

AN EMPIRICAL ANALYSIS OF NEED OF TRAINING PROGRAM OF IN-SHOP DEMONSTRATORS OF LED PANEL TELEVISION

Avinash Kumar Choudhary,

Research scholar, Faculty of Management Studies, MLS University, Udaipur

Dr. Pratibha Wasan,

Associate Professor, Jaipuria Institute of Management, Noida,

ABSTRACT

In-shop demonstrators (ISD) who sell at store are very critical for any retail company as the sales from store decides incentives for ISD and profitability for the company. In fierce market competition it becomes imperative for companies to have their best ISD team at store. The proposed research study will define how company train their ISD to be best in the retail sales. These companies spend time, energy and money on training these ISD. This study will define the need of training for ISD for better sales at store level.

Keywords- *In-shop demonstrator, Training, Sales Performance, Sales Productivity*

INTRODUCTION

There is fierce competition among electronic consumer durable companies selling LED panel television to be among top three companies in terms of value market share. With growing competition from multi-national companies it becomes necessary for Indian companies to make changes in their way of selling in order to contain the onslaught of MNC like Samsung, LG and Sony. They must devise ways in order to compete with these MNC. This can be through providing better training for their ISD, better features as per customer's need, better value for money and excellent post sales service. In early days of '90s there was no concept of ISD at store level and store owners or their staff was facilitating in selling television. With the entry of MNC companies in 1995 ISD concept started when all companies provided ISD at store to increase their value and quantity share in the stores. Each ISD was provided with daily, weekly and monthly target and there was regular supervision from sales manager to be No.1 brand in terms of sales in the store.

Sales training of these ISD is very important in order to make them effective salesperson at the store floor. Training is ongoing process as new products are launched by companies on regular basis.

The success of business depends on well trained employees. Organizations provide continuous training to employees to make them equipped with latest knowledge and skills (Aguinis and Kraiger, 2009). There are challenges of external environment hence continuous upgrade in knowledge and skills are required (Niazi, 2011). Continuous training to employees results in creativity and innovation. Usually organizations spend 2-3% on employees training and development from their annual revenue. According to Pettijohn and Pettijohn (1994), sales training is beneficial & necessary and this is supported by literature reviewed. It should be an ongoing activity and not one time activity as there is dynamic changes in the eco system.

Companies spend lot of energy and money on ISD to improve their product knowledge and soft skills in order to achieve their sales target in the store. ISD should be confident, well groomed, excellent product knowledge,

pleasant in communication. They should have good information of what their competition are doing in terms of sales promotion and their product features. This will make them confident when interacting with customers. These days customers are more intelligent and they know about the products before they come to store. This makes it more imperative for ISD to be smart when interacting with customers.

Characteristics of good sales associates are as follows:-

1. First 30 seconds he gets with customers is the most crucial time and if done well then sales is productive
2. There has to be clarity and simplicity in how he speaks to convince the customer
3. Grooming, look & feel of sales associates – As we know “the first impression is the last impression” for any sales to be closed. He should be well groomed and up-to-date with top class hygiene for himself and stores
4. Products should be displayed as per Planogram; POSM [point of sales material] should be placed at right place. Products should be at eye level of the customers and it should capture customer mind share
5. Introduce himself with pleasant smile and full confidence, eye2eye contact
6. He should be aware about the company background and various recognition and awards received by his company. He should introduce about his company and awards won by company to customers.
7. Product knowledge - He should have complete knowledge of the products and top 5 USP [Unique selling proposition] of the products along with competition product knowledge and their running schemes so that he can counter any queries about the products. Questions put up to customers should be open-ended and let customer speak more. He should pick up the buying signals and close the sales. Once the customer is convinced about the products he should immediately offer selling tools like consumer offer and finance options. He should close the sales before he think of other option
8. Sales associates should never tell anything negative about the competition
9. Consumer confidence – if Samsung has manufacturing unit in Noida and Sony don't have their manufacturing units then SPC should be confident about own products as products has gone through Quality Check [QC]
10. Customer should be re-assured about the products by making him confident that for customer he is the only window available. This way they make loyal customers for life
11. He should maintain note book of all the customers he has met in a day with their name, mobile number, product preference, queries, when planning to buy
12. He must make follow-up calls, at least three times, to close the sales and if he is not buying then reasons
13. Feedback mechanism should be well placed and they are the best person to tell about the product feedback after getting response from customers

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Following are given some important review of literature related to need of training, has been done by researcher.

According to **Marone and Blauth (2011)** the effectiveness of sales training efforts is not usually evaluated because 80 % of the companies do not measure their ROI (Return on Investment) as they don't evaluate training effectiveness. They think training as cost and not as investment for future.

According to **Kirkpatrick (1994)** it is worth to develop the time-saving and inexpensive training evaluation tool. It should cover the evaluation necessitating additional time, money and effort. Hence companies should devise methods which are effective to evaluate training to manage future direction of training.

According to **Vemic (2007)**, with the advent of external fierce competition, complexity in work, innovative technology, and uncertainty of turbulent society, training needs have become common in all organization whether it is private or public. There is a gap between what we study in school and what is required at work. Training is required to fill this gap. Knowledge is reliable source to deal with uncertain business environment which is earned during training. Hence it is important for all companies to give importance to training.

Sanders in 2011 gave new view point of training. According to him training was earlier considered as expenditure while now it is considered as an investment activity. For better organizational results it is important to invest on both hard and soft skills.

Karen in 1996 stated that training is an ongoing process and planning put effectiveness in training along with this participant's selection, administrative support, venue, moderator/facilitators and contents of training.

