

DRIVING SUSTAINABLE HR MANAGEMENT: IMPLEMENTING A SYSTEMATIC APPROACH TO TRAINING OF EMPLOYEES FOR ORGANIZATIONAL SUCCESS

Abstract

This paper discusses the viability of a systematic approach to training as a tool for a long-term human resources management (HRM) strategy. The concept of systematic approach to training is introduced and discussed based on a meta-analysis of existing studies and latest research that has been executed on, training arrangements in various positions. The article discusses the intersection of systematic approach to training with the three subject areas (economic, social and ecological) and tries to show more specifically how systematic approach to training models can serve the fulfillment of selected Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Finally, this paper examines the systematic approach to training, a comprehensive methodology employed by organizations to enhance employee skills, knowledge, and performance. The paper synthesizes existing literature, highlighting the key components and benefits of a systematic approach to training and discussing challenges faced in its implementation.

Keywords: Systematic Approach, Sustainable HRM, CSR, Training

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I. INTRODUCTION

In today's quickly shifting business landscape, firms have the ongoing struggle of staying competitive and adjusting to fluctuating market conditions. To properly negotiate these difficulties, firms must invest in their most precious asset: their workers. Recognizing the crucial significance of a competent and adaptive staff, firms are increasingly taking a systematic approach to training.

However, this subject has not only permeated society, the media, and family policy; from a business standpoint, it is also extremely popular. Several organizations have already implemented a systematic approach to training. By taking a systematic approach, organizations ensure that training initiatives are purposeful, targeted, and result-oriented, leading to improved performance, productivity, and employee engagement.

At the same time the popularity and importance for corporate social responsibility (CSR) has increased in the business world. Many corporations in Germany already have well established CSR departments and are familiar with respect to the relevant national and international standards (Lindgreen & Swaen, 2010). The 17 sustainable development goals (SDGs) developed and adopted by all 193 member states of the United Nations in 2015 have not just led to an increased focus on CSR in the business and scientific community – but also to the formulation of specific global goals and herewith a framework to action, which has been operationalized in 169 subgoals (United Nations, 2018).

In today's rapidly evolving business landscape, organizations face the constant challenge of staying competitive and adapting to dynamic market conditions. To effectively navigate these complexities, organizations must invest in their most valuable asset: their employees. Recognizing the pivotal role of a skilled and adaptable workforce, organizations are increasingly adopting a systematic approach to training.

II. UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABLE HRM

Management of human resources is essential to determining an organization's viability and sustainability. To efficiently manage their human resources in a way that is in line with long-term economic, societal, and ecological goals, businesses must use sustainable HRM strategies and practices (Gom et al., 2021). Organizations can regenerate and enhance their human resources to support their sustainable competitive advantage by using sustainable HRM practices (Gom et al., 2021). Additionally, the growth of employees benefits society as a whole in addition to the firm.

Thus, recognizing systematic approach to training as a contributor to and driver of sustainability provides a theoretical foundation for discussion of how training and development may function as a tool for sustainable HR management while concurrently promoting a subset of SDGs. In addition, implications for the prolonged and long-lasting application of systematic approach to training methods in business. The need for organizations to reevaluate this idea is highlighted by the advantages of systematic approach to training in the context of a sustainable HR management approach and to also meet

individual SDG indicators. This knowledge could help to allay any potential concerns about management positions with unusual working arrangements.

Sustainable HRM involves integrating principles of sustainability into the management of human resources, emphasizing the triple bottom line of economic, social, and environmental performance. It recognizes that organizations have a responsibility to not only achieve financial success but also contribute positively to society and minimize their ecological impact. Sustainable HRM extends beyond traditional HR practices, encompassing strategies and initiatives that promote employee well-being, diversity and inclusion, ethical behavior, and environmental stewardship.

Understanding sustainable HRM requires a shift in mindset from viewing employees as mere resources to valuing them as essential stakeholders in an organization's sustainability efforts. It involves recognizing that employees play a crucial role in driving organizational performance, innovation, and resilience. By adopting sustainable HRM practices, organizations can foster employee engagement, enhance their reputation as socially responsible entities, and gain a competitive advantage in attracting and retaining top talent.

