

# TRAINING: AN EFFECTIVE TOOL FOR ENHANCED PRODUCTIVITY OF MANUFACTURING COMPANIES IN RIVERS STATE

**Mercy Ughuere Dienye, PhD.**

Department of Employee Relations and Human Resources Management, Faculty of Administration and Management, Rivers, State University, Nkpolu-Oroworukwo, PMB 5080, Port Harcourt, Rivers State. Nigeria.

**Abstract:** *This research investigated the relationship between training and organisational productivity of manufacturing companies in Rivers State. The paper offers a position on the significance of training to specific productivity outcomes of production quality, quantity and efficiency. The human capital theory was adopted as the theoretical foundation for this research. Its suitability is premised on its support for training as a means of enhancing the value and capacity of the worker, in line with the productivity concerns of the organisation. The correlational design was adopted as the research design and data generated from 29 management staff, using the structured questionnaire. Results from the tests revealed training to be significantly and positively associated with organisational productivity measures of production quality, quantity and efficiency. It was concluded that context-based training enhances the organisational productivity of manufacturing companies in Rivers State. It was thus recommended that these organisations build on reinforcing their learning and development of training programs that are emergent and contingent of their environment. This is necessary for effectively mapping out key areas for training.*

**Keywords:** *Organisational productivity, training, human capital, production quality, production quantity, production efficiency.*

## INTRODUCTION

The success of the organisation is spurred on by the capacity and productivity of its workforce (Binta et al, 2019). Azeez (2023) affirmed that the Nigerian manufacturing industry is bedevilled by high competition, the lack of infrastructure and more especially, the lack of skilled personnel. Despite its noted pivotal role in driving the nation's economy, and contributing over 16% to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP), most manufacturing organisations, yet struggle in terms of productivity, due to their inability to apply or engage the necessary technological know-how, or technical competence in their operations; thus leading to their failure to meet production deadlines, poor financial returns and in most cases, the outright closure of plants or facilities and operational shutdown (Azeez, 2023; Olasanmi et al, 2021). According to Azeez (2023), in the year 2023 alone, a total of 767 manufacturing firms shut down due to poor performance and productivity issues, while 335 companies were reported to be distressed. Hence the imperatives for enhanced productivity in the manufacturing sector.

Productivity is a multi-level construct, transversing individual, dyadic and organisational level concerns. However, the individual level of analysis is considered central in terms of actual output and target delivery (Ghamari et al, 2018). Thus, organisational productivity is hinged on the actions and extent of capacity or competence, demonstrated by its workforce. Organisational productivity describes the quality and quantity of output, offered and by that, advanced by the organisation within a planned period, and in line with its economic or financial objectives (Khalil et al, 2022; Ghamari et al, 2018). According to Ekwochi (2012), productive organisations are such that not only offer value in terms of the quality and quantity of their products but such that are also able to operate within efficient parameters or frameworks. These factors or facets of productivity, emphasize not only commitment to objectives, but the actual demonstration and evidence of capacity, and the requisite skills for ensuring quality, and also compliance to established standards and thresholds.

Research (Abebe, 2018; Mohammed et al, 2022; Adebobola et al, 2023), has over the years stressed the need for training, and the development of human capital in line with bridging performance gaps and addressing functional lapses within various contexts. Chahtli et al (2021) posited that effective training should not only focus on the task-related concerns of the individual but should also facilitate improvements in their adaptive and contextual performance as well. Likewise, Falolah et al (2014) argued that training should be engaging, consistent and in line with the emerging realities of the worker and the organisation as well. However, operational contexts, such as industries, countries and even geographical regions differ on a substantial level. Such differences come with peculiarities and unique conditions for organisations, such that demand the specificity of training models or concerns that are contextual and tailored in line with the particular challenges and factors that shape the experiences of the individual or organisation within a specific context (Belefkah et al, 2019).

