

TRAINING MIX AND ITS CONSEQUENCES AMONG MARKETING EXECUTIVES: AN ANALYTICAL STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this study is to identify the appropriate training mix for marketing executives in pharma executives in Tamil Nadu, India. The success of training depends on the correct implementation of all steps of the process, analysis on training needs, development and implementation of an adequate training plan and evaluation. The organisational commitment among the employees is one of the important effectiveness of any training programme conducted by the organisation. Based on review, seven components of training mix for marketing executives are included. This study outlines the rate of implementation of appropriate training mixes which is essential for the successful training effectiveness especially organisational commitment among the executives in the marketing field.

Keywords: Training mix, pharma executives, organisational commitment, evaluation

INTRODUCTION

The dynamic nature of marketing has cultivated a setting that is quite different from that experienced by marketers just a few years ago. Both new marketing environment and organisational environment require marketing executives to recalibrate their efforts to operate with new set of demands, stakeholders and environment (Jones et al., 2005). The focus on the customers is becoming a vital part of the success of any marketing company (Ganesan, 1994; Canon and Perreault, 1999; Weitz and Bradford, 1999).

Of course, marketing executives play a critical role in developing customer relation through a customer oriented perspective (Beverland, 2001; Leigh & Marshall, 2001). There are many evidences which suggest that both sales person (Schwepher & Ingram, 1996) and organisational performance (Barles et al., 2002; Verschoor, 2003) are highly related to each other. The higher performance among the marketing managers and executives requires intensive and dynamic marketing training (Bashaw et al, 2002). The reorganisation of training methods, measurement and training effectiveness are crucial for the organisation's success (Kalemci, 2005).

The training marketing concept to the marketing executives is not a simple taste. It requires a test model for strategic training of market concept (Chin, 2009). This model was

designed by Wentland (Lupton et al, 1999), which focuses on three important aspects namely cost leadership strategy, differentiation strategy and focus strategy (Attia et al., 2008). There are seven components included in the training model which is called training mix (Honeycutt, 1996), which is highly essential for the success of any marketer. The pharmaceutical industry is not an exceptional case. It has to teach marketing executives to satisfy the three stakeholders related to the industry namely doctors, patients and company (Mahendra, 2013). Since there is hectic competition in the pharma industry, the optimal mixes of training components are essential for better training effectiveness. Hence, the present study has made an attempt to examine the linkage between the training mix adopted by the companies and its consequences among the marketing executives in Tamil Nadu.

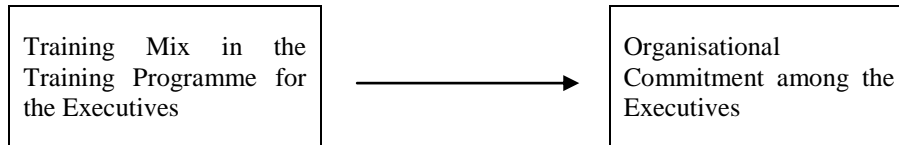
REVIEW OF PREVIOUS STUDIES:

Training in the industry leads to behavioural change among the employees (Afshan et al., 2012), employees' performance (Benedicta, 2010; Colombo & Stanca, 2008) and organisational performance (Huselid, 1995; Chris, 2011). Effective training increases the productivity of employees and is fruitful to the organisation (Rohan and Mohanty, 2012). The success of training depends on the correct implementation of all steps of the process, analysis of training needs,

development and implementation of an adequate training plan and evaluation (Bartel, 1994; Tannenbaum & Yukl, 1992). The appropriate training mixes are essential for better training effectiveness (Holton, 2000; Selmer, 2000). Since the requirements of business differ from one another and one department to another (Gray and Hall, 1997; Dickenson & Blundell, 2000).

Even though there are many studies related to the measurement of training effectiveness at various fields, there is no separate study on the impact of implementation of training mixes at the pharma industry on the organisational commitment among their marketing executives. Hence, the present study focuses on fulfilling the research gap with the help of the proposed research model.

