IMPACT OF TECHNOLOGY ON TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT IN COVID-19 ERA: A STUDY OF THE GHANA CIVIL SERVICE

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PROGRAMME BACKGROUND

Public Management & Policy Analysis Program (PMPP)

➢ **Duration**: (2) Year Programme

➢ **Qualification**: MA. in Public Management

➢ **Objective**: Provide students with knowledge and skills necessary to be good managers in public and non-profit organizations.

INTRODUCTION

➢ The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted the delivery of training in the Ghana Civil Service - traditional method of training delivery.

➢ 2018 provisions of the Civil Service Training and Development Policy, the use of e-learning is identified as an innovative approach to the delivery of the training, and thus, its implementation accelerated with the outbreak of COVID-19.

INTRODUCTION (2)

➢Effectiveness of the use of e-learning during the COVID-19 era in the Ghana Civil Service has not been examined.

➢Study examined the benefits and challenges associated with the adoption of e-learning in the Ghana Civil Service during COVID-19.

➢Study used administrative data and interviews of fifty officers who attended training from 2018 to 2021 for the analysis

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

- COVID-19 identified as an environmental factor caused change:

  - Processes

  - Operations

- Technology adopted as a solution

- To ensure that the human resource of the service keeps pace with modern trends and possess the knowledge and skills required to be effective, take on new responsibilities, and adapt to changing conditions (Jones, Geoarge, & Hill, 2000).

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE (2)

➢Examine the impact of technology on employee training and development in the Ghana Civil Service in the COVID-19 era.

RESEARCH QUESTION

What has been the benefits and challenges of adopting e-learning technology on training and development in the midst of COVID-19 era?

LITERATURE REVIEW

AUTHORS	
Drucker (1993)	❖ The approaches of learning, training, and development have grown in importance, broadened in scope, and become more sophisticated in method (*The sophistication includes the adoption of ICT tools in training*).
Chitra and Raj (2018)	❖ **"e"** in e-learning stands for **"electronic"** ❖ E-learning is the use of networked information and communication technology in teaching and learning.

LITERATURE REVIEW (2)

AUTHORS	
Upoalkpajor (2020)	❖ Argue that, even **though e-learning educaional platforms:** *Google classroom, Telegram, and Zoom,* are not entirely new ways delivering training, **their usage for lectures, and presentations, and modes of assessment, is of great benefit both facilitators and learners**.
Nkansah et al. (2020)	❖ Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is noted to complement, enrich and transform education ❖ The use of interactive educational technology platforms which include e-learning during the COVID-19 pandemic era improves learning.

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HYPOTHESIS

> **H1:** E-learning has a positive effect on access to training and development in the COVID-19 era

> **H2:** E-learning has a positive effect on sustaining employee training and development in the COVID-19 era

