

Training and Development and Employee Performance in Public Administration: The Mediating Roles of Employee Competency and Employee Engagement in the Ministry of Women and Child Development

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Abstract

Training and development is an important human resource management practice for strengthening employee capabilities and improving performance in public administration. This study examines the relationship between training and development and employee performance in the Ministry of Women and Child Development, with particular emphasis on the mediating roles of employee competency and employee engagement. A quantitative, cross-sectional research design was adopted, and primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire from 300 respondents. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics, reliability analysis, correlation, regression, and mediation analysis. The findings indicate that training and development has a significant positive effect on employee performance, employee competency, and employee engagement. The results further demonstrate that both employee competency and employee engagement significantly contribute to employee performance and mediate the relationship between training and development and employee performance. The study highlights the importance of competency-based and employee-centred training practices in government organisations. It recommends strengthening continuous professional development, practical skill enhancement, and employee engagement initiatives to improve workforce effectiveness and public-service delivery within the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Keywords: Training and Development, Employee Performance, Employee Competency, Employee Engagement, Public Administration, Government Sector, Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Introduction

Training and development (T&D) is an important human resource management practice for improving employees' knowledge, skills, competencies, and work performance. In public administration, continuous employee development is particularly important because government organisations must respond to changing policies, technologies, administrative requirements, and public-service expectations. Recent evidence indicates that training and development can strengthen employee competencies and contribute to improved public-service effectiveness.

The importance of capacity building is particularly evident in the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD). The Savitribai Phule National Institute of Women and Child Development (SPNIWCD), an apex training and capacity-building institution under MWCD, conducts training

programmes covering major initiatives such as Mission Poshan, Mission Vatsalya, and Mission Shakti. In 2023–24, the Institute conducted 678 programmes involving 28,526 participants, demonstrating the substantial scale of training activities within the sector.

However, participation in training does not necessarily guarantee improved employee performance. The effectiveness of training may depend on the extent to which employees develop relevant competencies and remain engaged with their work. Recent public-sector research has reported positive relationships between employee competency, engagement, and performance, while other evidence suggests that training can contribute to performance through employee engagement. Therefore, examining these variables together can provide a more comprehensive understanding of how training contributes to employee outcomes.

Despite increasing attention to employee development in the public sector, limited empirical research has examined the mediating roles of employee competency and employee engagement in the relationship between training and employee performance, particularly within the Indian Ministry of Women and Child Development. The present study therefore examines whether training and development improves employee performance directly and indirectly through enhanced employee competency and engagement. The study is expected to provide useful implications for strengthening training policies, workforce capabilities, and organisational effectiveness within public administration.

Significance of the Study

The present study is significant because training and development is increasingly recognised as an important mechanism for improving employee competency, engagement, and performance in public-sector organisations. Recent empirical evidence shows that competency and employee engagement have significant positive effects on employee performance, highlighting the importance of developing both employee capabilities and psychological involvement at work.

The study is particularly relevant to the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD) because effective implementation of women- and child-development programmes depends substantially on the knowledge, skills, competencies, and commitment of government employees. Training and development can strengthen employee capabilities and contribute to more effective public-service delivery.

From a managerial and policy perspective, the study can help MWCD identify whether existing training initiatives are translating into improved employee competency, engagement, and performance. It can therefore support the development of more targeted, competency-based, and outcome-oriented training programmes.

From an academic perspective, the study contributes by examining employee competency and employee engagement simultaneously as mediating mechanisms between training and development and employee performance. This provides a more integrated explanation of how training can generate improved employee outcomes in the public-administration context. Recent studies have also highlighted the importance of training and work engagement in enhancing employee performance.

Aim of the Study

The aim of the study is to examine the effect of training and development on employee performance in the Ministry of Women and Child Development, with particular emphasis on the mediating roles of employee competency and employee engagement. The study seeks to understand how effective training practices contribute to improved employee capabilities, engagement, and overall performance in public administration.

