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Facilitating training transfer effects : the case of MBA programs in Vietnam

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Chapter 6

SUMMARY AND GENERAL CONCLUSIONS & DISCUSSION

"Education is a kind of continuing dialogue, and a dialogue assumes, in the nature of the case, different point of view".
Robert Hutchins (1899-1997)

1.   THESIS OVERVIEW

The challenges of emerging markets in a globalized economy require well trained employees. Therefore, employee training plays a critical role in developing employees to be able to adapt to new challenges and hence to achieve the goals of an organization. However, training is effective only if trainees successfully apply/transfer the newly gained knowledge, skills and attitudes to their job. Otherwise, corporate training is useless and a waste of money. This Thesis develops and tests a series of models identifying the factors influencing training transfer, aiming to enhance the application of training in job settings, the so-called transfer of training (Baldwin & Ford, 1988; Burke & Hutchins, 2007; Cheng & Ho, 2001; Ford & Weissbein, 1997; Pidd, 2004).

The literature has identified three groups of variables that influence training transfer: training design, trainees' characteristics, and work environment (Cheng & Hampson, 2008; Ford & Weissbein, 1997; Pugh & Bergin, 2006). Nevertheless, compared to traditional transfer of training research (analyzing singular effects of training design, trainee characteristics and work environment with transfer of training), the Thesis

takes different perspectives. *First of all,* we address the joint influence of the aforementioned factors on transfer of training. In addition to the system approach, we extend the above three variables commonly measured with the variable *transfer strategies*. Transfer strategies are cognitive and behavioral techniques, that include setting goals, analyzing work situations, preparing to deal with difficulties, identifying and using the necessary supports, and recognizing and monitoring opportunities to use acquired knowledge and skills on the job (Noe, Sears, & Fullenkamp, 1990). Learning in training does not automatically result in transfer (e.g. Hesketh & Laidlaw, 1997). Once trainees re-enter the workplace after training, they have to cope with the dynamics of the workplace which might support or inhibit the use of learned knowledge and skills, such as the negative attitudes of their co-workers (e.g. Nikandrou, Brinia, & Bereri, 2009; M. C. Taylor, 2000). Therefore, we argue that trainees need to use appropriate strategies, to transfer learned skills and knowledge, i.e a transfer training strategy (Burke & Baldwin, 1999).

The literature confirms the relations between using transfer strategies and transfer (Burke, 1997; Burke & Baldwin, 1999; Tziner, Haccoun, & Kadish, 1991). For example, Tzinner et al (1991) believed that paying attention to goal-setting and self-management as transfer strategies resulted in a significantly higher level of transfer. Machin and Fogarty (2003) and Ford and Weissbein (1997) revealed that the use of transfer strategies for facilitating the transfer process is a crucial prerequisite for transfer of training. A few studies proposing the importance of transfer strategies as a key mediator of the link between influencing factors and transfer outcomes. Examples include Gollwitzer (1999), Latham (1997) and Noe, Sears, and Fullenkamp (1990). Therefore in addition to the direct (separate as well as simultaneous) relationship between training design, trainees' motivation and work environment and transfer of training, we include the trainee's use of transfer strategies as a mediating variable, proposing it will influences the strength of the relation between the aforementioned factors and transfer of training. We hypothesize that training design, trainees' motivation and work environment affect trainee's use of transfer strategy, which in turn, influence transfer of training.

Second, before building the comprehensive model, a series of three studies is presented, each dealing with one factor (training design, trainee characteristics and trainees work environment), taking into account the mediating role of the trainee's use transfer strategy, that influence transfer of training. This deepens our understanding of the unique impact of each factor, and of how the results affect the main theories in the training field.

Finally, a comprehensive model including the joint effects of training design, trainees' characteristics and work environment is built based on a

series of our studies in which we have been focusing on the separate influence of the three aforementioned variables. It has been stressed that in order to fully understand the transfer of training issue, a system approach is needed, looking at the simultaneous effects of the training design, trainees' motivation and work environment. This suggests the need to extend the research base to a better understanding of whether and how different these factors jointly influence training transfer. In other words, we study transfer process not only by analyzing the separate influence of training design, trainees' motivational characteristics and work environment, but also by positioning transfer of training as a multidimensional model. This helps to better understand the transfer process. .

For studying the influence of *training design* (chapter 2), we add a *constructivist learning* theory approach, along with the traditional training design approach. Given the current training practices where to a minor or major extent constructivist pedagogy is implemented, it can be questioned if the traditional training design characteristics are sufficient to capture the design training programs. Therefore we argue the necessity of an extension of the traditionally measured design characteristics with characteristics that reflect the constructivist learning environments in current training programs. According to Vrasidas (2000, p. 6) "the basic and most fundamental assumption of constructivism is that knowledge does not exist independent of the learner, knowledge is constructed". The core idea of constructivist pedagogy considers learning as meaning making, and the negotiation of meaning.

