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Impact of training and development on organizational performance of the university libraries in Sri Lanka

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ABSTRACT

The prime purpose of the current research is to explore the impact of training and development programs for University library professionals in Sri Lanka. The research adopted the quantitative research method, where the data were collected through a structured questionnaire from 132 respondents. The collected data were analyzed using MS-Excel and Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), where the descriptive statistics, Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), correlation, and regression analysis were carried out and showed significant results. The analysis finding revealed that the training and development programs have a constructive impact on organizational performance. Also, the findings revealed a significant relationship between training and development and organizational development and self-development. The paper emphasizes the requirement of training and development programs for the library staff in the University libraries of Sri Lanka. The research findings would proffer useful guidance for organizations in Sri Lanka to offer better library services.

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KEYWORDS

Training and development; library professional; self-development; organizational development; organizational performance

1. Introduction

Training and development is a run-through process that aids in building synergy among the staff, which further results in an effectual organizational performance (Omar & Mahmood, 2020). It also stipulates the set of practices that facilitate the organization to efficiently incorporate strategy, planning, assessment, performance, and development to enhance the mission of the institution (Bibi et al., 2018). Training and development also play a significant role in building the work environment so that the employees are dedicated and contribute to the organization's success (Katić et al., 2020). With the analysis of the organization's performance, it is probable to recognize the requirements of the employees. Some of the necessities of the employees in an organization are management and leadership initiatives that bring about training and development programs and other support mechanisms that enable a creative, positive, and worthwhile work environment (Carlisle et al., 2019).

Moreover, human resource management (HRM) practices have the potential to enhance the skills, effort, and commitment of the employee, which further improves

the performance of the organization. This will support the development and success of the library personnel. Thus, a superior workforce will be simultaneously generated, and the growth of the employees and the organization will be attained. Organizational growth and performance can be attained through systematic and proper incorporation of training and development programs for the employees (Burhan Ismael et al., 2021). This lies in the fact that when employees are provided with proper development and training, their professional skills of the employee enhanced, and this further leads the employee engagement and retention (L. Fletcher et al., 2018). It is undeniable that well-developed and trained employees are the organization's treasured asset. This is because they enhance the effectiveness and efficiency of the organization by effectively rendering their responsibilities and duties (Sung & Choi, 2018).

Training and development programs are the essential elements of the university libraries to attain their mission and objectives (T. L. Fletcher, 2021) (Jehanzeb & Mohanty, 2018). The library personnel acquires skills, knowledge, and other competencies through practical skill training and also acquires deeper insights into the responsibilities and roles required for the library profession (Federer, 2018). Nevertheless, the requirement of training and development programs has to be properly identified. This is because the current global scenario creates the necessity to equip library personnel with knowledge, skills, and abilities to manage the technological advancements for the growth and survival of the university libraries and the corresponding institution (Cox et al., 2018). Thus, well-organized training and development programs make university libraries effective.

Furthermore, it is imperative to mention that an enhanced library service can be delivered only with well-trained personnel. Also, when proper training and development programs are given to the library personnel, two main factors, namely the organizational development and self-development of the employee, simultaneously grow. Therefore the current study has aimed to analyze the impacts of the training and development programs of the 17 university libraries in Sri Lanka.

1.1. Paper organization

The current research paper is organized in the following manner. [Section 1](#) gives a brief introduction to the impacts of training and development programs, [section 2](#) is the review of the literature, [section 3](#) is the methodology part, [section 4](#) is the result section, and [section 5](#) and [6](#) present the implications and limitations of the research respectively and [section 7](#) presents the conclusion.

2. Literature review

Several studies have identified that the performance and effectiveness of an organization were hindered due to funding issues, ineffective leadership, and a predominantly lack of proper training and development programs. Moreover, the lack of the concerns mentioned above also affected the abilities and skills of the library personnel, with which their self-development also declined. One such study has been conducted by (Osiesi et al., 2022) to evaluate the effect of training programs at the OyeEkiti Federal University of Nigeria. To evaluate this, the study

conducted a quantitative approach and descriptive survey. The purposive sampling method has been followed to collect data from 77 library personnel through questionnaires. The questionnaires were based on training and development, staff performance, and development. The collected data were analyzed statistically, and the hypotheses tested revealed that the performance of the staff and the organization were high when proper training and development programs were given to the staff. Hence it has been evident that proper professional training and development programs positively impacted orientation, job performance, seminars, and other attributes. An adequate number of human resources and extremely qualified personnel have been identified as the most required constituents for the libraries to be successful (Esteban-Lloret et al., 2018).