METHODOLOGY

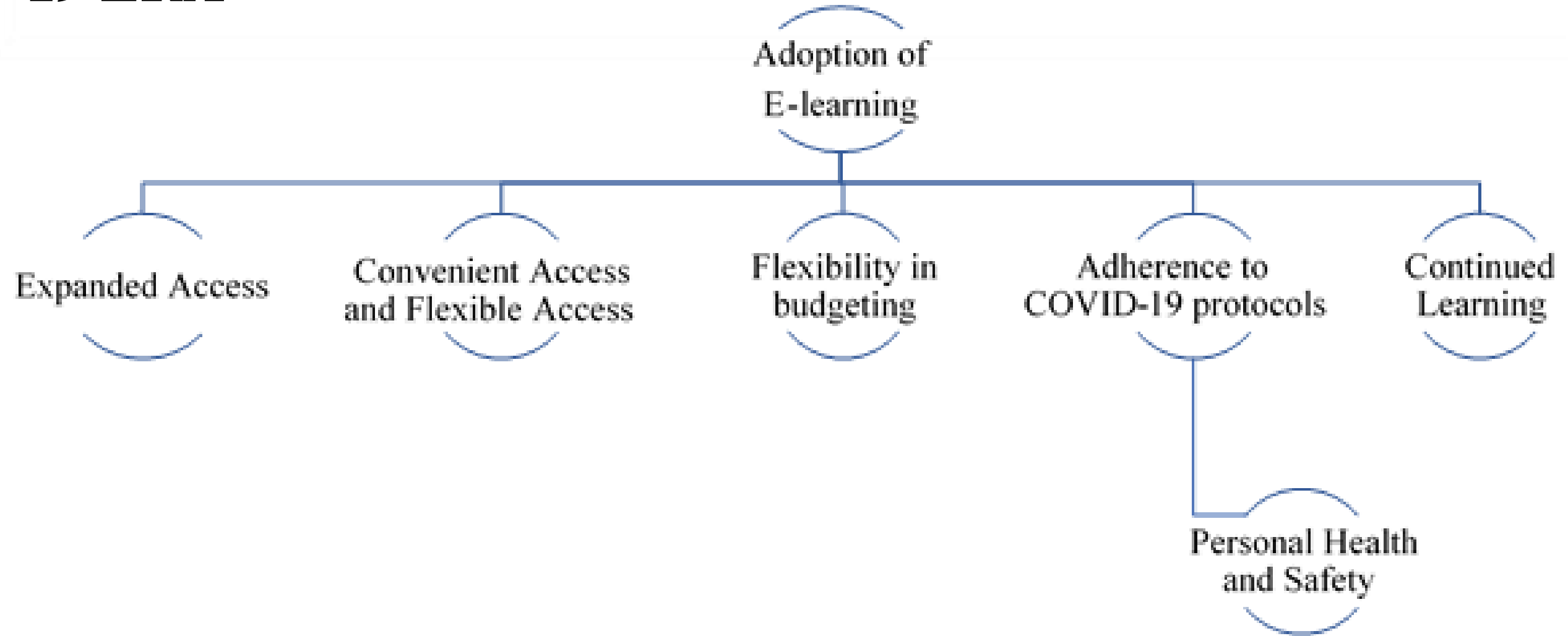| Administrative Data on training and development for 2018 and 2021	Interviews
➢Annual Performance reports (APR)	➢Population: Ghana Civil Service
➢Training reports	➢Sample Size:50 respondents *trained within 4 year period*
➢Training plan reports	➢Purposive sampling
	➢WhatsApp video and voice calls
	➢Average of 15 minutes per session
	➢Interview protocol: 6 open, 4 closed-ended questions

Demographic Variable	Characteristics	Number of Respondents
Gender	Male	19
	Female	31
Age	20 - 25	3
	26 - 30	9
	31 - 35	22
	36 - 40	16
Rank	Senior	29
	Junior	21
Years on Job	0-2	0
	3-5	37
	6-8	11
	9-11	2
Type of Organization	Ministry	20
	Department	30

DEMOGRAPHIC

DATA ANALYSIS

➢ To interpret the interview data, the study utilized the inductive approach of content analysis.

➢ Transcribed data and organized into a database using Microsoft Excel. *open coding system was used in the first stage of content analysis*

➢ Key ideas, phrases and words were color coded and grouped under specific themes.

➢ **Five major themes for benefit**: expanded access, convenient access and flexible access, flexibility in budgeting, continued training, adherence to COVID-19 protocols.

➢ **Two themes for barriers**: Poor infrastructure and increased distractions

BENEFITS OF E-LEARNING ON TRAINING IN COVID-19 ERA

Adoption of E-learning

- Expanded Access
- Convenient Access and Flexible Access
- Flexibility in budgeting
- Adherence to COVID-19 protocols
  - Personal Health and Safety
- Continued Learning

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EXPANDED ACCESS: INTERVIEW RESPONSE

CODE	MEANING UNITS
Increased number of officers participating in training	➢ I was able to attend online training for promotion *(Interviewer 4)*
	➢ More participants were able to attend training which means more participants can be nominated for training *(Interviewer 12)*
	➢ E-learning allowed more officers to participate in training *(Interviewer 48)*

