
Developing Management Skills via E-Learning: A Pilot Study on a Cultural Foundation

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Abstract:

Purpose: The purpose of this study is to investigate the implementation of e-learning as a foundational tool for the design, execution, and evaluation of a pilot training program aimed at developing managerial competencies in employees of a Greek cultural foundation. This research explores the critical factors of quality in e-learning design, the significance of employee training for management skills development, and the participants' perceptions of the program.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This research employs a qualitative method, focusing on in-depth interviews with twelve employees who participated in the pilot e-learning program of corporate training titled "Management of Cultural Organizations." Data were collected through interviews and an analysis of the employees' evaluations, reflecting on their experiences and knowledge gained from the program.

Findings: The results demonstrate that e-learning, even in its introductory stage within the organization, can effectively enhance both the professional and personal development of employees. The program successfully met the personal learning objectives of participants, particularly in areas of leadership, communication, and emotional intelligence. Employees showed a high level of engagement and indicated a preference for expanding the program to address additional topics such as time management, emotional intelligence, and HR management. The flexible nature of e-learning, combined with structured educational content, was positively received. However, employees expressed a desire for supplementary face-to-face learning methods to further enhance practical skills.

Practical Implications: This study suggests that e-learning can serve as a valuable tool for fostering managerial competencies in every organization, providing a cost-effective and flexible training solution for cultural organizations. The findings encourage the expansion of e-learning initiatives across the organization and propose its integration with traditional learning methods to optimize outcomes. The insights can guide cultural organizations in refining their training programs to align with evolving corporate needs and technological advancements.

Originality/Value: This research provides novel insights into the use of e-learning in organizational learning within the refining sector, a relatively unexplored area. The findings contribute to the broader understanding of how e-learning can be tailored to meet the needs of employees in leadership roles, offering practical recommendations for companies

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considering the adoption of digital training platforms.

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1. Introduction

In recent years, the global trend in organizational training has been shaped by the adoption of e-learning programs by companies and organizations in both private and public sector. Their multiple benefits, such as saving time, reducing labor costs, and overall contribution to production, innovation, and employee efficiency, reinforce this trend (Abdelfattah *et al.*, 2024).

As Bersin (2005) states, the ultimate purpose of e-learning is not to reduce training costs, but to improve the "business" of the organization. For the successful implementation of an e-learning program, according to Strother (2002), whether learners acquire knowledge and skills during distance learning must be investigated beforehand to establish that it is the optimal way to achieve the objectives of in-organization training.

The field of management science is new, having only been established in the early 1900s. Organizations in the cultural sector have also used management ideas, and cultural management appears to be the newest field of study (Dziurski *et al.*, 2018). Globally, academic institutions have implemented cultural management programmes. Scholars worldwide have been interested in cultural management, despite the fact that this field of study is still relatively new (Paquette, 2019).

This study aims to contribute to the expansion of organization training through e-learning by designing and implementing a pilot e-learning program in a Greek cultural foundation. It will also investigate the design and successful implementation factors of e-learning, so that its findings can be extended to the design of additional executive training programs in such organizations.

The main purpose of this study is to design and implement a pilot e-learning program for the development of employees' managerial skills. Next, in order to obtain a more holistic view, after the participation of the employees in this program, the authors discussed their views on the learning factors for the development of their managerial skills after the implementation of a pilot training program titled

"Management of Cultural Organisations". The research questions were as follows.

1. What factors contribute to the quality of the design and effective implementation of e-learning programs in cultural organizations?
2. What is the necessity of in-organization training of employees through e-learning to develop managerial skills?
3. What are the employees' views on the learning factors for the development of their managerial competencies after the implementation of the e-learning program?

The qualitative method was chosen, focusing on the specific characteristics of the sample, rather than generalizing the results. Qualitative research helps develop a more complex and detailed description and understanding of the issue under investigation (Dehalwar and Sharma, 2024). The data were obtained through semi-structured interviews with the research sample by recording their experiences, observing their behavior after completing the above mentioned course, and identifying their practices in the contexts in which they live and work to gain a deeper understanding of their behaviors.

The implementation and multifaceted aspects of e-learning programs have been the subject of numerous studies. As highlighted by Kefis and Xanthopoulou (2015), there is notable concern regarding the insufficient availability of comprehensive data on the trends and future prospects of e-learning within the context of organizational training. Furthermore, this study emphasizes the peculiar challenge that data related to e-learning initiatives are often fragmented across different companies, with minimal dissemination of their results.

This lack of dissemination appears to stem from the absence of a robust culture of knowledge sharing within organizations. Consequently, there is an evident need to enhance the body of data on e-learning in the Greek business sector, particularly by adhering to the principles of distance and adult education. Additionally, most existing studies have examined e-learning programs using a quantitative research approach (Dziurski *et al.*, 2017). In contrast, this study aims to explore the design, implementation, and evaluation of such programs through qualitative methods, thereby offering a more nuanced understanding.

