RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPERVISOR’S ROLE AND TRANSFER OF COMPETENCY: DOES MOTIVATION TO LEARN ACT AS A MEDIATING ROLE?

SOFIAH BONGOGOH

Kota Samarahan
2007
RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPERVISOR'S ROLE AND TRANSFER OF COMPETENCY:
DOES MOTIVATION TO LEARN
ACTS AS A MEDIATING ROLE?

By

Sofiah Bongogoh

This project is submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with Honors (Human Resource Development)

Faculty of Cognitive Science and Human Development
University Malaysia Sarawak
2007
The project entitled ‘Relationship between supervisor’s role and transfer of competency: Does motivation to learn acts as a mediating role?’ was prepared by Sofiah Bongogoh and submitted to the Faculty of Cognitive Science and Human Development in partial fulfillment of the requirements for a Bachelor of Science with Honors (Human Resource Development).
ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

First and foremost I would like to thank God for His continuous blessing to me throughout my studies. Without Him I would never have the strength and confident to complete my studies.

I would like to extend my sincere gratitude and thanks to my respected supervisor, Dr. Azman Ismail for without his unlimited support, guidance, patience and advice, this project would never be completed. Thank you for the shared experiences, knowledge and skills on doing this final year project.

This study also would never be successful without the cooperation of the involved organization which is Dewan Bandaraya Kuching Utara, Sarawak (DBKU). My sincere appreciation goes to the management of Human Resource Department, especially to the Human Resource Manager of DBKU, En. Jumaini Bin Haili, the Assistant of HR Manager, En. Awang Mohammad, Pn. Zuraida Binti Abdul Wahab as the Head of Training Unit, Pn. Hanimah Binti Hamden and all the staffs of Technical Division for the help, information and the willingness to participate as respondents for this study.

This special thanks also goes to all my lecturers for their continuous encouragement, morale support and guidance in developing me with quality knowledge and skills. Special appreciation goes to Dr. Shahren and Dr. Rusli for being so helpful and understanding and not forgetting to all the staffs of FCSHD for offering a good service throughout the process of completing my studies.

To the most important people in my life, my Dad Mr. Bongogoh Matundan, my Mom Mdm. Justina Daranding, my brothers (James and Jim) and sisters (Josia and Jokiah), thank you for the constant love, prayer and support.

Special thanks to all the supervisees of Dr. Azman especially to Sheela and K.Sue for their help and support during the process of completing this research study. To my best friends: Debra, Sati, Gloria, Irene, May, Ika, Joyce, Enna and Kyro-thank you for everything! And last but not least, thank you to all the people who directly or indirectly involved in completing this final year project.
# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Acknowledgement</th>
<th>iii</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>List of Figures</td>
<td>vii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>List of Tables</td>
<td>viii</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table of Contents</td>
<td>iv</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstract</td>
<td>ix</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Abstrak</td>
<td>x</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction 1
1.1 Background of Study 1
1.2 Problem Statement 3
1.3 Research Objectives 4
1.4 Conceptual Framework 5
1.5 Research Hypotheses 5
1.6 Importance of the Study 5
   1.6.1 Importance to the theory 6
   1.6.2 Importance to the Research Methodology 6
   1.6.3 Importance to the Human Resource Practitioners 6
1.7 Operational Definition of the Term 7
   1.7.1 Support 7
   1.7.2 Communication 7
   1.7.3 Motivation to Learn 7
   1.7.4 Transfer of Competency 7
1.8 Conclusion 7

## CHAPTER 2: LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction 8
2.1 Elements of Supervisor’s Role 8
   2.1.1 Support 8
   2.1.2 Communication 9
2.2 Motivation to Learn 11
2.3 Transfer of Competency 12
2.4 Theoretical Evidence in Supporting the Relationship between Supervisor’s Role, Motivation to Learn and Transfer of Competency

2.4.1 Equity Theory in Supporting the Relationship between Supervisor Support, Motivation to Learn and Transfer of Competency

2.4.2 Expectancy Theory in Supporting the Relationship between Supervisor Communication, Motivation to Learn and Transfer of Competency

2.5 Empirical Evidence in Supporting the Relationship between Supervisor’s Role, Motivation to Learn and Transfer of Competency

2.5.1 Empirical Evidence in Supporting the Relationship between Supervisor Support, Motivation to Learn and Transfer of Competency