In addition, we address the *trainees' characteristics* influence transfer of training from a *motivational perspective* (chapter 3). Pugh and Bergin (2006, p. 156) argued that "motivational factors seem likely to have a significant impact on transfer because of the influence that they have on cognitive engagement" which in turn, influences the transfer of training. They conclude that "there is enough evidence from various sources to view motivation as a promising lens for future research on transfer, and we encourage others to pursue this intersection of fields" (p. 157). This study investigates how different motivational factors influence the extent to which trainees apply in their workplace what they have learned.

With regards to the influence of the *work environment* on transfer effect (chapter 4), we take into account not only trainees' perception of the work environment *at the end of the training* (T1) but *also three months after the training (T2).* It is worth noting why we measure trainee's perception of the work environment both at T1 and T2. Generally, when entering training, most trainees already have their own characteristics such as specific acquired knowledge and skills, expectations, and motivations, especially perceptions about their work environment. In our MBA setting, the trainees

are employees working while following the program. Thus, they experience the support or the hindrance of the work environment already during the training. However, in the training process, the influences of content of training, the training methods and training design as well as interactions between the trainers and the trainees, and between trainees will influence these trainees' characteristics and perceptions. As a result, these interactions can shape their perception of work environment. When return to their workplace after the training period, trainees' perceptions of work environment might have changed. They might use acquired knowledge and skills to influence the organization directly or/and indirectly by demanding more autonomy, task variety, and job involvement (Kontoghiorghes, 2004). Thus, the period after training is considered the most important in facilitating positive transfer (Wexley & Baldwin, 1986). In other words, it is relevant to measure trainee's perception of work environment not only during the training but also some period after the training (Tannenbaum & Yukl, 1992). Figure 6.1 shows the empirical model of Thesis.

Figure 6.1 Thesis Model
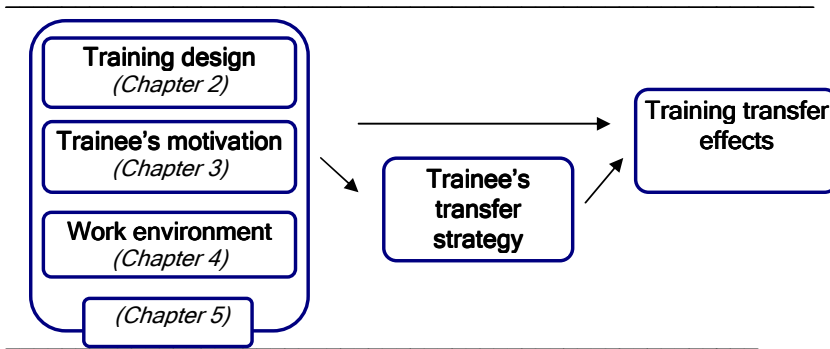
All measures were based on questionnaires validated in previous studies. In some cases they were adapted for the specific purpose of data collection in MBA programs. All measures were assessed by the closed-ended questions in a 5-point Likert scale.

The questionnaires were completed by trainees at two points in time: (T1) - at the end of the training program, and (T2) - three months after the end of the training. At time 1, we have measured (a) demographic variables, (b) training design, trainees' motivational characteristics and work environment and (c) trainee's use of training transfer strategies. At time 2, we have measured again (d) trainee's perception of the work environment,

(e) trainee's perception of the transfer of training and (f) trainee's supervisor perception of transfer of training. It helped to avoid bias and achieve comparability in the overall evaluation.

Data were collected from 305 trainees who were sampled from eight different part-time MBA programs in Vietnam. All trainees combined a job with an MBA study (for a description of the programs, see Appendix). 167 trainees answered the 1st survey, while 126 trainees answered the 2nd one. The majority of the sample was male (n = 102; 61%). The average age is 32. Moreover, 33 supervisors of the trainees answered the second survey.

2.   RESULTS

Chapter 2 explores the impact of *training design*, focusing on the influence of constructivist features of the design of the training programs as well as the mediating role of trainee's transfer strategy, on training transfer (figure 6.2). The results show that (i) the training transfer design characteristics, specially the presence of constructivist perspective, are positively related to transfer of training; (ii) the association between training design and transfer of training was mediated through the trainees' use of transfer strategies. Concretely:

- The effects of training design on transfer of training represented by three factors: (1) personal benefits of the training; (2) the use of interactions and real life events during the training directly affect the transfer of training and (3) training transfer design characteristics. Personal benefits refers to what the value-added of the course is for the trainees and represents constructivist principles: motivating them toward reflections and concept investigation; encouraging them making meaning of the learning content; taking into account their need; and providing materials and resources to support learning. This factor, together with interactions among participants and use of real life events factors represent constructivist principles.