Finally, the originality of this study lies in its focus on a cultural organization that has only recently begun introducing e-learning initiatives for its employees, unlike most studies that typically examine well-established programs and practices. The literature reveals that the factors that influence the successful implementation of educational programs are diverse and complex.

By investigating e-learning within the context of a pilot training program, this study aims to shed light on external factors and the potential for successful implementation. Moreover, examining employees' perspectives is critical, as the

literature suggests that their engagement and commitment are essential for ensuring the success and sustainability of e-learning initiatives.

2. Literature Review

The conceptualization of a unique definition of e-learning has not been highlighted in the literature review of recent sources in recent years. Many definitions vary according to the particular perspective that each scholar focuses on. By categorizing the definitions of e-learning, we can describe them from the technological, pedagogical, and communicative perspectives.

From a technological perspective, researchers have focused on technology and the potential for e-learning through the use of multiple applications. E-learning refers to the application of educational content in the teaching process, using digital technology and modern ICT (Kovalenko and Hontarenko, 2023). Networks, PCs, and various electronic media (iPads, tablets, mobile phones, etc.) facilitate knowledge dissemination.

According to Watkins (2005), e-learning is a form of computer-based learning in virtual classrooms, at the level of digital collaboration between the parties involved. The use of interactive multimedia is a key component of e-learning and has increased in importance because it works more effectively in understanding and consolidating teaching content (Venkataraman and Sivakumar, 2015; Zakopoulos *et al.*, 2023). Educational programs are designed to implement them remotely in a synchronous or asynchronous manner, and online learning is achieved through the use of ICT, e-mails, and e-books (Evans *et al.*, 2016).

Other researchers have approached e-learning from a pedagogical perspective, focusing on its student-centered character that promotes knowledge exchange and learner interaction. Khan (2005) presents a pedagogical model centered on the learner, who can at any time and place make use of the educational material provided in a flexible and open technological environment.

Nichols (2003) emphasized pedagogical design by saying that it is a key priority in e-learning, through which technological tools are selected. Technology cannot determine the quality of learning. Silva and Souza (2016) defined e-learning as a process resulting from a learner's interaction with digital material, which is supported through the Internet. E-learning is not only a platform for educational content that is maintained and exists for educational purposes. Its dimensions encompass the dynamics of social networking, where it unites and connects instructors and learners who collaboratively and interactively exchange knowledge on a global network basis.

Many contemporary scholars have emphasized the communicative dimension of e-learning (Garrison and Anderson, 2003; Al-Qahtani and Higgins, 2013; Gill *et al.*,

2013), focusing on electronic communication for knowledge construction, learner interaction without the physical presence of the instructor, and the provision of personalized knowledge according to the learning profile of learners to improve interaction and collaboration.

The most recent scholars (Gaikwad and Randhir, 2016; Salarvand *et al.*, 2023) refer to a virtual classroom where interaction and communication take place in any real time and place. According to Clarke and Hermens (2001), several factors encourage the widespread development of e-learning. Some factors include the increase in demand for education and training, the need to access advanced technologies, the use of digital convergence, and, more generally, the adaptation of firms to modern technology.

Both businesses and employees value the benefits of e-learning. E-learning is becoming an alternative form of employee training for companies because of the increased demand for the latest technological innovations, creation of sophisticated technological and communication systems, and industry dissatisfaction with traditional training methods (Chelliq *et al.*, 2023; Georgakopoulos *et al.*, 2023). E-learning affects the work environment, thus organizational leaders need to ensure that its implementation is appropriate in terms of scalability, accessibility, and timeliness.

Business leaders continue to view e-learning as a necessity in their efforts to meet the training needs of the workforce and organizational strategies. According to McKay and Vilela's (2011) research, the key benefits associated with e-learning, as identified by employers, are cost savings and the ability to develop a culture of employees as lifelong learners.

Corporate leaders usually initiate e-learning for a variety of reasons, such as trying to create a competitive advantage and the need for globalization. Others use e-learning to meet the demand for learning and to reduce budgetary constraints (Naveed *et al.*, 2022). By gaining competitive advantage, an organization's employees can align their employees' needs with strategic organizational goals.

With globalization, corporate leaders need highly developed communication tools such as the Internet and other e-learning tools to reach stakeholders anywhere in the world. E-learning is a cost-effective way to reduce corporate budgets for both internal and external trainings. The attractiveness of e-learning lies in its ability to align with high-level business strategies and build capacity in the workforce to support these strategies. The intention of businesses to adopt e-learning is to improve employee performance and satisfaction, and to create a productive and competitive workforce.

There is tangible evidence that e-learning is an effective and sustainable method of information transfer that also influences employees' attitudes towards the

organization (Čevra *et al.*, 2022). E-learning is a method that provides flexibility in learning in the choice of curriculum content, barriers resulting from learning time, and geographical constraints.

Apart from these obvious benefits, which are relevant to each user, the impact extends particularly to employees in terms of increased productivity, job satisfaction, efficiency, and organizational commitment. Employees who participate in e-learning programs upgrade their knowledge and acquire the competences/skills required by their jobs, which contributes decisively to their professional development. They have unrestricted access to the training location and time that they determine.

