

Examining the Effectiveness of Workforce Training in Enhancing Organizational Performance: A Case Study of National Pensions Authority (NAPSA)

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ARTICLE INFORMATION	ABSTRACT
Article history: Published: October 2026 Keywords: Effectiveness of Workforce Training Enhancing Organizational Performance	Workforce training is a critical component of human resource management, designed to enhance employees' skills, knowledge, and competencies to improve organizational performance. Effective training not only equips employees to perform their current roles efficiently but also prepares them for future responsibilities, fostering adaptability, innovation, and sustained productivity. This study examined the effectiveness of workforce training at NAPSA and its impact on employee performance and overall organizational outcomes, with a focus on identifying the types of training provided, methods of delivery, and the relationship between training and performance improvements. The study adopted an exploratory case study design. Chi-square tested was conducted to establish a correlation between bureaucratic delays and customer satisfaction. Thematic analysis was applied to analyse qualitative data. The study findings indicated that workforce training at NAPSA significantly enhances employee performance and organizational productivity. Most employees received technical skills (40%) and soft skills (25%) training, primarily delivered by internal trainers (35%) and on-the-job methods (40%), with skills frequently applied daily or on most days. Technical and soft skills were linked to improvements in task accuracy, time management, and communication, while compliance and leadership training improved problem-solving and teamwork, demonstrating that performance gains depend on the type of training received. Training also influenced organizational productivity, particularly service delivery, output speed, and accuracy, with departments like Operations and IT benefiting most. Rapid implementation of skills was associated with practical application, managerial support, and access to resources, emphasizing the role of organizational support. Training effectiveness was driven by relevance (30%), trainer competence (25%), and practical delivery methods, while trainer expertise and growth opportunities motivated skill application. The study concluded that workforce training at NAPSA significantly enhances employee performance and organizational productivity. Technical and soft skills training were the most common and closely linked to improvements in task accuracy, time management, communication, problem-solving, and teamwork. Employees frequently applied learned skills, particularly through on-the-job training, highlighting the effectiveness of practical, hands-on methods. Organizational productivity improved in areas such as service delivery, output speed, and operational efficiency, with Operations and IT departments benefiting most. Training effectiveness was influenced by the relevance of content, trainer competence, and employee readiness, while organizational support, managerial guidance, and access to resources accelerated skill application and maximized training benefits.

1. Introduction

Workforce training refers to planned activities that develop employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities for their current roles or future roles. Organizational performance refers to measurable outcomes such as service delivery, process efficiency, financial results, compliance, and client satisfaction (Parween, 2024). The link between training and performance is usually conceptualized as a causal chain: training changes employee competence; changed competence changes work behavior; changed behavior affects organizational outputs and outcomes (Pramon, 2022).

Across Africa, skills development and institutional capacity building appear on regional agendas. The African Union and ILO promote skills anticipation and the alignment of training with labour market demand. Development finance institutions support programmes that combine vocational training, on-the-job training, and employer engagement. Regional reports also stress that public institutions face pressures to modernize service delivery and to adopt digital systems, which raises demand for training in technical and managerial skills. The regional policy environment therefore frames workforce training as a route to improved public services and to economic transitions such as the green economy (Kim, 2025).

Zambia's public sector guidance and strategic plans include provisions for human resource development, training, and performance

management. Government documents, sector strategic plans, and public service guidelines require agencies to develop staff capacity, align training with service needs, and monitor outcomes (Phiri, 2020). NAPSA itself articulates strategic priorities that involve operational efficiency, financial sustainability, and improved customer service. These priorities imply a role for targeted training in areas such as pensions administration, IT systems, customer care, compliance, and financial management (Kaoma, 2021). National pension and public service reforms that introduce new processes, digital platforms, or expanded benefit types create a direct need for staff retraining and assessment of training impact (Yohane, 2021).

Where training is well designed and linked to workplace practice, expected effects include faster processing of claims, fewer errors, better financial controls, improved client communication, and higher staff morale (Milukutu, 2023). Where training is not linked to systems change or lacks follow-up, effects tend to be small or short lived. For NAPSA, consequences of effective training would likely include improved operational efficiency, higher compliance with pension rules, and better member satisfaction. Consequences of ineffective training would include wasted resources, persistent service bottlenecks, and risk to financial controls. These outcomes have fiscal and reputational implications for a national pension agency (Chisanga, 2022). Given the mix of global evidence and local policy demand, a case study of NAPSA can test how training design, delivery, and institutional arrangements interact to produce organizational outcomes.

1.2 Statement of the problem

NAPSA manages large pension contributions and benefits for Zambia's formal workforce, and current data show a compliance rate of about 41% with more than forty thousand claims processed each year (Kawimbe, 2023). These volumes place pressure on staff capacity, yet service delivery indicators show uneven performance, including variation in turnaround times and shifts in claims volumes between 2023 and 2024 (Phiri, 2025). Workforce training is expected to support stronger performance, and current public policy calls for mandatory training across the public service, while NAPSA's strategic plan identifies human capital development as a core requirement (Chisanga, 2022). Despite these commitments, there is limited evaluation of training outcomes at NAPSA, and existing documents outline training needs without providing measured effects on staff behaviour, accuracy, or processing speed. This gap creates uncertainty in budget decisions and limits accountability for capacity building.

1.3 Objectives

1.3.1 General objectives

To examine the effectiveness of workforce training in enhancing employee performance and improving organizational productivity at NAPSA.

