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ASSOCIATION OF TRAINING PRACTICES WITH JOB SATISFACTION IN PUBLIC SECTOR ORGANIZATIONS

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ABSTRACT

Focus of this study is training practices and its impact on job satisfaction of employees working in public sector of Pakistan. A sample of 205 was randomly selected from ten leading public sector organization in Pakistan. Training practices were taken as independent variable, job satisfaction was out-come variable while demographic variables were taken as confounder variables. Results show that there is strong and significant association between training practices and job satisfaction of employees. This is an original study and logistic regression is first time used in this type of studies where demographic variables are included in final analysis.

KEYWORDS

training practices, job satisfaction, PSU.

INTRODUCTION

In the present world the concept of wealth has been shifted from physical to the human capital. The human beings are seen as a resource rather than a liability for a country. Trained and developed people contribute to the economic growth of one country and one organization. On the other hand the countries with under developed and under-utilized human resource perish. Pakistan is a country with sixth largest population of the world. Underdevelopment of the economy has left negative impact over the investment on human capital. Today's market is global market. The companies are surrounded by competitors. To have a competitive advantage, it is important that companies truly influence and use work force as a competitive weapon. A strategy for radically improving workforce productivity to drive higher value for the organization has become an important focus. Companies seek to optimise their workforce through comprehensive development programmes not only to achieve business goals but to survive and thrive for years to come. To achieve this task, companies will need to invest resources to ensure that employees have the information, skills and competencies, they need to work effectively in a rapidly changing and complex environment. This includes investment in training and development as part of an overall effort to achieve cost effective and timely results. The companies need to understand training and development policies that would enhance employee satisfaction and improve performance. Simply providing training and development programmes is the key to better performance and higher productivity. Organizations need to look into the needs of employees and ensure that training and development policies are associated with both company and individual goals. Keeping in view importance of training and development for development and growth of employees and organizations, this study has focused on the training and development practices and their impact on employee's satisfaction.

Training and development of the human resource of Pakistan is much neglected area of study in the country. Development is defined and understood in terms of development of economy. We forget about the development of people through education and training.

We are living in a very competitive world which has global outlet. The countries compete in economic fields in one way or other. Where highly competitive, skilled and trained people form the human resource of the organizations.

STATEMENT OF PROBLEM

Training and development is so important that the lack of learning skills may denote illiteracy. 21st Century provides a fresh opportunity to think about the kind of world we want to live in. In this regard it is also time to think about the kind of workplace we need to establish or support in Pakistan. In today's employment worn social fabric we are only beginning to address the complex human performance needs of people, globally.

One organization that has potential to help shape the kind of changing workplace of the future will be employees' organizations. The impact that this force will have on positive change in the workplace will depend a great deal on the way employees' organizations relate to other sectors in society and how well they will be able to adapt to the marketplace. A skilled labour force will be more than ever central in national economic success. In Pakistan a large part of the labour force, continues to utilize low productivity employment.

This study is an effort to explore training and development practices in public sector of Pakistan and also to find out how training and development practices may contribute to the employees job satisfaction. Increased job satisfaction increases organizational commitment and organizational performance as well.

OBJECTIVES OF STUDY

The objectives of this study is to find the association of training and development with job satisfaction of employees in public sector of Pakistan.

SIGNIFICANCE OF STUDY

Training is very important for employers and employees; government is also vigorously implementing training, education and human resource development plans. Present study has focused of training and development practices in public sector of Pakistan and its association with job satisfaction. The study is significant due to uniqueness of methodology used in it. Logistic regression is used in this study and demographic variables are used in analysis as confounders to find real impact of independent variable over dependent variable after controlling confounders.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Present study explores following research question:

Is job satisfaction associated with the availability of various training components and practices in public sector organizations in Pakistan?

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The term training is defined as "a planned process to alter attitudes, "knowledge or skill behaviour through learning experience to achieve effective performance in an activity or range of activities. Training stands for activities or deliverables designed to enable end users to learn and use new processes, procedures,

systems and other tools efficiently and effectively in the performance of their work; includes training, documentation and communications” or “the planned and organized activity of a consultant to impart skills, techniques and methodologies to employers and their employees to assist them in establishing and maintaining employment and a place of employment which is safe and healthful”.(Smith, 1992).