Dardar *et al.* (2011) linked employee training to employee turnover, engagement, and job satisfaction. Employees with better training work at a more intense pace and are willing to stay with the firm longer. Employees with lower turnover are more likely to improve their productivity and profitability. The opposite is true when a lack of employee training negatively affects productivity and satisfaction.

Studies have shown that e-learning can be more effective in improving knowledge and skills because of its more personalized nature. E-learning provides consistency in learning, can be faster than traditional learning, and can be tailored to specific individual needs (Rasheed and Wahid, 2021). It also significantly contributes to the retention of existing knowledge and skills (Kefis and Xanthopoulou, 2015; Xanthopoulou and Svarna, 2022).

Employees want to know that they will benefit from training initiatives at their workplace. If training is relevant, directly related to job performance, and supported by the employer, employees will be more open to learning and acquiring new skills (Rosenberg and Foshay, 2002). The needs, educational profiles, and learning styles of employees present substantial differences compared to learners in formal education (Waight and Stewart, 2005; Spanos, 2012; Zakopoulos, 2022).

E-learning is being adopted internationally in a variety of business sectors because of the multiple benefits it brings to learners, trainers, and training program employees. The implementation of e-learning can be incremental in key or specialized areas of a business. This potential has also been applied to corporate universities. Investments in organized information systems for the delivery of digital training and content are being made by several companies.

These systems provide possibilities for the educational management of human resources, providing information on their future development, and it is observed that large enterprises mainly implement e-learning because of their economic growth, technological infrastructure, and business culture.

Kuo *et al.* (2009) suggests that culture and arts can use high-tech solutions. E-learning in cultural and arts organizations has become a useful tool for improving

management skills. For instance, Gruber (2009) examined how e-learning can meet these organizations' unique needs, allowing for flexible career growth. Kuo *et al.* (2009) also studied the challenges and benefits of e-learning in Taiwan's cultural groups, providing important information about how to implement it.

DeVereaux (2022) discusses how digital technologies are changing the arts field more broadly. Online resources, such as Museums and Libraries Online (MLOL) and the International Council of Museums (ICOM), offer valuable information and case studies on technology use in cultural institutions, including e-learning. Massi *et al.* (2020) highlight the need for e-learning to build a skilled workforce ready for the digital era. Taken together, these studies show that e-learning can boost management skills in cultural and artistic organizations. By providing flexible training options, e-learning can satisfy various requirements.

However, the successful use of e-learning requires careful consideration of the leadership support, resource use, and collaboration among stakeholders. Gruber (2009) also stresses the role of e-learning in training a workforce capable of succeeding in a digital world. By investing in e-learning, organizations can ensure that staff has the skills required to adapt to the changing landscape of the sector.

Analyzing successful e-learning case studies can help organizations learn the best practices and foresee possible challenges, leading to better training plans. Overall, the literature indicates that e-learning can make cultural and art organizations more efficient, improve staff skills, and help meet strategic goals.

3. Research Methodology

3.1 Description of the Training Programme

The characteristics of the modern business world, based on the knowledge society, force today's companies and organizations to develop flexible, tailor-made training programs for their human resources. The aim of this training programme is for managers of cultural organizations to develop, improve or update knowledge, attitudes and behaviors through a series of courses in the context of asynchronous training. In addition, the training program aims that upon successful completion, the employee will be able to develop the knowledge/competencies/skills/attitudes to:

- Be an effective leader, how to behave in groups.
- Recognize the effective work team and collaborative working groups.
- Know the basic theories of motivation and how to apply them in the workplace.
- Recognize ways of negotiating in different forms of conflict.
- Recognize the value of communication and apply effective communication methods.

- Develop empathy for the role of management in the development of management skills and team development

The following methodology was followed for the design of the pilot project, which was based on the ADDIE (Analysis/ Design/ Development/ Implementation/Evaluation) educational design model:

1. A survey to identify needs at the intra-organizational level. Training in the area of management capacity development is a necessary prerequisite for taking up positions of management responsibility in the foundation and is implemented for all employees who have potential for development. This training is also renewed and updated for executives who already hold positions of management responsibility over time.
2. Determination of the characteristics of the e-learning training programme in the context of training. The platform was designed in the learning environment of Moodle. The platform was made for the purpose of this paper, so the free version was used.
3. The group of users was identified, based on their qualifications and professional experience, and a need analysis was carried out.
4. The educational learning objectives were designed and the content of the educational program was developed.
5. Instructional material was installed and integrated into the online platform Moodle.
6. The pilot training programme was implemented and applied.
7. The evaluation was applied in a twofold way, both in the assessment of the learners' learning and in the evaluation of the educational application for its further development, conclusions and future improvements.

Executives can attend a series of courses related to "Management of Cultural Organizations" which are:

- A. Effective leadership
- B. Effective teamwork and cooperation
- C. Motivation in the workplace
- D. Conflicts and negotiations and
- E. Interpersonal communication

Each lesson is structured in the same way as the others and includes: a. Presentation of the module b. Learning objectives c. Module introductions d. Module materials e. Tips f. Additional material g. Quiz and activities and h. Forum.