While research (Mohammed et al, 2022; Adebobola et al, 2023; Khan et al, 2011) on training has in the past bordered on a broad and more generalistic stance, such suggests the universality of solutions and models, which in most cases, can be considered as alien and unsuitable to particular contexts; such as demonstrated in the socio-economic and cultural divide between developed and developing economies (Belefkah et al, 2019; Akinyele, 2010). The scarcity of employee training research addressing this concern is evident in the scantiness of related studies, hence an apparent gap in knowledge. This research, thus contributes toward addressing such as it investigates the relationship between training and organisational productivity of manufacturing firms in Rivers State. The study draws on the human capital theory as its theoretical foundation, with its investigation rooted in delineating the prevalence and significance of context-specific training approaches to outcomes of organisational productivity. The specific objectives of the paper as therefore to:

- i. Determine the relationship between training and production quality of manufacturing firms in Rivers State
- ii. Ascertain the relationship between training and production quantity of manufacturing firms in Rivers State
- iii. Determine the relationship between training and production efficiency of manufacturing firms in Rivers State

## Hypotheses Statement

The following null hypothetical statements are to be tested in line with the objectives of the study. These are as follows:

HO<sub>1</sub>: There is no significant relationship between training and production quality of manufacturing firms in Rivers State

HO<sub>2</sub>: There is no significant relationship between training and production quantity of manufacturing firms in Rivers State

HO<sub>3</sub>: There is no significant relationship between training and production efficiency of manufacturing firms in Rivers State

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Human capital Theory

In espousing the role of training in driving organisational productivity, this research adopts the human capital theory as its theoretical foundation. The theory was propounded by Gary Becker in the 1960s. Becker's position on the link between human capital and productivity, as well as the imperative for human development, identifies with the objective of developing the workers' capacity for value through skill acquisition and learning (Barahona & Elizondo, 2021). The theory in this sense, identifies with the significance of training in the development of the workforce and in enriching the value and relevance of the workers (Armstrong, 2020). According to Armstrong (2020), the training of workers, reinforces their level of functionality, impacting positively on their ability to effectively address related tasks and responsibilities. Hence, the adoption of the human capital theory thus serves as a premise for explaining and also predicting the role of training in driving the productivity of the organisation. The tenets of the human capital theory permeate the core assumptions of this paper, serving as its premise in the assessment of the relationship between training and organisational productivity. This follows the observations of previous research (Odhiambo, 2018; Falolah et al, 2014) which identify training as crucial, and imperative in developing and reinforcing the existing human infrastructure of the organisation, enabling

### Training

Employee training builds on the idea or goal of addressing functional gaps or lapses in the organisation (Olasanmi et al, 2021; Khan et al, 2011). Mohammed et al (2022) noted that training programs should be designed to reflect the particular or noted shortcomings of the employee, or facilitate their capacity for adapting to new work or functional forms. Research has for centuries, resorted to training as the more effective strategy or practice in driving the workers' performance and productive capacity. This follows the observations of studies (Khan et al, 2011; Adebobola et al, 2023; Olasanmi et al, 2021) which demonstrate the significance of training in employee effectiveness, and productivity. However, as Akinyele (2010) argued, training should build on a needs assessment; structured around the specific problems or challenges of the employees, and that way, should be specific and tailored to match the specific functional concerns, expectations or weaknesses of the employees.

### **Organisational productivity**

Productivity, at the organisational level, describes a capacity for output; especially the extent to which such matches planned standards and output forms (Adebe, 2018; Uzochukwu et al, 2023; Nasir, 2011). Binta et al (2019) argued that productivity is concerned with the extent to which inputs are clearly accounted for by outputs. Organisational productivity, therefore reflects the capacity for outputs in the quality, quantity and cost estimates or budgetary frameworks of the organisation. Egiyi and Eze (2022) described productivity and the management of such as central to the organisations' well-being. According to Egiyi and Eze (2022) producing emphasizes inputs and the use of resources, which if not adequately or optimally dispensed, can also lead to waste and a loss of resources. Ghamari et al (2018) posited that the productivity of the organisation is also tied to its availing technological and operational capacities such as warehousing, plant facilities, network and database systems, all of which provide the necessary base and support for the organisation's productivity goals.

