

## Factors Impacting Training and Adult Education Providers' Business Performance: The Singapore Context

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**Abstract :** The SkillsFuture Singapore's mission to develop a responsive and forward-looking Training and Adult Education (TAE) and workforce development system is undergirded by how successful TAE providers are in their business performance and strategies that strengthen their operational efficiency and processes. Therefore, understanding the factors that drive the business performance of TAE providers is critical to the success of SkillsFuture Singapore's initiatives. This study aims to investigate how business strategy, work autonomy, work intensity and professional development support impact the business performance of private TAE providers. Specifically, the three research questions are: (1) Are there significant relationships between the above-mentioned four factors and TAE providers' business performance?; (2) Are there significant differences on the four factors between low and high TAE providers' business performance groups?; and (3) To what extent and in what manner do the four factors predict TAE providers' business performance? This was part of the first national study on organizations and professionals working in the Training and Adult Education (TAE) sector. Data from 265 private TAE providers where respondents were Chief Executive Officers representatives from the Senior Management were analyzed. The results showed that business strategy (the extent that the organization leads the way in terms of developing new products and services; uses up-to-date learning technologies; customizes its products and services to the client's needs), work autonomy (the extent that the staff personally have an influence on how hard they work; deciding what tasks they are to do; deciding how they are to do the tasks, and deciding the quality standards to which they work) and professional development support (both monetary and non-monetary support and incentives) had positive and significant relationships with business performance. However, no significant relationship is found between work intensity and business performance. A business strategy, work autonomy and professional development support were significantly higher in the high business performance group compared to the low-performance group among the TAE providers. Results of hierarchical regression analyses controlling for the size of the TAE providers showed significant impacts of business strategy, work autonomy and professional development support on TAE providers' business performance. Overall, the model accounted for 27% of the variance in TAE providers' business performance. This study provides policymakers with insights into improving existing policies, designing new initiatives and implementing targeting interventions to support TAE providers. The findings also have implications on how the TAE providers could better formulate their organizational strategies and business models. Finally, limitations of study, along with directions for future research will be discussed in the paper.

**Keywords :** adult education, business performance, business strategy, training, work autonomy

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