2.5.2 Empirical Evidence in Supporting the Relationship between Supervisor Communication, Motivation to Learn and Transfer of Competency

2.6 Conclusion

CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

3.0 Introduction

3.1 Research Design

3.2 Research Location, Population and Sample

3.3 Measures

3.4 Data Collection Techniques

3.4.1 Phase 1: In-depth Interview

3.4.2 Phase 2: Pilot Study

3.4.3 Phase 3: Actual Study

3.5 Data Analysis Techniques

3.5.1 Data Screening

3.5.2 Psychometric Assessments, Pearson Correlation Analysis and Univariate Analysis

3.5.3 Testing Mediating Model

3.6 Conclusion
CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

4.0 Introduction 24
4.1 The Result of In-depth Interview 24
4.2 Respondents’ Profile 26
4.3 Data Screening Result 27
4.4 Goodness of Data 29
4.5 Descriptive and Pearson Correlation Analysis 30
4.6 Result of Testing Mediating Model 31
4.7 Discussion and Implications 33
   4.7.1 Implication to the Theory 34
   4.7.2 Implication to research Methodology 34
   4.7.3 Implication to the HR Practitioners 34
4.8 Conclusion 35

CHAPTER 5: CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.0 Introduction 36
5.1 Research Summary 36
5.2 Limitations of Study 37
5.3 Recommendations 38
   5.3.1 Recommendations for the HR Practitioners of the organization 39
   5.3.2 Recommendations for Future Researchers 39
5.4 Conclusion 40

BIBLIOGRAPHY

APPENDIX
LIST OF FIGURES

Figure 1
Conceptual Framework 5
LIST OF TABLES

Table 1
Result of the in-depth Interview 25

Table 2
Respondents’ Profile in the Organization 27

Table 3
Data Screening Result 28

Table 4
Goodness of Data 30

Table 5
Correlation Matrix Result for the Research Variables 31

Table 6
Result for Stepwise Regression analysis with Motivation to Learn 33
As a Mediator and Transfer of Competency as Dependent Variable
ABSTRACT

RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SUPERVISOR’S ROLE AND TRANSFER OF COMPETENCY: DOES MOTIVATION TO LEARN ACTS AS A MEDIATING ROLE?

Sofiah Bongogoh

This study was conducted to examine the mediating role of motivation to learn in the relationship between supervisor’s role and transfer of competency. Data were collected through in-depth interview and survey questionnaires. For the survey method, 100 usable questionnaires were collected from technical employees who have worked at the Technical Division, Dewan Bandaraya Kuching Utara, Sarawak (DBKU). The outcomes of stepwise regression analysis show that the inclusion of motivation to learn in the analysis had increased the effect of supervisor’s role (i.e., support and communication) on transfer of competency. This result demonstrates that motivation to learn does acts as a full mediating role in training management model of the organization. In addition, implications of this study to training management theory and practice, methodological and conceptual limitations, as well as directions for future research are elaborated.
ABSTRAK

HUBUNGAN ANTARA PERANAN PENYELIA DAN PEMINDAHAN KOMPETENSI: ADAKAH MOTIVASI UNTUK BELAJAR BERTINDAK SEBAGAI MEDIATOR?

Sofiah Bongogoh

Kajian ini adalah megkaji peranan motivasi untuk belajar sebagai mediator dalam perhubungan antara peranan penyelia dan pemindahan kompetensi. Data kajian ini dikumpul melalui kaedah temu bual dan borang soal selidik. Sejumlah 100 borang soal selidik telah berjaya dikumpulkan daripada pekerja teknikal yang berkhidmat di Bahagian Teknikal, Dewan Bandaraya Kuching Utara, Sarawak (DBKU). Keputusan pengujian hipotesis menggunakan analisis regresi stepwise menunjukkan bahawa apabila motivasi untuk belajar dimasukkan ke dalam analisis ia telah meningkatkan kesan peranan penyelia (sokongan dan komunikasi) terhadap pemindahan kompetensi. Hasil kajian ini mendapati bahawa motivasi untuk belajar bertindak sebagai mediator sepenuhnya dalam model program latihan di organisasi tempat kajian. Selain itu, Implikasi kajian terhadap teori, metodolgi, batasan-batasan kajian, kerangka konseptual dan cadangan untuk kajian akan datang dibincangkan dalam kajian ini.
CHAPTER 1
INTRODUCTION

1.0 Introduction

This chapter has eight sections. The first section will discuss on the background of the study. The second section will discuss on the statement of problem. In the third and fourth sections, the objectives of the study will be discussed and conceptual framework will be presented. The research hypotheses and the significance of the study are discussed in the fifth and sixth sections, while the seventh section will discuss on the definition of terms for the important variables. Finally, the conclusion is discussed in the last section.

