Chapter 8
A Study of Trainee Attitude and Satisfaction between E–Learning Training versus Traditional Training

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this chapter is to analyze the relationship between change in attitude toward computers and overall course satisfaction of participants. Of the 262 randomly selected participants, 64% completed the study. Data were collected using questionnaires and course satisfaction rating survey. Results of the study indicated that there was a statistically significant difference in overall course satisfaction between the e-learning group (the treatment group) and the traditional group (control group). The traditional group was more satisfied with their course than the treatment group on the general program construct and the overall course satisfaction index. Results of the t-tests indicated that overall the e-learning group liked computers more than the traditional group prior to treatment and remained with this attitude after treatment. The control group had a statistically significant change in attitude toward computers after the treatment to reflect a less favorable attitude toward computers after the treatment.

INTRODUCTION
The use of the computer for instructional purposes in education and training in the corporate world has been on the rise since the late 1980s (Ciancarelli, 1998; Nafukho & Park, 2004; Piccoli, Ahmad, & Ives, 2001). This growth is largely due to the current information age and the rapidly changing business environment (Rendall, 2001). Additionally, with the onset of the information age, society demanded that information flow quickly, efficiently, and accurately, which is why the use of technology is very appealing. Furthermore, as technology improved, electronically delivered
learning, or e-learning, became a popular choice for non-traditional training.

E-learning offers more opportunities to the corporate world for training a workforce in attaining and developing skills needed for good jobs that could lead to economic growth (Pantazis, 2002). Furthermore, the rapid growth of electronic commerce and the changes in the way information, computing, and communications are processed places a premium on new business models, customization, and innovation. To boost success in the digital economy, individuals and organizations must be willing to learn, change and adapt new technologies to remain flexible, to acquire new knowledge, and to manage knowledge linking learning, people, and organizational performance in better and stronger ways (Pantazis, 2002).

Today’s workplace is changing, and new learning solutions are being defined. Work-related tasks are becoming more specialized, and workers are expected to keep up the pace in a rapidly changing work environment (Zahner, 2002). Training in the workplace is being replaced by what the business industry refers to as learning solutions, which means the approach to training is decided by considering a number of factors, such as costs, time, content, and access to resources. The concept of knowledge management emphasizes the importance of people, as well as the technology employed for creating, collecting, and disseminating information to solve business problems (Zahner, 2002). Technology is an important vehicle for faster information access. It allows people to keep up with changes in a global economy by eliminating the barriers of time and distance. With the emergence of e-learning, workers are enabled to access huge quantities of information and knowledge (Close, Humphreys, & Ruttenbur, 2000). The new learning strategy is based upon a learner-centered design aimed at using technology to engage learners (Kahu, 2013). In order to understand what makes good online learning, one must understand what makes good learning offline (The National Learning Infrastructure Initiative [NLII], 2003). Empirical evidence shows that the teaching and learning process is a complex interaction among learners and the environment (Cranton, 1989), hence the need to understand the learner needs, expectations, perception and satisfaction with the training offered.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM AND PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

It has been noted in the past that limited empirical research examining the satisfaction of e-learning courses among adult learners or their attitudes toward computer technology (NCREL Policy Issues, 2002; Piccoli, Ahmad, & Ives, 2001). Negative attitudes toward computers and with instructional innovation in education and training may compromise satisfaction with e-learning and become a huge barrier to the successful implementation of e-learning initiatives (Irvin, 2003). The primary purpose of this study was to determine the relationship of trainee attitude toward computers and their overall course satisfaction.

Research Questions

The following questions guided the study: (a). Are there differences in the end-of-course satisfaction rating between participants enrolled in the e-learning supervisory course and those enrolled in the traditional supervisory course, and if there is a difference, is the e-learning group more satisfied?, and (b). Is there a statistically significant difference in the change of attitude toward computers between participants enrolled in the e-learning supervisory course and those enrolled in the traditional supervisory course?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical foundation for this study is based upon Everett Rogers’ diffusion of innovation research. Rogers (1995) defined innovation as “an
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