- The relation between personal benefits and transfer of training is stronger when the trainee uses strategies to improve transfer. In other words, the trainee's use strategies play a mediating role in the relationship of training design with training transfer.

Figure 6.2 The effects of training design on training transfer effects
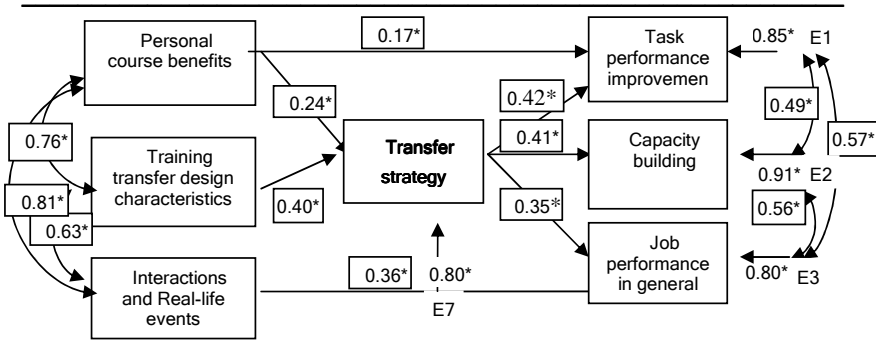
Chapter 3, concerning the *trainees' motivation,* highlights motivational aspects within MBA programs can influence transfer (figure 6.3).

Figure 6.3 The effects of trainee's motivation on training transfer effects
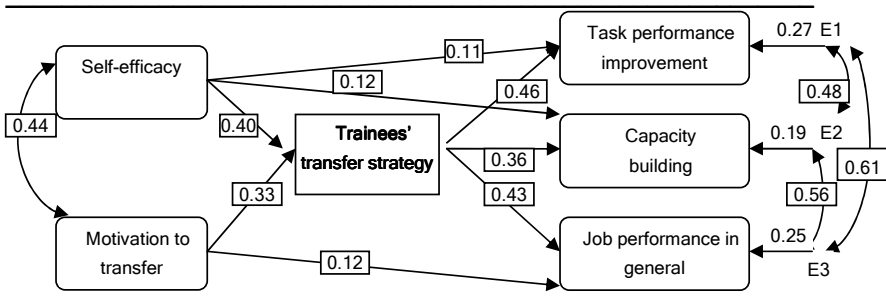
The results show that the trainees' motivation, concretely self-efficacy and motivation to transfer, are directly related to the extent of transfer of training in terms of task performance improvement, job performance in general and capacity building ($\beta=.11$; $\beta=.12$; and $\beta=.12$ respectively). This study supports Pugh and Bergin (2006) and Cheng and Hampson (2008) argument that studying transfer of training from a motivational perspective, contributes to a better understanding of the transfer effects of training.

Moreover, *transfer strategy* strongly and directly related to the extent of transfer of training in terms of task performance improvement, capacity building and job performance in general ($\beta=.46$; $\beta=.36$; and $\beta=.43$

respectively). The relations between self-efficacy and motivation to transfer are strengthened when trainees use transfer strategies

Chapter 4 explores the effects of work environment on transfer of training (figure 6.4). The results indicate that *work environment* (*preferred support, supervisor support* and *job autonomy*), both at the end of training and three months after the training, affect transfer of training, directly and indirectly with supervisor support as a powerful variable. Furthermore, the effect of work environment factors on the training transfer effects is mediated by trainee's transfer strategies.