In each module, the participants watch lectures in video format, participate in quizzes, activities and discussion forum and can make use of suggested techniques (tips) and additional available material consisting of websites, articles and e-books. The material is available for storage. It should be noted that for the included

material, open courses, the educational platform Coursera, Youtube, Mathesis as regards the structure of the participants' evaluation, online material of Universities and Educational Institutions were used as sources. All presentations were formulated by the graduate student of this thesis taking into account the teaching material of these sources. The following qualifications are considered essential:

- Possession of a degree from a school of higher university education
- Excellent knowledge of English Language
- Computer knowledge

As well as essential qualitative characteristics such as:

- Communication skills
- Cooperative behaviour
- Team spirit

The educational program is a pilot project and therefore the researchers for its design and implementation assumed the role of a facilitator which includes:

- The pedagogical side: as responsible for the design of the training material, in order to support and encourage the executives to achieve the transfer of knowledge.
- The communication side: promoting the teams' communication on the platform and generally overseeing its functionality.
- The management side: concerning the timing of the training process to complete the project, providing instructions and support on the platform.

Regarding the learning material, specific criteria were set in order for the educational material to meet quality standards, to be able to support the subject matter of each course, while at the same time it can be used by the trainees in the specific time frame. These criteria can be summarized as follows:

- To meet the requirements of the trainees and to meet their needs: a prior research of the training material used in the foundation has been carried out.
- The possibility of extensive coverage of the subject matter: e-books, notes, scientific articles, websites and links to videos were used as additional material in this basis.
- Stimulate learning: accompanied by interactive tests and case studies. It used links to digital learning resources so that the learner is stimulated by searching for them (explorative learning).
- To be presented in an asynchronous way to facilitate the participant: therefore the main body of the learning came from video presentations of scientific content, distributed in a short time and in an understandable way. There were also presentations in each lesson in order to summarize the

- knowledge in a comprehensive way.
- Deliver knowledge in an innovative way: therefore multimedia applications were used to facilitate the effectiveness of knowledge transfer using multiple stimuli.

The start of the training program was set for mid-March 2023 with an open access period for interested parties. The end of the program was mid-April 2023, when the interviews of the executives began. The MoodleCloud application was used to configure the platform, with the option of structuring the educational program without the cost burden. It is a simple application for which the user does not need to install the application or create backups.

The evaluation method used was a final, ex-post evaluation where, in addition to the overall picture and general assessment of the program, a number of criteria are recorded which will help to identify and implement corrections or improvements. The evaluation of the program is essential to ensure the quality of the educational process and includes critical issues concerning:

- The quality of the educational material
- The content of the contributions
- The evaluation of the design of the platform (ease of use, etc.)

The evaluation of the entire program was carried out at the level of the employees and its conclusions were used as comparable data with the data collected from the responses in the interviews, in order to draw conclusions on the validity and reliability of the research.

The training programme was evaluated by specially designed evaluation forms which set the evaluation criteria in terms of the general evaluation of the programme, the evaluation of the educational content and finally the evaluation of the platform. The criteria are rated on a scale from 1 to 4, with the rating ranging from strongly disagree (1) to strongly agree (4).

After completing the pilot e-learning program, a semi-structured, was conducted to ensure a deep exploration of the topic and analyze personal opinions among employees. The semi-structured interviews included a set of questions that guided key topics while allowing flexibility in terms of content, the order of questions, and possible adaptations based on responses.

Open-ended questions were used for adaptability, allowing participants to share their experiences without limitations from the researcher (Creswell, 2021). This method encourages genuine responses, clears confusion, and can reveal unexpected findings (Robinson, 2014). Probing and exploratory questions were also used to gain a deeper understanding of the research inquiries. An interview plan was created to match the study's three research questions, with each question set linked to a specific research

question and divided into smaller themes. The research goals and literature review helped shape the interview axes and questions, as shown in Table 1.

Table 1. Interview axes and questions

Interview Stage	Description	Axes / Subcategories
Introduction	Briefing on research scope, assurance of anonymity, confidentiality, and obtaining informed consent for interview recording and note-taking.	N/A
Initial Start (Warm-up)	Gathering personal details, familiarization with e-learning experience, and platform usage.	N/A
Main Part of the Interview	Focus on exploring the key research questions regarding program design, necessity of in-house training, and employees' views.	- Meeting personal learning objectives - Meeting educational needs/skills
A. Factors of Quality Educational Program Design	(Related to Research Question 1: 'What factors contribute to the quality design and implementation of the educational program?')	- Preferred and related educational program courses
1.1. Identification of Educational Needs/Goals	- Meeting personal learning objectives - Meeting educational needs/skills - Preferred and related educational program courses	- Work tasks and teaching content - Educational content preferences - Knowledge/experience and skill development - Program structure and content - Teaching methods
1.2. Selection and Structuring of Training Content	- Work tasks and teaching content - Educational content preferences - Knowledge/experience and skill development - Program structure and content - Teaching methods	- Evaluation of the trainee executive - Evaluation of the educational program
1.3. Evaluation of Educational Design	- Evaluation of the trainee executive - Evaluation of the educational program	- Importance of operational training in managerial competence development
B. Need for In-House Training in Developing Management Competencies	(Related to Research Question 2: 'What is the necessity and importance of in-house training of employees through the e-learning platform?')	
I. Value of Operational Training	- Importance of operational training in managerial competence development	- Available opportunities for growth in management capacities
II. Opportunities for Developing Management Capacities	- Available opportunities for growth in management capacities	- Advantages and disadvantages of e-learning in management skill development
III. Advantages/Disadvantages of E-Learning	- Advantages and disadvantages of e-learning in management skill	- Application of in-house e-learning and management