With that notion (Jegatheesparan & Samaradiwakara, 2021) analyzed the training needs of the public library staff in Sri Lanka's Eastern part. To accomplish this, the study collected data through a questionnaire from the public library staff in the selected region of Sri Lanka. The study results showed that the total count of librarians was 48, the total count of library assistants was 255, and the total count of para-library staff was 121. The study revealed that only 60% of the professionals were properly qualified in Library Science. The study also revealed that the library personnel lacked technical skills and other required competencies, which implied that the professional required proper training and development programs. The statistical tests confirmed that there had been a significant association between self-development and organizational performance. The result also showed that most of the respondents desired to have professional training on automation in library skills. Nevertheless, most of the respondents desired basic training in computer skills. Therefore, it is evident that the organizations and authorities have to take remedial measures to address the requirements of the library personnel so that an overall performance enhancement can be seen (Utley, 2020).

(Ranaweera & Li, 2018) Has conducted a study to analyze the job satisfaction of the library personnel in the 14 Sri Lankan University libraries. Data were collected from 600 respondents through a structured questionnaire. The study mainly analyzed the factors that impacted the job satisfaction of the employees in the Sri Lankan University library. The study results revealed that the respondents were satisfied with the organizational structure and environment but were not satisfied with the training and development activities. Hence it is evident that training and development programs are the positively impacting factors in employees' job satisfaction, which further enhances organizational performance (Anwar & Abdullah, 2021).

2.1. Research gaps

Though various studies have identified the role of training and development programs for library professionals as the impacting factor in organizational performance, only a few studies have analyzed the relationship between the training programs and organizational development and Self-development. Also, these analyses were not conducted in the University Libraries of Sri Lanka. Therefore the current study will fill this gap.



Figure 1. Conceptual model of the research study.

3. Research methodology

The methodology of research for the current study is briefed below.

3.1. Aim of the study

The current study has aimed to analyze the impacts of the training and development program in the 17 University Libraries of Sri Lanka, and the study has also aimed to explore the beliefs and attitudes of the university library professionals regarding the existing training. With this exploration, the study has eventually aimed to identify the relationship of the training programs with the organization and self-development with which the overall organizational dependency can be identified. The following [Figure 1](#) represents the conceptual model of the current study.

3.2. Research question

- (1) Is there a relationship between the training and development programs, organizational development, and self-development in the University libraries of Sri Lanka?
- (2) What is the level of impact of the training and development programs on organizational performance?

3.3. Objectives of the study

The adoption of an appropriate management training strategy will provide benefits not only to the individuals but also to the whole organization as well. Therefore, the research objectives of this study are:

- (1) To explore the beliefs and attitudes of the university library professionals regarding the existing training programs and the achievements of organizational performance.
- (2) To find the correlation between the existing training programs and organizational development and self-development in the 17 University libraries of Sri Lanka.
- (3) To determine the impact of training and development on organizational performance in the 17 University libraries of Sri Lanka.

3.4. Hypotheses

The hypotheses of the study have been framed based on the objectives of the study and are mentioned below,

H₁1: Training and development programs have a constructive impact on the organizational development and self-development of library professionals.

H₁0: Training and development programs have no constructive impact on the organizational development and self-development of library professionals.

H₂1: Training and development programs have a constructive impact on organizational performance.

H₂0: Training and development programs have no constructive impact on organizational performance.