1.3.2 Specific objectives

- To examine the relationship between workforce training and employee performance at NAPSA.
- To assess the effect of workforce training on organizational productivity at NAPSA.
- To identify the key factors influencing the effectiveness of workforce training programs at NAPSA.

1.4 Conceptual framework

The conceptual framework for this study explains how workforce training influences employee performance and organizational productivity at NAPSA. Workforce training is treated as the main input, which includes training content, delivery methods, frequency, trainer competence, and the resources provided. These training inputs shape employee skills and work behaviour, which act as mediating factors that determine how well staff apply what they learn in daily tasks. The framework assumes that improved skills and behaviour lead to higher employee performance, seen through task completion, accuracy, service speed, and adherence to procedures. Strong employee performance then contributes to organizational productivity, measured through output levels, claims processing volumes, reduced errors, and shorter turnaround times. The framework also recognises that factors such as supervisory support, technology use, and alignment of work processes can strengthen or weaken the link between training and performance.

2. Literature Review

2.1 The Relationship between Workforce Training and Employee Performance

The relationship between workforce training and employee performance is widely recognized in organizational research, as training serves as a strategic tool to enhance the skills, knowledge, and competencies of employees (Abdullah, 2020; Akdere & Egan, 2020). Employee performance is influenced by several dimensions, including task efficiency, quality of output, adaptability to change, and engagement in achieving organizational goals (Alsafadi & Altahtat, 2021; Al-Saffar & Obeidat, 2020). Workforce training impacts these dimensions directly and indirectly.

One of the most direct ways workforce training impacts employee performance is through skill development and competency enhancement (Blanchard & Thacker, 2023). Equally important is the role of soft skills in employee performance. While technical skills allow employees to perform their duties correctly, soft skills influence how effectively they interact with colleagues, supervisors, and clients (Akdere & Egan, 2020). In addition to improving skills, workforce training has a profound impact on employee motivation and job satisfaction, both of which are critical determinants of performance (Alsafadi & Altahtat, 2021; Anwar & Abdullah, 2021).

Firms that consistently invest in workforce adaptability and innovation are better able to respond to market disruptions, adopt new technologies faster than competitors, and maintain high levels of customer satisfaction (Goswami & Saha, 2021). The link between training, adaptability, and innovation is supported by research in organizational behavior.

2.2 Effect of Workforce Training on Organizational Productivity

The effect of workforce training on organizational productivity is significant, as productivity is closely tied to the skills, knowledge, and efficiency of employees (Parween, 2024; Yertas, 2024). Organizational productivity refers to the ability of an organization to convert inputs such as labor, capital, and materials into outputs efficiently while maintaining quality standards. Workforce training directly influences this conversion process by enhancing employees' competencies, improving work processes, and fostering a

culture of continuous improvement (Rustam, Astuti & Safitri, 2024; Salim et al., 2023).

Workforce training plays a pivotal role in enhancing organizational productivity through the development of employee skills, both technical and non-technical. Technical skills are essential for performing specific job functions accurately and efficiently (Škrinjaric, 2022). In manufacturing organizations, for instance, training on advanced machinery, equipment handling, and production processes ensures that employees can operate tools with precision, minimize breakdowns, and maintain production quality (Parween, 2024; Rachmad, 2025). Employees who are trained in modern production techniques can identify potential operational issues before they escalate, reducing downtime and preventing costly errors. Similarly, in information technology or service-based industries, training in software applications, digital platforms, and operational procedures equips employees to complete tasks efficiently, manage workloads effectively, and respond to client needs promptly (Shet, 2024; Roberts, 2020). These enhancements to operational efficiency directly impact organizational productivity by increasing the quantity of outputs delivered per unit of time without compromising quality (Yertas, 2024).

2.3 Determinants of Effective Workforce Training Programs

A fundamental determinant of effective workforce training is a thorough training needs assessment, which forms the basis for designing programs that improve employee performance and organizational productivity. Training needs assessment is the systematic process of identifying the gap between current employee competencies and the knowledge, skills, and behaviors required to meet organizational objectives (Blanchard and Thacker 2023). Without a clear understanding of these gaps, training programs risk being irrelevant or ineffective, which can lead to resource loss and limited improvement in performance. Needs assessment helps organizations target areas with the greatest impact and supports efficient resource allocation, focusing development efforts on employees who benefit the most (Beer and Mulder 2020).

Conducting a training needs assessment involves several methods to gather accurate information. Performance evaluations provide evidence of current skill levels and help identify areas that require improvement. Employee surveys and self-assessment tools give insight into perceived learning needs, motivation, and readiness for training (Bandura 2023). Job analysis offers data on job tasks, responsibilities, and required competencies (Blanchard and Thacker 2023). Consultations with managers and supervisors add practical insight based on direct observation of workflow challenges and skill gaps (Akdere and Egan 2020). By combining these data sources, organizations can build a full view of workforce capabilities and identify priority areas for development.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Research design

The study adopted an exploratory case study, utilizing a mixed method approach.

3.2 Target population

The target population for this study consisted of employees at the National Pension Scheme Authority (NAPSA).

3.3 Sample size

The study consisted of 100 employees at the National Pension Scheme Authority (NAPSA)

3.4 Sampling

Convenience sampling approach was used to select the study sample.