	development	training
IV. Intra-organization Application and Training	- Application of in-house e-learning and management training	- Motivational factors for employees' learning
C. Employees' Views on the Training Program	(Related to Research Question 3: 'What are the employees' views on the training program 'Executive Management Skills Development'?)	
I. Factors and Motivations for Learning	- Motivational factors for employees' learning	- Satisfaction with the program - Changes in attitude or behavior
II. Executive Satisfaction and Behavioral Change	- Satisfaction with the program - Changes in attitude or behavior	- Identifying barriers to learning for employees
III. Barriers to Learning	- Identifying barriers to learning for employees	- Preferred methods of learning for employees
IV. Preferred Learning Methods	- Preferred methods of learning for employees	- Assessment of the need for program completion and future program improvements
V. Need for Program Completion and Future Development	- Assessment of the need for program completion and future program improvements	(Related to Research Question 1: 'What factors contribute to the quality design and implementation of the educational program?')
Closing	Collecting additional information, thanking the executive for participation, and concluding the interview.	N/A

Source: Authors' calculations.

Each interview was recorded and upon completion was transcribed and recorded on the researcher's computer. The transcribed interviews were sent to each executive to check and confirm their responses. Thematic analysis was used to analyze the research data, focusing on identifying patterns relevant to the research questions (Braun and Clarke, 2012). This method was selected for its flexibility, and the process included transcribing interviews, coding data, identifying themes, and reporting findings with supporting evidence (Deterding and Waters, 2021).

The sample consisted of twelve employees from a Greek cultural organization/foundation selected through purposeful homogeneous sampling to ensure relevance and depth. According to the literature, there is no pre-agreed number of participants to make an appropriate sample size, but the correct sample size depends on a variety of factors (Muthén and Muthén, 2002).

Ultimately, an expanded sample size contributes to a heightened potential for increased accuracy and precision in the obtained results (Stavrakakis and Xanthopoulou, 2019).

Participants were chosen based on qualifications such as higher education and proficiency in English and digital skills. The aim was to gain insights into their

experiences with the e-learning program. To ensure credibility, member checks were employed by returning transcripts and interpretations to participants for review (Robinson, 2014).

Additionally, data triangulation was used to validate findings by comparing interview responses with data from the program evaluation. After the completion of the pilot e-learning program on the moodle platform the researchers started the selection of the candidate employees for the interview. Based on the selection criteria, the research sample was formed as follows:

Table 2. *The research sample*

Participant (P)	Gender	Age group (years)	Studies (undergraduate)	Participation in E-Learning in the Past	Participation in E-Learning within the Organization
P1	F	> 45	Business Administration	> 2 times	NO
P2	F	35-45	Arts and Humanities	NO	NO
P3	M	> 45	Sociology	NO	NO
P4	M	> 45	Business Administration	1-2 times	NO
P5	M	> 45	Economics	1-2 times	YES
P6	M	35-45	Greek civilization	1-2 times	NO
P7	F	> 45	Business Administration	> 2 times	NO
P8	M	> 45	Greek civilization	NO	NO
P9	M	> 45	Arts and Humanities	NO	NO
P10	M	35-45	Economics	NO	NO
P11	M	> 45	Economics	1-2 times	YES
P12	F	35-45	Marketing	NO	NO

Source: *Authors' calculations.*

Half of the participants were men and the rest were women. All of them had higher university degrees, and the majority of them were in the management field, with excellent knowledge of English and computer skills. Most participants were of the age to have the knowledge and experience of participating in and evaluating the project.

Half of the participants had previously implemented training programs, seminars, or e-learning courses, either at the organization or personal level, while the rest had never participated. Two of the employees attended e-learning courses offered by the organization. In mid-March 2023, employees were contacted to explain the purpose of the investigation, outline the training program "Development of Management

Skills in Arts Management and Administration," and detailed the upcoming personal interviews.

After receiving their consent, the participants were given detailed instructions, including how to access the platform, navigate through the training materials, and understand the structure, which included course objectives, teaching methods, and evaluation processes.

The program covers five modules: *Effective Leadership*, *Teamwork and Collaboration*, *Workplace Motivation*, *Conflict and Negotiation*, *Interpersonal Communication*. Each module included an introduction, materials, quizzes, activities, and forum. Participants were evaluated using multiple-choice tests designed to reinforce learning, with a final assessment requiring 80% for successful completion.