Figure 6.4 The effects of work environment on training transfer effects
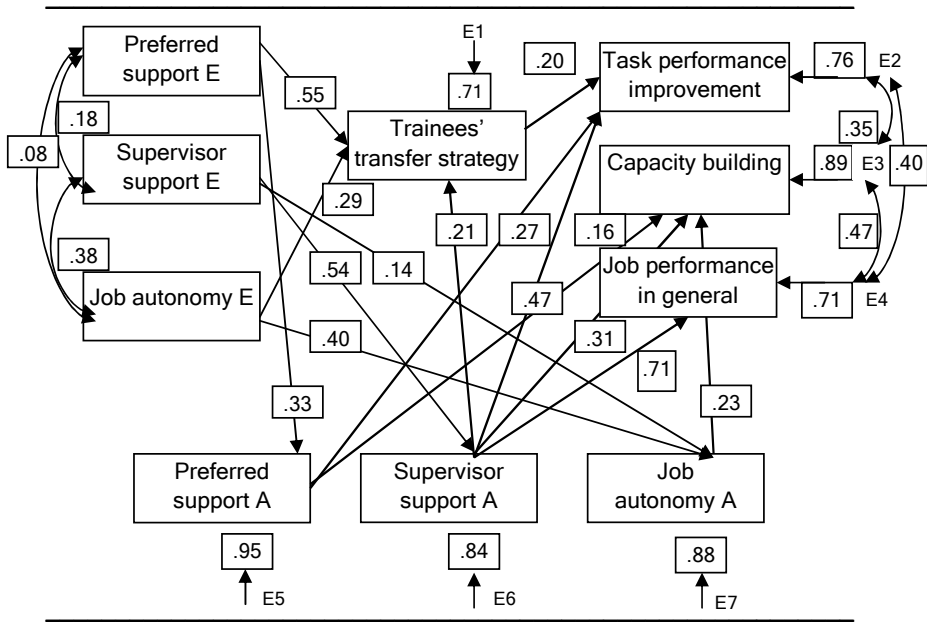
Note: E = End of training; A = After three months of training

The figure 6.4 shows that:

1) Work environment (including preferred support, supervisor support and job autonomy) at the end of the course (E) are significantly related to their perceptions three months later (A) (β=.33; .29 and .40, relatively).

2) All of work environment variables after training: preferred support A, job autonomy A and especially supervisor support A are powerful variables in affecting transfer of training directly and indirectly. For example, job performance in general (item example is "*In general, I think this training*

course has helped me increase my work performance") were directly predicted by supervisor support A (β=.71). Task performance improvement (item example is "*I can accomplish my job task better than by using new KSA")* was directly predicted by (a) supervisor support A directly (β=.47) (and also indirectly, β=.21*.20 =.04); (b) preferred support A (β=.27), and (c) trainees' transfer strategy (β=.20). Similarly, capacity building *(*item example is *"My ability to implement work in general is increased")* were directly predicted by supervisor support A (β=.31), job autonomy A (β=.23) and preferred support A (β=.16).

3) None of preferred support E, supervisor support E and job autonomy E directly influence transfer of training. Instead, they only directly influence preferred support A, supervisor support A and job autonomy A or transfer strategies. Meanwhile, preferred support A, supervisor support A and job autonomy A or transfer strategies directly influence transfer of training. For example, supervisor support E influences supervisor support A (β=.54). In turn, supervisor support A directly influence transfer of training (β=.47; 31; and 71 in terms of task performance improvement, capacity building and job performance in general, relatively).

4) Job autonomy A directly influences capacity building and job autonomy E influences performance improvement through transfer strategy

5) Transfer strategy is directly influenced (in order of importance) by preferred support E (β=.55), job autonomy E (β=.29) and supervisor support A (β=.21). In addition, transfer strategy influences directly the training transfer effects in terms of Task performance improvement (β=.20). Moreover, the relation between supervisor support A and task performance improvement is strengthened when trainees use transfer strategies.

Chapter 5 builds further on our previous studies (that addressed the separate and unique influence of *training design*, *trainees' motivational perspectives* and *work environment* variables on transfer of training), by exploring the extent to which the trainee's transfer of learning to the workplace is simultaneously influenced by the above factors (Figure 6.5).

The results indicate that the above combined factors predict transfer training effects directly and indirectly. Additionally, the model shows direct as well as indirect effects of trainees' use of *transfer strategies*. It indicates the important role of trainees' use of transfer strategies on transfer of training. The impacts of most above joint factors such as self efficacy, preferred support, and supervisor support on transfer are strengthened when the trainee uses transfer strategies.