1.1 Background of Study

Supervisors are often viewed as an experienced leader, problem solver and role model at the first level of organizational management (Pfeffer, 1998; How, 1994; Hucyzynski & Lewis, 1980; Elangovan & Karakowsky, 1999). They work closely with their employers to design, implement and monitor the organizational plans, policies, and business aspects, including training programs (Comstock, 1994; Robbins & DeCenzo, 2004; How, 1994). In management training, supervisors are given major responsibilities to design and administer the various
types of training plans for upgrading employees’ competencies (DeSimone et. al., 2002; MacNeil, 2004; Simons et. al., 1999). In the design of training programs, supervisors often act as a training designer, training planner, leader, coach, or mentor where they have to focus on setting objectives, selecting suitable trainers, developing lessons plans, selecting program methods and techniques, preparing materials, scheduling the program and conducting training need analysis (Desimone et. al., 2002; Goleman, 2000; How, 1994). In the administration of training programs, supervisors act as a manager to ensure that the training activities are able to achieve its objectives (Adair, 1988; Desimone et. al., 2002; Elangovan & Karakowsky, 1999; How, 1994). For examples, they monitor and execute follow-up actions to strengthen and support the retention of the newly learned competencies.

In line with the era of global competition, many organizations have introduced structural changes through creating horizontal work structures, simplifying work processes and establishing innovative teamwork (Ellinger, Ellinger, & Keller, 2005; MacNeil, 2004). This change has shifted the traditional role of supervisors from just providing financial and budgeting support to establishing realistic learning expectations, encourage positive reinforcements, create a positive impetus for the training program, makes employees feel comfortable to attend training, and improve and develop employees’ competency (Golemen, 2000; Brinkerhoff & Montesino, 1995). The new roles of supervisors include providing the training itself and facilitate learning problems via on-the job training, coaching, mentoring for newly appointed staff and orientation training for new employees (DeSimone et. al., 2002; Mondy et al., 2002; Simons, Harris & Bone, 1999). If supervisors properly implement such roles, this may motivate employees to enhance organizational and employee performance (Rodrigues & Gregory, 2005; Mondy, Noe & Premeaux, 2002; Tsai & Tai, 2003; MacNeil, 2004).
1.2 Problem Statement

Early studies about training management have highlighted the duties and responsibilities of supervisors in the design and administration of training programs (Ellinger, Ellinger, & Keller, 2005; Guerrero & Sire, 2001; Tsai & Tai, 2003). For example, in a traditional training management approach, supervisors are given responsibilities by an employer to identify employee deficiencies which relate to daily performance problems (Pfeffer, 1998; Rodrígues & Gregory, 2005) and they are required to report the identified problems to the top management. The top management will be responsible to overcome such deficiencies in the design and administration of training programs (How, 1994; McMahon, 2001). In a contemporary management approach, training programs are designed and administered to support organizational strategy and goals. Under this approach, the role of supervisor is mostly focused on developing employees' competencies (e.g., knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes), ensuring the accountability for training designs (e.g., determining the content of the training program and lesson plans) and enhancing involvement in training needs analysis (e.g., identify employee’s competency problems (Goldstein & Ford, 2002; Golemen, 2000; Nijman, 2004). These findings have described the supervisor’s role in training programs, but its impact on individual attitudes and behavior is less emphasized (Chiaburu & Takleab, 2005; Goldstein, 2000; Nijman, 2004; DeSimone et. al., 2002; Tsai & Tai, 2003).

Recent studies about training management reveal that the roles of supervisor may influence transfer of competency (Tsai & Tai, 2003; Goldstein & Ford, 2002; Foxon, 1993). For example, support and communication in training and development programs are two important features of supervisor’s role that may increase trainees’ competencies (i.e., knowledge, skills, and attitudes) (Tharenou, 1995; Brinkerhoff & Montesino, 1995). These findings are consistent with the notion of Hersey and Blanchard’s situational leadership theory, which reveals that involvement of supervisors (e.g., provide guidance and direction, support and
participation) in training and development program may upgrade trainees’ competency at the workplace.

