

TRAINING AND EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE IN E-BOOKING TRANSPORT COMPANIES IN RIVERS STATE

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ABSTRACT

This study investigated the relationship between training and employee performance in e-booking transport companies in Rivers State. The study was conceptualized using training as predictor to employee performance proxies including employee satisfaction, employee engagement and employee productivity. The study adopted cross-sectional survey research design. The population of the study was made up of four thousand, five hundred and twenty-three (4523) employees from the eight (8) major E-Booking Transport companies operating in Rivers State. The sample size of 354 employees was determined using of the Krejcie and Morgan Table. The questionnaire method was used to collect relevant data to the study. Spearman Rank Order Correlation was used in testing the various hypotheses with the help of the Statistical Packages for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 25.0. Findings from the study revealed existence of significant and positive relationship between training and the three proxies of employee performance of e-booking transport companies in Rivers State. The study therefore, concluded that training has significant and positive relationship with employee performance in e-booking transport companies in Rivers State. Based on the established fact, the study recommended that managers of e-booking transport companies should be intentional about their activities by considering the long term implications of their operations to ensure efficiency; managers of e-booking transport companies should build strong team for monitoring training programmes aimed at achieving positive employee performance.

Keywords: Training, employee performance, employee satisfaction, employee engagement, employee productivity

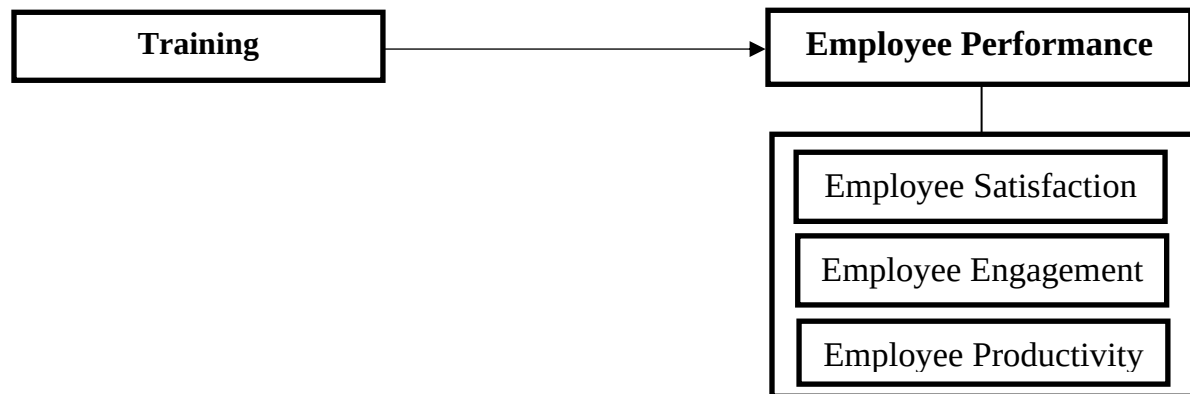
INTRODUCTION

Digital technology has affected virtually every aspect of the 21st century human life. Today, we can scarcely do anything without the aid of digital technology. For instance, digital technology has transformed the way people travel, providing comfort and easy transport solutions through electronic platforms (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017). Presently, e-booking transportation mode has emerged as a popular choice for travelers in Rivers State. However, with the increasing competition in this industry, it has become imperative for e-booking transport companies to identify factors that can help them boost employee performance to ensure enduring

survival within the industry. In this sense, Lodha and Pathak (2017) remarks that training is a pivotal as it equips employees with the necessary skills and knowledge to excel in their roles. Training programs help employees develop a thorough understanding of the digital platforms they work with, improve customer service skills, and enhance their knowledge of safety and compliance regulations. Furthermore, training equips employees with the necessary technical skills to ensure smooth operations and effective communication with customers (Kiruja & Mukuru, 2018). Effective training programs have a significant impact on employee performance within e-booking transport companies. By providing comprehensive training, companies can enhance employee competence, increase their job satisfaction, and improve overall performance levels (Kim *et al.*, 2019).

In spite of the growing interest in training among academicians and practitioners, its implementation is problematic in the Rivers State transport business context. Problems of this kind exist for several reasons, one of which is that literature depicting the relationship between training and employee performance of e-booking transport companies in Rivers State is still modicum. Most studies in this area were conducted in foreign demography. For instance, Quagraine, Adu, Ashie and Opoku (2019) investigated organizational support for career development and organizational commitment: Evidence from the Ghana Police Service; Yuntawati, Umar, Al-Musadieq and Nayati (2019) explored the relationship among super leader, **perceived organizational support** and work performance mediated by work satisfaction and employee engagement.