3.5. Research design

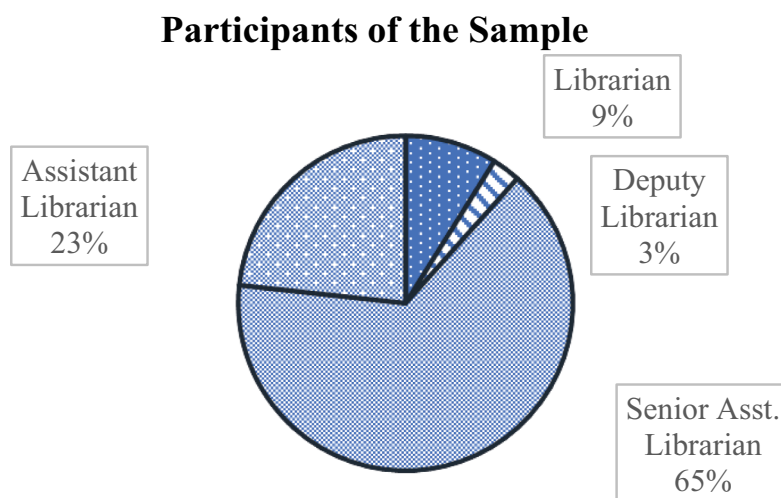
The present study has adopted the quantitative approach for the data analysis process. The data was collected through a structured questionnaire. The population of this study is the library staff of the State University Libraries in Sri Lanka. The library staff of the universities has been divided into three categories, i.e. professionals, para-professionals, and non-professionals. Professionals involve librarians with Master's degrees in Library science, and paraprofessionals include persons without library degrees yet skilled in library tasks such as collection, cataloging, referencing, acquisition, etc., through on-job training. Non-professionals in the library include persons lacking formal library education and adequate work experience. The questionnaire has been designed to collect information from the university library professionals. As the number of library professionals seems considerable, all the library professionals were taken into this study purpose. A total of 146 university library professionals have been chosen with the help of the librarians of the respective University Libraries in Sri Lanka. The questionnaire has been administered to a total of 146 Library Professionals, and a total of 132 responses have been retrieved. An effort has been made to contact all the university library professionals, including those who were on sabbatical leave, maternity leave, and study leave. As the university library professionals are well educated and dedicated to filling the questionnaires, there were no rejected questionnaires due to reckless marking and invalid responses. The response rate was 90%. All library professionals in state university libraries have been considered for this research study as they are the key officials and decision-makers in the university libraries. Seventeen universities established under the Universities Act No. 16 of 1978 have been selected to collect the data through questionnaires. In this respect, the following universities have been taken into consideration, which is illustrated in the following [Table 1](#).

University library professionals have been selected as their work is similar, and they are the people who are directly responsible for university libraries. Moreover, the outcome of such university library professionals can be checked immediately to

Table 1. Participants of the sample.

Universities	Librarian	Deputy Librarian	Senior Asst. Librarian	Assistant Librarian
UOC	1	1	13	8
UOP	1	–	11	2
UOSJ	1	1	4	6
UOK	1	–	10	4
UOM	1	–	6	–
UOJ	1	–	9	4
UOR	1	–	9	1
OPOS	–	1	7	1
EUOS	1	–	5	3
SEUOS	1	–	3	2
RUOS	1	–	5	–
SUOS	1	1	3	–
WUOS	1	–	3	1
UVUOS	–	–	3	–
UOVPA	1	–	2	1
GWUOI	–	–	1	1
UOV	–	–	1	–
Total	13	4	95	34

Source: https://www.ulasl.lk/media/attachments/2020/12/14/ula_directory-2020.pdf.



■ Librarian ■ Deputy Librarian ■ Senior Asst. Librarian ■ Assistant Librarian

Figure 2. Percentage of participants based on designation.

see whether they achieved the university library objectives successfully. University library professionals are always prepared to take over extra duties and responsibilities for the professional accomplishment of their profession (Boyce et al., 2019). Therefore, the professional level is where the aspect of HRM is practiced, and the consciousness of HRM practices is stressed in the organizational performance of the university libraries. All the selected universities have granted permission to visit their University Libraries to meet the respective university library professionals. From the above Figure 2 shows the percentage of participants based on their designation, it is

clear that out of the total respondents, 23% of them were assistant librarians, 9% of them were librarians, 3% of them were deputy librarians and 65% of them were senior assistant librarians.

3.6. Questionnaire design and ethical consideration

The self-administered questionnaire for data collection consists of four parts, with responses confirmed through a five-point Likert scale. To meet the research objectives and hypothesis, the questionnaire has been framed with questions to evaluate the existing training programs, organizational and self-development, and organizational performance. Section I of the questionnaire consists of eight questions regarding training and development. Section II of the questionnaire deals with organizational development and contains eight questions. Section III presents nine questions to evaluate self-development. The final section of the questionnaire deals with organizational performance and consists of eight questions. As part of ethical concerns, voluntary participation and confidentiality of respondents have been considered. The objective and purpose of the research were explained to participants before the questionnaire distribution.

3.7. Variables used in the study

The dependent and independent variables used in the study are as follows.