Proposed Research Model



OBJECTIVES

Based on the proposed research mode, the present study confines its objectives.

1. To measure the rate of implementation of training mixes by the organisation and the organisational commitment among their executives
2. To evaluate the impact of training mixes on the organisational commitment among the executives.

METHODOLOGY

The present study confines its population to the marketing executives in pharma industry in Tamil Nadu. The sample size of the study was determined with the help of the following formula:

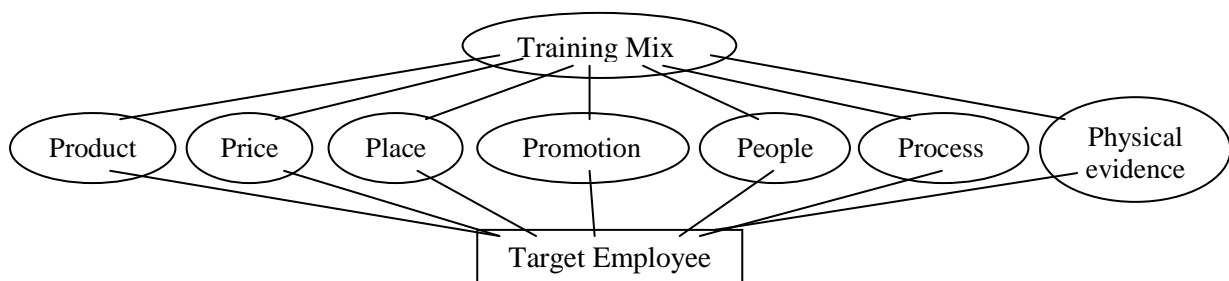
$$n = \left[\frac{\sigma}{D} \right]$$

The sample size was 504. It was equally distributed to nine major cities of Tamil Nadu namely Chnnai, Madurai, Coimbatore, Trichy,

Tirunelveli, Salem, Erode, Ramnad and Cuddalore. The 56 marketing executives in various pharma companies in each city are included in the sample of study. The data were collected with the help of structured questionnaire. The response rate on the questionnaire was only 48.01 per cent. Hence, the final samples of 242 marketing executives are included for further analysis.

Training mix in strategic training of marketing concept

The strategic training of marketing concept (STMCM) provides a mechanism to help HR manager regarding the assessment of training needs and others to their employees (Wentland, 2003). In marketing, the training needs differ at various levels. In all marketing strategy, the segmentation, targeting and positioning (STP) are built for market analysis (Gomez et al, 1995). It is also the process of HR training for STP. There are seven Ps in training mix especially under marketing (Robbins, 1995). These are product, price, place, promotion, people, physical evidence and process (Dessler, 2003). These seven Ps components of the training mix are shown in the given figure:



In the present study, the variables in all seven components of training mix for marketing executives are identified with the help of reviews (Liao, 2007; Lupton et al., 1999; Wislon et al., 2002). These are shown in the following table.

Table-1: Variables in Components of Training Mix

S.No	Variables	S.No	Variables
I	Product mix	2	Size of population
1	Purpose of training	3	Period of training
2	Content in training	4	Roles in hierarchical levels
3	Timing methods	V	Promotion mix
II	Price mix	1	Strategic planning
1	Cost/benefits to employee	2	Communication
2	Facilities provided	3	Trust
3	Materials used	4	Training reference
4	Equipments used	VI	Physical evidence mix
5	Productivity	1	Equipment decision
III	Place mix	2	Permanent conditions
1	On the job / Off the job	3	Space application
2	Coverage and methods	VII	Process mix
3	People security	1	Need analysis
IV	People mix	2	Validation
1	Targeted population	3	Evaluation and follow up

The respondents are asked to rate the above said variables at five point scale according to the order of implementation.