There are little or no empirically evidenced studies depicting the relationship between training and employee performance of e-booking transport companies in Rivers State (to the best of our knowledge). This study sought to bridge the identified gap in knowledge, as it purposed to investigate with empirical evidence the relationship between training and employee performance in e-booking transport companies in Rivers State as conceptualized in figure 1.

Conceptual Framework**Figure 1:** Relationship between training and employee performance

Source: Desk Research: Chass, M.S. & Balu, L. (2018).

LITERATURE REVIEW**Theoretical Foundation of the Study: Equity Theory (Adam Smith, 1965).**

Equity Theory (Adams, 1965) focuses on the perception employees form about their treatment compared to others. The theory contends that employees evaluate the suitability of their benefits received (outputs) with their work (inputs) by matching the ratio of their input and output with that of other employees (Armstrong, 2014). Therefore, employees feel equitably treated when their input and output ratio is construed as favourable, and vice versa. This theory is, however, anchored on the notion that employees are equally sensitive to equity even though research suggests that several demographic, psychological and environmental variables differently affect employees' reactions to apparent equity or inequity (Huseman, Hatfield, & Miles, 1987). The implication of this theory to the present study is that employees feel better and assumes to be part of the organization when and if there is favourable organizational support system to look into their welfare needs.

Concept of Training

Oxford dictionary defines training as the process of learning the skills that you need to do a job. Training

plays a vital role to support the competitive edge over esteemed respective competitors of any organization in perspective of changing business horizon. Training usually refers to some kind of organized event a seminar, workshop that has a specific beginning data and end date aimed at enhancing cognitive performance as well as result in connective disposition that is in conformity with organizational expectations. According to Madhukar and Sharma (2017), training is a learning process that involves the acquisition of skills, concepts, rules, or attitudes to increase employee performance. It is a key strategy for generating skills in people since it enables them to both learn and unlearn skills – in other words, to acquire new skills and change inappropriate skills (Pineda, Quesada & Ciraso, 2014).

Employee Performance

The Oxford learners Dictionary (2010) refers to performance as an act of performing; of doing something using Knowledge as distinct from merely possessing it and any recognized achievement. employee performance is how a member of staff fulfils the duties of their role, completes required tasks and behaves in the workplace. Employee performance is among the critical factors that contribute significantly in organizational success. Employees performance also depends on their internal satisfaction towards their job. If employees are satisfied from their jobs as well as the organization than they are more keenly interested to perform well towards organizational goal achievement (Kurtessis *et al.*, 2017).

Measures of Business Performance

Singh (2011) measured performance using sales growth, return on investments (ROI), market share, service quality, positive corporate image, industry harmony, customer retention and team spirit. Here, Powell (2008) sees sales performance as the overall performance of a firm's financial position at the end of the financial year. Similarly, Ongore and Kusa (2013) determined performance using market share, profitability, quality service delivery, return on assets, retention of customers, charge in market share or profitability, new product success and employee satisfaction. Thus, this study adopts non-financial

measures of employee satisfaction, employee engagement and employee productivity as key attributes of employee performance.

Employee Satisfaction: Satisfaction refers to the level of fulfillment of one's needs, wants and desire. Satisfaction depends basically upon what an individual wants from the world, and what they get (Kirusa & Mukuru, 2018). Employee satisfaction is a measure of how happy workers are with their job and working environment. Employee satisfaction is the terminology used to describe whether employees are happy, contented and fulfilling their desires and needs at work (Kose, 2016). Abraham (2012) defined employee satisfaction as the combination of affective reactions to the differential perceptions of what he/she wants to receive compared with he/she actually receives. According to Bailey *et al.* (2016), employee satisfaction may be described as how pleased an employee is with his or her position of employment.

Employee Engagement: Research around the world shows that more engaged employees could help companies achieve incredible results. Employee engagement implies the emergence of motivation, active participation and involvement of workers in all production processes, which should favorably influence on the growth of labor efficiency (He, Zhu & Zheng, 2014). People begin to work effectively only if they are passionate about work. To achieve this, it is necessary to create conditions for the maximum interest of employees in their work. Kalkavan and Katrinli (2014) believe that employee satisfaction gives rise to loyalty to the employer, loyalty forms engagement, which, in turn, allows improvement in the quality of production (Stevenson, 2019). Sequel to the views of several scientists, employee engagement is primarily an individual's predisposition to participate in particular labor activity, which consists of three components: knowledge, interest, and performance (Meiyani *etc.*, 2019). Employee engagement relates to an employee's concentration on the task, satisfaction with his role, and also a commitment to the organization and its goals and values (Eskildsen *et al.*, 2000).