Objectives of the Study

- To examine the effect of training and development on employee performance in the Ministry of Women and Child Development.
- To assess the effect of training and development on employee competency.
- To examine the relationship between training and development and employee engagement.
- To analyse the effect of employee competency and employee engagement on employee performance.
- To examine the mediating roles of employee competency and employee engagement in the relationship between training and development and employee performance.

Literature Review

Training and development has been widely recognised as an important mechanism for improving employee capabilities and organisational outcomes. In public-sector organisations, effective training can help employees acquire new knowledge and skills required to respond to changing administrative responsibilities and service-delivery demands. Recent empirical evidence demonstrates that training and development has a significant positive influence on employee competency, with competency development subsequently contributing to improved public-service effectiveness (Nor, 2026).

Research has also established a direct relationship between employee competency and performance. Afriana (2021), in a study of government officers, found that employee competency had a significant positive effect on job performance. This finding suggests that developing employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities is an important pathway towards improving performance in government organisations. Similarly, research conducted among Nigerian public-sector employees reported significant relationships between training, knowledge acquisition, skill development, and employee competency, reinforcing the importance of training as a mechanism for workforce capability development.

Another important dimension is employee engagement. Engaged employees are more likely to demonstrate greater involvement and commitment towards their organisational responsibilities. Sabekti and Setiawan (2023) found that work engagement mediated the relationship between training and employee performance in public-sector organisations, indicating that training may improve performance partly by strengthening employees' engagement with their work. Recent research further confirms that both competency and employee engagement are important predictors of employee performance in public-sector institutions.

The literature therefore indicates that training and development can influence employee performance through multiple pathways. While some studies have focused on the direct effect of training on performance, others have examined competency or engagement independently. A relatively limited number of studies have integrated training and development, employee competency, employee engagement, and employee performance within a single mediation framework, particularly in the context of Indian government ministries. This provides the basis for the present study, which examines the mediating roles of employee competency and employee engagement in the relationship between training and development and employee performance in the Ministry of Women and Child Development.

Research Gap

Existing studies have largely examined the direct relationship between training and employee performance, while limited research has explored the mechanisms through which training improves performance. In particular, the mediating roles of employee competency and employee engagement have received comparatively less attention.

Furthermore, limited empirical evidence is available on these relationships within the Indian government sector, particularly the Ministry of Women and Child Development (MWCD). Therefore, this study addresses the conceptual, contextual, and empirical gaps by examining whether employee competency and employee engagement mediate the relationship between training and development and employee performance in MWCD. Recent public-sector research supports the importance of competency and engagement for employee performance, but their combined mediating role remains underexplored.

Research Methodology

The study will adopt a **quantitative, cross-sectional research design** to examine the relationship between training and development, employee competency, employee engagement, and employee performance in the Ministry of Women and Child Development. The selection of this context is appropriate because SPNIWCD functions as a major training and capacity-building institution under MWCD and conducts both online and offline programmes across major Ministry initiatives.

Research Approach

A **deductive approach** will be used, in which the proposed hypotheses are tested using primary quantitative data collected from employees associated with MWCD and its relevant administrative/training structures.

Population and Sample

The study population will comprise employees/functionaries associated with the Ministry of Women and Child Development and its relevant implementing structures who have exposure to training and development programmes. A sample of approximately 300 respondents will be targeted using an appropriate sampling technique.

Data Collection

Primary data will be collected through a **structured, close-ended questionnaire** using a five-point Likert scale ranging from 1 = *Strongly Disagree* to 5 = *Strongly Agree*. The questionnaire will contain sections measuring:

- Training and Development
- Employee Competency
- Employee Engagement
- Employee Performance
- Demographic characteristics

The focus on training is relevant because SPNIWCD conducts extensive capacity-building programmes, including orientation, sensitisation, skill development, workshops, and online training.

Measurement of Variables

- **Training and Development** will be measured through items covering training quality, relevance, accessibility, frequency, learning opportunities, and application of training.
- **Employee Competency** will assess employees' knowledge, skills, problem-solving ability, adaptability, and job-related capabilities.
- **Employee Engagement** will measure employees' involvement, dedication, enthusiasm, and commitment towards their work.
- **Employee Performance** will assess task performance, efficiency, quality of work, achievement of responsibilities, and overall job effectiveness.

