What Kind of Employee Wants to Use Corporate E-Learning: An Empirical Case Study in the Financial Industry

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ABSTRACT

Despite the plethora of previous studies on the various uses of e-learning, there is a dearth of research on employees’ action to use corporate e-learning (ACE). The present study attempts to address this lack in literature by investigating whether individual factors such as self-esteem and need for cognition, and job factors such as job hygiene factors (JHF) and job motivation factors (JMF) applied from Herzberg’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory affect learners’ ACE. This study tests the difference between high action and low action learners. Findings indicate that high action learners have higher individual factors and JMF than lower action learners. The difference in JHF between high action learners and low action learners is not significant. From a practical perspective, the authors’ findings provide corporate e-learning providers with a heightened perspective into the possible actions of its employees regarding their use of corporate e-learning programs and platforms, which could offer organizations with important insights into human capital investment.

Keywords: Corporate E-Learning, Individual Factors, Job Factors, Job Hygiene Factor, Job Motivation Factor

INTRODUCTION

Enterprises have continuously emphasized and invested in employee learning and development despite the challenging economic environment in recent years. Of which, e-learning has steadily gained its position in enterprise training programs (Patel, 2010). Try to enhance the competitiveness of Taiwan through the effective use of e-learning technologies, similar to progressive, forward-looking and technologically highly developed country, Taiwan has the raised...
importance of ‘e-learning’ (Tsai et al., 2010). Through the adoption of e-learning program, companies not only are able to provide timely training materials anytime, anywhere and to any employee with substantial cost saving (e.g. eliminating travel expenses), but they can also effectively deliver personalized learning, improve collaboration and interactivity among trainees (Jones, 2007). With the obvious advantages of adopting e-learning, it is no surprise that the global e-learning market expected to surpass $49.9 billion by 2015 (Adkins 2011).

As beneficial as it may seem to the enterprises, developing a practicable e-learning strategy is not without hurdle. In fact, according to a study, e-learning related information systems suffer more than 30% of failure rates (Sela & Sivan, 2009). Moreover, reports showed that one of the reasons for the downfall of corporate e-learning is that the planners neglect to realize the differences of individual’s abilities and motivations in adopting e-learning (Weaver, 2002). Young and Ku’s study (2008) also dressed a fresh perspective on the extension of e-learning and try to find out what learners’ motivations were.

Prior studies provide effective ways of supporting this new trend in education, for example, based on negative critical incidents standpoints, Lin et al. (2011) develops a model to examine the critical drivers of learners’ continuance intention of e-learning. Tennyson and Sisk (2011) offer a dynamic systems approach to instructional systems design. Wang et al. (2010) present an evaluation model to evaluate the e-learning system by adopting socio-technical systems theory. Martinez-Torres et al. (2008) devised the extended technology acceptance model (TAM) in predicting a student’s intention to use e-learning. The results define a set of external variables with a significant influence in addition to the original TAM variables. However, there is little research on employees’ actions to use corporate e-learning (ACE).

In the present study, individual factors were introduced to investigate employees’ action to use corporate e-learning (ACE). Robbins (2005) showed that self-esteem (SE) and need for cognition (NC) are directly related to expectations for success. For instance, people with high esteem believe that they possess the essential ability to succeed at work. Hence, the two factors of SE and individual NC were considered in this study. Based on antecedent studies, two factors of job hygiene factor (JHF) and job motivation factor (JMF) adapted from Herzberg’s Motivation-Hygiene Theory were also considered. The two-factor theory has been applied to some Web services. For example, Zhang and von Dran (2000) suggested that hygiene factors are essential by ensuring that Web sites are functional and offer good services while motivation factors add values to a Web site by contributing to user satisfaction. In addition, the results from Liang and Lai (2002) have shown that hygiene factors are fundamental reasons to determine whether consumers would enter the e-market in the first place while motivation factors play an important role when consumers choose which electronic store to shop. Wu et al. (2008) adopt the two-factor theory and find substantial results that support the motivation for using a search engine. Likewise, given that corporate e-learning is a kind of Web service, there is a need for more in-depth research to investigate the difference of variables of corporate e-learning features corresponding to hygiene and motivation factors.

By knowing what kinds of employee intent to use corporate e-learning, corporate e-learning planners can focus on and improve the features that stimulate and strengthen an employee’s motivation rather than on enhancing aspects of the physical system’s performance that are not as highly appreciated by learners. Inspired by the two-factor theory of job motivation (Herzberg, 2003; Herzberg, Bernard, & Snyderman, 1959), we test the differences of job features among learners in terms of hygiene and motivation factors to test whether the factors can affect learners’ action to use corporate e-learning programs. Therefore, our primary research question is whether individual factors and job factors affect learners’ ACE. An empirical study
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