Employee Productivity

Productivity is a component which directly affects the company's profits (Kiruja & Mukuru, 2018). Productivity may be evaluated in terms of the output of an employee in a specific period of time. Typically, the productivity of a given worker will be assessed relative to an average output for employees doing similar work. It can also be assessed according to the number of units of a product or service that an employee handles in a defined time frame (Kiruja & Mukuru, 2018). As the success of an organization relies mainly on the productivity of its employees, therefore, employee productivity has become an important objective for businesses (Sharma & Sharma, 2014). The importance of productivity in an organization can hardly be overstated. Productivity has been described by Herti *et al.* (2011) as the level of an individual's work achievement after having exerted effort. They believe that productivity is an individual phenomenon. However, certain environmental factors will have a significant bearing on performance. Determining the individuals work as attempted by various evaluations gives the organization certain advantages.

Empirical Review

Ojokuku and Adegbite (2014) examined the impact of capacity building on staff performance in selected organisations in Nigeria. The study employed descriptive and inferential statistical technique of data sourced through questionnaire. The study found that there is a strong positive relationship between capacity building and staff performance in an organization. Malaolu and Ogbuabor (2013) investigated the effects of training and manpower development on employees' productivity and organizational performance using First Bank of Nigeria Plc. as a case study. The study applied structured questionnaires to a sample size of 75 drawn by simple random sampling. The data generated was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The findings of the study show that training and manpower development has significantly enhanced employee efficiency and job productivity in the bank. Gunu, Oni, Tsado and Ajayi (2013) examined whether employees' training enhances work efficiency in the banking industry. Primary data were used for the study were generated through the use of questionnaires. The study employed a sample of 395 respondents from a population of

35,386 from the five banks used as case study. Simple random technique was used to select the respondents and data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics, and Pearson's moment correlation. Multiple regressions were employed to test the hypothesis. They found evidence that organizational commitment to training and development, frequency of training and development, and reward for best performance significantly improve organizational performance in the Nigerian banking sector.

AL Damoe et al. (2012) asserted in their study that highly skillful and knowledgeable staff is very necessary for the improvement of the organization. Training increases the productivity of employee, improves the services of the employee and brings the positive change in the organization. Training gives the outcome in the shape of tangible and intangible. Similarly, Raja, Furqan and Muhammad (2011) assess the impact of training on organizational performance using primarily sourced data from 100 employees of different organizations in Pakistan. The study employed descriptive statistics and found that training are regarded as costly but the advantages of employee training are much more than its disadvantages since training has positive effect on organizational performance. Anyanwu (2002) studied the effects of training on employee productivity. The paper provides a review of the current evidence of such a relationship and offers suggestions for further investigation. They reviewed extensive the literature in terms of research findings from studies that had attempted measuring and understood the impact that training have on employee productivity across various sectors. The focal point of their review was on training practices and employee productivity and their relationship. The outcome of their findings varied. While some studies reported a positive association between training and employee productivity, some reported negative and some no association whatsoever. Also, Rastogi (2000) examined the role of training on workers' productivity in both public and private organizations in Rivers State. The study also pointed out the problems of human resource management and personal manager. The study found that training is a long term and very sensitive function of an organization. The present study proposes the following hypotheses:

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between training and employee satisfaction of e-booking transport companies in Rivers State

H₀₂: There is no significant relationship between training and employee engagement of e-booking transport companies in Rivers State

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between training and employee productivity of e-booking transport companies in Rivers State

METHODOLOGY

This study adopted the cross-sectional survey research design with a correlational investigation type. The population of the study was made up of four thousand, five hundred and twenty-three (4523) employees from the eight (8) major E-Booking Transport companies operating in Rivers State. The sample size of 354 employees was determined using of the Krejice and Morgan Table. Data were generated from the respondents by the use of a well-structured questionnaire. Spearman Rank Order correlation was used to test the hypotheses with the aid of statistical packages for social science version 25.0. Table 1 depicts the instrument reliability values.

Table 1: Results of Instrument Reliability Test

S/NO	DIMENSION/MEASURES OF THE STUDY	NUMBER OF ITEM	CRONBACH's ALPHA
1	Training	5	0.720
2	Employee Satisfaction	5	0.793
3	Employee Engagement	5	0.701
4	Employee Productivity	5	0.726

Source: Research data output, 2023.