3.5 Data Collection Methods

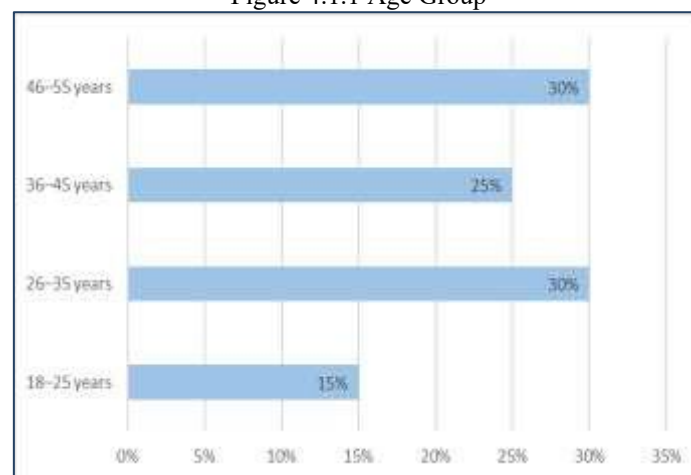
Interviews were primarily conducted face-to-face, with electronic questionnaires also being utilized to collect information on the research variables. The main data collection method for this study was a structured questionnaire containing closed-ended questions.

4. Result Presentation

4.1 Presentation of results on background characteristics of the respondents

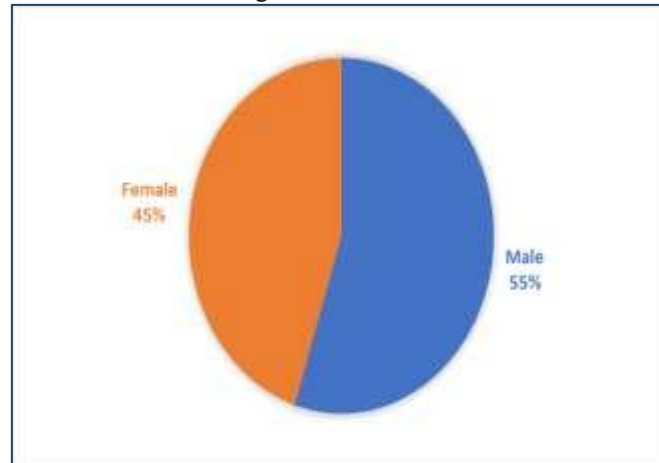
The majority of respondents (30%) were aged 26–35 years, followed by 36–45 years (25%). This indicates that most employees are in early to mid-career stages. The smallest group (10%) were 56 years and above, which may indicate fewer senior or long-serving staff in the sample.

Figure 4.1.1 Age Group



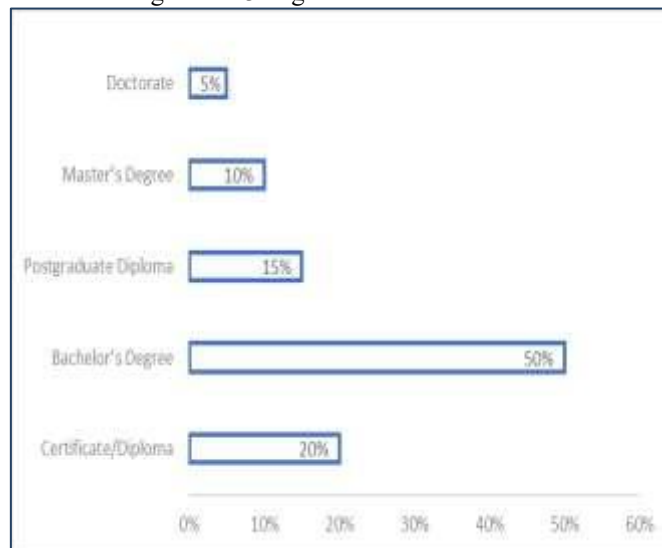
Male respondents comprised 55% of the sample, while females accounted for 45%.

Figure 4.1.2 Gender



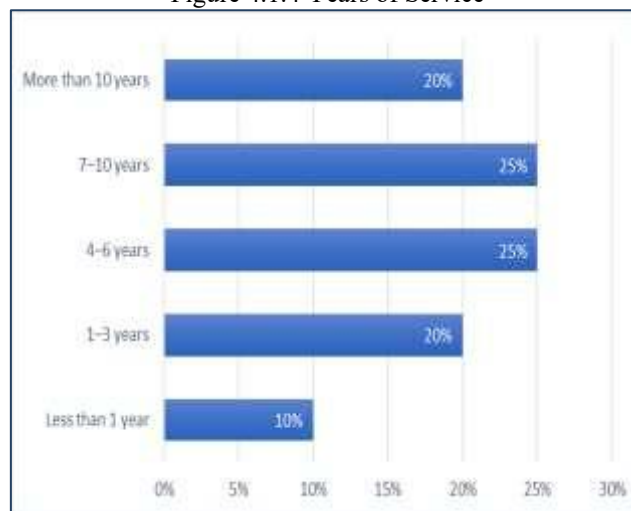
Half of the respondents (50%) held a bachelor's degree, followed by certificate/diploma holders at 20%. A smaller proportion held postgraduate or master's qualifications (15% and 10%, respectively), and 5% had doctorates.

Figure 4.1.3 Highest Level of Education



Employees with 4–6 years (25%) and 7–10 years (25%) of service were the largest groups, followed by 1–3 years (20%) and more than 10 years (20%). Employees with less than one year made up 10%.