Figure 6.5 Path model toward training transfer effects
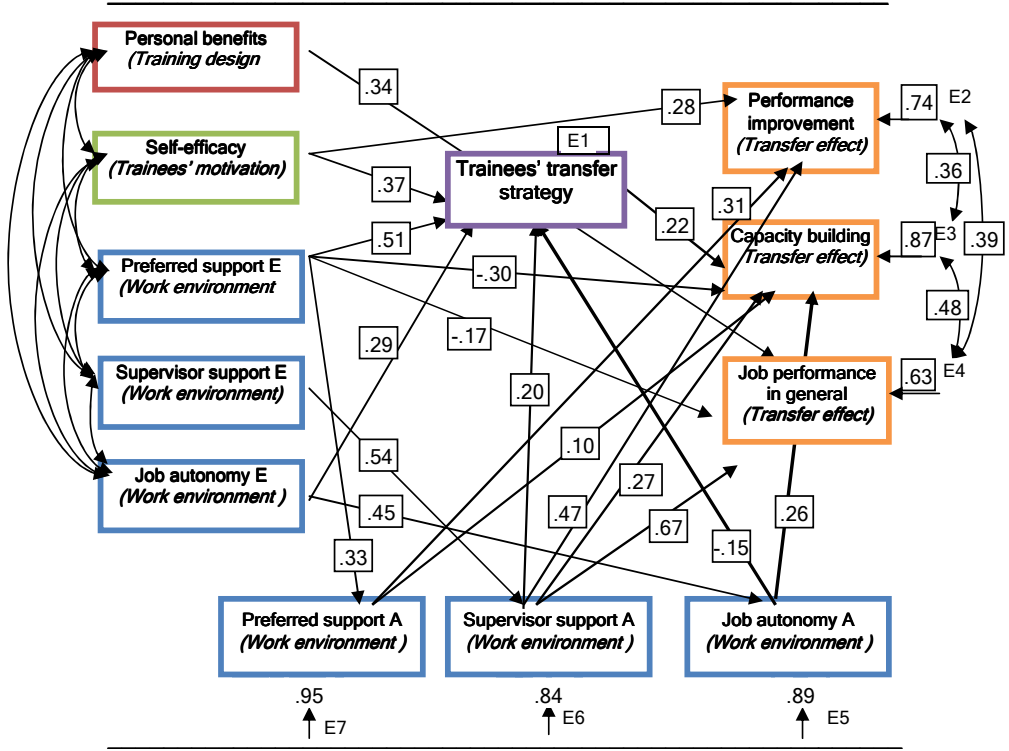
Note: E = End of training; A = After three months of training

The results of Figure 6.5 provide evidence that, (1) *transfer design* with *constructivist principle (Personal course benefits*) is powerful variables, and directly predict transfer of training in term of capacity building (β=.34); (2), *self-efficacy*, a *trainees' motivation* is directly and indirectly (through transfer strategy), influencing transfer of training. (3) *work environment* factors including preferred support, supervisor support and job autonomy, both at the end of training (E) and perceived three months after the training (A), affect transfer of training directly and indirectly with supervisor support A is a powerful variable; (4) *transfer strategy* directly affect transfer of training in term of capacity building (β=.22) as well as plays a mediating role in relationship of preferred support E, supervisor A and Job autonomy A with training transfer.

More precisely, regarding *training design,* personal course benefits directly and positively predict Job performance (β=.34). The personal course benefits refer to principles of *constructivist* pedagogy. The results confirm prior researchers' arguments for applying characteristics of the constructivist learning environments(Lea, Stephenson, & Troy, 2003; Pham, Gijselaers, & Segers, 2010, in press; Tenenbaum, Naidu, Jegede, & Austin, 2001).

Concerning the *trainees' motivation*, *self-efficacy* predicted the extent of transfer of training positively and significantly, both directly (β=.28 in terms of performance improvement) and indirectly, through transfer strategy in term of capacity building). The results confirm the role of self-efficacy in transfer of training (Cheng, 2000; Colquitt, Lepine, & Noe, 2000; e.g. Gist, Stevens, & Bavetta, 1991; Pham, Segers, & Gijselaers, 2010b; Tannenbaum, Mathieu, Salas, & Cannon-Bowers, 1991).

In terms of *work environment*, we found that *preferred support, supervisor support* and *job autonomy,* both at the end of training (E) and three months after the training (A) affects transfer of training, directly and indirectly. Especially, the work environment A play a significant role in influencing transfer even more than the work environment E, with supervisor support A is a powerful variable predict transfer of training. For example, supervisor support A directly predicts Job performance in general (β=.67); Performance improvement (β=.47) and Capacity building (β=.27). This relation is strengthened when the trainee adopt transfer strategies. Specially, supervisor support A directly predicts Capacity building (β=.27) and indirectly predicted through transfer strategy (β=.20 *.22 = .04).

We also found that while preferred support A positively and directly affect Performance improvement and Capacity building (β=.31 and β=10 respectively), preferred support E negatively and directly affect Capacity building and Job performance (β=-.30 and β=-.17 respectively).

Job autonomy E does not directly affect transfer of training, but indirectly affect Capacity building through transfer strategy, and directly affects Job autonomy A (β=.45). Job autonomy A positively and directly affects Capacity building (β=.26), and negatively affects transfer strategy (β=-15).

Transfer strategy is directly influenced Capacity building (β=.22). In addition, the relation between supervisor support A and Capacity building is strengthened when trainees use transfer strategies.

