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Antecedents and Outcome of Trainees' Motivation: Evident from South East Asia

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Antecedents and Outcome of Trainees' Motivation: Evident from South East Asia

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Abstract

Research Aims: This study examines the effect of training content on trainee outcomes and the mediating role of trainees' motivation in the relationship between training content and organisational citizenship behaviour.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A cross-sectional research design was employed to collect 320 survey questionnaires from employees at the Malaysian federal government's central agencies in Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory. The SmartPLS software programme was utilised to assess the quality of the instrument and subsequently test the hypotheses.

Research Findings: The results demonstrate that training content significantly determines trainee outcomes. Trainees' learning motivation significantly mediates the relationship between training content and organisational citizenship behaviour.

Theoretical Contribution/Originality: This study reveals that training motivation mediates the relationship between training content and organisational citizenship behaviour in the organisational sample. This finding supports and broadens previous studies conducted in South East Asian and other countries.

Managerial Implication in the South East Asian context: The study findings can assist managers in understanding different paradigms of trainees' motivation construct and formulate employee-oriented training instructions to maintain and upgrade organisational sustainability. Research Limitation & Implications: This study has certain methodological and conceptual limitations that must be addressed in future research to strengthen its findings.

Keywords: Malaysian federal government's central agencies, organisational citizenship behaviour, SmartPLS, trainees' motivation, training content

INTRODUCTION

Organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB) was first discovered in the late 1980s by Organ (1988) and continues to be recognised as a crucial phenomenon in organisational behaviour research (Kang & Hwang, 2023). OCB is commonly interpreted as an employee's voluntary commitment to an organisation that is not part of his/her contractual obligation (Organ, 1988; Van Dyne et al., 1994; Cheema et al., 2020) or an employee's civic engagement in the workplace that goes beyond the requirements of their job description when he/she trusts his/her management, receives clear instructions, and is given constructive criticism (Khaskheli et al., 2020; Kang & Hwang, 2023). Over two decades ago, researchers proposed the notion of OCB, describing how talented employees are voluntarily willing to execute extra duties and responsibilities (Khaskheli et al., 2020; Kang & Hwang, 2023) by reducing their self-interest to increase efficiency and output. It includes performing any activities benefitting the organisation, treating other people with consideration and politeness, establishing good connections to reduce their stress levels, demonstrating a higher level of self-discipline or self-control in challenging circumstances to promote their organisations to others, attending events to show their support for the organisation, performing discretionary activities beyond their role norms that are not directly associated with rewards, and maintaining their calm and focus in executing work, even when their ideas are not accepted (Organ, 1988; Piatak & Holt, 2020; Zbierowski, 2020; Kataria & Adhikari, 2022). Therefore, this positive behaviour may lead to the attainment of an organisation's strategies and goals (Cheema et al., 2020; Kang & Hwang, 2023).

Recent organisational behaviour studies have shown that recruiting and retaining employees demonstrating "good citizenship" within organisations can strongly contribute to a positive working culture by avoiding selfish, harmful, and counterproductive actions, fostering a sense of belonging to the organisation, treating others with consideration and politeness, establishing good connections in the workplace, and helping to reduce the amount of stress experienced by other employees. Additionally, these employees exhibit a higher level of self-discipline or self-control

than is necessary for any given circumstance, show genuine interest in their peers' work, remain calm and perform well in challenging situations, make suggestions to improve job processes, assist in training new employees, take care of organisational assets, improve customer satisfaction, and use new competencies to achieve job targets (Kataria & Adhikari, 2022; Piatak & Holt, 2020; Zbierowski, 2020; Kang & Hwang, 2023). Therefore, this situation can lead to positive organisational outcomes by strengthening an organisation's capacity, improving its ability to coordinate operations within and between teams, enhancing its stability, and allowing it to respond more effectively to changes during times of global changes and economic turbulence (Cheema et al., 2020; Els et al., 2022; Kumpikaitė-Valiūnienė et al., 2022; Widarko & Anwarodin, 2022).

A significant body of research on organisational behaviour has highlighted the crucial antecedents of OCB. They include individual factors (e.g., motivation, self-efficacy, and charisma) (Putra, 2019; Ali Işık, 2021) and environmental factors (e.g., leadership, work engagement, psychological contract, work design, technology, human resource systems, and workplace culture) (Ali Işık, 2021; Ngah et al., 2022). However, there is a dearth of recent articles evaluating the influence of training content on OCB (Elumalai et al., 2020; Mohamad et al., 2020). From a training management perspective, human resource managers formally and informally plan training content to meet the current requirements of an organisation's tasks and personnel. For example, training content is prepared in printed and digitalised training materials, such as modules, handouts, slides, and/or study packs (Palomino et al., 2022; Raimundo & Rosário, 2022), which trainers, coaches, and/or facilitators use to impart and upgrade employees' technical and human skills matching the real world of work, customers' needs, and the global market of the 21st century (Palomino et al., 2022; Raimundo & Rosário, 2022).

No matter how skilfully training methods are designed, they will not be able to fulfil their objectives if management has not effectively prepared training content in organisations, according to an in-depth analysis of workplace training research (Rahman et al., 2021; Andoh et al., 2022). In high-performing organisations, training content needs to be well-planned by qualified subject matter experts from inside and/or outside the organisations. It also needs to emphasise two critical elements, namely training goal (TRGL) (e.g., objectives that are clear, realistic, and challenging in lesson plans, modules, and/or study packs) and task relevance (TSRN) (e.g., technical, and non-technical competencies that are related to job functions in lesson plans, modules, and/or study packs) (Bonnes et al., 2020; Andoh et al., 2022). A review of some high-impact training studies supports implementing such training content designs in online training mode (e.g., CD, Zoom meetings, Google Meet, and social media) and face-to-face training mode (e.g., lectures and practice software packages in classrooms, computer labs, and seminar halls) may have a significant

impact on positive employee outcomes, revealing higher trainees' motivation (TRMN) (Mohamad et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2021) and OCB (Rahman et al., 2021; Andoh et al., 2022).