1. Definition of Corporate Social Responsibility: The definitions of the European Commission from 2001 and 2002 are relatively common and accepted in practice for European companies (European Commission, 2001, p. 7): „A concept whereby companies integrate social and environmental concerns in their business operations and in their interactions with stakeholders on a voluntary basis.” Likewise, the definitions from the years 2011 resp. 2014 (European Commission, 2011, p. 6): „the responsibility of enterprises for their impacts on society “as well as “... process to integrate social, environmental, ethical and human rights concerns into their business operations and core strategy in close interactions with their stakeholders”.

CSR initiatives can take various forms, including philanthropy, ethical sourcing, environmental sustainability, employee welfare programs, community engagement, and responsible marketing practices. Companies may engage in activities such as donating to charitable causes, implementing sustainable business practices, promoting diversity and inclusion, supporting employee volunteer programs, or investing in renewable energy sources, among many others.

The underlying principle of CSR is the belief that businesses have a role to play in addressing societal challenges and can contribute to the well-being of the communities in which they operate. By integrating social and environmental considerations into their strategies, organizations strive to balance financial success with ethical and sustainable practices. Definition of Sustainable Human Resource Management

Sustainable human resources management can be defined as “the adoption of HRM strategies and practices that enable the achievement of financial, social, and ecological goals, with an impact inside and outside of the organization.” With regard to this background, ‘Sustainable HRM’ has been defined by Ehnert (2009), p. 74 as “the pattern of planned or emerging human resource strategies and practices intended to enable organizational [and individual] goal achievement while simultaneously reproducing the

HR base over a long-lasting calendar time and [while] controlling for self-induced side and feedback effects of HR systems on the HR base and thus on the company itself.”. This definition emphasizes the longterm, strategic character of the sustainability concept as well as the need to integrate the organizational and the individual perspective. If human resource management is “the process of acquiring, training, appraising, and compensating employees, and of attending to their labor relations, health and safety, and fairness concerns” (Dessler, 2011, p. 30), ‘Sustainable HRM’ is to achieve all this on a durably ongoing basis in a way that accounts for the economic, social and ecological needs of the organization, its members, and other stakeholders.

- 2. Understanding of Systematic Approach to Training :** A systematic approach to training encompasses a structured and comprehensive methodology for developing employees' knowledge, skills, and competencies. It goes beyond one-time training events or ad hoc initiatives, focusing instead on a strategic and cohesive framework that aligns training efforts with organizational goals and individual development needs. By taking a systematic approach, organizations ensure that training initiatives are purposeful, targeted, and result-oriented, leading to improved performance, productivity, and employee engagement.

The systems approach intends to keep various aspects of the training programme connected in a systematic manner so that the goal of a training programme is achieved. It is a scientific way of conducting any training programme. According to Sharma (1977), ‘the system approach has introduced a new type of increased professionalism and expertise’. It calls upon the trainers to see their activities as a whole along with a management system for putting all resources together in a functional system. Through the systems approach, the training programme is made easier for the trainer to achieve a goal.

A thorough training program includes the methodical development of numerous competencies as well as supporting the growth of the knowledge, abilities, and attitude needed by employees at work. To achieve the desired results from training and development initiatives, it involves precise interconnected and interdependent processes that advance in a systematic manner.

Training is a planned process that directs learning toward certain outcomes with the purpose of achieving performance goals. The term "systematic approach to training" refers to a methodical, organized approach to instruction with the intention of improving job performance.

- 3. The Role of Training and Development in Sustainable HRM Training and development plays a significant role in driving sustainable HRM practices within organizations:** By providing employees with opportunities for continuous learning and skill development, organizations can enhance their capabilities and create a workforce that is adaptable to changing business environments. Research studies have shown that training and development programs as HRM practices influence job satisfaction and lead to better organizational performance (Islam et al.,2020). Moreover, a systematic approach to training and development is vital for driving sustainable HRM. It enables organizations to align their training initiatives with the goals and values of sustainable development,

ensuring that employees are equipped with the knowledge and skills necessary to contribute to sustainable practices in their day-to-day work.