The results answer the research question that *training design, the trainees' motivational perspectives, and work environment factors, taking into account the role of the trainees' transfer strategies, simultaneously contribute to the transfer of newly acquired knowledge, skills and attitudes on the job.*

3.   GENERAL CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSION

There are a number of conclusions that are worth describing.

First, the results confirm prior researchers' arguments for applying characteristics of the constructivist learning environments (Lea, Stephenson, & Troy, 2003; Pham, Gijselaers, & Segers, 2010, in press; Tenenbaum, Naidu, Jegede, & Austin, 2001). Training design should concentrate on the factors which meet trainees' personal benefits, referring to what the value-added of the training is for the trainee in terms of motivating them toward reflections and concept investigation; encouraging them making meaning of the learning content; taking into account their need and providing materials and resources to support learning.

Additionally, the results confirm the role of self-efficacy in transfer of training (Cheng & Hampson, 2008; Colquitt, Lepine, & Noe, 2000; Elangovan & Karakowsky, 1999; Pham, Segers, & Gijselaers, 2010b; Pugh & Bergin, 2006; Velada, Caetano, Michel, Lyons, & Kavanagh, 2007). This means that the trainee's who possess a strong self-efficacy will transfer what they have learned to their workplace. This relation is strengthened when the trainee uses transfer strategies.

Finally, the results confirm prior research indicating that work environment variables including preferred support, supervisor support and job autonomy influence transfer training effects, directly and in directly, with supervisor support after the training is a powerful variable (Bates, Holton, & Seyler, 1996; Brinkerhoff & Montesino, 1995; Cohen, 1990; Cromwell & Kolb, 2004; Pham, Segers, & Gijselaers, 2010a; P. Taylor, 1992).

The results support the suggestions by Alliger, Tannenbaum, Bennett, Traver, and Shotland (1997) and Nikandrou, Brinia and Bereri (2009) that repeated measures of trainees' perceptions are relevant in order to better understand transfer of training.

One of the most striking findings of the present study indicates the importance of what happens at the workplace after the training. For example, it is surprising that supervisor support as perceived at the end of the training was not found to be related to either transfer strategy nor to training transfer, whereas supervisor support three months later is a powerful variables directly affect transfer strategy (β=.20) and transfer of training as well (β=.67, β=.47 and β=.27 in terms of job general improvement, performance improvement and capacity building respectively) and indirectly (β=.20*.22=.04) in terms of capacity building). Given the fact that MBA trainees work during the training, this effect might be explained by the possibility that during training, the trainees depend less on their supervisors in the workplace than they do when they return to their jobs (after training). Moreover, the power of trainees' perception three

month after the training might be explained by various interactions during as well as after the training shape trainees' perception of work environment.

The results also indicated that trainees who believe and know in advance that they would need support (preferred support) will apply their learned knowledge and skills to work (in terms of performance improvement and capacity building).

We found the impact of the trainee's job autonomy three months after on capacity building significant (β=.26), implying that the more the trainees' degree of freedom in executing of his/her job), the more (s)he develop his/her ability to organize and execute the work. This confirms prior research (e.g. Axtell & Maitlis, 1997; Nijman, Nijhof, Wognum, & Veldkamp, 2006).

Job autonomy A negatively affects transfer strategy (β=-15). This could be explained in terms of the nature of transfer strategy, which includes analyzing work situations, preparing to deal with difficulties, and recognizing and monitoring opportunities to use acquired knowledge and skills on the job. The more job autonomy the trainee had before the training, the more freedom (s)he knows (s)he will have following the training, so less transfer strategy is needed.

Preferred support E negatively affect Capacity building and Job performance (β=-.30 and β=-.17 respectively). Reasons remain to be elucidated, but there are several reasonable hypotheses. In terms of Capacity building, preferred support E directly and significantly influences preferred support A (β=. 33). Based on the correlation between preferred support A and E (r=.33), preferred support A directly predicts Capacity building, so it could be said that preferred support E is suppressed by preferred support A. Again, the results confirm the importance of what happens at the workplace after the training (Kontoghiorghes, 2004; Tannenbaum & Yukl, 1992; Vermeulen, 2002; Wexley & Baldwin, 1986) and support the suggestions by Alliger, Tannenbau, Bennett, Traver and Shotland (1997) and Nikandrou, Brinia and Bereri (2009) that repeated measures of trainees' perceptions are relevant in order to better understand transfer of training.

Similarly, preferred support E negatively affecting job performance (β=-17) might be explained by the nature of preferred support. Trainees need to have support to apply their learned knowledge and skills. Given the fact that most MBA trainees work during the training, they may (as part of their transfer strategy) ask for the needed support at work, and this might conflict with a supervisor's notion that, on the contrary, training will result in a need for less support.