Surprisingly, a few recent findings from studies of successful organisations in the global market of the 21st century reveal that the relationship between training content and TRMN might enhance OCB (Mohamad et al., 2020; Twase et al., 2021). In various organisational psychology studies, TRMN is also known as intrinsic motivation, in which an employee's internal state (e.g., want, need, or demand) provides energy and direction to engage in four categories of developmental activities, namely required training, on-the-job training, voluntary job-related learning, and voluntary non-job-related learning (Birdi et al., 1997). This development activity is beneficial for achieving learning outcomes by acquiring and mastering training content (Noe & Schmitt, 1986; Wang & Noe, 2010) that are declarative and tacit knowledge (Colquitt et al., 2000), and domainrelevant skills (e.g., factual knowledge, technical skills, and special talents) providing essential basic knowledge for generating, developing, and implementing innovative and creative work behaviour (Auernhammer & Hall, 2014; Dong et al., 2017; Afsar & Umrani, 2020). Consequently, this situation may reinforce employees' self-efficacy to exhibit stronger feelings of citizenship to the organisation in difficult and challenging contexts (Morales-Sánchez & Pasamar, 2020) by helping peers execute their work and offering assistance to new employees or employees with excessive workloads, paying particular attention to daily work (e.g., following protocols or complying with work requirements), showing a strong sense of responsibility for the organisation (e.g., offering advice and suggestions or trying to overcome problems and improve work efficiency), and demonstrating a positive attitude and loyalty to the organisation, often improving the quality and best aspects of the organisation or not caring about less positive activities (Organ, 1988; Muthuraman & Al-Haziazi, 2017; Widarko & Anwarodin, 2022).

Although this relationship has been extensively investigated, the effect size and nature of TRMN as a crucial mediating variable is largely ignored in the workplace training research literature (Rahman et al., 2021; Andoh et al., 2022). To address these gaps, many researchers argue that several reasons may influence this condition. First, most previous studies have emphasised the internal properties of TRMN (e.g., conceptual discussion about disconfirmation definitions, purpose, dimensions, and importance of this construct in public and private organisations). Second, many past empirical studies have utilised a direct effect model which only focuses on the association between the independent variable and the dependent variable: (a) between employee perceptions and training content, (b) between training content and TRMN, and (c) between TRMN and OCB. These relationships have been extensively used in fundamental and applied studies but

are only able to describe the degree and nature of the association between the variables of interest (Elumalai et al., 2020; Mohamad et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2021; Twase et al., 2021).

Third, adopting a direct effect model to examine workplace training requires only simple statistical instruments (e.g., descriptive and bivariate statistics). This statistical tool is only able to measure the direct relationship between the independent variable (e.g., training content) and the dependent variable (e.g., TRMN and OCB), but it is not able to elaborate on the mediating effect of TRMN in the hypothetical model (Elumalai et al., 2020; Twase et al., 2021). Fourth, prior studies show that implementation of such training content through face-to-face and online training methods has successfully upgraded positive employee outcomes by promoting TRMN (e.g., Azmar et al., 2015; Hanaysha & Hussain, 2018) and OCB (e.g., Nik Nazli & Sheikh Khairudin, 2018). Although the relationship is essential, the mediating role of TRMN has not been widely explored because of the paucity of empirical evidence published in the Malaysian public sector. As a result, this study paradigm has only provided general recommendations, and this may not offer adequate guidelines to be used by management in understanding disconfirmation paradigms of TRMN construct and formulating effective training instructions that may help to maintain and enhance organisational sustainability in times of global competition and uncertain economy (Andoh et al., 2022; Els et al., 2022).

To advance the existing knowledge, the researchers have taken the initiative to explore the study issues by developing several research questions. First, which elements of training content may affect trainee outcomes? Second, does training content affect TRMN? Third, does TRMN mediate the relationship between training content and OCB? Thus, the objectives of this study are to examine three significant relationships. The first is to examine the relationship between training content and OCB. The third is to examine the relationship between training content, TRMN, and OCB.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Training Content

Deciding on the training content is fundamental to ensure what is taught, at which level, and how many training materials match the present organisations' requirements (Alias et al., 2019; Kraai & Mashau, 2020). In addition, this training material may help employees transfer competencies learned from training sessions into the workplace (El-Hajjar & Alkhanaizi, 2018; Kraai & Mashau, 2020). Effective training content usually consists of two critical elements: TRGL and TSRN (Bonnes et al., 2020; Andoh et al., 2022). TRGL is often explained as the

purpose, essential facts, and critical training theories that may help to enhance employees' knowledge, skills, and behaviour in performing their tasks (Mohamad et al., 2020; Andoh et al., 2022). In recent years, TRGL has emerged as one of the more noticeable effects in the educational and training research literature regarding learning and performance. TRGL is usually designed to improve three trainees' performance, namely cognitive (thinking), affective (emotion), and psychomotor (hands-on), in which they may alter the character and quality of skill acquisition and generalisation, which is particularly relevant. Even though TRGL were originally conceived in dispositional terms, it is also influenced by situational factors (e.g., instructional design methods and leadership styles) (Sonnentag et al., 2005; Mohamad et al., 2020; Kozlowski et al., 2021). It has resulted in distinct lines of research concentrating on the effects of TRGL on learning, motivation, and performance.