- **Systematic Approach to Training Model**

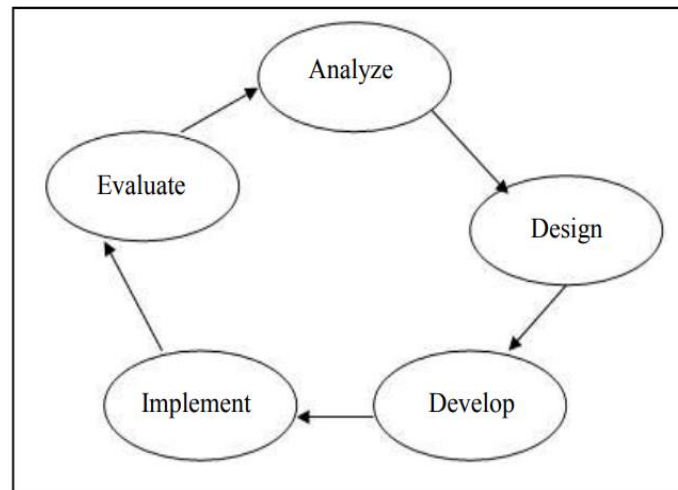


Fig 1.2 Concord Associates Model of Systems Approach

Source: <http://www.concordassoc.com/main.aspx?PID=1>

The Systematic Approach to Training (SAT) is a five-step training development process that aims to provide training programs so workers can “do their jobs safely, efficiently, and effectively, and to protect the workforce, the public and the environment”. The five steps of the SAT include: analysis, design, development, implementation, and evaluation. Key features of ensuring the development of a successful training program include ensuring frequent communication with subject matter experts, and management commitment to the development and ongoing implementation and improvement of the program.

- **Analyze:** The first step is to conduct a needs assessment to identify the training needs and requirements of the organization. This involves analyzing the skills, knowledge, and performance gaps within the workforce and determining the training objectives and goals.
- **Design:** Once the training needs have been identified, the next step is to design the training program. This includes determining the training methods and delivery format (e.g., classroom training, e-learning, on-the-job training), developing the training materials and resources, and creating a detailed training plan.
- **Develop:** During the training delivery phase, the actual training sessions or programs take place. Trainers or facilitators deliver the content and engage participants through various instructional techniques. This can include lectures, group discussions, hands-on exercises, simulations, and role-plays.
- **Training Implementation:** After the initial training, it is essential to provide ongoing support and reinforcement to ensure the transfer of learning to the workplace. This can include follow-up sessions, coaching, mentoring, and continuous feedback mechanisms.

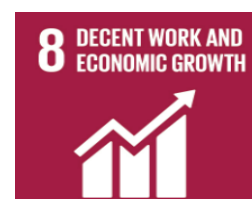
- **Training Evaluation:** Evaluation is a crucial step in a systematic training approach. It involves assessing the effectiveness and impact of the training program. Evaluation can be done at multiple levels, including:
- **Reaction:** Collecting feedback from participants to gauge their satisfaction and perception of the training program.
- **Learning:** Assessing the knowledge and skills acquired by participants during the training.
- **Behavior:** Observing changes in behavior and performance on the job as a result of the training.
- **Results:** Evaluating the overall impact of the training on organizational goals, such as improved productivity, reduced errors, or increased customer satisfaction.

A systematic approach to training involves continuously improving the training programs based on feedback and evaluation results. This may involve updating training content, methods, or delivery formats to address changing needs and ensure effectiveness.

By following a systematic approach to training, organizations can ensure that their training initiatives are aligned with business objectives, effectively address skill gaps, engage employees, and drive performance improvement. It also allows for continuous improvement and adaptation to meet evolving needs and challenges.

4. Systematic approach to Training and Sustainable Development Goals

- **SDG 4: Quality Education:** A systematic approach to training ensures the design and delivery of high-quality education and skill development programs. By providing access to quality training opportunities, particularly for disadvantaged groups, it promotes lifelong learning and equips individuals with the knowledge and skills needed to thrive in a sustainable society.
- **SDG 5: Gender Equality:** Training models that incorporate a gender perspective and promote gender equality contribute to the fulfillment of SDG 5. By addressing gender biases, providing equal training opportunities, and empowering women and girls through skills development, these models support gender equality and women's economic empowerment.
- **SDG 8: Decent Work and Economic Growth:** Systematic training models play a crucial role in enhancing workforce skills and promoting decent work. By providing training on relevant technical skills, entrepreneurship, and sustainable business practices, these models facilitate economic growth, productivity, and job creation while ensuring decent and sustainable work opportunities.