In conclusion, while previous transfer of training models such as the pivotal Holton, Bates and Ruona (2000) model have been presenting a

large set of influential variables, our study, nevertheless, indicates that a limited set of variables such as training design, trainees' characteristics, work environment factors and transfer strategy significantly predicts transfer training. This study adds to the existing knowledge base by providing an empirical study indicates the validity of a model that present a simultaneous joint influence of these factors on transfer of training. This study might stimulate further research using a complete conceptualization of such factors to predict training transfer. It provides empirical evidence to the aforementioned theoretical models.

The results of this study supported the findings of some previous studies while at the same time gave some new insights in the impact of transfer strategies, training design, trainees' characteristics, and work environment on transfer of training field. *First,* the study results confirm the mediating role of transfer strategy in the relation other factors influencing training transfer. Using transfer strategies will strengthen the relation between the training design, trainees' characteristics and work environment and transfer effects. *Second,* the study extends 11 items for questionnaire measuring the transfer effect. While a number of former studies have used often with very few items, this addition strengthen self-report measure with a more robust instrument. Besides, the present study adds a preferred support construct in the set of work environment components. This evaluative addition presents a milestone and an additional tool for measuring training transfer. The present findings provide empirical evidence that the more comprehensive the characteristics assessment, the better. *Third*, opposite of previous studies uses self report questionnaires to measure training transfer, we have measured transfer by trainees' supervisor as well. It helped to reduce the possibility of common method bias and to increase the reliability and validity of the relationships examined. *Finally*, with regards to methodology, while most of the cited transfer of training research has used trainees' perception of work environment either at the end of training or after training, this study uses both in two periods of time. Based on the results of this study, we can argue that in order to better understand the effect of transfer of training, we need to conduct follow-up assessments after the training for repeated measures of trainees' perceptions.

4.   IMPLICATIONS OF THE RESEARCH FOR MBA PROGRAMS AND RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FURTHER TRAINING PROGRAMS

This study has several practical implications for improving MBA programs in order to enhance transfer of training. They are even more

important because the marketplace for MBA is highly competitive, demanding from MBA suppliers to offer programs which add value to trainee's competencies.

First of all, if the training design is designed based on *constructivist learning theory approach* (i.e. bring personal benefits to trainees), it will affect trainees' linking up the course content with their daily work, in turns, it's much more likely transfer training (increase job performance in general). MBA trainees are experienced professionals. They enter MBA course in order to improve their job performance. Therefore, Training Providers should design training program using this approach to enhance transfer. Moreover, while both trainers and trainees should be open to negotiating the instructional goals and objectives, trainees' supervisors should also participate in these negotiations to facilitate trainees learning and maximize the training effects. The more line managers consider training is useful for trainees, the more support they will facilitate trainees to transfer, because they understand that it will help to increase trainees' contribution to their organizations. .

Second, the use of *transfer strategies* strengthens transfer of training. Training Providers and Supervisors should encourage MBA trainees to formulate their transfer strategies during the training and after training. Supervisors should allow and reward trainees to use transfer strategies to apply learning on the job. This helps motivate trainees to apply new knowledge and skills performance in general). By doing do, supervisors positively influence trainees' confidence to learn new skills as well as their ability to transfer the new skills to the job

Third, the results imply *self-efficacy* turned out to be crucial motivational factor, which give rise to trainees' transfer strategies, and in turn leading to higher transfer of training. Therefore, training designers and trainers should think about how to help trainees pursue their self-efficacy during and after training. Research has revealed that self-efficacy is trainable (e.g.Karl, O'Leary-Kelly, & Martocchio, 1993), therefore, in order to maximize transfer of training, faculty should train and regularly monitor trainees' self-efficacy and motivation to transfer in their trainees. Trainees' self-efficacy can be increased before they attend the training by providing them with training-related information, such as the importance of training, training content, training method or training environment (Tai, 2006).

Specifically, it also indicates that to maximize return on training, trainers should regularly monitor trainees' self-efficacy. Line managers should encourage their employees with high self-efficacy to become training candidates. Especially, line managers are advised to work with the employee to choose the best MBA provider where training is designed to encourage the particular trainee's self-efficacy. This will help ensure that

trainees apply to their job the learned knowledge and skills during and after training as well.