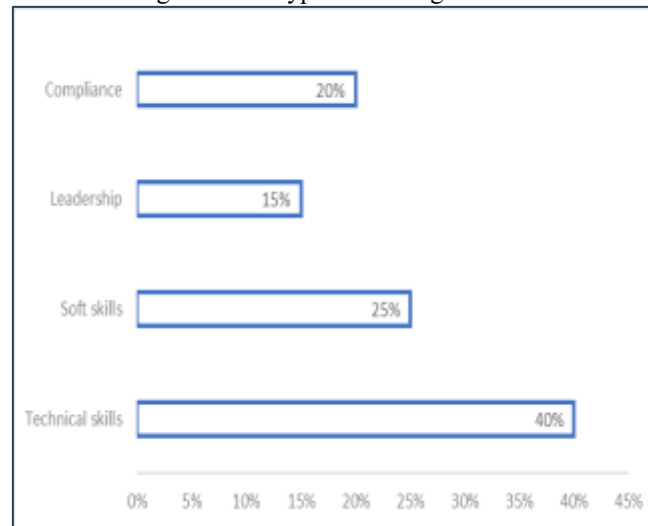
Figure 4.1.4 Years of Service



4.2 Workforce Training and Employee Performance

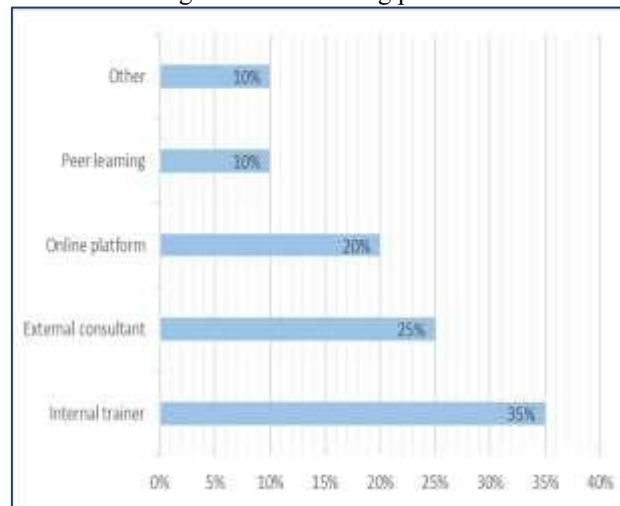
The results show that 40% of employees received technical skills training, 25% received soft skills training, 20% received compliance training, and 15% received leadership training. This indicates that most employees were trained in skills linked to core work functions.

Figure 4.2.1 Type of training received



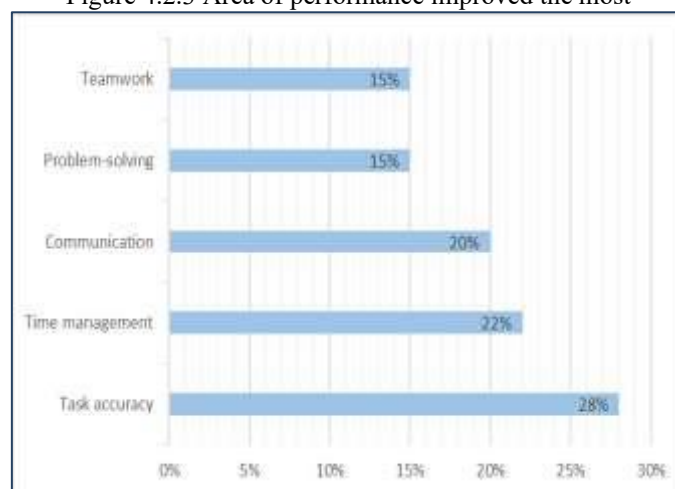
Internal trainers conducted training for 35% of employees while 25% were trained by external consultants. Online platforms accounted for 20%, peer learning for 10% and other providers for 10%. This shows that NAPSA relies more on internal trainers.

Figure 4.2.2 Training provider



Task accuracy improved for 28% of employees, time management for 22%, communication for 20%, problem solving for 15% and teamwork for 15%. This shows a wide range of performance gains.

Figure 4.2.3 Area of performance improved the most



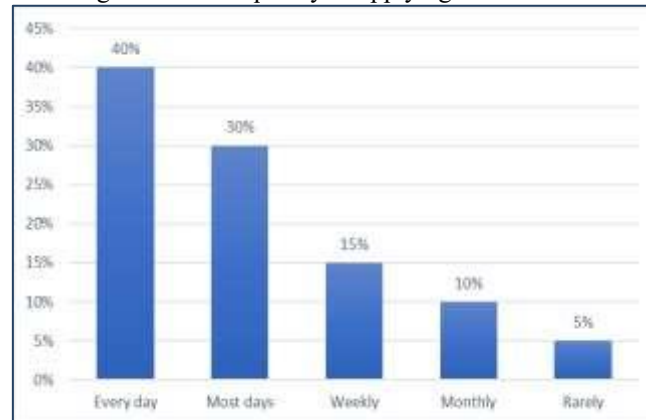
The chi square test showed a significant relationship between the type of training received and the area of performance that improved the most, $\chi^2(9, N=100)=90.00, p=.001$. This means that performance gains depended on the kind of training employees received. The significant association shows that technical and soft skills training were linked to improvements in accuracy, time management and communication, while compliance and leadership training were linked to gains in problem solving and teamwork.