Overall, a systematic approach to training models can support the fulfillment of selected SDGs by equipping individuals and organizations with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to drive sustainable development in various sectors and contexts. By addressing specific challenges and promoting capacity building, these models contribute to creating a more sustainable and inclusive society.

5. A Systematic approach to Training Offers Several Benefits for Organizations and Individuals:

- **Improved Learning Outcomes and Uniformity of Procedure:** A systematic approach ensures that training programs are well-designed, structured, and aligned with learning objectives. This enhances the effectiveness of training, resulting in improved learning outcomes for participants. By incorporating instructional techniques that suit different learning styles, the systematic approach caters to diverse training needs.
- **Higher Morale:** A systematic approach allows organizations to optimize their training resources and efforts. By identifying the most appropriate training methods, formats, and delivery channels, it eliminates unnecessary or redundant training activities. This leads to improved efficiency and cost-effectiveness by maximizing the impact of training initiatives while minimizing time and resource investment.
- **Enhanced Employee Engagement and Retention:** A systematic approach to training demonstrates an organization's investment in its employees' professional development. This enhances employee engagement and motivation by showing that their growth and learning are valued. Engaged employees are more likely to stay with the organization, leading to improved employee retention and reduced recruitment and training costs.

6. Challenges and Limitations of a Systematic Approach to Training:

While a systematic approach to training offers several benefits, it is important to be aware of the challenges and limitations that organizations may encounter. Here are some common challenges associated with a systematic approach to training:

- **Resource Constraints:** Developing and implementing a systematic approach to training requires significant resources, including financial resources, time, and expertise. Organizations with limited budgets or limited access to training resources may face challenges in implementing comprehensive training programs.
- **No Time for Training:** Designing and delivering training programs in a systematic manner can be time-consuming. Employees must deal with an already full work schedule, let alone navigate the possible complexities of their new hybrid workplaces and the way these changes affect their work-life balance. Blocking time consistently in their schedule every week to focus on training may feel impossible. Yet asking them to complete their training in their free time may lead to them resisting, or even resenting the whole process.

- **Can't see how Training is Relevant:** Many training programs are too generic and not personalized enough for specific roles or skills. Organizations operate in dynamic environments, where technological advancements, market trends, and industry requirements continually evolve. This poses a challenge in ensuring that training programs remain relevant and up to date. Organizations need to regularly review and update their training content and methods to address changing training needs.
- **Dispersed Workforce:** A steady rise in remote/hybrid work and a decentralized workforce has led to new training challenges. With a geographically dispersed workforce, training can be quite hard: misunderstandings are common, and cultural differences may even lead to inconsistent training. For example, some cultures are less comfortable with being vocal on online forums than others.

It is important for organizations to recognize these challenges and proactively address them to maximize the benefits of a systematic approach to training. Flexibility, ongoing evaluation, stakeholder engagement, and customization can help overcome these challenges and ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of training efforts.

III. CONCLUSION

In conclusion, understanding sustainable HRM is essential for organizations seeking to align their HR practices with broader sustainability objectives. By embracing employee well-being, diversity and inclusion, ethical behavior, and environmental sustainability, organizations can cultivate a sustainable workforce, enhance their reputation, and contribute to the long-term success and resilience of both their business and society. In the following sections of this paper, we will explore the various dimensions of sustainable HRM and examine its implementation within organizational contexts.

By conducting a thorough review of the systematic approach to training, this paper contributes to the understanding of best practices, challenges, and future directions in this field. It provides a valuable resource for practitioners, researchers, and organizations seeking to enhance their training initiatives and maximize the impact of employee development programs. In summary, a systematic approach to training offers numerous benefits, including improved learning outcomes, targeted skill development, increased efficiency, consistent training standards, enhanced employee engagement, alignment with organizational goals, and opportunities for evaluation and continuous improvement.

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