The researchers (Barro, 1989; Buechtemann and Sooloff 1994) believe that the productivity of human resource is more important than natural resources, physical equipment’s or any other form of wealth. Human capital is conceptualized as sum total of skills and knowledge acquired by people of one country. Human capital is a significant factor to explain different rates of economic growth of nations.

The job satisfaction is an important goal for organization. It has been shown that profitability, productivity, employee retention and customer satisfaction are linked to employee satisfaction. Satisfied, motivated employees will create higher customer satisfaction and in turn positively influence organizational performance. The researchers like Becker and Gerhart (1996) Becker and Huselid (1998) Wright and Boswell (2002) focused to establish link between human resource management and organizational performance. Recently some scientists focused on impact of training and development practices on employees’ attitudes and behaviour at work Appelbaum et al., (2000) Ramsey et al.,(2000) Guest,(2002).Employees’ satisfaction and well-being play a central role in explanatory models of training and development practices and organizational performance (Peccei , 2004).

Other behavioural theories also suggest that the impact of training and development practices on performance is mediated by employees satisfaction, commitment and well being. (Guest, 1997; Paauwe and Richardson, 1997; appelbaum et al., 2000).

However studies by Marsden and Richardson (1994) showed that the impact of training and development practices on employees’ satisfaction is rather limited. Similarly some researchers like Rosenthal et al., (1997) Peccei and Rosenthal, (2001) repeated that impact itself may be dependent on other factors such as age, skill, educational composition of the workforce or on employees’ individual dispositions and orientations to work, or on existing institutional arrangements.

A comprehensive review of related literature disclosed abundant definitions and factors that affect employees’ satisfaction. Although there are many facets of the definitions of employees satisfaction, all agree that it is multidimensional concept (Locke , 1976; Rice et al., 1989; Shouksmith et al.,1990;Koustelios, 1991;Smith et al. , 1969 and Wiener, 1982) recommended that employees satisfaction is feelings or affective responses to facets of the situation or work related condition. Locke (1976) defined employees’ satisfaction as a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from assessment of one’s job or job experience. In the same way findings of the other authors like Gregson (1987), Lease(1998) Appelbaum et al., (2002) Chay and Bruvold (2003) vieweg employees satisfaction as the degree of an employee’s affective orientation towards the work role occupied in the organization. In the same way Dawis and Lofquist (1984) defined employees satisfaction as the result of the worker’s appraisal of the degree in which the work environment fulfils the individual’s needs.

Spector (1997) noted that employees satisfaction could be measured as a global feeling about the job or as attitudes about various aspects of the job.

Rowden and Conine (2003) also recommended additional research “. . . to further understand this apparently powerful link between workplace learning and job satisfaction. If this powerful link continues to surface in other sectors and larger companies, managers concerned with the level of job satisfaction among their employees may want to encourage more learning opportunities in the workplace.”Research by Goldfarb Consultants (1999) on private and public sectors in Canada showed similar results. The study showed that the top five most important factors that influenced job satisfaction have more to do with interpersonal relationships (quality of decision makers, communication and relations between managers and employees), atmosphere at the workplace (work ethic, level of innovation and physical environment) and sense of personal achievement (personal growth opportunities and level and range of responsibility) than it has to do with attributes that can be measured. In fact, these more quantitative attributes seemed to be least important in determining an employee’s level of satisfaction with their job. On the contrary, findings in a survey carried out by the Society of Human Resource Management showed that the absolute top five factors for the employees’ satisfaction were compensation/pay, benefits, job security, flexibility to balance life and work issues, and feeling safe in the work environment.

Lermusi (2006) established that meaningfulness of work and job variety are the two areas that employees value.As far as the effect of training and development policies on ES is concerned, limited literature on this shows a positive correlation. According to Lee (2000), organisations who invest in career management are more likely to increase ES. In addition, Chen et al. (2004) found that career development programmes positively influence ES, professional development and productivity. Other studies enclosed similar results. For example, there is a positive relationship between job enrichment and employee job satisfaction (Guest, 2002) and of participative work on ES (Appelbaum et al., 2000).