TSRN refers to technical and non-technical content in the lesson plans, modules, and/or study packs (Bonnes et al., 2020; Mohamad et al., 2020). Technical content emphasises learning and mastering a particular subject or product (e.g., software development and language programming). In contrast, non-technical content focuses on learning and mastering human skills (e.g., communication, critical thinking, and emotional intelligence) (Mohamad et al., 2020; Andoh et al., 2022). Subject matter experts usually design both types of training content based on organisational requirements. They may be used by qualified trainers to teach, inspire, and facilitate employees to decrease their job deficiencies, increase their job performance, accomplish their organisations' strategic vision and missions, and ensure the sustainability of their organisations in future (Bonnes et al., 2020; Andoh et al., 2022). Hence, the latest studies in training management reveal that TRGL and TSRN are essential determinants of trainee outcomes, namely TRMN (Alias et al., 2019; Elumalai et al., 2020; Twase et al., 2021) and OCB (Mohd Zainol et al., 2015; Rahman et al., 2021).

Trainees' Motivation (TRMN)

TRMN is commonly considered a vital component in personalities, needs, and motivation theories of individuals (e.g., goal setting), cognitive choice theories of motivation (e.g., decision-making), and the integrative theory of training motivation (e.g., motivation to learn and transfer) (Kraiger et al., 1993; Mathieu & Martineau, 1997; Colquitt et al., 2000; Beier & Kanfer, 2009). These theories conceptualise TRMN as trainees' ability to think, concentrate, learn, and master new skills after realising the importance of the training programme (Colquitt et al., 2000; Beier & Kanfer, 2009). From a workplace training perspective, employees may increase their motivation to undergo training when they are assigned to such programmes both mandatorily and voluntarily by their management. Such an assignment may inspire trainees to

participate actively and engage in mastering and applying new skills and/or human competencies during and after training sessions (Mohamad et al., 2020; Rahman et al., 2021). Recent studies in workplace training have shown that TRMN is a crucial outcome of training content (Elumalai et al., 2020; Mohamad et al., 2020; Twase et al., 2021), and it can also serve as a significant mediating variable between training content and OCB (Mohd Zainol et al., 2015; Rahman et al., 2021).

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

Organ (1988) defines OCB as an "individual behaviour that is discretionary, not directly or explicitly recognised by the formal reward system, and in the aggregate promotes the efficient and effective functioning of the organisation". This definition explains that OCB refers to an employee taking discretionary actions to perform a job beyond their defined roles, which may improve organisational efficiency and effectiveness (Lovass et al., 2020; Afram et al., 2022). For example, employees are willing to help colleagues without expecting anything in return, offer assistance, be considerate of others, take on new duties, work extra hours, defend the organisation, speak up about significant organisational concerns, create a sense of community, and be ready to be friends and provide valuable benefits to the organisation (Afram et al., 2022; Abbasi et al., 2022). Thus, this positive behaviour may strongly stimulate employees to increase optimal productivity, efficiency, and customer satisfaction and support their organisations' strategies and objectives (Rubel & Asibur Rahman, 2018; Zúñiga et al., 2022). Hence, recent research on individual attitudes and behaviour supports OCB is a critical outcome of training content (Elumalai et al., 2020; Mohamad et al., 2020), and it may also act as a significant result of the relationship between training content and TRMN (Mohd Zainol et al., 2017; Rahman et al., 2021).

Relationship Between Training Content and Trainees' Outcomes

The role of training content in enhancing trainees' outcomes is consistent with the main idea of motivation theory. The first motivation thought is a content-based motivation theory, which posits that individuals' actions are inspired by their needs. For example, individuals' needs have been a significant issue, and they are interpreted from diverse views, namely physiological and psychological needs (Maslow, 1943; 1954) existence, relatedness, and growth (Alderfer, 1989), need for achievement, need for affiliation and the need for power (McClelland, 1965), and growth (e.g., achievement, recognition for achievement, the work itself, responsibility, and growth or advancement) and hygiene (e.g., company policy and administration, supervision, interpersonal relationships, working conditions, salary, status, and security) (Herzberg, 1959; 1987). Applying this motivation thought in a workplace training programme shows that the

essence of individuals' needs in the training content design is usually interpreted as TRGL and TSRN. This essence has received strong backing from the training management research literature (Ismail et al., 2018; Mohamad et al., 2020).

Conversely, the second motivation thought is a process-based motivation theory, which explains why an individual's action is initiated. It has caused a major debate, disclosing that behaviour is a function of its consequences (e.g., an individual will repeat the action that leads to positive effects and will not perform the action that brings negative effects) (Skinner, 1953; 1957). The association between expectancy, instrumentality, and valence will encourage individuals to act (Vroom, 1973). Perceived fair treatment in the distribution and exchange of resources may strongly inspire individuals to perform positive behaviour (Adams, 1963; 1965), and setting up a goal that has specific, measurable, achievable, relevant, and time-bound features may help individuals to remove roadblocks and potential gaps, as well as focus on their efforts in achieving their intended outcomes (Locke & Latham, 1990; Locke, 2000). Using the motivation thoughts in a workplace training context displays that the notion of consequence, expectancy, fair treatment, and goal setting in the training content design is often translated as TRGL and TSRN. This notion has received strong support from the training management research literature (Elumalai et al., 2020; Mohamad et al., 2020).

Numerous past studies advocate that training content is an essential predictor of trainee outcomes. For example, several surveys were conducted in different organisational settings, involving 215 staff from management and professional services groups (Alias et al., 2019), 784 students in India and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Elumalai et al., 2020), 603 farmers in Uganda (Twase et al., 2021), and 160 teachers working in high-needs schools with large numbers of English learners (ELs) in the Southwest USA (Nafukho et al., 2023). These surveys reported that effective training content consisted of two vital features, namely TRGL design (e.g., expected outcome statements that are related to cognitive, affective, and/or psychomotor abilities must be specific, realistic, and challenging to fulfil the organisation's tactical and strategic planning objectives), and TSRN (e.g., deliver current technical and non-technical content that is relevant to the specific requirements of the organisation, task, and personnel). The ability of management to properly implement the TRGL and TSRN in online and face-toface training methods has strongly invoked trainee motivation in different organisations settings (Alias et al., 2019; Elumalai et al., 2020; Twase et al., 2021). Based on the previous empirical studies by Alias et al. (2019), Elumalai et al. (2020), and Twase et al. (2021), the following hypotheses are formulated:

H1a: TRGL is positively correlated with trainee motivation.