Organisational Commitment

The organisational commitment among the employees is one of the important effectiveness of any training programme conducted by the

organisation (Barlett, 2001). The organisational commitment shows the level of involvement and attachment of an employee to execute the works in their organisation (Bulut & Culha, 2010). In the present study, it is measured with the help of variables shown from the reviews (Feldman, 2003; Dunegan, 2007; Super, 2008). These are shown in the table below:

Table-2: Variables in Organisational Commitment (OC)

S.No.	Variables	S.No.	Variables
1	Work interest	6	Confidence building
2	Group cohesiveness	7	Workaholism
3	Job satisfaction	8	Balance between personnel and organisation goals
4	Creative behaviour	9	Work life balance
5	Attendance	10	Dedication to productivity

The respondents are asked to rate the above said variables at five point scale according to their order of perception.

Validity and Reliability

The present study includes a few concepts related to various training mixes and organisational

commitments to fulfill the objectives of the study. Before taking the variables included in each concept, its validity and reliability have to be tested. The confirmatory factory analysis (CFA) has been administered to examine it (Anderson and Gerbing, 1982). The overall reliability of variables in each concept has been tested with the help of Cronbach alpha. The results are shown in table-3.

Table-3: Reliability and Validity of Variables in the Concepts

Sl. No.	Concepts	Range of standardized factor loading	Range of 't' statistics	Cronbach alpha	Composite reliability	Average variance extracted
1	Product mix	0.9141 – 0.6345	4.1889* – 2.2545*	0.8142	0.7918	56.93
2	Price mix	0.8249 – 0.6408	3.4117* – 2.4117*	0.7676	0.7418	55.03
3	Place mix	0.8773 – 0.6511	3.9108* – 2.5059*	0.7492	0.7249	54.11

4	People mix	0.8509 – 0.6118	3.8208* – 2.1541*	0.7301	0.7117	52.09
5	Promotion mix	0.8441 – 0.6334	3.6632* – 2.2994*	0.7404	0.7266	53.96
6	Physical evidence mix	0.8331 – 0.6549	3.5091* – 2.5886*	0.7317	0.7082	51.14
7	Process	0.8089 – 0.6117	3.4046* – 2.1089*	0.7209	0.7011	51.38
8	Organisational commitment	0.8447 – 0.6339	3.7319* – 2.3089*	0.7339	0.7109	52.16

* Significant at 5 per cent level

The standardized factor loading of the variables in all concepts are varying from 0.6117 to 0.9141, which reveals its content validity (O'Leary and Vokurka, 1998). The significance of 't' statistics of the standardized factor loading of the variables in all concepts show the convergent validity (Raykov and Marcoulides, 2000). It is also proved by the composite reliability and average variance extracted, since these are greater than its standard minimum of 0.50 and 50.00 per cent respectively. The Cronbach alpha of all concepts is greater than its minimum threshold of 0.60 which reveals its internal consistency.

Implementation of Training mix and Organisational commitment

The level of implementation of training mixes in the training programmes among the marketing executives and their respective organisational commitment is measured by the mean score of the variables in each concept. The standard deviation and coefficient of variation of all concepts are also measured to exhibit the level of consistency in the executive's view on the implementation of training mixes and organisational commitment. The results are given in table-4.

Table-4: Measurement of the Concepts

Sl.N o.	Concepts	Mean score	Standard deviation	Coefficient of variation (in per cent)
1	Product mix	3.0841	0.4339	14.07
2	Price mix	3.3886	0.7085	20.91
3	Place mix	3.2084	0.5732	17.86
4	People mix	3.4117	0.8674	25.42
5	Promotion mix	3.1178	0.5979	19.18
6	Physical evidence mix	3.0245	0.6544	21.64
7	Process	3.2176	0.8979	27.91
8	Organisational commitment	3.1133	0.7145	22.95

The highly implemented training mixes as per the view of the executives are people mix and price mix since their mean scores are 3.4117 and 3.3886 respectively. The higher consistency in view of the implementation of product mix and place is are noticed since their coefficients of variations are 14.07 and 17.86 per cent respectively. The level of organisational commitment among the executives due to the training programmes is at the moderate level since its mean score is 3.1133.