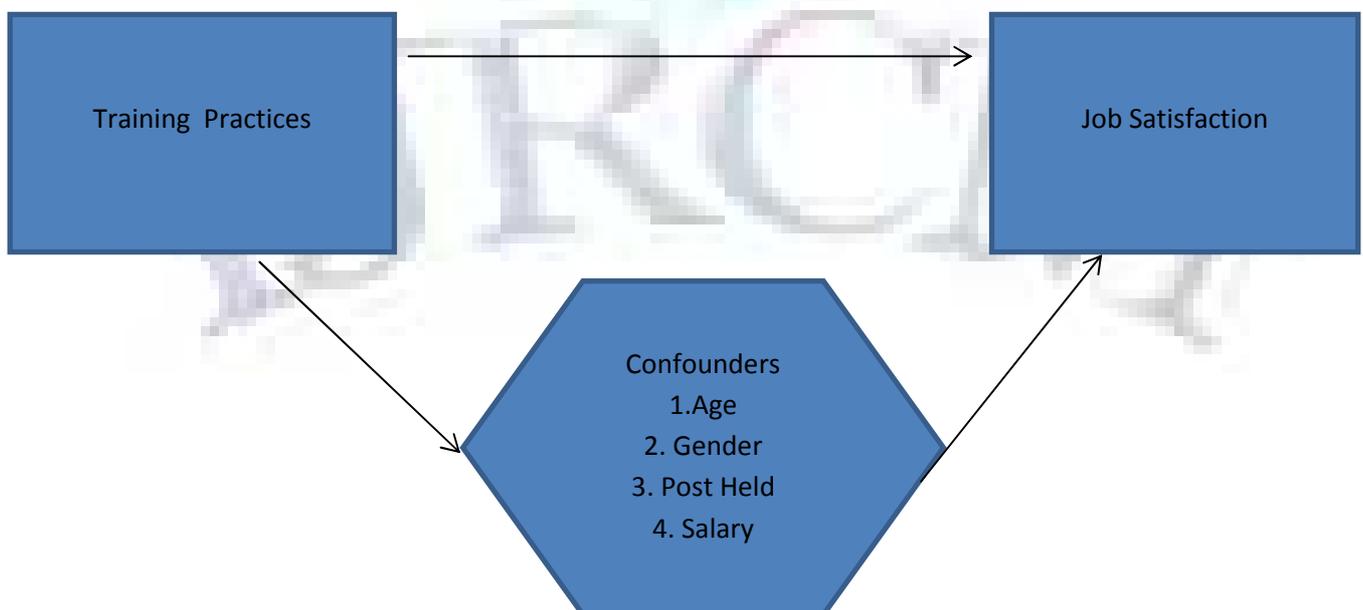
Based on extensive review of literature following hypothesis are made:

HYPOTHESIS

- H1a: Job satisfaction is associated with the availability of various training practices in an organization.
- H1b: Age plays a confounding role between training practices and job satisfaction
- H1c: Gender plays a confounding role between training practices and job satisfaction
- H1d: Post held plays a confounding role between training practices and job satisfaction
- H1e: Salary plays a confounding role between training practices and job satisfaction

Research Model

RESEARCH MODEL



METHODOLOGY

STUDY DESIGN

A sample of 205 employees was taken from the list of public sector organizations. This is a cross sectional data as data was collected on one point in time from the respondents and representatives

DATA PREPARATION

A total of 205 questionnaires were sent to the employees of public sector organization at all levels, of which 201 questionnaires were received back, thus the response rate was 98.04 percent. The response rate for variables was 100 percent however some values were missing which are mentioned in each table below. Five questions were combined to create a variable showing training component in the public sector organizations in Pakistan. Total likert scale was five for each question. For the variables where multiple variables were combined to generate new variable value a cut point of 2.5 was used to create binary variables.

Age group was split into three categories. The first group was categorized into the respondents belonging to age group from 22 to 29, second group included the respondents of 30 to 39 while third group included of the age group 40 and above. The post held was also categorized into three groups: Managerial, Assistants and staff members. Data was collected from different organization of public sector however, scarcity of values lead to drop this variable for advanced analysis.

DESCRIPTIVE STATISTICS

First of all simple frequency tables, percentages graphs and charts were generated to explain various variables.

UNIVARATE ANALYSIS

The main outcome variable was employees' satisfaction. Five hypotheses were tested to see impact of various aspects of satisfaction. Training practice was taken as exposure variable which was tested to see the association with the outcome variable.