Independent Variable- Training and development that includes factors, namely knowledge, skills, abilities, attitude, and personal growth

Intervening Variable - Organizational development and self-development

Dependent Variable- Organizational performance

3.8. Method of data analysis

The collected data have been analyzed with the assistance of MS Excel and SPSS software. The frequency distribution is provided in the table, and chart further ANOVA, correlation analysis, and regression were done to test the hypotheses. The three levels of data analysis are as follows,

Level-1: The demographic details of the collected data were analyzed in MS Excel, and the frequency distribution was presented.

Level-2: The statistical analysis was performed with the SPSS software to find the mean and standard deviation values of the variables used in the study

Level-3: The hypotheses were tested with ANOVA, correlation analysis, and regression.

4. Result and discussion

This section provides the data analysis and interpretations of each test conducted in the current study. The frequency distribution chart, descriptive statistics, ANOVA, correlation, and regression analysis have been tested based on the study's hypotheses using MS Excel and IBM SPSS software.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Knowledge	132	2	5	3.99	.624
Skills	132	2	5	3.99	.722
Abilities	132	1	5	3.95	.841
Attitude	132	1	5	3.66	.719
Personal growth	132	1	5	3.55	.814
Organizational Development	132	1	5	3.59	.847
Self-Development	132	1	5	3.62	.624
Organizational Performance	132	1	5	3.71	.921
Valid N (list-wise)	132				

Table 3. ANOVA results – training and development and organizational performance.

Organizational Performance					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	6.264	3	2.088	2.550	.011
Within Groups	104.797	128	.819		
Total	111.061	131			

It can be seen from the descriptive statistics in Table 2 that the mean values of the variables are positive, where the highest mean value is 3.99. Thus, the variables with the highest mean value are the most significant factors in organizational performance. It can be inferred that knowledge and skills obtained from training can enhance organizational performance.

It is evident from Table 3 that the significant value is lower than 0.05, which implies the rejection of the null hypothesis and acceptance of the alternate hypothesis. It can also be stated that there is a momentous relation between the training and development programs and organizational performance. Significantly, the performance of universities can be enhanced through conducting more training and skill development programs.

The Pearson correlation in the above Table 4 shows that the correlation coefficient value is 0.029 between training and development and self-development. It can also be seen that the value of both variables tends to increase to 1, which shows a positive relationship between the variables. Thus it can be inferred that training programs create a significant impact on the self-development of library professionals. Therefore, more training and development programs organized can enhance the self-development of librarians.

The Pearson correlation in the above Table 5 shows that the correlation coefficient value is 0.003 between training and development and organizational development. It can also be seen that the value of both variables tends to increase to 1, which shows a positive

Table 4. Correlation between training and development and self-development.

		Skills	Self-Development
Training and Development	Pearson Correlation	1	.029
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.744
	N	132	132
Self-Development	Pearson Correlation	.029	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.744	
	N	132	132

Table 5. Correlation between training and development and organizational development.

		Personal Growth	Organizational Development
Training and Development	Pearson Correlation	1	.003
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.974
	N	132	132
Organizational Development	Pearson Correlation	.003	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.974	
	N	132	132

relationship between the variables. Thus it can be inferred that training programs create a significant impact on the organizational development of the university libraries in Sri Lanka. From the above results, training and development programs seem to impact self-development organizational performance, which can collectively contribute to organizational development.

It can be deduced from Table 6 that the significance value is 0.039, which is lower than 0.05, which means that there is a momentous relation between the beliefs and attitudes of the university library professionals regarding the existing training programs and the achievements of organizational performance. This implies that these factors or the predictors, namely, personal growth, knowledge, skills, attitude, and abilities, have a strong impact on organizational performance, which is the dependent variable. Also, the value of R^2 shows this significance.

From Table 7, it is evident that with the existing training and development programs, the factors simultaneously develop, and it is seen in the value of the standardized coefficient β skill with a value of 0.460, knowledge with a value of .360, and personal growth with a value 0.317 overall contributing to the organizational performance. While the same result was obtained by (Osiesi et al., 2022), it covered an investigation only in a specific region in Nigeria.

Table 6. Regression analysis – model summary.

Model Summary									
Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics				
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.296 ^a	.818	.052	.897	.088	2.425	5	126	.039

a. Predictors: (Constant), Personal growth, Knowledge, Skills, Attitude, Abilities.

Table 7. Regression analysis of existing training programs on the organizational performance.