Fourth, with regard to *work environment,* the important role of preferred support, supervisor support and job autonomy at the end the training as well as after the training the results demonstrate the practical implications: Supervisor should recognize that trainees who believe and know in advance that they would needed support, and who have job autonomy will apply their learned knowledge and skills to work. It is also important for organizations to be aware of their responsibility in making transfer happen by letting trainees know that they will receive the support from the organization (preferred support), supervisor and job autonomy to successfully transfer the training. Therefore, supervisors as well as organizations should facilitate trainees during and after training, respond to trainees' need support, and ensure that trainees have opportunities to practice and apply newly learning on the job. Supervisors with positive perceptions toward support experience better transfer outcomes than managers who do not. The role of Supervisor after the training importantly related to the level of transfer outcome because out results indicate that how trainees perceive the work environment three months after training is a stronger indicator of transfer of training than trainees' perceptions of supervisor support at the end the training. The result also implies that the more the trainees' degree of freedom in executing his/her job), the greater their ability to organize and execute their work, resulting in effective transfer. Therefore, supervisors as well as organizations should allow and reward trainee to exercise more autonomy on the job. Besides, trainers should train supervisors about how to (a) support trainees during and after training; (b) respond to their needed support and (c) allow them to exercise more autonomy on the job.

Base on results of this study, we formulate a number of recommendations for further training programs. They are presented in Table 6.1. The recommendations refer to (1) the encouragement of developing and using transfer strategies; (2) the design of the training; (3) the selection of trainees; (4) supporting the development of trainees' self-efficacy and monitoring it during the training; (5) supervisor and colleagues' support; and (6) job autonomy. By doing so, it brings benefits first, for organizations, companies (increasing job performance and benefit/cost ratio of training employees); second, for training providers (attracting the interest of organizations and trainees, and as a results, having more income); and finally, for trainees (enjoying more autonomy on the job, having opportunity to exercise new skills, and (as a result of higher productivity) higher income).

Table 6.1 Recommendations for Training Programs

Recommendations	For Trainers	For Supervisors/Organizations
Developing a training transfer strategy	- Encourage trainees to formulate and develop transfer strategies, during the training - Collect examples of training transfer strategy and present these explicitly as part of the training. - Helping trainees to be well prepared for transfer learning	- Allow and reward successful trainee to apply learning on the job - Letting trainees know that they will receive the support from the organization - Identifying organizational reasons behind the failure of application.
Designing training according to constructivist principles, focusing on trainees' personal benefits	- Training is designed to concentrate on constructivist principles (e.g. motivating trainees toward reflections and concept investigation; encouraging them making meaning of the learning; taking into account their needs and providing them with materials and resources to support their learning) - Be open to negotiating the instructional goals and objectives	- Work with trainers and trainees/employees on instructional goals and objectives
Acquiring and maintaining self-efficacy	- Allow for argumentation, discussions, debates among learners and with trainers - Training is designed to help trainees to pursue their self-efficacy during and after learning - Regularly monitor trainees' self-efficacy	- Encourage employees with high self-efficacy to become training candidates - Work with the employee to choose the best training provider where training is designed to encourage their self-efficacy. - Show trainees that they are believed having the ability to successfully learn training and utilize such new knowledge on the job. - Inform trainees that applying learning is valued by the organizations
Providing more supervisor and colleague support	- Train supervisors about how to support trainees during and after training	- Maintain facilitating trainees during and after training - Respond to their need for support - Letting trainees know that they will receive the support from the organization
Providing more autonomy on the job	- Advise supervisors how to allow to exercise more autonomy on the job	- Allow and reward to exercise more autonomy on the job
Selecting the right candidates	- Advise supervisors on how to encourage employees most likely to benefit from training to attend training	- Encourage employees most likely to benefit from training to attend training

5. WHAT IS NEXT?

The results of this study also indicate some direction for future research.

First, this study offers evidence for the validity of training design, trainees' motivation and work environment affect training transfer in a Vietnamese MBA context. Therefore, future studies in different countries and different training contexts are highly desirable, in order to strengthen the cross-cultural validity of the findings as well as examine the generalizability of our results. We will continue to test and validate our findings in our Marie Curie Project (FPT-People-2009-Intra-European Fellowship, FATT 255292) in the European countries settings.

Second, although this study has used questionnaires to measure transfer effects by trainee's self report and their supervisor assessment, we suggest looking for possibilities to implement ratings from multiple and objective measurement sources such as peers, subordinates and customers (360 degree assessment) in order to enhance inter-subjecting.

Third, as a next step in cross-validating a transfer of training model, in order to deepen our understanding of the transfer process, we recommend the additional use of qualitative research methods such as interviews. The results can highlight why and how specific training design, trainees' motivation and work environment aspect influence transfer of training.

Finally, although our final sample of 167 participants provided statistical power to test our hypotheses testing, including of larger sample sizes will enhance validity and generalization of the present findings.

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