### **METHODOLOGY**

The design of this is that of the correlational design. In this sense, the investigation focused on identifying the association between training and organisational productivity. The choice of this design is premised on a nomothetic and by that, quantitative methodological stance. The population for the research comprised 32 management and supervisory staff, sourced purposively from six selected manufacturing companies in Rivers State. Each of these companies represents sub-categories such as (a) bottling, (b) cement, (c) food and beverages, and (d) aluminium from which eight (8) referent staff or units of measurement are drawn from each; totalling 32. Data for this study was sourced using the structured questionnaire. Instrumentation for the variables was based on extant research (Ghamari et al, 2018; Odhiambo, 2018). Items were measured using the five-point Likert scale ranked from 5 = strongly agree, 4 = agree, 3 = undecided, 2 = disagree and 1 = strongly disagree. The Cronbach alpha reliability tool was also utilised in the test for the reliability of the instruments with coefficients affirming the replicability of the instruments (training = 0.812, production quality = 0.809, production quantity = 0.781, production efficiency = 0.827).

### **DATA RESULTS**

The result of the distribution and test for the hypotheses for this research is presented in this section of the paper. From the 32 questionnaire copies distributed, only 29 copies were considered suitable, given related errors of incomplete and blank sections for some of the retrieved copies.

Descriptive analysis

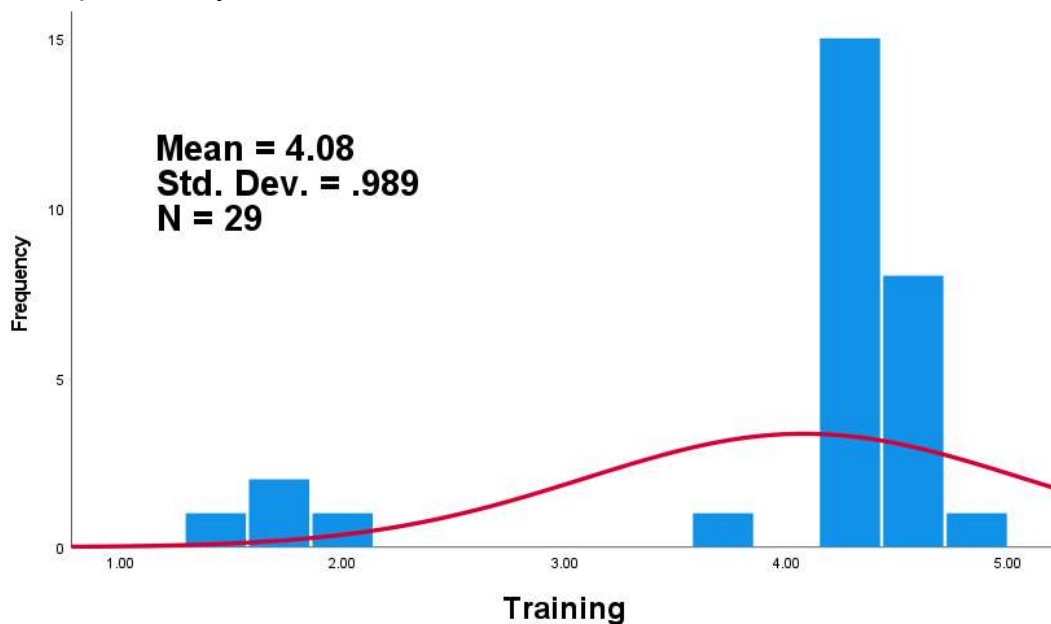


Figure 1: Summary distribution for training

The distribution for training, illustrated using figure 1, illustrates the extent to which training activities are reflected within the context of the manufacturing companies. The figure offers a summary of the properties of training with the results showing that where  $x = 4.08$ , context-specific training moderately characterises the manufacturing companies in Rivers State. The evidence affirms manifestations of training, particularly such, structured in line with the dynamics of the manufacturing industry.