Byrne in 1999 agrees that organization follows modernization. In order to cope with organization need employees with updated skills and knowledge, this can be done through training and development.

According to **Adralin (2004)** training has now become strategic training as it serves long term strategic organizational goal. Training helps to improve organizational commitment; it improves employee's job performances to meet internal and external challenges. Employees' morale is enhanced and skills and knowledge are upgraded. Employee's problem solving skills are upgraded and build confidence in employees' personality. Due to these companies spend lot of time and money on training and development.

RESEARCH DESIGN

Researcher's studies have been divided into two phases, exploratory research design and causal research design.

The first phase is exploratory research design; it is the simplest and loosely structured with the objective of discovering the problem definition, hypothesis and research question. Post-hoc studies, incidences which might have occurred earlier, ex post facto research, in which whatever is happening or happened is reported. Secondary data sources were used, expert interviews and focus group discussion were conducted with the concerned respondents. Company's data and their process were discussed with industry experts. Industry books and magazines were studies.

Second phase is by causal research design. These are formal in nature and try to test the hypotheses which are plausible answer to the research questions. It explores the effect of one thing on another and more specifically, the effect of one variable on another. The purpose of the study is causal in nature. Relationship of one variable with another keeping other factors constant.

During study data has been collected through self-structured questionnaire method. This research was conducted with the help of a questionnaire measuring the need of training for ISD. The chosen research design mainly emphasizes on the discovery of ideas and development of insight into the subject under study.

For collecting data from respondents' convenience sampling procedure is used. Under this procedure it is taken care that responses are collected from only those respondents who are able to understand the necessity of the research. They understand that any fruitful outcomes will definitely benefit them in terms of better training for ISD.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

Analysis of relationships between demographic variables of respondents and need of training program by the respondents will be presented in this section. In order to investigate the relationship between demographic variables like Age, Education, Total working experience in years on need of training programs following hypotheses are formulated.

H₀₁:- There is no significant difference between the opinion of age and need of training programs.

H₁₁:- There is significant difference between the opinion of age and need of training programs.

H₀₂:- There is no significant difference between the opinion of education and need of training programs.

H₁₂:- There is significant difference between the opinion of education and need of training programs.

H₀₃:- There is no significant difference between the opinion of total working experience in years and need of training programs.

H₁₃:- There is significant difference between the opinion of total working experience in years and need of training programs.

1.1 CONSEQUENCES OF AGE AND NEED OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

Table 1: Test of Homogeneity of Age and need of training programs

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
Age			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.202	1	173	.654

Source: Primary Data

Table 2: One Way ANOVA for Age and need of training programs

ANOVA					
Age					
	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.167	1	.167	.616	.434
Within Groups	46.782	173	.270		
Total	46.949	174			

Source: Primary Data

According to the Table 1 & 2, Levene statistics of test of Homogeneity of age and need of training program is 0.202 and Sig. is 0.654 whereas mean square between groups and within groups are 0.167 and 0.270 and Sig. is 0.434 which is more than 0.05 hence the null hypothesis is accepted. It means there is no significant difference between the opinion of age and need of training programs. It implies for all age group of ISD training is fundamental and there cannot be any compromise with quality of training. Training is equally important for new joiners' and old ISD.

1.2 CONSEQUENCES OF EDUCATION AND NEED OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

Table 3: Test of Homogeneity of Education and need of training programs

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
Education			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
5.340	1	173	.022

Source: Primary Data

Table 4: One Way ANOVA for Education and need of training programs

ANOVA					
Education					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.072	1	1.072	2.908	.090
Within Groups	63.785	173	.369		
Total	64.857	174			

Source: Primary Data

According to Table 3 Levene's statistics is high i.e. 5.340 for education and need of training. From the above table 4, Sum of Square between groups and within groups are 1.072 and 63.785 resp. F value is 2.908 and Sig. is 0.090 which is more than 0.05 hence the null hypothesis is accepted i.e. there is no significant difference between the opinion of education and need of training programs. Education qualification doesn't have any correlation with need of training as school and college degree doesn't matter much while selling products and achieving targets at store level. For all what is important is that current product and competition product knowledge is important. Soft skill of ISD and how they interact with customer is what matters at store level sales.

1.3 CONSEQUENCES OF EDUCATION AND NEED OF TRAINING PROGRAMS

Table 5: Test of Homogeneity of Total working experience in years and need of training programs

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
Total Working Experience			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
3.266	1	173	.072

Source: Primary Data

Table 6: One Way ANOVA for Total working experience in years and need of training programs

ANOVA					
Total Working Experience					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	.000	1	.000	.000	.985
Within Groups	172.548	173	.997		
Total	172.549	174			

Source: Primary Data

Table 5 shows high Levene's statistics of 3.266 with df1 and df2 as 1 and 173 resp. Sig. value is .072. The above table 6 shows One Way ANOVA of ISD total experience and need of training with Sig. value as 0.985 which is more than 0.05 hence the null hypothesis is accepted i.e. there is no significant difference between the opinion of total working experience in years and need of training programs. The above test indicated that training is an important part of any organisations workforce to know the features of current products and what information to communicate to customers.

CONCLUSION

The study aims to analyse the need of training programs for ISD and all companies make every efforts to have the best ISD at store level to improve their sales and profitability. This is imperative in the face of fierce competition among consumer durable companies.

Above analysis interpret the importance of training programs for ISD and agreed by all that training is continuous process and it should be conducted as per need of ISD and company's requirement.

Under One Way ANOVA Test the results are tabulated between groups and within groups. After the analysis it was found that for most of the variables irrespective of variation in them they all accepted the fact that need of training programs for ISD is very important.

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