H1b: TSRN is positively correlated with trainees' motivation.

Previous studies have shown that training content is a significant determinant of OCB. Various studies have been conducted in different types of organisations, including 215 civil service staff from management and professional services groups in Malaysia (Alias et al., 2019), 300 respondents working in accounting, management, information and communication technology, and human resources departments in Malaysia (Mohamad et al., 2020), and 784 undergraduate and postgraduate students in India and the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (Elumalai et al., 2020). These studies revealed that well-planned training content had two salient dimensions, namely TRGL (e.g., expected outcome statements that are related to cognitive, affective, and/or psychomotor abilities must be specific, reasonable, and challenging to meet the organisations' short and long-term objectives), and TSRN (e.g., learn current technical and non-technical content meeting the specific aims of the organisation, task, and employees). The ability of management to appropriately apply TRGL and TSRN in online and face-to-face training programmes has strongly improved OCB in diverse organisations (Alias et al., 2019; Elumalai et al., 2020; Mohamad et al., 2020). Thus, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H2a: TRGL is positively correlated with OCB.

H2b: TSRN is positively correlated with OCB.

Mediating Effect of TRMN

The mediating role of TRMN on the relationship between training content and OCB is consistent with the notion proposed by Knowles (1984), known as the Adult Learning Theory. This theory outlines five critical assumptions of adult learners (andragogy): (a) self-concept (a self-directed human being), (b) adult learner experience (accumulate a growing reservoir of experience to become a resource for learning), (c) readiness to learn (learn subjects that have immediate relevance and impact on learners' job or personal life), (d) orientation to learning (learn knowledge to be applied and problem-centredness), and (e) motivation to learn (internal motivation to learn). These learning assumptions may help adults acquire new knowledge, skills, and behaviour in organisations. Using this theory in a workplace training context shows that the notion of adult learning is often interpreted as TRMN. This notion has received strong support from the training management research literature (Alias et al., 2019; Twase et al., 2021; Ithnin et al., 2022).

Limited additional studies support the idea that TRMN is a crucial mediating variable between training content and OCB. For example, some studies were conducted in various organisational

samples involving 412 employees in a security agency in Malaysia (Mohd Zainol et al., 2015), 382 employees of the Malaysian Army infantry corps (Mohd Zainol et al., 2017), and 442 students represented by 35 universities in Bangladesh (Rahman et al., 2021). These studies supported the idea that the design of systematic lesson plans consisted of two major components: TRGL (e.g., expected outcome statements in terms of cognitive, affective, and/or psychomotor abilities should be specific, realistic, and challenging to meet the organisations' vision, missions, and goals), and TSRN (e.g., providing up-to-date technical and non-technical content that is relevant to the specific needs of the organisation, task, and personnel). The ability of management to correctly implement TRGL and TSRN in online and face-to-face training modes significantly enhanced trainee motivation. As a result, this motivation could lead to a higher OCB in the various organisational samples (Mohd Zainol et al., 2015; Mohd Zainol et al., 2017; Rahman et al., 2021). Therefore, the following hypotheses are formulated:

H3a: The relationship between TRGL and OCB is positively mediated by TRMN.

H3b: The relationship between TSRN and OCB is positively mediated by TRMN.

Based on the literature review, a conceptual model was presented in Figure 1.

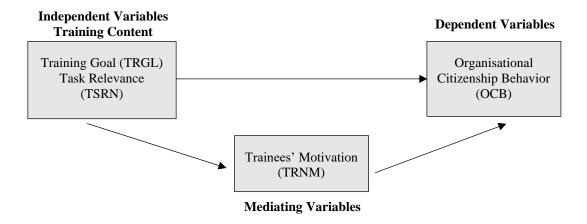


Figure 1. Research Model

RESEARCH METHOD

Research Design

This study employs a survey method as the primary strategy, allowing the researcher to collect questionnaire data using a cross-sectional study design. The primary benefit of this data collection procedure is that it may assist the researchers in obtaining relevant data, reduce data bias, and improve data quality (Sekaran & Bougie, 2016). This research was conducted at the

Malaysian federal government's central agencies (MFGCA) in Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory. For confidentiality, the actual names of these institutions are withheld.

The central agencies have implemented human resource development and management policies and procedures as designed by the Malaysian Public Service Department. This department gives discretionary power to the agency heads to design and administer training content to achieve their vision and missions. For example, internal subject matter experts and professional consultants are invited to training needs analysis workshops. Their input is highly considered to develop training content for various job structures and levels within the central agencies. The workshop outcomes identified two critical elements of training content: TRGL (i.e., improve employees' cognitive, affective, and psychomotor) and TSRN (i.e., impart relevant technical skills and personal attributes).

At the initial data collection stage, a survey questionnaire was developed based on the literature on workplace training management. The survey questionnaires were translated into English and Malay using a back-translation technique (Brislin, 1970; Wright, 1996). In this translation technique, the researchers used expert services from several lecturers in English and Malay and three lecturers in human resource development at Universiti Kebangsaan Malaysia in Selangor, Malaysia. The main advantage of this translation technique is that it ensures the accuracy, authenticity, and reliability of the study questionnaire, which will undoubtedly be used for the actual study (Brislin, 1970; Wright, 1996). These two bilingual faculty members then examined the translated English version of the questionnaire to ensure consistency of item meaning, improve the quality of the research instrument, and produce better results (Brislin, 1970; Sekaran & Bougie, 2016).