Table 2: Summary distribution for measures of organisational productivity

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Kurtosis		
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic
Production Quality	29	4.2069	.77176	-2.079	4.134	.434	.845
Production Quantity	29	4.0640	.91996	-2.084	2.951	.434	.845
Production Efficiency	29	4.0690	.93570	-1.713	1.453	.434	.845
Valid N (listwise)	29						

Source: Survey Data (2024)

The summary distribution for the measures of organisational productivity demonstrates the extent to which features of production quality, quantity and efficiency, are reflected in the behaviour of the manufacturing companies in Rivers State. The result affirms the moderate expressions of production quality ( $x = 4.2069$ ), production quantity ( $x = 4.0640$ ) and production efficiency ( $x = 4.0690$ ), in the organisation; thus, indicating that there is a substantial level of productivity expressed by the manufacturing companies investigated

in this research. The summary of the distribution for organisational productivity is illustrated using Figure 2.

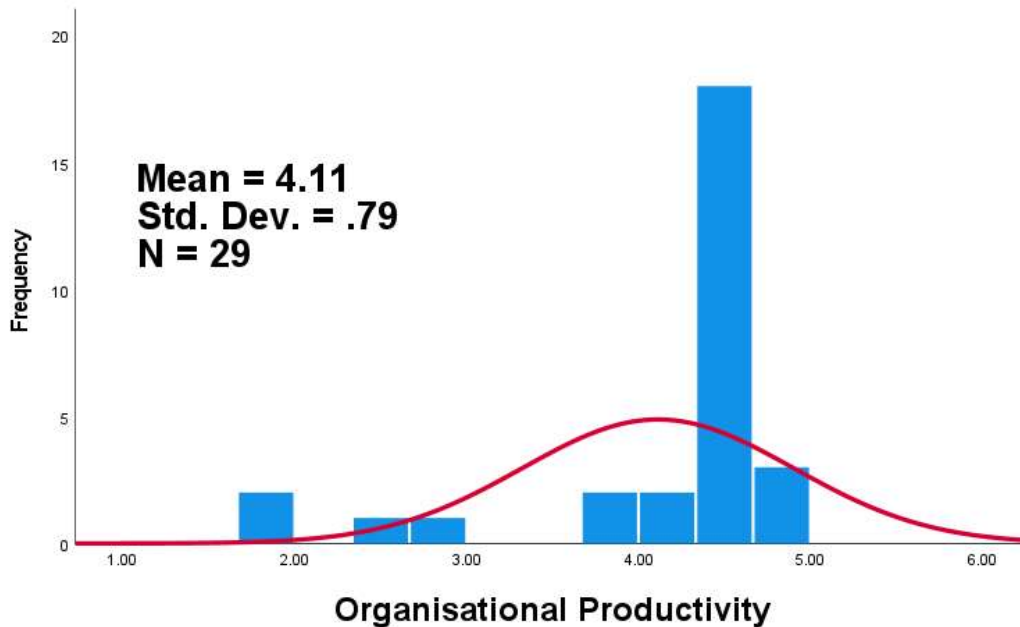


Figure 2: Summary distribution for training

The summary distribution for organisational productivity, as illustrated in Figure 2; affirms the moderate manifestation of the variable, within the context of the organisation where  $x = 4.11$ . The result affirms the manufacturing companies in Rivers State as demonstrating substantial levels of productivity and as such advancing the desired level of production quality, quantity and efficiency.