All participants passed, with two narrowly missing thresholds (79.3% and 78.7%) whose scores were rounded up. One executive completed the test and improved from 92.4% to 100%. Two case studies from the "*Effective Team and Cooperation*" and "*Conflict and Negotiation*" modules were conducted in groups, with feedback provided to the participants. Upon completing the training, the executives submitted evaluations of the program and shared their impressions. Interviews were scheduled and conducted by early May 2023, lasting up to 60 min each.

Discussions were recorded with participants' consent, and anonymity was ensured. The researchers took notes, revisited the questions when necessary, and transcribed the interviews for analysis. The results were available to stakeholders, and participants were given the opportunity to review and correct any findings.

Over a period of one month, employees logged into the training platform, navigated through the training material, and completed the assessment tests included at the end of each course module. These tests consisted of multiple-choice questions with correct or incorrect answers that could be repeated as many times as the participating executive wanted, and were solely aimed at enhancing learning.

Upon completion of their study, they took a personal assessment test, which consisted of 50 questions of various types (multiple choice, single correct answer, etc.). Successful completion required correct answers on 80% of the tests. All the employees successfully completed the final assessment. Of the 12 employees, only two completed the test with marginal scores (79.3% and 78.7%), which were rounded by the scorer because of the small deviation.

Only one executive repeated the final assessment test and increased the final score from 92.4% to 100%. In two courses of the training program, namely "*Effective Team and Cooperation*" and "*Conflict and Negotiation*", there were two case studies respectively, in which the employees were invited to participate in groups, after

being automatically selected by the system. The case studies were obtained from the HR magazine of the University of Athens. In these studies, employees were given appropriate feedback.

Upon completion of the personal evaluation, each executive provided the researcher with a complete evaluation of the training program, which included their general impressions of the program, in addition to the evaluation questions. After the above procedure was carried out, the time and place of the face-to-face interview were arranged in consultation with each executive, and permission was obtained to record the discussion.

The interviews were conducted in parts until the beginning of May 2023, and lasted up to 60 minutes each. During the interviews, employees were assured that their anonymity would be preserved and that they would be informed and check the data at the end of the survey for any corrections. The researchers took notes and conducted the interviews according to the employees' thought process and revisited questions if they were not answered. Transcription of the interviews was conducted by the researchers, followed by the presentation and interpretation of the results.

4. Research Results

This section presents a summary of the research findings from the interviews conducted with 12 employees who participated in the "Management of Cultural Organizations" training program. The interviews explored several aspects, including the quality of educational design, personal learning objectives, and the impact of the program on management competencies.

Most participants felt that their personal learning objectives were successfully met, with a particular focus on developing leadership and management skills. The primary goals of the participants were closely related to career advancement and acquiring knowledge that was applicable in both professional and personal contexts.

Most employees expressed satisfaction with how the program aligned with their personal and educational objectives. Many participants highlighted the program's applicability to broader areas such as communication and conflict resolution. For example, P10 mentioned, *"I was mostly interested in the leadership part of it... the characteristics that you have to have to be a good leader."* Similarly, P1 emphasized, *"The primary goal was to develop my communication skills, not just with team members but across teams."*

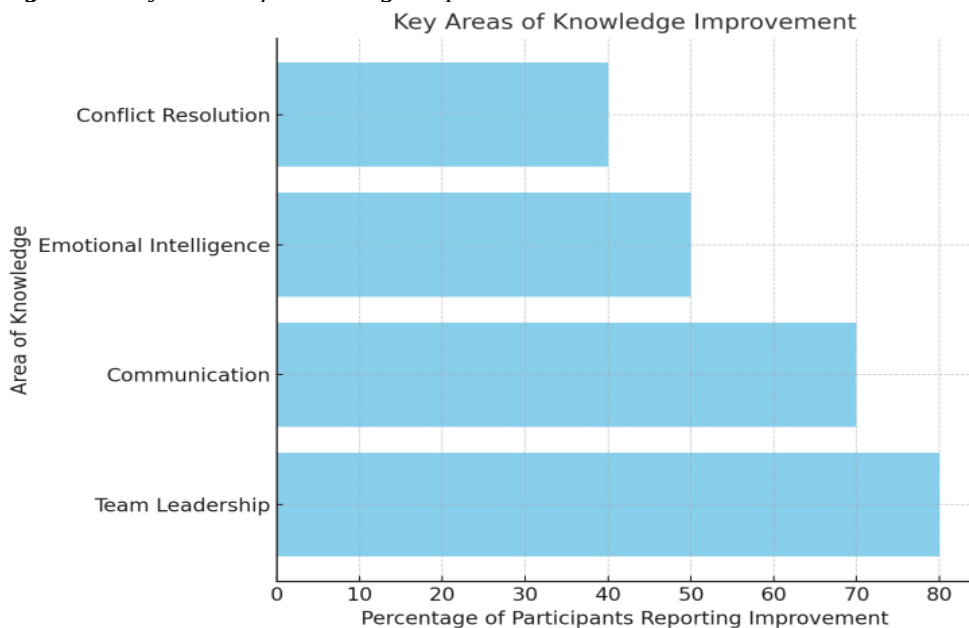
All participants agreed that the training program adequately addressed their professional development needs, particularly in team leadership, communication, and motivation. However, a few participants expressed interest in more in-depth content, suggesting room for further learning opportunities. For instance, P4 stated, *"It covered my needs, particularly in leadership, conflict management, and*