Table 4.2.1 Relationship Between Type of Training Received and Performance Improvement

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	90.000 ^a	9	.001
Likelihood Ratio	71.613	9	.021
Linear-by-Linear Association	29.000	1	.001
N of Valid Cases	100		

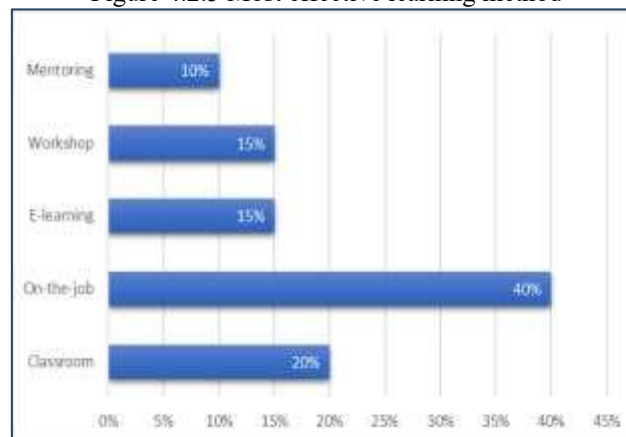
Skills are applied every day by 40% of employees and on most days by 30%. Weekly use accounted for 15%, monthly for 10% and rare use for 5%. This indicates frequent use of training skills.

Figure 4.2.4 Frequency of applying learned skills



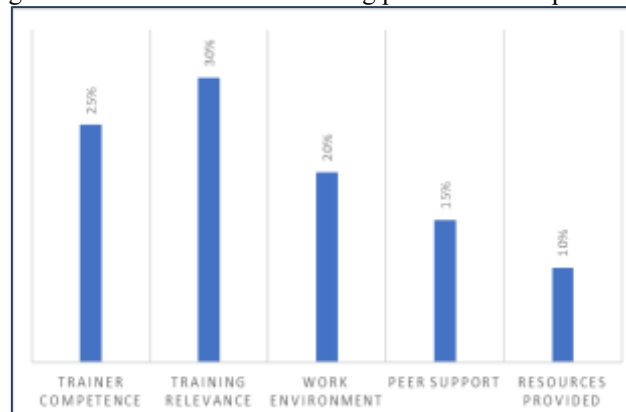
On the job training was selected by 40% of employees as the most effective method. Classroom learning accounted for 20%, e learning for 15%, workshops for 15% and mentoring for 10%. This shows a preference for hands on learning.

Figure 4.2.5 Most effective learning method



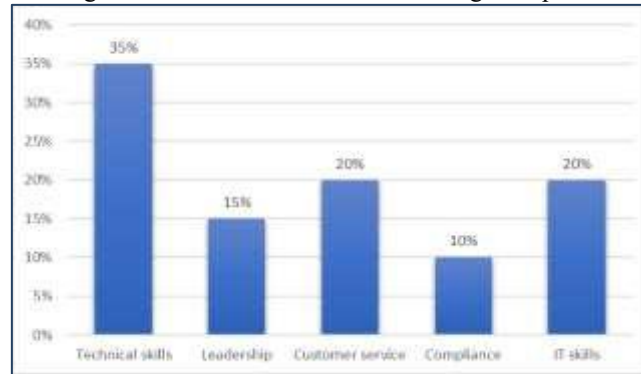
Training relevance influenced performance for 30% of employees and trainer competence for 25%. Work environment accounted for 20%, peer support for 15% and resources for 10%. This shows that relevance and trainer skill matter most.

Figure 4.2.6 Main factor influencing performance improvement



Technical skills were needed by 25% of employees. Customer service and IT skills each accounted for 20%. Leadership training needs accounted for 15%, compliance for 10% and other needs for 10%. This shows that technical and service areas remain priority needs.

Figure 4.2.7 Areas where more training is required



The chi square test shows a significant relationship between the type of training employees received and the areas where they reported needing more training, $\chi^2(9, N=100)=90.00, p=.000$. This means training needs varied by the kind of training employees had already completed. Employees who received technical skills training were more likely to request more technical support, while those who received soft skills training showed greater need for customer service and IT skills. Employees with compliance and leadership training indicated further need for leadership development and compliance updates. The significant association shows that existing training shaped future training priorities, and employees requested more support in areas that aligned with their core work demands.

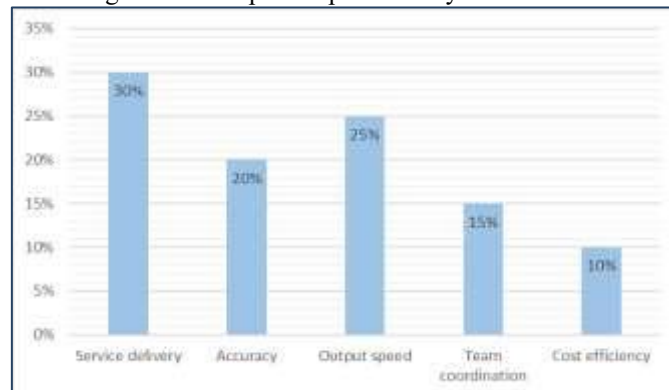
Table 4.2.2 Relationship Between Type of Training Received and Training Needs