First association between outcome (job satisfaction) was tested using chi square with exposure variables one by one, then the association between outcome and other variables such as age, gender, monthly income was tested. In the end the association between exposure variable and all other variables was checked. Variables which were found associated both with outcome and exposure variable were taken as possible confounders. In first hypothesis exposure variable was training. In this hypothesis Gender and age were found to be confounders while post and salary were not the confounders.

Mantel-Haenszel methods was used to check the interaction and adjusted ORs were also calculated.

MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS (LOGISTIC REGRESSION)

The variables which were found to be confounders were added in final model for hypothesis testing. Therefore, model of the log odds of satisfaction were created checking various aspects of job satisfaction. Likelihood ratio test was applied to check whether the exposure variables were independently associated with the outcome variable or not after adjusting for other variables i.e. age, gender salary and post held.

Data analysis was carried out by using Stata version 10 (Stata Co-operative, College Station, TX). Data entry was done in Microsoft excel.

RESULTS

DESCRIPTIVE RESULTS

Individual level data was available for 201 respondents. Baseline information is provided in (table 2.1). 89.05 % (179) were males while only 10.95 % (22) were females. The respondents from the age group 22-29 were 31.84%(64), from the age group 30-39 were 47.76% (96) while 40 and above were 20.4%(41). The respondents were categorized into three layers of posts, managers including mid managers, their assistants and staff.20.9% of respondents belonged to managers or mid managers post, 6.16% were assistants while 11.94% were staff members. Salary slot was such that 21.54% (42) had the salary from 5000 to 10000, 60% (117) respondents earned 10000 to 20000 per month while 18.40% (36)earned a salary of 20000 to 40000 per month. A total of ten organizations participated in the survey . The names of each organization is kept anonymous.

Age group			
	22-29	64	(31.84%)
	30-39	96	(47.76%)
	=>40+	41	(20.4%)
Gender			
	Female	22	(10.95%)
	Male	179	(89.05%)
Post held			
	Managers/Mid Managers	42	(20.9%)
	Assistants	135	(67.16%)
	Staff	24	(11.94%)
Salary slot*			
	5000-10000	42	(21.54%)
	10000-20000	117	(60%)
	20000-40000	36	(18.46%)
Organization**			
	A	21	(10.71%)
	B	15	(7.65%)
	C	33	(16.84%)
	D	9	(4.59%)
	E	32	(16.33%)
	F	9	(4.59%)
	G	10	(5.1%)
	H	55	(28.06%)
	I	9	(4.59%)
	J	3	(1.53%)
	* 5 missing values		
	** 4 missing values		

The following table (2) provides the analysis of satisfaction among the respondents for the job and training in descriptive statistics of percentages and frequencies for all six questions. For the first question that does company do the good job of providing the training or skill building needed to improve the respondent's job performance?, 11.44% (23) strongly agreed ,14.43%(29) agreed ,19.9% remained neutral while 46.77% (94) disagreed and 7.46% (15) strongly disagreed.

The second question was about training component i.e. are the training schedules convenient and meet the needs of respondents? For this question a total of 4.48% (9) respondents strongly agree, 27.30% (55) agreed, 4.97 % (10) remained neutral, 36.81% (74) disagreed while 29.36% (53) strongly disagreed. Question number three to five were also related with training components and details can be seen from the table below.

TABLE 2: HOW MUCH EMPLOYEES ARE SATISFIED WITH VARIABLES THAT CONTRIBUTE TO THEIR SATISFACTION IN THEIR ORGANIZATION?

Q.No	Strongly agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly disagree
1	The company does a good job of providing the training/skill building I need to improve my job performance				
	23 (11.44%)	29 (14.43%)	40 (19.9%)	94 (46.77%)	15 (7.46%)
2	Training schedules are convenient and meet my needs.				
	9 (4.48%)	55 (27.36%)	10 (4.97%)	74 (36.81%)	53 (29.36%)
3	Training schedules meet my needs				
	29 (14.43%)	46 (22.89%)	19 (9.45%)	59 (29.35%)	48 (23.88%)
4	I am given the training and support I need to carry my job effectively				
	22 (10.95%)	35 (17.41%)	44 (21.89%)	71 (35.32%)	29 (14.43%)
5	I am given the real opportunities to improve my skills in this company				
	33 (16.42%)	32 (15.92%)	5 (2.49%)	48 (23.88%)	83 (41.29%)
6	I am satisfied with my job				
	30 (14.93%)	56 (27.86%)	19 (9.45%)	38 (18.91%)	58 (28.86%)