Variables Measurement

The survey questionnaire comprised three parts. Firstly, the training content was evaluated using TRGL and TSRN. TRGL consisted of four items, and TSRN consisted of five items modified based on a literature review of organisational training literature (Burke et al., 1999; Tharenou, 2001). Secondly, TRMN was measured based on five items adapted from a review of the training management literature (Burke et al., 1999; Tharenou, 2001). Finally, OCB was measured based on six items adapted from a literature review of organisational behaviours (Podsakoff et al., 1997; Wallace et al., 2011). These items were assessed using a scale ranging from one (strongly disagree/very dissatisfied) to seven (strongly agree/very satisfied). The choice of a scale ranging from one to seven was based on its ability to produce more neutral feedback and was found to improve higher reliability (Cox, 1980; Lewis, 1993). Meanwhile,

demographic items acted as control variables since their role as predictor variables was not supported by previous theories and empirical studies related to research objectives, research framework, and hypothesis development (Mohamad et al., 2020; Yaghi & Bates, 2020). Therefore, this survey aimed to investigate research issues based on employee perceptions in general.

Unit of Analysis and Sampling

The unit of analysis of this study is employees serving in various units/sections of the central agencies of the Malaysian federal government in Kuala Lumpur Federal Territory. The researcher used a purposive sampling technique to distribute 500 printed questionnaires to the organisation's employee population. This technique was chosen because the organisation could not provide a list of registered employees due to confidentiality reasons, which prevented the researchers from using a random method to select the sample. The printed questionnaires were sent to the human resource managers, who distributed them to willing employees. The human resource managers collected and returned the questionnaires to the researchers. Of the 500 distributed questionnaires, only 320 (64%) were usable and included in the data analysis. Respondents participated in this study based on consent, and no coercion was involved. The respondents' anonymity was maintained throughout the study.

The adequacy of the study sample was evaluated using a rule of thumb that suggests that the number of formative indicators in the survey questionnaire should be at least ten times the sample size, and the items for measurement models must have an outer loading above the standard threshold of 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017). The OCB construct, which had six items, had the most formative indicators in the survey questionnaires. Based on this rule, the sample size should be a minimum of 60 respondents. The sample size in this study met the requirement and was deemed suitable for testing the research hypotheses.

Most respondents were aged between 34 to 39 years (37.8%), married (70.9%), Malay (91.9%), Islam (92.5%), female (70.0%), held a bachelor's degree (45.3%) and were from the management and professional services groups (62.8%).

Common Method Variance

Harman's Single Factor Analysis was performed to determine the level of biased feedback found in the study sample, as proposed by Eichhorn (2014) and Podsakoff et al. (2003). The findings of this test show that the percentage of variance found in the study sample is 49%. This value is less than the critical value of 50%, which means that the study sample obtained is free of serious bias feedback problems (Eichhorn, 2014; Podsakoff et al., 2003).

Data Analysis

The SmartPLS software was used to analyse the survey questionnaire data. This software was chosen because it can analyse a complex research model that uses many latent variables, small and large sample sizes, and non-normal data (Hair et al., 2017). The data analysis procedure is as follows. Firstly, a measurement model analysis was used to determine the validity and reliability of the study instruments (Henseler et al., 2009). Secondly, a structural model analysis was used to test the direct effect and mediating models. Significant hypotheses can be identified when the t-value is significant (t > 1.95). Thirdly, the value of R^2 is used to assess the exploratory power of the study model based on three main criteria: 0.26 strong, 0.13 moderate, and 0.02 weak (Cohen, 1988). Fourthly, the model fit is determined when an estimated root mean residual square (SRMR) value is less than 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), indicating the appropriate study model used. Fifthly, the value of f^2 was also used to evaluate the effect of size based on three essential criteria: 0.35 strong, 0.15 medium, and 0.02 small. Next, the blindfolding value (Q^2) was measured based on a value criterion greater than zero, meaning the construct reached the level of predictive accuracy recommended by Hair et al. (2017). This SmartPLS package has the advantage of being able to analyse data simultaneously on the measurement model, either relative or/and formative through path analysis, does not require normally distributed data, can analyse data with a small sampling, and is user-friendly with an attractive interface display (Henseler et al., 2009).

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Validity and Reliability of Research Instrument

Table 1. presents the results of the convergent validity test that was measured based on the outer loading values and average variance extracted (AVE) values. The outer loading values for the correlation between items and constructs are greater than 0.70 (Hair et al., 2017), indicating that the items have met the convergent validity criterion. In contrast, the AVE values for all of the study's constructs are higher than 0.50 (Hair et al., 2017), indicating that the study constructs have fulfilled the convergent criterion. Moreover, the composite reliability values for all study constructs are greater than 0.70, meaning that the constructs have high internal consistency (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 1. Convergent Validity Analysis

Constructs	Outer	Composite	Average	Cronbach
	Loading	Reliability	Variance	Alpha
			Extracted	
			(AVE)	
TRGL		0.916	0.731	0.878
A1: Increase task knowledge	0.843			
A2: Reach a level of competence	0.853			
A3: Fulfil work objectives	0.875			
A4: Increase career development opportunities	0.850			
TSRN		0.925	0.755	0.892
B1: Can be applied	0.829			
B2: Exposed to skills	0.903			
B3: Provide experience	0.874			
B4: Explain the method of mastering task skills	0.868			
B5: Provide task solutions	0.829			
TRMN		0.928	0.622	0.903
C1: Give full focus	0.833			
C2: Committed	0.856			
C3: Interested in attending training	0.827			
C4: Sense of responsibility	0.884			
C5: Motivated	0.845			
OCB		0.933	0.697	0.913
D1: Complete tasks in an efficient time	0.825			
D2: Share the benefits of the task	0.848			
D3: Adapt to technical skills	0.835			
D4: Build decision-making skills	0.871			
D5: Willing to help colleagues	0.832			
D6: Trying to solve task problems	0.798			