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	90.000 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	71.613	9	.021
Linear-by-Linear Association	29.000	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	100		

4.3 Effect of Workforce Training on Organizational Productivity

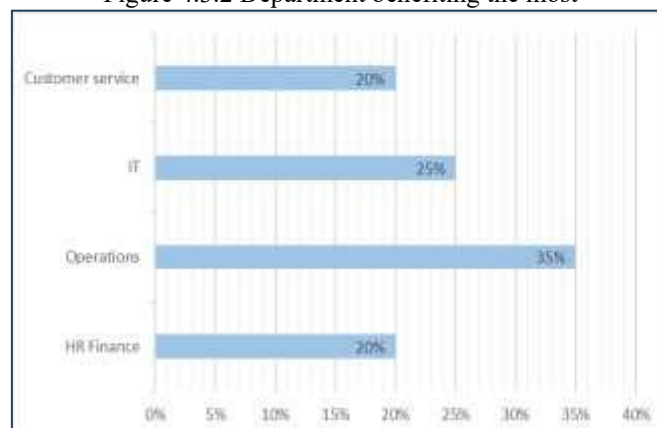
Training most affected service delivery for 30% of employees and output speed for 25%. Accuracy accounted for 20%, team coordination for 15% and cost efficiency for 10%. This shows that training strengthens service quality and speed.

Figure 4.3.1 Aspect of productivity most affected



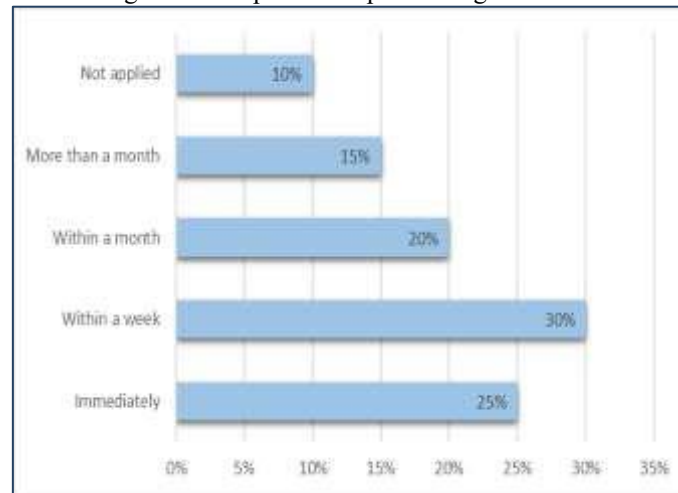
Operations benefited the most at 35%, followed by IT at 25%. HR Finance and customer service each accounted for 20%. This shows different levels of benefit across departments.

Figure 4.3.2 Department benefiting the most



New skills were applied within a week by 30% of employees and immediately by 25%. Skills were applied within a month by 20%, after more than a month by 15% and not applied by 10%. This shows that implementation is quick for most employees.

Figure 4.3.3 Speed of implementing new skills



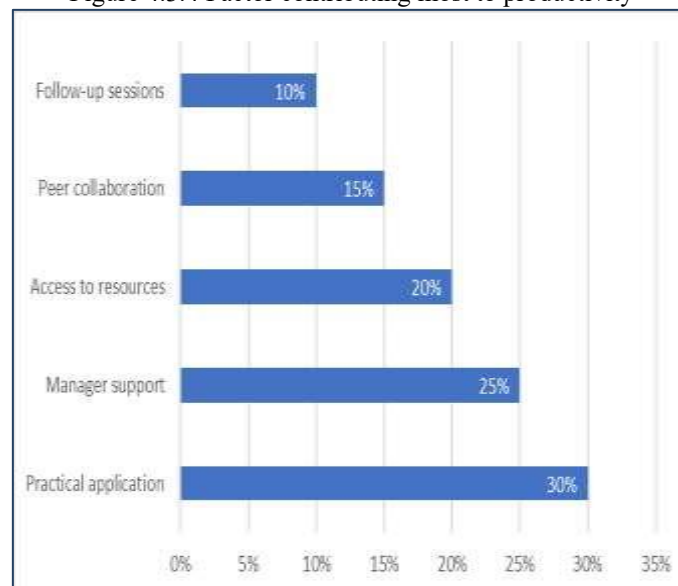
Based on the chi-square test results, there is a statistically significant relationship between the factor contributing to productivity and the speed of implementing new skills ($\chi^2 = 90.000$, $df = 9$, $p = 0.021$). This indicates that the way employees apply new skills is influenced by the support and conditions provided. Specifically, practical application was reported to contribute most for 30% of employees, followed by manager support for 25%, access to resources for 20%, peer collaboration for 15%, and follow-up sessions for 10%. Correspondingly, most employees applied new skills within a week (30%) or immediately (25%), while fewer took longer than a month (15%) or did not apply them (10%). These findings show that factors such as hands-on practice and managerial guidance are strongly associated with faster implementation of new skills in the organization.