CONVENIENT AND FLEXIBLE ACCESS: INTERVIEW RESPONSE

CODE	MEANING UNITS
Accessible from any preferred location	➢ I can access online training from any location which was convenient for me because I sometimes work from home *(Interviewer 10)*
	➢ E-learning made it easy for me to access training from any location *(Interviewer 16)*
Reduced stress associated with traffic and travel time to training facilities	➢ Attending training was much easier since I did not have to struggle with traffic to get to the training center *(Interviewer 39)*

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FLEXIBILITY IN BUDGETING: INTERVIEW RESPONSE

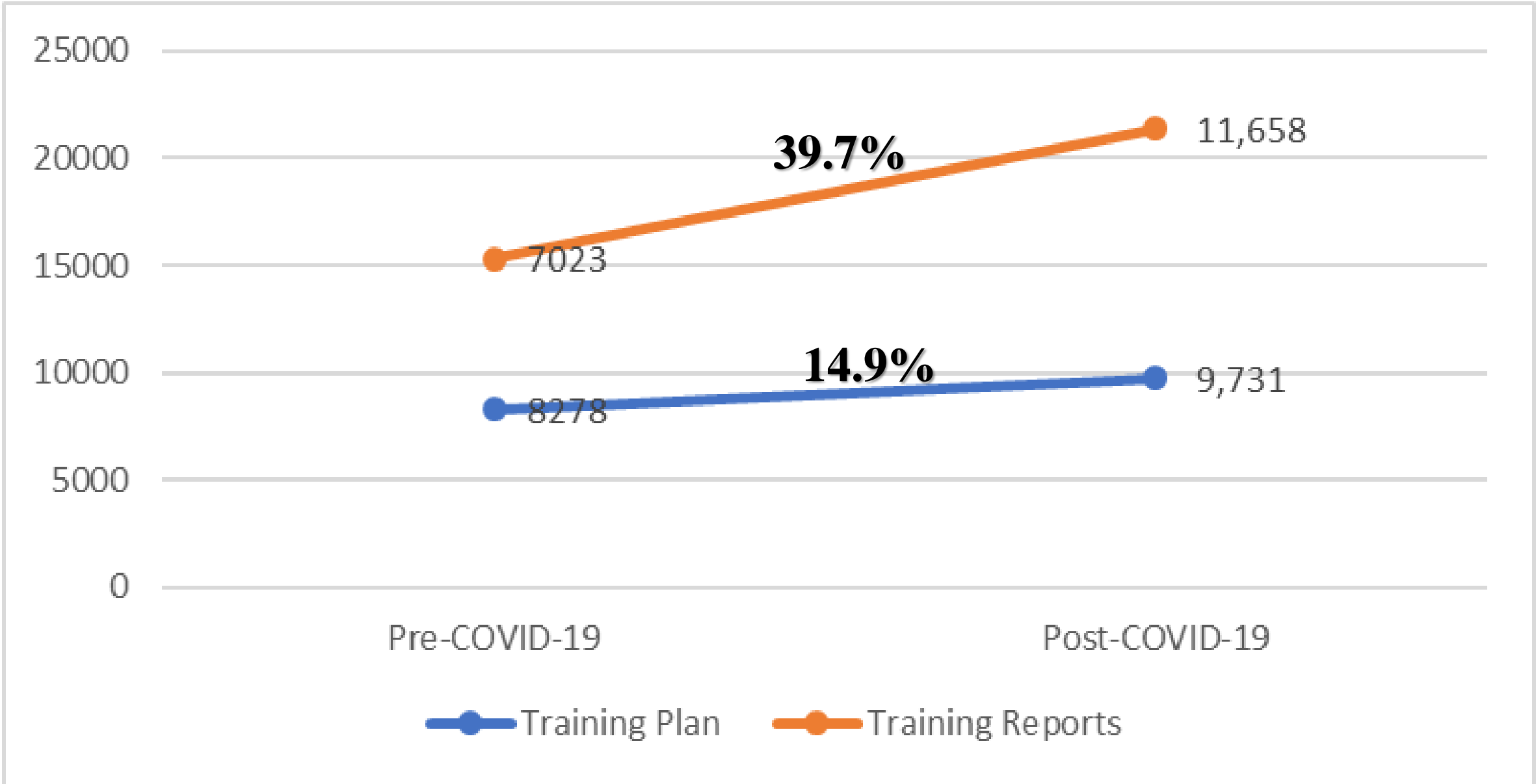| CODE	MEANING UNITS
Reduced the cost associated with training	➢ I was able to save money that would have been used for transportation when going to the training center *(Interviewer 33)*
	➢ The cost of internet data to access the online training was less than the cost of transportation to the training school *(Interviewer 34)*