The instrument reliability results as shown in Table 1 depicts that the four constructs used for the study had high reliability values of 0.720, 0.793, 0.701 and 0.726 respectively. This indicates that the research instrument used for the study was reliable.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive Analysis on Study Variables

The Mean score was used to assess the level of the study variables in the industry investigated and the results are presented thus:

Table 2: Descriptive statistics for Training

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Our company subjects us to compulsory training programmes at different intervals.	339	2	5	3.58	.927
Our company hire experts who come to sensitize us while on-the-job.	339	1	5	3.73	1.209
Our company funds special courses for us from time to time.	339	1	5	3.88	1.303
We record improvement in knowledge of our job role as a result of the training we receive from experts and resource persons	339	1	5	3.46	.979
Valid N (listwise)	339				

Source: Field Survey, 2023.

Table 2 illustrates the distribution for the constructs of the study based on summaries obtained from their manifest properties. The distribution which is based on a 5 – point Likert scale format of 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = moderately agree, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. The distributions for the variables demonstrate evident levels of agreement to the properties and manifestations of the constructs; where mean scores (x) are observed to range mostly between $x = 3.0 - 4.0$. This shows that the employees in the organization under study affirm to the manifestations of training as a variable in E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State.

Table 3: Descriptive statistics for Employee Satisfaction

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We take delight in our job	339	2	5	3.58	.959
We receive fringe benefits from our company	339	1	5	3.46	1.128
We can describe our working conditions as fair	339	1	5	3.34	1.024
There is free and good communication between we and our employers	339	2	5	3.58	.905
Valid N (listwise)	339				

Source: SPSS Output, 2023.

Table 3 illustrates the distribution for the constructs of the study based on summaries obtained from their manifest properties. The distribution which is based on a 5 – point Likert scale format of 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = moderately agree, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. The distributions for the variables demonstrate evident levels of agreement to the properties and manifestations of the constructs; where mean scores (x) are observed to range mostly between $x = 3.0 - 4.0$. This shows that the employees in the organization under study affirm to the manifestations of employee satisfaction as a measure of employee performance in of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State.

Table 4: Descriptive statistics for Employee Engagement

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We are dedicated to our job roles	339	1	5	3.79	1.273
We have sentimental attachment to our job roles	339	1	5	3.79	1.179
We care about the company's overall performance	339	1	5	3.50	1.016
We are heavily and carefully engaged in our official duties	339	2	5	4.01	1.151
Valid N (listwise)	339				

Source: SPSS Output, 2023.

Table 4 illustrates the distribution for the constructs of the study based on summaries obtained from their manifest properties. The distribution which is based on a 5 – point Likert scale format of 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = moderately agree, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree. The distributions for the variables demonstrate evident levels of agreement to the properties and manifestations of the constructs;

where mean scores ($\bar{x}$) are observed to range mostly between $\bar{x} = 3.0 - 4.0$. This shows that the employees in the organization under study affirm to the manifestations of employee engagement as a measure of employee performance in of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State.

Table 5 illustrates the distribution for the constructs of the study based on summaries obtained from their manifest properties. The distribution which is based on a 5 – point Likert scale format of 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = moderately agree, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree.

Table 5: Descriptive statistics for Employee Productivity

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
We are meeting up with our daily tasks	339	1	5	3.80	1.220
We are passionate about our company's objectives	339	2	5	3.61	.758
Our company is recording positive results from us	339	2	5	4.02	.892
We are meeting our organization's goals through cooperation and collective effort	339	2	5	3.68	.835
Valid N (listwise)	339				

Source: SPSS Output, 2023.

The distributions for the variables demonstrate evident levels of agreement to the properties and manifestations of the constructs; where mean scores ($\bar{x}$) are observed to range mostly between $\bar{x} = 3.0 - 4.0$. This shows that the employees in the organization under study affirm to the manifestations of employee productivity as a measure of employee performance in of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State.

Bivariate Analysis

The bivariate analysis involving the test for the bivariate relations is presented on Table 6. The decision rule which applies for all bivariate test outcomes is stated as follows: where $P < 0.05$, reject hypothesis on the basis or evidence significant relationship; and where $P > 0.05$, accept hypothesis on the basis of insignificant relationship between the variables.

Training and the Measures of Employee Performance

Ho₁: There is no significant relationship between training and employee satisfaction of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State.

The result of correlation matrix obtained between training and employee satisfaction of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State was shown in Table 6. Similarly displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. The correlation coefficient of 0.727 confirms the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a strong positive correlation between training and employee satisfaction of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State. The tests of significance shows that this relationship is significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between training and employee satisfaction of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State.

