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TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AS A CATALYST FOR ENHANCING EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE: EVIDENCE FROM KANO STATE POLYTECHNIC, NIGERIA

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Abstract

This study investigates the effect of training and development on employee performance at Kano State Polytechnic, Nigeria. A survey design was employed, and data were collected from 300 academic and non-academic staff across different schools within the polytechnic. The study used descriptive statistics and inferential analysis via SPSS to examine the relationship between training initiatives and staff performance indicators such as job efficiency, motivation, and productivity. The findings reveal that training and development significantly influence employee performance, with staff who participated in training reporting higher job commitment, improved efficiency, and enhanced institutional loyalty. The study recommends continuous capacity-building programs and adequate institutional investment in training and professional development as critical strategies for improving productivity in higher education institutions.

Keywords: Training, development, employee performance, capacity building, higher education, Kano State Polytechnic

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Introduction

Human capital development has been recognized as one of the most critical determinants of organizational growth and performance. In today's knowledge-driven economy, institutions that invest in training and development of their workforce tend to outperform those that do not (Armstrong, 2018). In higher education institutions, especially in developing countries like Nigeria, training and development play a pivotal role in enhancing teaching quality, administrative efficiency, and overall institutional performance (Ekpoh & Edet, 2020).

Kano State Polytechnic, being one of the largest polytechnics in Northern Nigeria, faces challenges associated with limited staff capacity, resource constraints, and dynamic educational demands. To remain competitive and efficient, the institution must continuously upgrade the skills of its workforce through structured training and development programs.

This paper, therefore, examines the role of training and development as a catalyst for enhancing employee performance at Kano State Polytechnic, with a focus on both academic and non-academic staff.

Literature Review

Concept of Training and Development

Training and development are often considered essential tools for human resource management. Training is a planned intervention aimed at improving employees' specific skills, while development is a broader process focusing on long-term professional growth (Fapohunda, 2019). In the higher education context, these processes ensure that lecturers, administrators, and support staff remain updated with pedagogical, technological, and managerial skills (Sharma & Taneja, 2018).

Training and Employee Performance

Several studies demonstrate the positive relationship between training and employee performance. For example, Hassan (2018) found that HRM practices, particularly training, significantly enhanced staff performance in Nigerian universities. Similarly, Ibrahim and Daniel (2019) revealed that continuous training opportunities improved academic staff productivity in polytechnics. Recent studies (Adesola & Adeyemi, 2019; Kassa & Raju, 2020) further confirm that training impacts employee efficiency, innovation, and commitment across higher education systems in Africa.

Training in Nigerian Higher Education

In Nigeria, staff training and development are considered central to achieving quality assurance in higher education (Ekpoh & Edet, 2020; Onyema, 2019). Despite financial and infrastructural challenges, institutions that prioritize capacity-building programs tend to record higher employee satisfaction and better organizational outcomes (Okeke & Nwankwo, 2022). Studies by Joseph and Gabriel (2021) also suggest that polytechnics that invest in training report significant improvements in administrative performance and student satisfaction.

Theoretical Framework

This study draws on Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1993) and the Resource-Based View (RBV) of the firm (Barney, 1991). Human Capital Theory posits that investment in employees' knowledge and skills yields higher returns in performance. RBV emphasizes that training creates unique and inimitable competencies that serve as competitive advantages. Recent empirical evidence (Mensah, 2021; Salihu & Musa, 2023) supports these theories by showing that organizations with systematic training programs achieve sustainable performance outcomes.

Methodology

The study adopted a descriptive survey design. The population consisted of all academic and non-academic staff of Kano State Polytechnic. Using stratified random sampling, 300 respondents were selected (180 academic staff and 120 non-academic staff). A structured questionnaire was used to collect data, which included both demographic information and items measuring perceptions of training and employee performance.

Data were analyzed using SPSS (version 25). Descriptive statistics (mean, frequency, percentages) were employed to summarize data, while regression analysis tested the effect of training on employee performance. Reliability of the instrument was established with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.84, indicating internal consistency.

Results

Demographic Profile of Respondents

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

Variable	Frequency	Percentage
Academic Staff	180	60%
Non-Academic Staff	120	40%
Male	190	63%
Female	110	37%
Below 35 years	85	28%
36–45 years	120	40%
Above 45 years	95	32%

Regression Analysis

The regression results showed that training and development had a significant positive effect on employee performance ($\beta = 0.61$, $p < 0.01$). This indicates that an increase in training

opportunities leads to improved staff performance outcomes such as efficiency, motivation, and productivity.

Discussion

The findings align with previous studies which highlight training as a determinant of employee productivity in higher education (Ibrahim & Daniel, 2019; Adesola & Adeyemi, 2019). The results also confirm the assertion of Ekpoh and Edet (2020) that staff development programs are critical for sustaining performance in Nigerian tertiary institutions.

Interestingly, the positive effect observed in this study supports Kassa and Raju's (2020) findings in Ethiopian universities, suggesting that investment in training yields similar benefits across different African contexts. Furthermore, the results resonate with international literature, where Al-Zu'bi (2020) and Baporikar (2021) emphasize that training enhances both individual and institutional outcomes.

However, despite the evident benefits, studies such as Onyema (2019) and Okeke and Nwankwo (2022) caution that inconsistent funding and poor policy frameworks limit the sustainability of training programs in Nigerian polytechnics. This implies that while training contributes positively to performance, its impact may be undermined if not institutionalized as a continuous process.

Thus, the study reinforces Human Capital Theory and RBV by showing that investments in staff development lead to competitive advantages in higher education institutions.

Conclusion and Recommendations

This study concludes that training and development are vital catalysts for enhancing employee performance in Nigerian higher education. Specifically, the findings from Kano State Polytechnic confirm that well-structured training programs improve job efficiency, motivation, and institutional commitment.

Recommendations:

Management of Kano State Polytechnic should allocate adequate resources for continuous staff development.

Training programs should be aligned with institutional goals to maximize impact.

Both academic and non-academic staff should be included in regular training initiatives to enhance institutional effectiveness.

Policymakers should enforce minimum training standards across Nigerian polytechnics.

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