ADHERENCE TO COVID-19 PROTOCOLS & PERSONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY: INTERVIEW RESPONSE

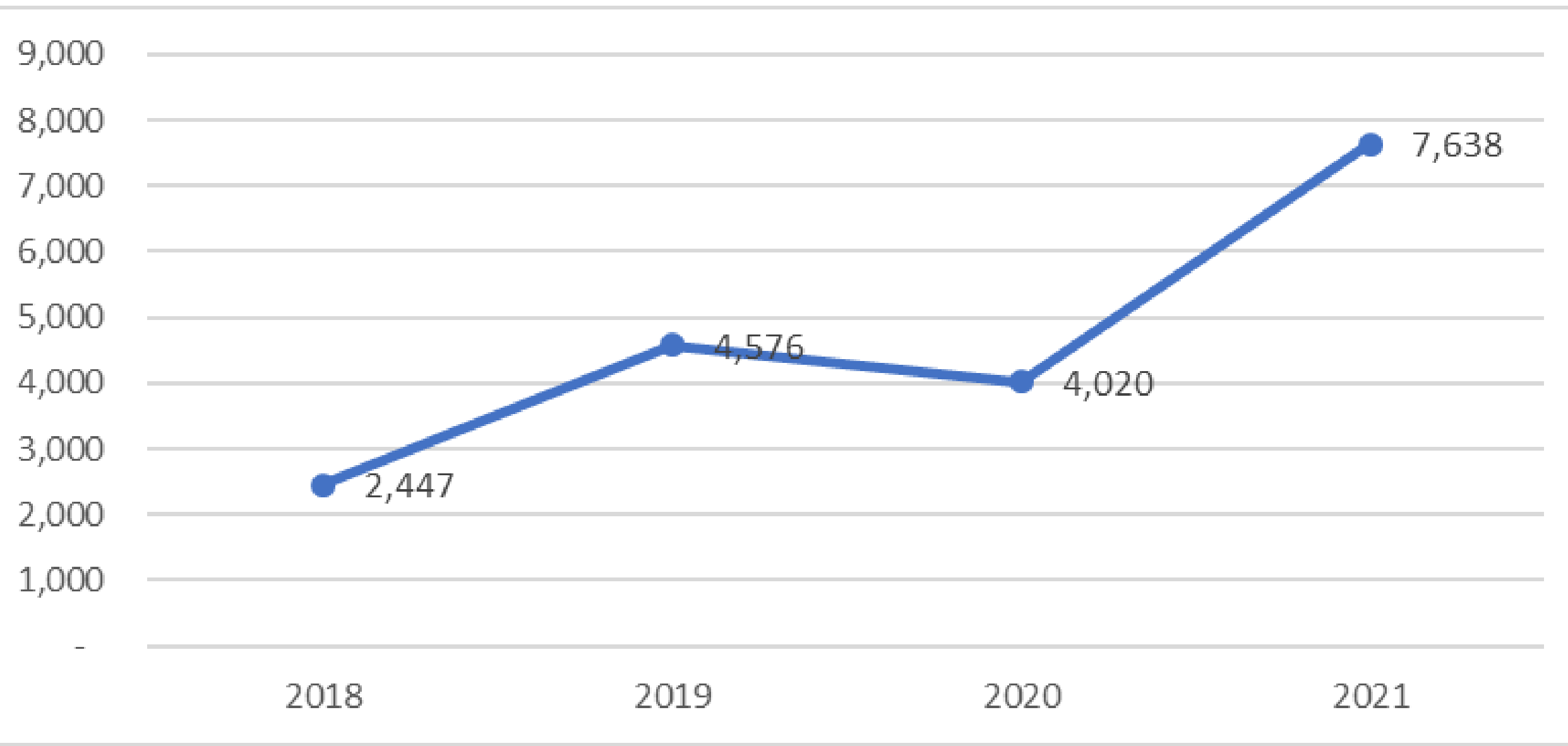| CODE	MEANING UNITS
Promoted Covid-19 protocol compliance: Public gathering and social distancing	➢ Compared to the traditional training (face-to-face), the online training did not require us to be in close proximity with other participants *(Interviewer 1)* ➢ During the lockdown period, I was able to attend training from home *(Interviewer 10)*
Reduced the rate of COVID-19 infections in the work environment	➢ I was scared of leaving the house because I did not have a car. I was happy when online training was introduced because I could attend training from home *(Interviewer 20)*