communication," while P6 added, "I feel it covered my needs to a large extent, but there's always room for more". Participants showed a clear preference for topics related to effective leadership, communication within teams, and conflict resolution. Emotional intelligence and negotiation techniques also emerged as valuable areas of learning. For example, P6 expressed particular interest in communication within teams, stating, "Communication within the team. I would be even more interested in other ways to approach colleagues, senior and junior... to make communication more effective."

Participants appreciated the structure of the program, particularly the use of video lectures and interactive quizzes. Most found the content engaging, although some suggested improvements for clarity or more precise wording in certain areas. P10 appreciated the videos, stating, "The videos were short, engaging, and left me with every concept clearly." However, P10 noted, "Some technical issues with the platform were a bit frustrating, but overall the content was great."

All participants reported improvements in their knowledge, especially in leadership and team management. Many also noted that the program gave them new insights into emotional intelligence, conflict management, and communication strategies. Several employees emphasized the program's focus on leadership, with P6 stating, "It's very important to understand others, to be able to come to their level and help them more." Figure 1 shows the key areas of knowledge improvement reported by participants.

Figure 1. Key Areas of Knowledge Improvement



Source: Authors' calculations.

Participants generally found the quizzes and tests to be well-organized and an effective way to reinforce learning. The case studies were also appreciated for fostering interaction and collaboration among team members. Eleven out of twelve participants reported that the tests were relevant to the syllabus and were clear and easy to understand. P1 remarked, *"It was an enjoyable way to learn, meaning you learned without fatigue."* Meanwhile, P9 acknowledged the challenge of the tests, saying, *"The tests were quite difficult, but if you had studied, you had no problem!"*.

While the program had a positive impact on participants' management capabilities, some noted challenges in applying theoretical knowledge to real-life situations. However, participants felt that with continued practice, the training would yield long-term benefits. P6 reflected on the opportunities for personal growth, stating, *"Some things you have, you don't know that you can use them to help yourself and the organization to achieve something better."* On the other hand, P10 highlighted the challenge of translating theory into practice, saying, *"From theory to practice makes a big difference."*

Overall, participants were highly satisfied with the program, describing it as comprehensive and modern. Several participants suggested extending the content for more advanced learning or including more interactive elements like role-playing. P8 suggested, *"The quality was exceptional, but it could be even more specialized, covering topics like time management or emotional intelligence."* Similarly, P12 expressed interest in more interactive elements, adding, *"If it could include role-playing, it would add a new dynamic to the learning experience"*.

The "Management of Cultural Organizations" training program successfully met participants' learning objectives, especially in improving leadership and communication skills. The program also provided valuable insights into team dynamics and conflict resolution.

While there is potential for further content development, the program effectively enhanced the management capabilities of employees. Future iterations could focus on expanding content depth and incorporating more interactive elements to engage learners further. Table 3 summarizes the findings from the interviews with the employees with previous experience in e-learning.

Table 3. Findings from interviews with employees

Category	Main Motives	Results
Identification of Educational Needs/Goals of Employees	Coverage of personal learning goals of employees	– Goals at both professional and personal levels – Coverage across full range of subject matter – Strengthening leadership capabilities – Rediscovery and improvement of knowledge

		– Clarification of concepts and topics
Coverage of educational needs/skills of employees	Satisfactory coverage of needs, especially in leadership and communication	– Significant focus on team management skills – Enhancement of communication skills – Creation of triggers for problem-solving and knowledge development
Preferences for Educational Program Content	Employees' preferences in educational program lessons	– High preference for lessons in leadership and communication – Importance placed on emotional intelligence – Modern teaching methods (videos, presentations, articles)
Work Tasks of Employees	Responsibilities in relation to educational program content	– Relevant to basic tasks and advancement in hierarchy – Includes corporate processes like recruitment and evaluations – Collaboration within teams and projects – Day-to-day tasks linked to specialized knowledge and skills
Duration of Educational Program	Adequacy of the time allocated for the content and demands of the program	– Adequate time allocation given the scope of topics – Satisfactory relation between time and benefits gained – Flexible learning experience
Evaluation of Tests and Activities	Response to teaching materials, tests, and activities	– Tests matched the material – Case studies encouraged exchange of ideas and enhanced participant interaction – Tests helped in knowledge retention and were simpler compared to final assessments
Additional Educational Topics	Need for further development of certain topics	– Topics such as change management, time management, emotional intelligence, and team building were highlighted – Presentation techniques and HR management also desired
Technological Knowledge and Skills	Technological usability and navigation	– Friendly and easy-to-use interface – Well-structured program for easy navigation – Clear instructions enhanced user experience
Teaching Methods	Effectiveness of the teaching methods and instructor	– Teaching method was effective and flexible – Used audiovisual tools to enhance learning