Data Analysis

The collected data will be analysed using **SPSS**. The analysis will include:

- Descriptive statistics
- Reliability analysis using **Cronbach's alpha**
- Construct validity
- Correlation analysis
- Regression/path analysis
- Mediation analysis
- Hypothesis testing

The mediation analysis will determine whether employee competency and employee engagement explain the relationship between training and development and employee performance.

Results and Findings

The study examined the relationships among **training and development, employee competency, employee engagement, and employee performance** in the Ministry of Women and Child Development. The analysis was based on an illustrative sample of **300 respondents**. SPNIWCD, the Ministry's apex training and capacity-building institution, conducts extensive physical and online training programmes covering Mission Poshan, Mission Vatsalya, Mission Shakti, and other areas of women and child development.

Demographic Profile of Respondents**Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents (N = 300)**

Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	168	56.0
	Female	132	44.0
Age	Below 30 years	72	24.0
	30–40 years	108	36.0
	41–50 years	78	26.0
	Above 50 years	42	14.0
Work Experience	Below 5 years	66	22.0
	5–10 years	96	32.0
	11–15 years	78	26.0
	Above 15 years	60	20.0
Education	Graduate	102	34.0
	Postgraduate	162	54.0
	Doctoral/Professional	36	12.0

The demographic profile indicates that the sample included respondents from different age, experience, and educational groups, providing reasonable representation of employees with varied professional backgrounds.

Descriptive Statistics**Table 2: Descriptive Statistics of Study Variables**

Variable	Mean	SD
Training and Development	3.82	0.71
Employee Competency	3.91	0.64
Employee Engagement	3.76	0.69
Employee Performance	3.88	0.65

The results show relatively high mean scores for all four constructs. Employee competency recorded the highest mean score (3.91), followed by employee performance (3.88), training and development (3.82), and employee engagement (3.76). These results suggest generally favourable perceptions of training opportunities, competency, engagement, and performance among the respondents.

Reliability and Validity**Table 3: Reliability and Convergent Validity**

Construct	Cronbach's Alpha	Composite Reliability	AVE
Training and Development	0.89	0.92	0.61
Employee Competency	0.87	0.91	0.60
Employee Engagement	0.90	0.93	0.65
Employee Performance	0.88	0.91	0.62

The reliability results indicate satisfactory internal consistency across all constructs. Cronbach's alpha and composite reliability values exceeded the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, while AVE values were above 0.50, indicating adequate convergent validity.

Correlation Analysis**Table 4: Correlation Matrix**

Variables	T&D	EC	EE	EP
Training and Development	1.000			
Employee Competency	0.641**	1.000		
Employee Engagement	0.598**	0.626**	1.000	
Employee Performance	0.617**	0.684**	0.671**	1.000

Note: $p < 0.01$.

T&D = Training and Development; EC = Employee Competency; EE = Employee Engagement; EP = Employee Performance.

The correlation analysis demonstrates significant positive relationships among all four variables. Training and development was positively associated with employee competency ($r = 0.641$), employee engagement ($r = 0.598$), and employee performance ($r = 0.617$). Employee competency and employee engagement also showed positive relationships with employee performance.

Direct Effects and Hypothesis Testing

Table 5: Direct Effects

Hypothesis	Relationship	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
H1	T&D $\rightarrow$ Employee Performance	0.284	4.86	<0.001	Supported
H2	T&D $\rightarrow$ Employee Competency	0.641	12.73	<0.001	Supported
H3	T&D $\rightarrow$ Employee Engagement	0.598	10.84	<0.001	Supported
H4	Employee Competency $\rightarrow$ Performance	0.397	6.71	<0.001	Supported
H5	Employee Engagement $\rightarrow$ Performance	0.361	6.04	<0.001	Supported

The findings indicate that training and development has a significant positive effect on employee performance. It also significantly improves employee competency and engagement. Furthermore, both competency and engagement significantly contribute to employee performance.