Table 6: Correlations for Training and the Measures of Employee Performance

			Training	Employee Satisfaction	Employee Engagement	Employee Productivity
Spearman's rho	Training	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.727**	.738**	.857**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000	.000
		N	339	339	339	339
	Employee Satisfaction	Correlation Coefficient	.727**	1.000	.730**	.761**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000	.000
		N	339	339	339	339
	Employee Engagement	Correlation Coefficient	.738**	.730**	1.000	.754**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.	.000
		N	339	339	339	339
	Employee Productivity	Correlation Coefficient	.857**	.761**	.754**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.000	.
		N	339	339	339	339

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Source: SPSS Output, 2023

Ho₂: There is no significant relationship between training and employee engagement of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State.

The result of correlation matrix obtained between training and employee engagement of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State was shown in Table 6. Similarly displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. The correlation coefficient of 0.738 confirms the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a strong positive correlation between training and employee engagement of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State. The tests of significance shows that this relationship is significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between training and employee engagement of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State.

H₀₃: There is no significant relationship between training and employee productivity of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State.

The result of correlation matrix obtained between training and employee productivity of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State was shown in Table 6. Similarly displayed in the table is the statistical test of significance (p - value), which makes possible the generalization of our findings to the study population. The correlation coefficient of 0.857 confirms the direction and strength of this relationship. The coefficient represents a very strong positive correlation between training and employee productivity of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State. The tests of significance shows that this relationship is significant at $p\ 0.000 < 0.05$. Therefore, based on observed findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between training and employee productivity of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State.

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The outcome of the analysis on how training relates with the measures of employee performance in E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State revealed that there is a significant relationship between training and the measures of employee performance of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State,

given the p-value of 0.000 which is less than the level of significant of 0.05 ($p=0.000<0.05$). the hypothesis which was given in null form was thus rejected and the alternate hypothesis was accepted. The rho values were 0.727, 0.738 and 0.857 respectively. This indicates a strong and very strong positive relationship between training and the measures of employee performance of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State. This further implies that training can be used to achieve employee performance in respect to satisfaction, engagement and productivity of E-Booking Transport companies in Rivers State.

The findings are in line with the findings of other authors in the area of training. Specifically, the study result corroborates with the findings of Ojokuku and Adegbite (2014) which examined the impact of capacity building on staff performance in selected organisations in Rivers State. The study employed descriptive and inferential statistical technique of data sourced through questionnaire and found that there is a strong positive relationship between capacity building and staff performance in an organization. Also, the study finding is in harmony with the empirical findings of Raja, Furqan and Muhammad (2011) which assessed the impact of training on organizational performance using primarily sourced data from 100 employees of different organizations in Pakistan. The study employed descriptive statistics and found that training is regarded as costly but the advantages of employee training are much more than its disadvantages since training has positive effect on organizational performance. The findings converge with the findings of Gunu, Oni, Tsado and Ajayi (2013) which examined whether employees' training enhances work efficiency in the banking industry. Simple random technique was used to select the respondents and data collected were analyzed using descriptive statistics and Pearson's moment correlation was employed to test the hypothesis. The study found that organizational commitment to training, frequency of training, and reward for best performance significantly improve organizational performance in the Nigeria banking sector.

Again, the finding is in consonance with the findings of AL Damoe *et al.* (2012) which found that highly skillful and knowledgeable staff is very necessary for the improvement of the organization. The study

findings are in tandem with the findings of Malaolu and Ogbuabor (2013) in their study on the effects of training and manpower development on employees' productivity and organizational performance in First Bank of Nigeria Plc. Their study applied structured questionnaires to a sample size of 75 drawn by simple random sampling and found that training and manpower development had significantly enhanced employee efficiency and job productivity in the bank.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the results of this study and to the extent of its consistency with similar empirical studies, this study concludes that training significantly relates with employee Performance in e-booking transport companies in Rivers State. Thus, training is key imperatives for growth and positive behaviour of employees within the e-booking transport companies given its training, monitoring and employee welfare programmes criteria which in turn impacts employee satisfaction, engagement and productivity.

Based on the conclusion drawn from findings of the study and the contribution to knowledge drawn from the heuristic model, this study makes the following recommendations:

1. Managers of e-booking transport companies should be intentional about their activities by considering the long-term implications of their operations to ensure efficiency.
2. Managers of e-booking transport companies should build strong team for monitoring training programmes aimed at achieving positive employee performance.

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