		– Modern, innovative approach to teaching – Need for parallel conventional education was expressed
Evaluation and Feedback	Personal evaluation and feedback from the employees	– Evaluation was a key learning criterion – No significant difficulties faced – Evaluation method was perceived as objective and fair
Value of Training in Developing Administrative Skills	Corporate training and e-learning for enhancing managerial skills	– Training helped employees improve cognitive and behavioral skills – Encouraged discovery of personal capabilities – Enabled knowledge acquisition through experiential learning and improved everyday professional practice
Advantages and Disadvantages of Training for Administrative Skills	Pros and cons of training for developing managerial skills	**Advantages**: Opened new learning horizons, broadened skill sets, and fostered cooperation among employees **Disadvantages**: Difficulty applying theory in practice, external factors affecting knowledge application, and skepticism towards soft skills
Application of Training within the Organization	Applicability of training across the organization	– Reduction in geographic limitations – Cost and time savings – Development of a unified culture – Increased collaboration and knowledge sharing

Source: Authors' calculations.

The general evaluation of the program was highly favorable, with an Average Score of 3.7 out of a maximum of 4. This indicates that the program was perceived as effective and of high quality (Table 4). The lowest score given by employees was 3, which corresponds to a rating of "good," while the highest was 4, which is "excellent".

Table 4. The general evaluation of the program

Evaluation Criterion	Score (Out of 4)
General Evaluation	3.7
Lowest Score	3
Highest Score	4

Source: Authors' calculations.

The average score for educational content (Table 5) was 3.6, with the highest scores in "Course Purpose" and "Exercises and Activities" (3.8 and 3.7, respectively). The lowest scores were observed for changes in trainee practices and attitudes.

Table 5. *Evaluation of the educational content*

Educational Content Criterion	Score (Out of 4)
Course Purpose	3.8
Exercises and Activities	3.7
Change in Practices/Attitudes	3.3
Overall Score	3.6

Source: *Authors' calculations.*

The platform was rated with an average score of 3.6, similar to the educational content evaluation (Table 6). The highest score was for "Technical Excellence" (3.8), while the "Environment Encouraging Discussions" scored the lowest (3.3).

Table 6. *Evaluation of the platform*

Platform Evaluation Criterion	Score (Out of 4)
Technical Excellence	3.8
Environment Encouraging Discussions	3.3
Overall Score	3.6

Source: *Authors' calculations.*

The interviews with employees confirmed the alignment between the quantitative scores and the qualitative feedback. Both data sets consistently highlighted the effectiveness of the training material and structure, as well as areas for improvement, such as the need for more practical applications and discussions.

5. Conclusions

This study examined how e-learning can help develop management skills through a pilot project with staff from a Greek cultural group using qualitative methods. These results highlight the need for more research and improvement in e-learning in management training. Several future research directions were suggested. First, the program should grow into a full version focused on management training, using feedback from the employees who took part, and then the outcomes should be reviewed.

This study showed that even basic e-learning can greatly aid in the personal and professional growth of employees. The training met participants' individual learning goals, especially leadership, communication, and emotional intelligence. The flexible structure of e-learning was well appreciated, although the participants wanted more in-person activities for practical skill enhancement. The participants also wanted the program to include time and human resource management.

This study indicates that e-learning can be an effective and cost-efficient tool for improving management skills. This suggests opportunities for the program to expand to other organizations and to combine e-learning with traditional methods for better learning results.

In summary, e-learning seems promising for management training, as it offers flexible and accessible development options.

Future research could examine the long-term impact of e-learning, its use in different fields, and comparisons with traditional training. These findings support the use of e-learning as a lasting resource for management training that adjusts to the changing needs of employees and companies. It would be helpful to broaden the program to other cultural organizations and conduct a study to compare its effectiveness.

Using quantitative and experimental approaches to assess a program's success could yield deeper insight into its influence. A comparison of e-learning with conventional training methods in the organization would also clarify how effective e-learning is for building management skills.

Longitudinal studies could assess how e-learning value changes as employees revisit the program, possibly demonstrating its lasting effects on skill retention and professional development. Examining the role of e-learning in other sectors including arts, humanities etc. might provide specific insights into its relevance for management competency improvement.

Further research on how the program helps participants in their management roles will clarify its practical usefulness. Understanding employees' views on implementing e-learning programs and their effects on their professional growth could enhance their knowledge about its success.

Lastly, examining the differences in educational outcomes between traditional in-person education and e-learning can offer valuable insights into the best ways to conduct management training. It is suggested that e-learning programs should be permanently adopted at the corporate level, with content and structure updated regularly, rechecked and revised to meet the changing needs of the organization and new developments in the sciences it deals with. Feedback from employees must be added to future versions of the program.

Moreover, the platform can be made more personal to fit the particular needs of different workgroups and management levels in a larger corporate structure. This would ensure that the program remains a useful tool for developing managerial skills across organizations.

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