Table 4.3.1 Relationship Between Productivity Factors and Speed of Skill Implementation

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	90.000 ^a	9	.021
Likelihood Ratio	71.613	9	.022
Linear-by-Linear Association	29.000	1	.022
N of Valid Cases	100		

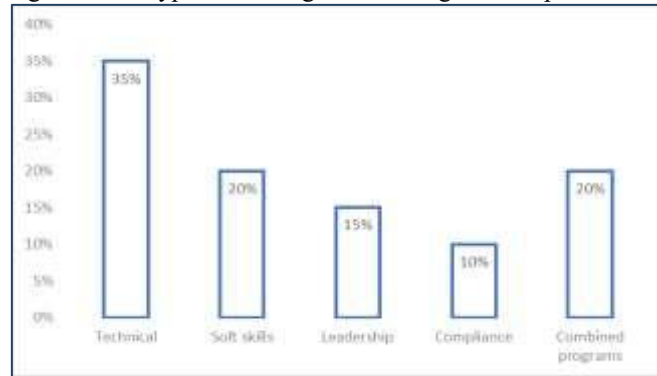
Practical application contributed most for 30% of employees and manager support for 25%. Access to resources accounted for 20%, peer collaboration for 15% and follow up sessions for 10%. This shows that practice and managerial guidance drive productivity gains.

Figure 4.3.4 Factor contributing most to productivity



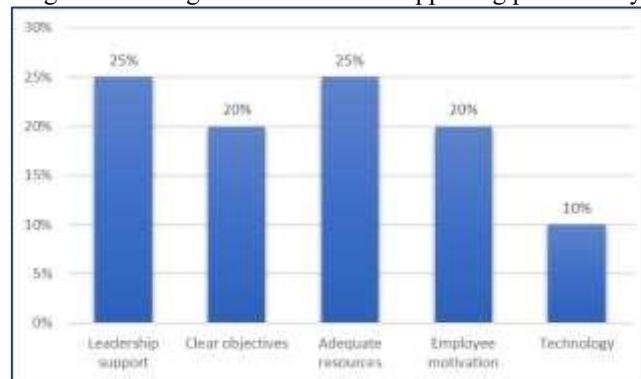
Technical training contributed most for 35% of employees. Combined programs and soft skills each accounted for 20%, leadership for 15% and compliance for 10%. This shows technical training has the strongest impact.

Figure 4.3.4 Type of training contributing most to productivity



Leadership support and adequate resources each accounted for 25%. Clear objectives and employee motivation each accounted for 20%, while technology accounted for 10%. This shows that leadership and resources are key support factors.

Figure 4.3.5 Organizational factor supporting productivity



The chi-square test results indicate a statistically significant relationship between organizational support factors and the department benefiting the most from training ($\chi^2 = 90.000$, $df = 9$, $p < 0.001$). This shows that the type of organizational support provided influences which department gains the most from workforce training. Specifically, leadership support and adequate resources each accounted for 25% of support, clear objectives and employee motivation each accounted for 20%, and technology accounted for 10%. In terms of departmental gains, Operations benefited the most (35%), followed by IT (25%), and HR, Finance, and Customer Service each accounted for 20%.

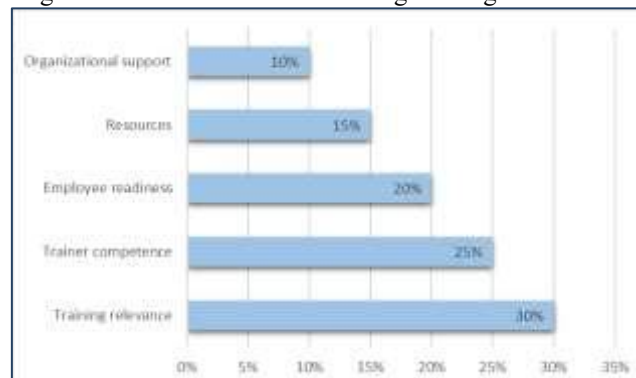
Table 4.3.2 Impact of Organizational Support Factors on Departmental Training Benefits

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	90.000 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	71.613	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	29.000	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	100		

4.4 Factors Influencing Training Effectiveness

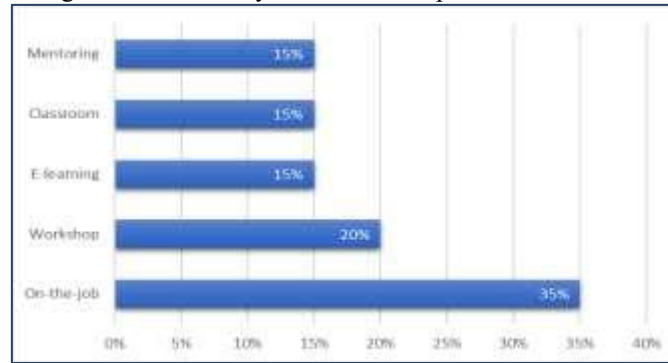
Training relevance accounted for 30% of employees and trainer competence for 25%. Employee readiness accounted for 20%, resources for 15% and organizational support for 10%. This shows that relevant content is the strongest driver.

Figure 4.4.1 Main factor influencing training effectiveness



On the job training was selected by 35% of employees. Workshops accounted for 20%. E learning, classroom learning and mentoring each accounted for 15%. This shows strong preference for practical learning.