Note:

Training Goal (TRGL)

Task Relevance (TSRN)

Trainees' Motivation (TRMN)

Organisational Citizenship Behaviour (OCB)

Table 2. presents the results of the discriminant validity test, measured based on the Heterotrait-Monotrait Ratio Test (HTMT). This test displays that all study construct has values smaller than 0.85 (Hair et al., 2017), indicating that the study constructs have satisfactorily met the discriminant validity criterion. Furthermore, the confidence interval values in parentheses for all study constructs are smaller than 1.0 (Hair et al., 2017), indicating that the study constructs have met the discriminant validity criterion.

Table 2. Results of Discriminant Validity and HTMT Confidence Interval Values

Constructs	TRGL	TSRN	TRMN
1. TRGL			
2. TSRN	0.825 (0.437, 0.619)		
3. TRMN	0.570 (0.438, 0.621)	0.594 (0.197, 0.450)	
4. OCB	0.514 (0.371, 0.551)	0.577 (0.422, 0.587)	0.717 (0.411, 0.598)

Table 3. presents the variance inflation factor (VIF) and descriptive constructs analysis. The correlation coefficients between the independent variables (TRGL and TSRN), mediating

variable (TRMN), and dependent variable (OCB) have a VIF value smaller than 5.0 (Hair et al., 2017), confirming that the study constructs are free from serious collinearity problems. Next, the mean values for all the constructs range from 5.900 to 6.085, indicating that the TRGL, TSRN, TRMN, and OCB levels are high (5) and very high (6).

Table 3. Results of VIF and descriptive constructs analysis

Construct	VIF	Values	Mean	Std. Deviation
1. TRGL	2.160	2.253	5.900	0.615
2. TSRN	2.160	2.338	5.907	0.621
3. TRMN		1.461	6.085	0.536
4. OCB			6.065	0.553

Results of Testing the Direct Effect Model

Table 4. presents the Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) analysis and direct hypothesis testing. The SRMR value is 0.046, less than the cut-off point of 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), indicating that the direct model is appropriate and reflects a good fit. Next, the results of direct hypothesis testing reveal four crucial findings. First, TRGL has a significant relationship with TRMN (β =0.510; t=10.658), thereby supporting H1a. Second, TSRN has a significant relationship with TRMN (β = 0.535; t=11.251), thereby supporting H1b. Third, TRGL has a significant relationship with OCB (β =0.464; t=10.226), thereby supporting H2a. Fourth, TSRN has a significant relationship with OCB (β =0.522; t=13.310), thereby supporting H2b. Furthermore, the R^2 values reveal four main findings. First, the inclusion of TRGL in the analysis contributed 26% to the variance of TRMN. Second, the inclusion of TSRN in the analysis contributed 28% to the variance of OCB. Fourth, the inclusion of TSRN in the analysis contributed 26% to the variance of OCB. Fourth, the inclusion of TSRN in the analysis contributed 28% to the variance of OCB. All these values are greater than 26%, indicating that the research models have a substantial effect (Cohen, 1988).

Table 4. Results of Testing The Direct Effects Model

Hypothesis	SRMR	\mathbb{R}^2	В	T Statistics	Result
				(O/STDEV)	
H1a: TRGL → TRMN		26%	0.510	10.658	Supported
H1b: TSRN → TRMN		28%	0.535	11.251	Supported
H2a: TRGL → OCB	0.046	26%	0.464	10.226	Supported
H2b: TSRN → OCB		28%	0.522	13.310	Supported

Next, the effect size (f^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2) are evaluated. The effect size test shows that the f^2 value for the relationship between TRGL and TRMN is 0.251, lower than 0.35. It indicates that the effect of TRGL on TRMN has a medium size. Second, the relationship between TRSN and TRMN has an f^2 value of 0.401, higher than 0.35. It indicates that the effect of TRSN on TRMN has a substantial size. Third, the relationship between TRGL and OCB has an f^2 value of 0.351, indicating that the effect of TRGL on OCB is substantial. Fourth, the

relationship between TRSN and OCB has an f^2 value of 0.401, higher than 0.35. It indicates that the effect of TRSN on OCB has a substantial size (Cohen, 1988). Furthermore, the predictive relevance (Q^2) analysis reports that the relationships between (a) TRGL and TRMN, (b) TRSN and TRMN, (c) TRGL and OCB, and (d) TRSN and OCB all have Q^2 values larger than zero. Specifically, (a) has a Q^2 value of 0.183, (b) has a Q^2 value of 0.202, (c) has a Q^2 value of 0.183, and (d) has a Q^2 value of 0.202. It means all the constructs have predictive relevance in this model (Hair et al., 2017).

Results of Testing the Mediating Model

Table 5. presents the results of Standardised Root Mean Square Residual (SRMR) analysis and indirect hypothesis testing. The SRMR value is 0.046, less than 0.08 (Hu & Bentler, 1999), indicating that the indirect model is appropriate and a good fit reflective model. The results of indirect hypotheses testing yield two critical findings. First, TRGL and TRMN have a significant relationship with OCB (β =0.287; t=7.093). Therefore, H3a is supported. Second, the relationship between TSRN and TRMN has a significant relationship with OCB (β = 0.280; t=7.427); therefore, H3b is supported. The values of R^2 yield two critical findings. First, the inclusion of TRGL and TRMN in the analysis has contributed 44% to the variance of OCB. Second, the inclusion of TSRN and TRMN in the analysis has contributed 46% to the OCB. All these values are greater than 26% (Cohen, 1988), confirming that this research model has a substantial effect.