CONTINUED LEARNING : INTERVIEW RESPONSE

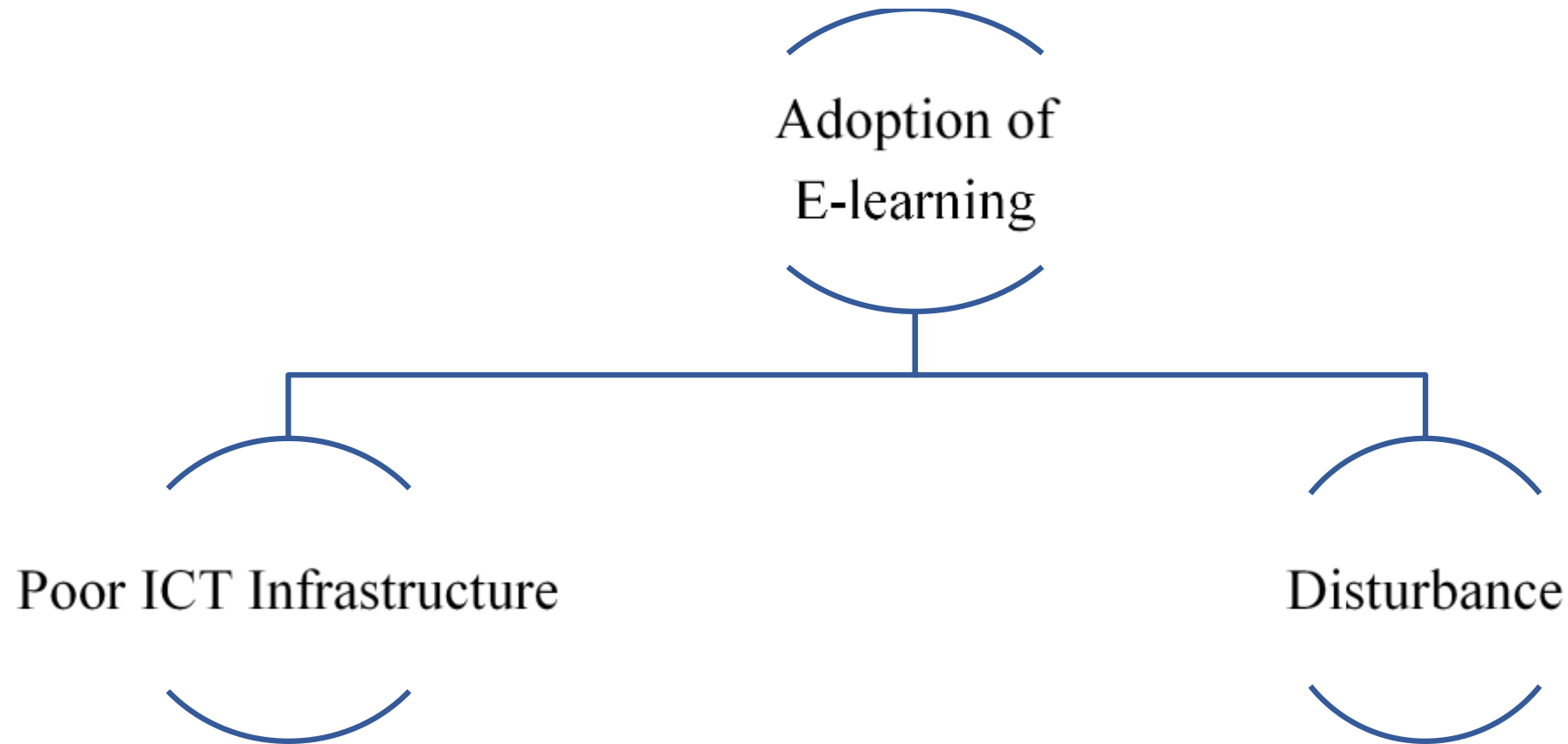| CODE	MEANING UNITS
Ensured continuous access to training during lockdown period	➤ I still received training while in lockdown *(Interviewer 14)*
	➤ During COVID-19, training sessions were suspended. But the following year I was able to attend training online *(Interviewer 33)*

