simulating reality and training the person in near reality situations (Udai Pareek and T.V.Rao, 1981). The in-basket exposes the manager to a series of situations he is likely to face in a short period and tests his ability to handle these situations. On the basis of such testing, feedback is given to him through discussion (in the class, in small groups or individually). The feedback is generally in the form of analysis, pointing out the advantages and disadvantages of the decisions he has taken, the way he went about understanding the problems, organizing information, planning action etc. The in-basket or in-tray, as its name suggests, uses

day-to-day decision-making situations which a manager is likely to face in the written form from various sources.

12. Television Lecture :

16% of the respondents said that television lecture was applied in the training programmes they had attended, but only 14% agreed that it was effective. It is an audio-visual method of training. Large potential audiences can be trained through TV broadcasts. This method of training is often linked with national (e.g. Open University) courses and qualifications. Satellite TV channel is likely to offer new and wider subjects. It can also be linked with tutorial assistance by phone.

Facilitation of Learning:

98% of the respondents agreed that appropriate use of training methods and techniques facilitates learning. Use of a number of training methods and techniques in suitable combinations and in proper sequence contributed to effective learning. There are several reasons for the effectiveness of such combinations. First, a lesson may have several behavioural objectives which cannot be achieved by a single technique. Second, several training methods and techniques provide multiple stimuli to the learner leading to a variety of responses from learners making the training highly participative. Third, use of training methods facilitates learning by generating interest and maintaining the trainee's receptivity level at a higher level which is otherwise not possible.

Appropriateness of training methods:

92% of the respondents found that training methods and techniques applied in the training programmes that they had attended were appropriate for the purpose of conveying lessons on the topic. Training techniques are devices of communication. Training is a learning experience in which the trainer facilitates lessons. Effective learning is possible only when training methods are appropriate. Use of appropriate training methods and techniques helps to attract, motivate and involve trainees in the training process.

New Methods and Techniques of Training:

Following are the relatively new methods and techniques of training.

1. Video-conferencing and Tele-conferencing:

These are two-way audio and two-way visual link-up training techniques. They can achieve participative training by involving trainers in different locations. Trainees can interact with each other and with a trainer. Special training is needed for the trainer. Careful preplanning is essential. They are dynamic exercises usually involving 'coming to terms with' a situation, then managing it via a set of imposed decisions. They offer practice in management – observations, analysis, judgment, decision-making, etc. Interactive element generates enthusiasm, notably when teams are in simulated competition. They can be linked with team development.

2. Electronic Brainstorming:

Participants sit in a laboratory at individual PCs connected through a local area network. One computer acts as a file server by using special packages e.g. Meeting Ware in which each participant can contribute anonymously by computer to a brainstorming session. The results are analyzed by computer (El-Sharif and Tang, 1994). Careful preparation is needed to implement this type of training method. experienced team guide is required.

3. Role-Reversal:

It involves enactment of reversed roles by two or more learners in a simulated situation. It is mainly used to help those who operate in face-to-face situations to appreciate their contacts' needs and feelings. As with role-play, it needs discipline and realism.

4. Computer-based Training:

It involves learner-managed coverage of programmed material usually involving keyboard and screen. Learner uses keyboard in line with screen instructions, calling forth information and responding to questions. It has many varied uses. Computer-based training (CBT) can offer workplace simulations and link with videotape to provide still or moving pictures. Compact disks offer huge information

storage, with visual additions. It moves to introduce artificial intelligence (AI) yield the prospect of using machine as a trainer and managing one's own learning process. With addition of 'artificial intelligence' (CBT-AI) the learner responds to computer questions and the computer interprets responses and adjusts own programme. Compatible hardware and software are needed; perhaps also tutorial help to successfully implement CBT.

5. Internet and Intranets:

They allow worldwide information gathering, including planned programmes of learning, plus worldwide forums. They provide useful data source for projects of all kinds. Intranets offer flow of information to specific workplace sites. Organisations can develop intranet systems in which members continuously input data for central storage which all can access as needed. There is a need for discipline in 'surfing' the Net and coping with vast amounts of available material.

6. Compact Disc Training (CDT) and Video Disc Training (VDT):

Compact Disc and Digital Versatile Disc 'Read-Only Memory' (CD-ROM and DVD-ROM) offer high-capacity data-storage facilities. Retrieval can include text, pictures and sound. Special hardware is needed. However, it is limited to retrieval of stored data.

CD and DVD 'Read-Only Memory-Extended Architecture' (CD-ROM-XA and DVD-ROM-XA) allow learners to 'play with material', practicing analysis and synthesis. DVD allows complex simulations, particularly suitable for assembling, dismantling, diagnosis and decision-making. Learner needs some basic awareness of data in order to manipulate it. CD 'Interactive' (CD-I) is similar to CBT-AI in allowing the learner much greater control of the learning process, the programme adjusting to learner's questions and responses. It may not reproduce realistic workplace language; hence a tutor may also be needed. 'Digital Video' Interactive (DV-I) offers CD-I together with the facility to videotape the learner's own actions, and replay the results. It is ideal where the learner must perfect a *physical* movement (e.g. golf swing, or sign language) and needs to see the result. Hardware and software are likely to be costly.

Video Disc Training (VDT) is increasingly available as CBT, CDT and 'multi-media programmes', which can offer both information and practice in using

the information to specific ends e.g. problem-solving. Programme-making equipment, though expensive, can also be purchased nowadays. The DVD's superior data-compression is likely to make it a standard learner-centered aid of the future, employing a new style disc-playing equipment linked to the personal computer.

7. Virtual Reality (VR):

A method of constructing, visualizing and interacting with computer-generated three-dimensional worlds, it differs from conventional playback technology, which depends upon previously recorded images. A Virtual Reality (VR) system must rapidly recalculate a fresh image in response to the participant's every move. To appear realistic each new image must be recalculated in fewer than 100 milliseconds. By using specialist equipment or by viewing the virtual model on the computer screen, users move through the simulated work and interact with it. It is in use worldwide by Motorola for teaching employees how to run assembly lines. It is also in use by British Nuclear Fuels for training purposes. Virtual Reality is currently very expensive to create. However, it has to be used with large numbers or for reasons of health and safety only.

Conclusion

A variety of training methods and techniques are used in training programmes to create, maintain and sustain interest and curiosity in the learner towards learning objects, all of which to facilitate learning. Among them, the most widely used are case study, lecture, role play, and seminar and business games. The study also found these training methods and techniques in varying measures to be effective, appropriate and facilitating learning.

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