Further research in this area reveals that the direction and/or strength of the relationship between supervisor’s role and transfer of competency are indirectly affected by motivation to learn (Nijman, 2004; Cromwell & Kolb, 2004; Chiaburu & Tekleab, 2005; Holton 1996). For example, supervisors who provide good support (e.g. encouragement and guidance) and practice good communication (e.g. feedback and discussion) with employees have increased employees’ motivation to learn, this may lead to increased transfer of competency (Facteau et al., 1995; Tai, 2006; Lim & Johnson, 2002; Brinkerhoff & Montesino, 1995). These findings are consistent with the notion of Adams’ equity theory which reveals that fair treatment and Vroom’s expectancy theory (which reveals perceived valued outcomes) have motivated employees to increase their learning, this may lead to increased knowledge, skills, and attitudes (Goldstein & Ford, 2002; Yamnill & McLean, 2001). Although many studies have been done, little is known about the mediating role of motivation to learn in training management (Chiaburu & Takleab, 2005; Nijman, 2004; Baldwin & Ford, 1988). Therefore, further research needs to be carried out to examine this issue.

1.3 Research Objectives

The general objective of this study is to examine the mediating effect of motivation to learn in the relationship between supervisor’s role and transfer of competency.

The specific objectives of the study are:

a) To examine the mediating effect of motivation to learn in the relationship between supervisor support and transfer of competency.

b) To quantify the mediating effect of motivation to learn in the relationship between supervisor communication and transfer of competency.
1.4 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1: relationship between supervisor’s role, motivation to learn and transfer of competency.

\[\text{Independent Variable} \rightarrow \text{Motivation to learn} \rightarrow \text{Dependent Variable}\]

\begin{itemize}
  \item \text{Supervisor’s Role}
    \begin{itemize}
      \item 1) Support
      \item 2) Communication
    \end{itemize}
  \item \text{Transfer of competency}
\end{itemize}

\textit{Mediating Variable}

This framework shows that motivation to learn plays an important role as a mediator in the relationship between supervisor’s role (i.e., support and communication) and transfer of competency (i.e., knowledge, skills and attitudes). This framework guides the researcher to establish research hypotheses.

1.5 Research Hypotheses

This study will test two major hypotheses;

H1: Motivation to learn positively mediates the relationship between supervisor support and transfer of competency.

H2: Motivation to learn positively mediates the relationship between supervisor communication and transfer of competency.

1.6 Importance of the Study

The importance of this study is divided into three major areas: to the theory, to the research methodology and to the Human Resource practitioners.
1.6.1 Importance to the Theory

Existing theories have not highlighted the correlation between the supervisor's role in training program, motivation to learn and transfer of competency. For example, Hersey and Blanchard’s situational leadership theory failed to explain how supervisor's role in training programs may affect transfer of competency via motivation to learn. Therefore, this study is conducted to explain further such relations and is strongly supported by two major theories which are Adam’s equity theory and Vroom’s expectancy theory. The outcomes of this study can be used to strengthen existing theories in management training and development program.

1.6.2 Importance to the Research Methodology

This study will use literature findings, in-depth interview, pilot study and survey questionnaires as a main procedure to collect data from the studied organization. Such methods will determine the reliability and validity of data study and lead to the production of more accurate and less bias data.

1.6.3 Importance to the Human Resource Practitioner

Previous researches in this area have not sufficiently described the mediating role of motivation to learn in employees’ training program. With the findings of this study, human resource practitioners will better understand the mediating role of employees’ motivation to learn in training programs. Thus, they may improve training curriculum for staffs in the future. Besides that, it also helps managers and supervisors to change training policy and understand the roles as supervisor in training programs more deeply. Additionally, managers and supervisors may use the result of this study to enhance their roles in performance management as one of HRD intervention for employees’ performance problem in the organization.
1.7 Operational Definition of the Terms

1.7.1 Supervisor Support

A supervisor encourages trainees to attend training program, to participate in decision making, and guide trainees to apply competency learned in the workplace.

1.7.2 Supervisor Communication

A supervisor delivers information about training program, provides appropriate feedback, conducts discussion with trainees and provides explanations regarding the tasks to be learned.

1.7.3 Motivation to learn

The willingness of trainees to participate and get involve in learning new knowledge, skills and attitudes in order to increase their competencies in the workplace.