Figure 4.4.2 Delivery method that improves effectiveness



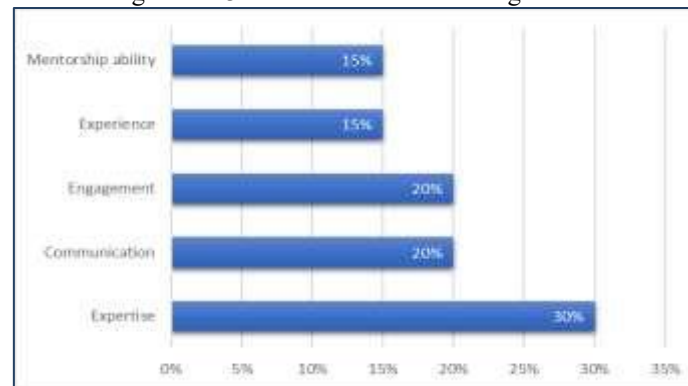
The chi-square test results indicate a statistically significant relationship between the main factor influencing training effectiveness and the delivery method of training ($\chi^2 = 90.000$, $df = 9$, $p < 0.001$). This shows that the effectiveness of training is closely linked to how it is delivered. Specifically, training relevance was identified as the top factor by 30% of employees, followed by trainer competence (25%) and employee readiness (20%). Correspondingly, on-the-job training was preferred by 35% of employees, while workshops accounted for 20%, and e-learning, classroom learning, and mentoring each accounted for 15%. These findings suggest that relevant content and competent trainers are most effective when delivered through practical, hands-on methods, highlighting the importance of aligning training design with delivery methods to maximize effectiveness.

Table 4.4.1 Relationship Between Training Effectiveness Factors and Delivery Methods

Chi-Square Tests			
	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	90.000 ^a	9	.000
Likelihood Ratio	71.613	9	.000
Linear-by-Linear Association	29.000	1	.000
N of Valid Cases	100		

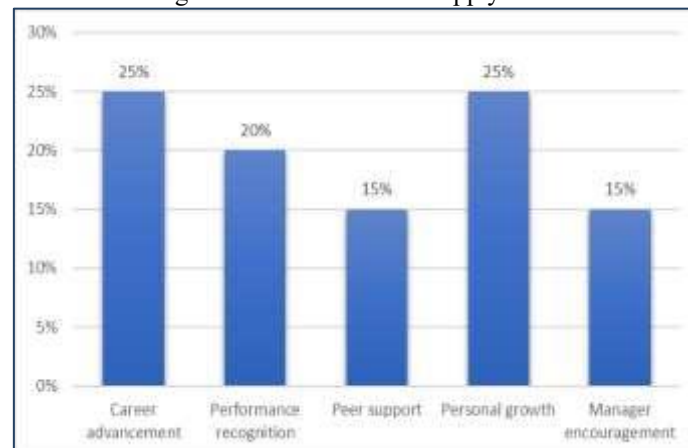
Expertise accounted for 30% of responses. Communication and engagement each accounted for 20%. Experience and mentorship ability each accounted for 15%. This shows trainer expertise is the top contributor.

Figure 4.4.3 Trainer attribute affecting success



Career advancement and personal growth each accounted for 25%. Performance recognition accounted for 20%, manager encouragement for 15% and peer support for 15%. This shows that growth opportunities motivate employees most.

Figure 4.4.4 Motivation to apply skills



5. Discussion

The study shows a clear link between workforce training, employee performance, and productivity. Most employees received technical and soft skills training, with technical training most common. Technical training improved accuracy, speed, and task execution, while soft skills training improved communication, teamwork, and problem solving. Compliance and leadership training supported decision making, teamwork, and adherence to standards. The results confirm that different types of training lead to specific performance outcomes and that targeted training improves how employees perform their roles.

The findings also show that training improves organizational productivity through faster service delivery, higher output speed, better accuracy, and stronger coordination. Employees applied new skills quickly, with many doing so immediately or within a week. On the job training was the most effective method because it allowed direct application of skills. Productivity gains were strongest in operations and IT, where leadership support, resources, and clear objectives were present. This shows that training works best when supported by management and aligned with daily work processes.

Training effectiveness depended on several key factors. Training relevance was the most important, followed by trainer competence, employee readiness, resource availability, and organizational support. Employees preferred practical delivery methods such as on the job training and workshops. Trainer expertise and communication skills influenced learning and application. Motivation to use new skills was driven by career growth, personal development, recognition, and support from managers and peers. Overall, the study shows that training is most effective when content matches job needs, delivery is practical, trainers are capable, and the organization provides support and resources.

6. Conclusion

The study concludes that workforce training at NAPSA has a significant positive impact on both employee performance and organizational productivity. Technical and soft skills training were the most common and were strongly associated with improvements in task accuracy, time management, communication, problem-solving, and teamwork, demonstrating that the type of training directly influences the area of performance enhanced. Employees frequently applied the skills learned, particularly through on-the-job training, indicating that practical, hands-on methods are most effective. Organizational productivity benefited primarily in service delivery, output speed, and operational efficiency, with departments such as Operations and IT realizing the greatest gains. The study further highlights that training effectiveness is influenced by the relevance of content, trainer competence, and employee readiness, while organizational support, managerial guidance, and access to resources accelerate skill implementation and maximize training benefits. These findings underscore that targeted, relevant, and well-supported training programs are essential for enhancing employee capabilities, fostering motivation, and achieving measurable improvements in overall organizational performance.

Acknowledgement

I am deeply grateful to the Divine Creator, the ultimate source of life, knowledge and insight, for guiding and blessing me on this research journey. I sincerely thank my research supervisor Ms. Lynn Kazembe, for her unwavering support, guidance and patience. It was an honor to work under her leadership and I deeply appreciate the valuable insights and wisdom he shared with me. Her expertise and commitment significantly influenced the results of this project.

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