The last question was related with the job satisfaction, for this question 14.93% (30) respondent strongly satisfied, 27.86% (56) satisfied, 9.45% (19) remained neutral, 18.91% (38) reported dissatisfaction, while 28.86% (58) remained strongly dissatisfied. In the next pages this has been explaining with the graphical charts i.e. pie charts so that it could be easily understood that how many agree, strongly agree, remain neutral, disagree or strongly disagree for each answer.

TABLE 3: MULTIVARIATE ANALYSIS (LOGISTIC REGRESSION)

Type of dependent variables	Satisfaction	Crude OR, 95%CI	p-value		
Exposure variables for various hypothesis	Training components (Q1-Q5)				
	No	32(21.92%)	1		
	Yes	54 (98.18%)	192.4 (11.9 - 310.9)	<0.001	
Possible confounders	Age group				
	22- 29	18 (28.13)	1	P<0.001	
	30- 39	40 (41.67)	1.48 (.28-1.09)		
	40 +	28 (68.29%)	2.42 (0.07-0.46)		
	Gender				
	Male	75(41.90%)	1	0.469	
	Female	11(50%)	1.34 (0.60-3.38)		
	Post				
	Manager	4(9.52%)	1	2.48-50.87	<0.001
	Assistants	69 (51.11%)	5.37 (0.47-2.71)		
	Staff	13(54.17%)	5.69		
Salary Range					
5000-10000	33 (78.57%)	1	<0.001		
10000-20000	42 (35.90%)	0.46 (0.97-4.40)			
20000-40000	11 (30.56%)	0.39 (0.76-5.51)			

OR= Odds ratio, CI

Table 3 provides the information about crude association of job satisfaction, exposure variables and socio-economic variables. Training component was found to be strongly associated with job satisfaction as p – value <0.001. 86 out of 201 were satisfied with their job. Among 86 , 54 (98.18%) were responded that training component(Q1-Q5) is related to satisfaction. In other words, odd of satisfaction in employees who reported availability of training component in the organization was 192.4 time higher than those who did not report availability of training.

In this way first hypothesis (H1) is accepted. However, the confidence interval was very wide ranging from (11.9-310.9). There is trend over age for satisfaction. Satisfaction of job appears to increase with the age. Odds of satisfaction in age group 30-39 was 1.48 the odds of satisfaction in age group 22-29. It means that employees in age group 30-39 were 48% more likely to be satisfied compared to age 20-29. Odds Ratio for age group 45 and above was RR=2.42. Employees in this age group are 2.42 time more likely to be satisfied with job compared to base line age group(20-29). Satisfaction was not a function of Gender . Odds Ratio (OR) for satisfaction was 1.13 but this difference was result of chance as p value=0.47. Higher post seem to be related to low level of satisfaction. Higher level of salary is also inversely related to satisfaction. In salary slot 10,000-20,000 OR=0.46. This difference does not appear to be statistically significant because Confidence interval contains the null value.

As mentioned above the crude OR was 192.4, 95% CI (11.9-310.9) and it was strongly associated with satisfaction in an organization. Rate adjusted provided in table 4.1 suggests that AOR for effect of training components on Satisfaction increased from 192.4 to 822.89 and association becomes even stronger p-value<0.0001. Rate adjusted for satisfaction in employees who said that training components are present in organization was 822.89 compared to who did not report availability of training component in organization after adjusting for age and Gender. So H1b and H1c also accepted and H1 d and H1 e are rejected. Please table 2.4 for tabulation depiction.