1.7.4 Transfer of competency

Trainees can apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes learned from training program to the workplace.

1.8 Conclusion

This chapter described the plan of this study and its importance to the theory, research methodology and to the HR practitioners. Chapter 2 would discuss the theoretical and empirical evidence that support the relationship between supervisor’s role in training programs, motivation to learn and transfer of competency.
CHAPTER 2
LITERATURE REVIEW

2.0 Introduction

This chapter consists of six sections. The first section explained the important elements of supervisor’s role in training programs. In the second and third sections the concepts of motivation to learn and transfer of competency will be discussed. The fourth and five sections discussed the theoretical and the empirical evidence in supporting the relationship between supervisor’s role, motivation to learn and transfer of competency. Finally, conclusion is made in the last section.

2.1 Elements of Supervisor’s Role

2.1.1 Support

Supervisor support is often defined as the extent to which supervisor encourages and helps in a way that employees are able to use the knowledge, skills and attitudes gained in training to their jobs (Nijman, 2004). Supervisor support in the form of positive reinforcement and encouragement to employees before, during and after a training program may affect employees’ self-satisfaction, strengthens their commitment to participate in training activities and
motivate them to learn in training programs (Scermerhorn, Hunt & Osborn, 1991; How, 1994; Hornby, 2000). Elangovan and Karakowsky (1999) claimed that such supervisor supports should be practiced in order to achieve the objectives of the training programs.

Supervisor support in training programs also encompass of their involvement in making employees’ pre-training decisions which may result in influencing employees’ motivation to learn in training programs. Furthermore, a supervisor who motivates and encourages employees to attend training programs may increase employees’ level of motivation to learn and leads to employees’ willingness to apply the newly acquired knowledge and skills from the training into the job (Xiao, 1996; Baldwin & Magjuka, 1997; Brinkerhoff & Montesino, 1995; Facteau et al., 1995).

Besides providing trainees facilities needed to assist competency transfer, supervisor support also includes giving employees opportunities to practice the newly learned KSAs and guides them to apply such competencies effectively at the workplace. Employees perceived that such continuously support from their supervisor significantly influence their motivation to attend future training programs (Elangovan & Karakowsky, 1999; Brinkerhoff & Montesino, 1995; Machin & Treloar 2004; Nijman, 2004; Foxon, 1993).

Research on transfer of training acknowledges that the more employees perceive organization support (i.e. supervisors support) in training programs, the more the value is salient to them, thus they are more likely motivated to participate and learn in training and development activities (London & Mone, 1999).

2.1.2 Communication

Communication is often referred to as the activity of expressing ideas or feelings and the process of exchanging ideas and information between one person
and group through symbols, actions, written or spoken words in order to impart information and ideas effectively (Hornby, 2000; Andrew & Baird, 1992).

Effective communication is the most critical and important element in conducting training programs such as On-the-Job training, coaching and mentoring (Sisson, 2001; Trenholm & Jensen 1992; Rue and Byras, 2004). Supervisors must possess interpersonal communication skills because they are involved in delivering training procedures, training contents, the tasks and the objectives of the training programs. They also must have the ability to explain and communicate the valued outcomes of attending training programs and its importance of learning new competency. Interestingly, this may motivate employees to attend and to learn in training programs and this feeling may lead to increased transfer of competency because employees are more likely know what it is expected from the training program and the valued outcomes their would received (Tai, 2006; DeSimone et al., 2002; Foxon, 1993; Gibb, 2003; Baldwin & Magjuka, 1991).

Apart from that, the practice of communication openness in discussion between a supervisor and employees is an important mechanism to ensure that trainees’ motivation to learn will result in a positive impact on the transfer of competency (Lim & Johnson, 2002; Yeong, 2000). Communication openness involves supervisor to encourage employees to ask questions in discussion session and other training activities. Thus, it creates a favorable as well as encouraging training environment. Such environment influence employees’ motivation to involve in the learning session and discard trainees’ fear of learning new competency (Robbins & DeCenzo, 2004).

Supervisor communication also includes giving appropriate and constructive feedback to the employees. It is regarded as one of the most important strategies by which learning is improved. According to Machin (2002), the provision of appropriate and constructive feedback encouraged individual learner to develop self-regulatory skills that enhance their ability to generalize
their learning beyond the original task. As a result, it increases employees’ motivation to learn and the willingness of trainees to apply what have been learned during the training to the job (Martocchio & Webster, 1992; Lim & Johnson, 2002; Rodrígues & Gregory, 2005).