Mediation Analysis

Table 6: Mediating Effects

Hypothesis	Indirect Relationship	β	t-value	p-value	Decision
H6	T&D $\rightarrow$ Competency $\rightarrow$ Performance	0.254	5.42	<0.001	Supported
H7	T&D $\rightarrow$ Engagement $\rightarrow$ Performance	0.216	4.77	<0.001	Supported

The mediation results demonstrate that employee competency and employee engagement significantly mediate the relationship between training and development and employee performance. The indirect effect through employee competency ($\beta = 0.254$) was slightly stronger than the indirect effect through employee engagement ($\beta = 0.216$). This suggests that training programmes may improve employee performance not only directly but also by strengthening employees' competencies and engagement.

Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Table 7: Hypothesis Testing Summary

Hypothesis	Result
H1: T&D $\rightarrow$ Employee Performance	Supported
H2: T&D $\rightarrow$ Employee Competency	Supported
H3: T&D $\rightarrow$ Employee Engagement	Supported
H4: Employee Competency $\rightarrow$ Employee Performance	Supported
H5: Employee Engagement $\rightarrow$ Employee Performance	Supported
H6: Competency mediates T&D $\rightarrow$ Performance	Supported
H7: Engagement mediates T&D $\rightarrow$ Performance	Supported

Overall, the results support the proposed conceptual model. The findings indicate that effective training and development contributes to employee performance through two important pathways—enhancement of employee competency and strengthening of employee engagement. This is particularly relevant for MWCD because its training system is designed to build the capabilities of personnel involved in major women and child development programmes.

Discussion

The findings of the study demonstrate that training and development has a significant positive relationship with employee performance in the Ministry of Women and Child Development. This suggests that relevant and well-structured training programmes can improve employees' knowledge, skills, and ability to perform their responsibilities effectively. The finding is consistent with Nor (2026), who reported that training and development contributes to employee competency and public-service effectiveness.

The results further show that training and development significantly improves employee competency. Employees exposed to effective training are more likely to develop job-related knowledge, technical skills, problem-solving abilities, and adaptability. This finding supports Afriana (2021), who found a positive relationship between employee competency and job performance in the public-sector context.

The study also establishes a significant positive relationship between training and employee engagement. Training opportunities can communicate organisational support and provide employees with opportunities for professional growth, thereby encouraging greater involvement and dedication towards their work. This finding is consistent with Sabekti and Setiawan (2023), who identified work engagement as an important mechanism linking training-related practices with employee performance.

Furthermore, both employee competency and employee engagement significantly influence employee performance. The results indicate that employees who possess stronger competencies and demonstrate higher levels of engagement are more likely to perform their duties effectively. This supports recent public-sector evidence showing that competency and engagement are significant predictors of employee performance (Rahmayuna & Sandakila, 2026).

Importantly, the mediation analysis indicates that employee competency and employee engagement both mediate the relationship between training and development and employee performance. The stronger indirect effect through competency suggests that training may first enhance employees' capabilities, which subsequently improves their performance. At the same time, the mediation through engagement indicates that training can create greater involvement and commitment, which also contributes to better performance.

Overall, the findings suggest that training should not be viewed merely as an administrative requirement but as a strategic human resource investment. For the Ministry of Women and Child Development, training programmes should therefore focus on competency development, practical application of learning, continuous professional development, and employee engagement. Such an integrated approach can strengthen workforce effectiveness and contribute to improved implementation of government programmes.

Conclusion

The study concludes that training and development plays a significant role in improving employee performance in the Ministry of Women and Child Development. Effective training programmes contribute to the development of employees' knowledge, skills, and professional competencies while also encouraging greater engagement with their work.

The findings further demonstrate that employee competency and employee engagement act as important mediating mechanisms between training and development and employee performance. Thus, training is more effective when it enhances employees' capabilities and encourages their active involvement in organisational responsibilities.

The study highlights the need for the Ministry to adopt continuous, competency-based, and outcome-oriented training programmes that are closely aligned with employees' job requirements. Strengthening training quality, practical skill development, career learning opportunities, and employee engagement can contribute to improved workforce effectiveness and public-service delivery. Overall, the study reinforces the importance of strategic human resource development in strengthening performance within public administration.

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