EXPANDED ACCESS : PLANNED AND EXECUTED TRAINING

	Pre-COVID-19	Post-COVID-19
Training Plan	8278	9,731
Training Reports	7023	11,658

39.7% (Training Reports)

14.9% (Training Plan)

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EXPANDED ACCESS: OFFICERS TRAINED: 2018 - 2021

BARRIERS OF THE ADOPTION OF E-LEARNING DURING COVID-19 ERA

POOR ICT INFRASTRUCTURE: INTERVIEW RESPONSE

CODE	MEANING UNITS
Unstable internet connectivity	➢ There were lots of technical issues during training, such as low internet bandwidth, which caused the facilitator to loose connection frequently. This disrupted training sessions *(Interviewer7)*
	➢ Access to stable internet is a problem because of poor service from network service providers *(Interviewer 22)*

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INCREASED DISTRACTION: INTERVIEW RESPONSE

CODE	MEANING UNITS
External and internal distractions during training sessions	➢ There were many noise distractions during training especially when participants leave their microphone on *(Interviewer 16)*
	➢ There were a lot of external distraction from colleagues and my boss when I participate in training from the office. *(Interviewer 19 and 22)*

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DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

➢ One of the key ways e-learning impacted training through expanded access was the **increase in the accessibility to training** which resulted in an **increase in the number of participants** for most of the training programs coordinated by the OHCS for the period 2020 and 2021

➢ Indicative of a positive relationship in support that e-learning has a positive effect on access to training and development in COVID-19 era (H1).

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION (2)

➢Training of staff of the civil service was observed to be sustained during COVID-19 era due to:

- ✓**Expanded access** to training resulting in an increase in the number of officers receiving training

- ✓**Convenience** and **flexibility** to **access** and use e-learning

- ✓ **Budgeting flexibility** which minimizes the associated cost of e-learning for the participants, and

- ✓**Adherence to COVID-19 protocols** which addresses the **personal health and safety** concerns of participants.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION (3)

➢These results indicate that, e-learning has a positive effect on sustained employee training and development in the COVID-19 era (H2)

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION (4)

➢ The study also identified two key barriers to the adoption of e-learning:

✓ **Poor ICT infrastructure:** Caused trainers and trainees to occasionally losing their connection to the online system during training resulting in interruptions.

✓ **Internal distractions** due to some participants leaving their microphone on during training sessions, and

✓ **External distractions** leading to an increase in the tendency of participants to engage in off-task multitasking, especially while accessing the training from a shared office environment.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION (5)

Findings of this study:

➤ Contribute to the existing body of knowledge on training and development in COVID-19 era and related pandemic situations

➤ Contribute to the policy process on training and development in the public organizations

LIMITATIONS

Sample Size

➢The sample of the study is very small, which makes it difficult for generalization.

Data

➢Complexities in obtaining administrative approvals limited access to financial data

Thank you