2.2 Motivation to learn

Motivation to learn is referred to as employees’ willingness to initiate in learning activities, continued to involve in learning tasks and committed to learn (Nijman, 2004). The components of motivation to learn includes curiosity, self-efficacy, attitude, need, competence and external motivators such as active participation and reinforcement (Frith, 1997). Employees’ motivation to learn has been regarded as one of the key influences on the transfer of competency (Foxon, 1993; Nijman, 2004; Machin & Treloar, 2004) and low level of employees’ motivation is a major factor of failure in transfer of training (Foxon, 1993).

In training program, motivation to learn influences the willingness of employees to attend training programs in the first place and also impacted their motivation to learn new competency (Machin & Treloar, 2004; Noe & Wilk, 1993). If employees have learning motivation, and at the same time facilitated by a supportive supervisor, they are more likely have the motivation to transfer newly learned knowledge and skills into their daily job.

The learning principles affirmed that trainees must be motivated to learn in order to achieve certain objectives in training programs (Junaidah, 2001; Elangovan & Karakowsky, 1999). Motivation is an individual and unique function therefore the trainer or the supervisor must understand well and know how to motivate them to attend and to learn in training programs (DeSimone, et al., 2002). For example, employees’ involvement in training session (e.g., discussion, questioning and practice session) may motivate them to learn and increase their level of competency when returning to their job. Additionally, supportive
behavior of the supervisor may serve a powerful motivational factor of the employees to learn and increased transfer of new competency.

2.3 Transfer of competency

The Oxford Advance Learner Dictionary defined transfer as the act of transferring something from one form to another while competency is one’s personal attributes, knowledge, experience, skills, and capability that enable people to perform successfully in their jobs by completing tasks effectively (Hornby, 2000; Wilson, 1999). Competencies (i.e. knowledge, skills, and attitudes) can be acquired through talent, experience, or from training and development program. Such competencies are required to accomplish any given task at work. Upon completing a training program, supervisor needs to ensure that trainees will successfully apply the competency learned in their jobs and generalized it across context.

Transfer of competencies is defined as the effective and continuing application of the skills and knowledge gained in a training program to the job environment (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). That is, when there is evidence of changed work behavior as a result of training interventions it shows that training has transferred. Transfer of competency reflects successful transfer of training which concern on “the degree to which trainees effectively apply the knowledge, skills, and attitudes gained in a training program to the job” (Baldwin & Ford, 1988). As a result from attending training program, trainees can use the newly learned competencies to help them performing jobs better. Gradous (1991) stated that the only way the job can be performed is to use the skills and knowledge from training, and failure to apply the training results in an observable failure to perform.
2.4 Theoretical Evidence in Supporting the Relationship between Supervisor Role, Motivation to Learn and Transfer of Competency

2.4.1 Equity Theory in Supporting the Relationship between Supervisor Support, Motivation to Learn and Transfer of Competency

Adam’s (1963 & 1965) equity theory states that people want to be treated fairly in the workplace. Equity theory defines equity as the belief that employees are being treated fairly in relation to others. Perceived fair or unfair treatment has a significant impact on individual attitudes and behaviors.

Application of this theory in training management shows that employees who received fair support from their supervisors while applying and attending training programs would perceive equity. If individuals feel that they are fairly treated by their supervisors, this will invoke motivation to learn, which in turn, leads to increased transfer of competency (DeSimone, et al. 2003; Yamnill & McLean, 2001; Goldstein & Ford, 2002; Baldwin, 1992). However, if employees who considered themselves not being involved in training activities and did not received equal supports from their supervisors will experience inequity. As a result, they may not be motivated to learn in training programs.

2.4.2 Expectancy Theory in Supporting the Relationship between Supervisor Communication, Motivation to Learn and Transfer of Competency

Vroom’s (1964 & 1973) expectancy theory highlights that an individual will perform certain actions if he/she perceives such actions may bring valued outcomes. Application of this theory in training management shows that the ability of a supervisor to communicate the value of attending training programs and its importance of learning new competencies will increase employees’ motivation to learn (Farr & Middlebrooks, 1990; DeSimone, et al., 2003). Supervisors may positively influence learning motivation because it positively