The effect size (f^2) and predictive relevance (Q^2) were evaluated. The effect size test finding shows that the f^2 value for the relationship between TRGL, TRMN, and OCB is 0.426. Furthermore, the f^2 value for the relationship between TSRN, TRMN, and OCB is 0.368. All these values are greater than 0.35 (Cohen, 1988), indicating that the effect of the relationship between these variables has a substantial size. The predictive relevant (Q^2) analysis reports that the relationship between TRGL, TRMN, and OCB has a Q^2 value of 0.309. Moreover, the relationship between TSRN, TRMN, and OCB has a Q^2 value of 0.322. All these values are larger than zero, indicating that the study constructs have predictive relevance in this model (Hair et al., 2017).

Table 5. Results of testing the mediating model

Hypothesis	SRMR	\mathbb{R}^2	В	T Statistics	Result
				(O/STDEV)	
H3a: TRGL → TRMN → OCB		44%	0.287	7.093	Supported
H3b: TSRN → TRMN → OCB	0.046	46%	0.280	7.427	Supported

The findings of this study indicate that TRMN acts as a mediator in the relationship between training content and OCB. The type of effect of the mediating variable indicates that TRMN can act as a partial mediator in this relationship. In this study's context, most respondents rated the training content, training motivation, and OCB as high. It suggests that the effective use of well-designed TRGL and TSRN in face-to-face and online training methods can strongly encourage employees to attend, participate, learn, and master new competencies. Consequently, this motivation can result in higher levels of OCB.

Table 6. presents the analysis of the performance forecasting test for the model implemented using PLS prediction. The Q^2 -predict values for all items in the PLS-SEM ranging from 0.533 to 0.631 and LM RMSE ranging from 0.538 to 0.646 are larger than zero, indicating that the prediction errors are highly symmetrically distributed. However, most of the regression model (LM) values are lower than the values of PLS-SEM root mean squared error (RMSE), suggesting that this model has a low predictive level (Shmueli et al., 2016).

Table 6. PLS predict

Item	PLS SEM RMSE	LM RMSE	LM RMSE-PLS SEM RMSE	PLS SEM RMSE-LM RMSE
C1	0.577	0.588	-0.010	0.010
C2	0.564	0.574	-0.010	0.010
C3	0.572	0.586	-0.014	0.014
C4	0.533	0.538	-0.005	0.005
C5	0.555	0.562	-0.007	0.007
D1	0.592	0.604	-0.012	0.012
D2	0.631	0.646	-0.014	0.014
D3	0.597	0.614	-0.018	0.018
D4	0.585	0.593	-0.007	0.007
D5	0.588	0.599	-0.012	0.012
D6	0.598	0.615	-0.017	0.017

The results of the important-performance matrix analysis (IPMA) are shown in Table 7. It shows management's importance in addressing a critical management issue (Ringle & Sarstedt, 2016). The analysis indicates that TRMN has the least significant value of 0.120 and the highest performance value of 84.769. In contrast, OCB has the highest significant value of 0.158 and the lowest performance value of 84.382. Therefore, this result confirms that OCB should be given considerable emphasis to help practitioners improve the effectiveness of training management in organisations.

Table 7. IPMA

Construct	Importance	Performance	
	(Total Effect)	(Total Index)	
TRMN	0.120	84.769	
OCB	0.158	84.382	

MANAGERIAL IMPLICATIONS IN THE SOUTH EAST ASIAN CONTEXT

Regarding practical contributions, the IPMA results (Table 7.) indicate that OCB is a critical management problem that must be addressed in South East Asian organisations, particularly in MFGCA. This study acknowledges that TRGL and TSRN influence TRMN and OCB. This study also reveals that TRMN acts as a mediator between TRGL, TSRN and OCB. MFGCA can benefit from the findings of this study to enhance training management and manager-follower exchange in the organisation.

Management must consider several aspects to accomplish this purpose. Firstly, formal and informal managerial coaching can be encouraged in daily job operations. For example, implementing this leadership style will motivate administrators to inspire, guide, and facilitate public servants to execute specific tasks, upgrade their motivation to help, and cooperate with peers to support their job goals. Secondly, formal and informal participative decision-making styles should be promoted to open opportunities for public servants to provide brilliant suggestions and allow them to share power in making decisions about their job issues. If this participation style is appropriately accomplished, this may increase public servants' psychological empowerment, sense of belonging, and motivation to execute the daily job efficiently. Thirdly, award bases for determining the level, type, and/or amount of pay should be revised to maintain fairness in pay systems. Perceptions of fairness in salary distributions will be achieved if public servants' monthly salaries and salary increases, as well as other fringe benefits related to the Malaysian remuneration system, are revised based on the difficulties and challenges of the real world of work. This improvement may motivate junior and senior public servants to cooperate in achieving their organisations' short and long-term objectives. The perceptions of fairness in variable pay distributions will be realised if public servants' level, type, and/or number of incentives and performance bonuses are increased for talented public servants. This situation will help talented public servants improve their life satisfaction, which may stimulate them to maintain and enhance their organisations' performance in the future. Fourth, digital technologies should be implemented to enhance work efficiency. For example, wired and wireless-based digital technologies (e.g., websites, smartphones, and social media) are useful instruments to help public servants perform daily job operations efficiently, reduce bureaucratic red tape, make faster decisions, and provide faster service deliveries. This situation may motivate public servants to fulfil customers' needs and satisfaction.