TABLE 4: OR OF SATISFACTION IN THOSE EMPLOYEES WHO REPORTED POSITIVE RESPONSES FOR TRAINING(LOGISTIC REGRESSION ANALYSIS)

Crude	OR	95 % CI	P value	
Training components (Q1-Q5)	192.40	11.9	310.9	<0.001
Adjusted OR				
Training components	822.89	74.13	9134.64	<0.0001
Age	3.57	1.71	7.43	=0.001
Gender	0.15	0.06	0.38	<0.0001

Post held and salary were not found to be confounders using likelihood ratio test (LRT) Therefore, they were dropped from final model

DISCUSSION

As far as the training and development practices in public sector organizations in Pakistan are concerned, it is imperative that public sector organizations provide the training or skill building needed to improve job satisfaction of employees. Improved job satisfaction would translate to higher productivity and organization's profit. Majority of the respondents in this study do not agree that they are being given the training needed or the improvement of their job performance.

The training schedules should also be convenient and should not interfere with the smooth running of training programs. Thus, it is necessary to have good-programmed plan before developing a training program schedule. The scheduling of training sessions need to be coordinated with the employees to ensure compatibility with business operation as well as maximum learning potential. Moreover, appropriate scheduling helps employees to balance their work schedules with family life and is beneficial to unit productivity and employee moral. For example, if a training is scheduled on off days the attendants may not take keen interest in that training. While the findings of this research suggest that training, schedules do not meet the needs of the employees in public sector organizations

As for the employee, satisfaction with the opportunities for training and development is concerned, more opportunities should be provided to employees to improve their skills, to work with up to date technologies and for career growth. Respondents in public sector organizations emphasized they are not given a real opportunity to improve their skills with up to date technologies. Lack of job related skills and outdated technologies would hinder the efficiency and can cause unnecessary wastage of resources. Some times it can be more costly than providing training. The employees who have the ability to work with up to date technologies will not hesitate to leave if there is lack of such technologies in the company.

Training also allows employees to take a break from monotonous routine work and an opportunity for social interaction. It not only can motivate the employees but also may improve theieinter personal skill. Lock (1976) noted mentally challenging tasks while Agho et al (199) indicated working with friendly people as determinants of employee's satisfaction with job. In the same way Goldfarb Consultants (1999) and Spector (1997) revealed the importance of interpersonal relations on employees' job satisfaction.

It is obvious that employees would like to have equal access to job related training opportunities that would help them improve their skills and enhance their development and growth. Respondents in public sector organization did not agree that they are being provided equal access to job related training opportunities. If the employees are denied equal opportunity in training it may demoralize them. The employees may view it as unfair organization's practice. As there is emphasis on lie long learning and emphasis on self- development, perhaps many employees would like to go for training.

Increasingly, high performing organizations today are recognizing the need to use best training and development practices to enhance their competitive advantage. Training and development is an essential element of every business if the value and potential of its people is to be connected and grown. Many studies have highlighted clear links between well designed training and development initiatives and the bottom line within the business. The image of an industry and of individual employers is also influenced by the extent and quality of staff training and development. Potential employees in such an open labor market will assess the track record of prospective employers in this vital area. Career progression and development is an increasingly attractive or even basic requirement for many such employees. In today's business climate where all industries are experiencing staff and skills shortages, companies are faced with stiff internal and external competition for quality employees. Each employer who invests seriously in the area of Training and Development will reap the benefits of an enriched working environment with higher levels of staff retention as well as increased productivity and performance.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

In the present research public sector organizations were in focus with its training and development practices. The research was made at organizational level. The association of training components were tested with outcome variable; job satisfaction. Age , gender , salary, post held were found confounder variable. The logistic regression was used for the analysis. The results indicate that there is strong association of training and development practices with job satisfaction in public sector of Pakistan.

The first hypothesis, i.e. is job satisfaction associated with the availability of various training components in an organization?, was tested and found strongly associated with the out come variable , job satisfaction. Some socio economic factors i.e. age and gender were found confounders in the final analysis of the logistic regression while salary and post held was not found confounders and were dropped from the final analysis. Hypothesis are showing strong evidence of association with the out come variable that is job satisfaction.

The odd ratios (OR) are quite big , these are in three digits figures which means if these training variables are applied in public sector organizations in Pakistan , they can significantly increase job satisfaction at public sector at all levels.

LIMITATIONS

1. The data was mainly collected from public sector so the results cannot be generalized for private sector.
2. Hypothesis were tested with small sample size so the results should be used with caution.
3. Cut point p-value less than .05 is used as an indicator to reject null hypothesis and for testing hypothesis. It means one out of twenty results can show association by chance which is type one error. Many research questions are tested in this research therefor roll of chance cannot be overruled.

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