Discriminant validity among the Training mix

The scores of the seven training mixes are included to measure the discriminant validity among the seven training mixes. The mean of average variance extracted and the square of correlation coefficient between all pair of training mixes are computed. If the mean of AVE of the pair of mix is greater than its square of correlation coefficient between the pair of mix, its discriminant validity is confirmed (Ahire et al, 1996). The results are given in table -5.

Table-5: Discriminant Validity among the Various Training Mixes

Sl.N o.	Mean of Square of correlation coefficient / AVE	1	2	3	4	5	6	7
1	Product mix		.5598	.5552	.5451	.5545	.5404	.5416
2	Price mix	.5441		.5457	.5356	.5449	.5309	.5321
3	Place mix	.5071	.5226		.5310	.5404	.5263	.5275
4	People mix	.4976	.4884	.5172		.5303	.5162	.5174
5	Promotion mix	.5172	.4969	.5033	.5219		.5255	.5267
6	Physical evidence	.4776	.4886	.4739	.4734	.5099		.5126
7	Process mix	.4804	.4973	.4559	.4798	.4996	.5011	

The mean of AVE between product and price mix (0.5598) is greater than its respective square of correlation coefficients (0.5441). Similarly, the same type of results is seen in the case of all pairs of training mixes. For example, the mean of AVE between physical evidence mix and process mix (0.5126) is higher than its respective square of correlation coefficient (0.5011). All these results indicate the discriminant validity among the various training mixes.

Impact of Training mixes on the Organisational Commitment among the Executives

The impacts of training mixes on the level of organisational commitment among the executives have been evaluated with the help of multiple regression analysis. The score on the rate of implementation of marketing mixes among the executives is treated as the score of independent variables, whereas the score on the level of organisational commitment among the executives is treated as dependent variable. The ordinary least square method is followed to administer the multiple regression analysis (Haas et al., 2010). The results are given in table-6.

Table-6: Impact of Training Mixes

Sl.N o.	Training mixes	Regression coefficient	Standard error	't' Statistics	P value	Beta
1	Product mix	0.1845	0.0676	2.7293	0.0438	0.1311
2	Price mix	0.1033	0.0974	1.0605	0.1011	0.0844
3	Place mix	0.1447	0.0888	1.6295	0.0773	0.1172
4	People mix	0.1899	0.0575	3.3026	0.0272	0.1624
5	Promotion mix	0.1119	0.0597	1.8744	0.0673	0.0979
6	Physical evidence	0.0973	0.0886	1.0982	0.0844	0.0673
7	Process mix	0.1554	0.0337	4.6113	0.0145	0.1314
	Constant	0.4548				
	R ²	0.7899				
	F Statistics	8.7733			0.0349	

The significantly influencing training mixes on the level of organisational commitment among the executives are product, people and process mix since their regression coefficients are significant at five per cent level. A unit increase in the level of implementation of above said training mixes results in an increase in the level of organisational commitment among the executives by 0.1311, 0.1624 and 0.1314 units respectively. The changes in the level of implementation of training mixes explain the changes in the level of organisational commitment among the marketing executives to an extent of 78.99 per cent since its R² value is 0.7899.

RESEARCH IMPLICATION

The moderate level of implementation of training mixes in training conducted by pharma companies replicates the findings of Wentland (2003); Wilson et al. (2002); and Attia et al. (2008). The higher relative importance of product, people and process mix in the determination of the level of organisational commitment among the executives recalls the findings of Rehman et al., 2011; Ghafoor Khan et al., 2011; and Tharenou et al., 2007. But the result of impact of analysis is contradictory to the results of Aguinis and Kraiger

(2009) and Ling (2007). The existence of moderate level of organisational commitment due to the implementation of training among the executives recalls the findings of Amin et al. (2011); Nikandrou et al. (2009) and Pineda (2010).

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that the rate of implementation of appropriate training mixes is essential for the successful training effectiveness especially organisational commitment among the executives in the marketing field. The training programmes should focus more on product, people and process mix. It shows that the training should concentrate more on delivery of information about the products, all stakeholders related to the organisation and the way in which their marketing activities are processed. If the company expects more organisational commitment among their executives, they have to deliver appropriate and updated training to their employees as per their needs.

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