Finally, talented public servants should fill high-level and essential positions in organisations. They should have good personal attributes, such as relevant academic qualifications, professional certifications, excellent track records, new knowledge, emotional intelligence, technical and human skills, and other capabilities consistent with the global market of the 21st century. Hiring talented senior administrators is vital because they may transfer their competencies to young administrators and supervisors through formal and informal training and coaching. This way, it may stimulate young administrators and supervisors to use new competencies that they learned to facilitate group members in accomplishing their work targets. If employers heavily consider these suggestions, this will help MFGCA to become an employer of choice in times of global competition and an uncertain economy.

THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS

The results of this study reveal two significant outcomes: Firstly, TRGL and TSRN have a positive relationship with TRMN in the MFGCA. This finding is consistent with the content-based motivation theory, which suggests that individuals (e.g., trainees) are inspired to undertake different actions due to their physiological and psychological needs (Maslow, 1943; 1954) existence, relatedness, and growth (Alderfer, 1989), need for achievement, need for affiliation, and need for power (McClelland, 1965), and growth and hygiene (Herzberg, 1959; 1987). These theories have received strong support from previous empirical studies published in South East Asian and other countries, which reveal that effective training content consists of two significant components - TRGL (i.e., cognitive, affective, and psychomotor oriented) and TSRN (i.e., technical skills and personal attributes) (Bonnes et al., 2020; Andoh et al., 2022). The readiness of management to implement such training content through face-to-face and online media has improved TRMN to attend, engage, learn, and master necessary competencies that align with their job goals (Alias et al., 2019; Twase et al., 2021). Next, TRGL and TSRN are positively related to OCB in the MFGCA. This finding aligns with the essence of the process and behaviour modification-based motivation theory, which interprets individuals' actions (e.g., trainees' attitudes and behaviour) as being influenced by different psychological viewpoints. For example, individuals' behaviour is a function of their consequences (Skinner, 1953, 1957), their expectancy and instrumentality inspire individuals' actions and valence (Vroom, 1973), and individuals' behaviour is stimulated by the perceptions of fair treatment in the distribution and exchange of resources (Adams, 1963; 1965), and individuals' actions are encouraged by their goals (Locke & Latham, 1990; Locke, 2000).

Secondly, previous studies on workplace training in South East Asia and other countries have supported the idea that a well-designed training programme should consist of two crucial dimensions: TRGL (i.e., cognitive, affective, and psychomotor aspects) and TSRN (i.e., technical

skills and personal attributes). The willingness of management to implement such training programmes using face-to-face and online methods has been a significant factor in determining OCB (e.g., voluntarily performing routine and beyond normal job duties) (Alias et al., 2019; Elumalai et al., 2020; Mohamad et al., 2020).

Thirdly, the relationship between training content and OCB is positively mediated by TRMN in the MFGCA. This finding is also supported by the key principle of Adult Learning Theory (Knowles, 1984), which suggests that successful training designs have two common features: TRGL and TSRN. The main principle of this theory is consistent with previous studies on workplace training in South East Asian and other countries, which shed light on the crucial mediating role of TRMN in the workplace. It reveals that the ability of management to properly implement TRGL and TSRN through face-to-face and online training programmes has strongly motivated TRMN to attend, participate, learn, and master necessary competencies. As a result, this motivation may lead to outstanding OCB in organisations (Mohd Zainol et al., 2015; Mohd Zainol et al., 2017; Rahman et al., 2021). In summary, this study has acknowledged the mediating role of TRMN in the training management models of the sample organisations and has also supported and expanded previous studies mainly conducted in South East Asian and other countries.

CONCLUSION

The present study aimed to test a research model and hypotheses developed from the training management literature. The validity and reliability of the measurement model were confirmed. The results of the structural equation modelling showed that TRMN and OCB are significant outcomes of TRGL and TSRN. Therefore, TRMN positively mediates the effect of TRGL and TSRN on OCB in the MFGCA. These findings support and expand upon previous studies on training management primarily conducted in South East Asian and other countries. In the South East Asian context, TRMN should be viewed as a critical driver of the training management domain. It suggests that managers' ability to design and deliver face-to-face and online training content will strongly enhance positive employee attitudes and behaviour, ultimately leading to improved organisational sustainability in globalisation and a challenging economy.

Although this study is the first attempt to assess the determinants and outcomes of trainees' motivation in the MFGCA, the conclusions should be interpreted cautiously due to conceptual and methodological limitations. Firstly, the cross-sectional study design only explains respondents' reactions to the variables of interest. Secondly, this study did not examine the connections between specific components for the variables of interest. Thirdly, the sample was limited to personnel who

have worked for the MFGCA in West Malaysia. Finally, the purposive sampling strategy may not represent the characteristics of the entire population. Therefore, the generalisability of the study's findings to different organisations and circumstances is limited.

The current research provides some recommendations to strengthen further research. Firstly, future studies should consider specific significant demographic characteristics of the respondents, such as gender, age, education, position, and length of service, to comprehend better their reactions to the link between the variables of interest. Secondly, if researchers want to examine the efficacy of the hypothetical model between subsamples within the sample data, a longitudinal study may be explored in future research. Thirdly, future research should include both public and private enterprises to improve the effectiveness of the study's conceptual framework in organisational contexts. Fourthly, other critical features of training material, such as technical and non-technical skills, should be considered since they have been linked to trainees' motivation and OCB. Fifthly, additional aspects of trainees' motivation, such as the desire to learn and motivation to transfer, should be addressed because such dimensions have been examined in both commercial and noncommercial companies in previous research (Mohd Zainol et al., 2017; Mohamad et al., 2020). Finally, particular components of OCB, especially being willing to help colleagues voluntarily, offering assistance honestly, and doing valuable actions benefitting the organisation, should be given priority because they are extensively acknowledged in previous studies as critical connecting constructs between training content and trainees' motivation. The above suggestion should be further considered when planning future studies.

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