Coefficients ^a						
Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)	1.784	.842		2.118	.036
	Knowledge	.236	.134	.360	1.769	.079
	Skills	.076	.110	.460	.690	.492
	Abilities	.098	.099	.090	.995	.322
	Attitude	.265	.114	.007	2.324	.022
	Personal growth	.019	.100	.317	.189	.851

a. Dependent Variable: Organizational Performance.

4.1. Implications

From the results, it is evident that training and development programs alter organizational development and self-development, leading to the enhancement of organizational performance. Several university libraries in Sri Lanka have recognized the necessity and significance of the training and development program for library professionals to enhance the organization's performance. With the latest technological advancements, most manual operations are replaced with digitalized technologies. Hence, the skill to get acquainted with such developments is much necessary for the library profession to deliver a better service. The acknowledgment of the prominence of training and development in the current epoch has been comprehensively inclined by the growth of competition and the comparative accomplishment of organizations where investments are made for employee development. Moreover, the technical expansions and organizational modification have progressively directed the structural management to the recognition that success depends on the employees' knowledge, abilities, attitude, personal growth, and skills, and this fund's substantial and constant venture in training and development.

4.2. Limitations

The major limitation of the study is that it has been conducted with respondents from the region of Sri Lanka alone, the collection of data in a more comprehensive manner by concentrating on other regions in addition to Sri Lankan university libraries will give a more generalized result.

5. Conclusion

Training requirements were recognized as a vital factor in the 17 university libraries of Sri Lanka. It was found that training and development programs in the university libraries improve professional skills, knowledge, abilities, attitude, and personality to deliver the work effectually. It was also found that the existing well-structured training and development programs foster library professionals. In addition, it was also found that the training and development programs enhanced the organizational development and the self-development of the library personnel in Sri Lankan University Libraries. Also, such HRM practices were found to develop the services rendered by the University libraries, eventually contributing to the growth of the organizational performance. In the future, the study can be extended to include personnel from university management to obtain generalized features regarding organizational support for training programs. Moreover, the study can be performed in regions other than Sri Lanka for comprehensive results.

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Data availability statement

My manuscript has no associated data.

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Appendix

Questionnaire (Five Point Likert Scale)

I. Training and Development

- (1) Training needs are identified as realistic and helpful in university libraries.
- (2) Postgraduate degrees teach library professionals the skills they need to perform their jobs.
- (3) University provides training opportunities in a systematically structured program.
- (4) Training improves the continuing professional development of university library professionals.
- (5) The training develops new knowledge and professional skill to carry out my work effectively and efficiently.
- (6) There is a well-designed and widely shared training policy available in university libraries.
- (7) University always gets the views of the library professionals to modify the training program.
- (8) Induction training is essential for a recruit to familiarize with the operations of the university library.

II. Organizational Development

- (1) Induction training is essential for a new recruit to understand the overall picture of the University Library.
- (2) Training helps to understand the structure and functions of the University Library.
- (3) Training provides the preparedness to cope with the changing environment.
- (4) Training emphasizes the flexibility of the University Library's organizational structure.
- (5) Group activities are promoted at the University Libraries through training programs.
- (6) No rewards are necessary for the additional contribution of a Library Professional if the awareness is given that he/she is a prominent member of the University Library.
- (7) I am proud to be a member of the University Library.
- (8) Investment in training programs always yields benefits to the University Library.

III. Self-Development

- (1) Training improves the employees' own knowledge & skills.

- (2) Training is the confidence-building measure to plan, implement and evaluate the works of the library professionals.
- (3) Learning from experience contributes to finding new concepts and ways to face emerging situations.
- (4) My University Library has taken the necessary measures to improve my skills.
- (5) Employee promotion policy is handled fairly in my University Library.
- (6) No rewards are necessary for my entire efforts towards the achievement of University. Library objectives, as I am a prominent member of the University Library.
- (7) Training provides a better chance for advancement in my job.
- (8) Career prospects should be an aspect of training programs.
- (9) Training develops a manner to accept weaknesses that are notified by co-workers.

IV. Organizational Performance

- (1) Library professionals are always ready to provide updated services to the staff and students.
- (2) Staff and students are benefitted from quality library services in the university libraries.
- (3) University libraries achieve their stated objectives and goals in the stipulated time.
- (4) Each sectional head of the library understands its role in achieving the library's goals and objectives.
- (5) Resources needed for the proper functioning of university libraries are always available.
- (6) University libraries have sufficient library professionals to achieve their goals and objectives.
- (7) Overall service quality is improving steadily in the university libraries.
- (8) Positive response regarding the services is rising steadily in the university libraries.