**Test for hypotheses**

Table 2: Result of hypotheses test

		Training	Production Quality	Production Quantity	Production Efficiency
Training	Pearson Correlation	1	.579**	.953**	.886**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.001	.000	.000
	N	29	29	29	29
Production Quality	Pearson Correlation	.579**	1	.656**	.570**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.001		.000	.001
	N	29	29	29	29
Production Quantity	Pearson Correlation	.953**	.656**	1	.901**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000		.000
	N	29	29	29	29
Production Efficiency	Pearson Correlation	.886**	.570**	.901**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.001	.000	
	N	29	29	29	29

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

Presented in Table 2 is the result of the test for the correlation between training and the measures of organisational productivity. The result shows that training is significantly associated with the outcomes of production quality ( $R = 0.579$  and  $P < 0.05$ ), production

quantity ( $R = 0.953$  and  $P < 0.05$ ) and production efficiency ( $R = 0.886$  and  $P < 0.05$ ). This demonstrates the link or correlation between training and organisational productivity; indicating that the related practices of context-specific training activities and programs, play significant roles and are in this sense linked to the outcomes of production quality, quantity and efficiency of manufacturing companies in Rivers State. Hence, all previously stated hypotheses are therefore rejected.

### **DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS**

This research, drawing on the evidence presented, affirms the significance of the correlation between training and organisational productivity of manufacturing companies in Rivers State. The findings point to the significance of context focus and tailored training programs in equipping the worker, with the required knowledge and skills for effectively addressing the peculiarities of their environment, functions and tasks. This position furthers the tenets and validates the human capital theory and its application in understanding and predicting the nature of the relationship between training and organisational productivity, even within the Nigerian manufacturing industry (Barahona & Elizondo, 2021). The study this way reinforces the views of researchers (Akinyele, 2010; Binta et al, 2019) who have in recent decades, argued in line with the structuring and development of training programs and approaches, to be emergent, reflexive and contingent on the dynamics and nature of the organisation's environment.

The findings thus advance the need for a more contextual approach in the development of training programs. Even within the Nigerian context, one could argue that sectors as well as industries differ substantially. To effectively capture and integrate such context-based differences, the implications of the findings of this study, point to learning, and the related actions of employee diagnosis in developing the required training framework and programs suited to addressing the workers' needs. This corroborates the views of Akinyele (2010) and Falolah et al (2014), on the need for organisations to not only focus outwards in their adoption and implementation of strategies but to also assess their internal capacities and the extent to which the skills, qualifications, knowledge and experience, of the organisation's workforce, match the features and attributes of the environment. The findings of this research thus, affirm to the significance of training in enhancing the outcomes of organisational productivity for manufacturing companies in Rivers State

### **CONCLUSION**

The position presented in this paper is hinged on the evidence which affirms the significance of training in improved outcomes of production quality, quantity and efficiency. The study, based on the findings, concludes that training, especially such that is context-specific and emphatic on the features and nature of the environment, is imperative for driving the production quality, quantity and efficiency of manufacturing companies in Rivers State. In this vein, it is important that the management or leadership of these organisations, structure their training programs to be more reflexive and context-based, providing practical skills and tools that adequately anchor on the actual challenges of employees and that way, empower them with the necessary framework and capacity for engaging their roles and responsibilities, and thus, achieving their various production tasks; thus, contributing to the productivity of the organisation.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

The recommendations for this research, draw on its findings and conclusion. These are as follows:

- i. Manufacturing organisations should build on a culture of learning and the acquisition of knowledge, particularly with regard to the emerging realities of their environment and the implications of such for the functions and roles of their workers. This is imperative in mapping out key areas or functions to reinforce through training.
- ii. Manufacturing organisations in Rivers State should invest in the development of technology infrastructure that supports the management, monitoring and appraisal of their internal systems and capacities. Such technologies should contribute to descriptive, diagnostic and predictive data on their workers, facilitating a more informed stance or decision-making when it comes to recruitment and the training of their workers.
- iii. Manufacturing companies in Rivers State should be strategic in their training approach, ensuring that such programs are designed to not only drive task concerns of the organisation but also address the social and adaptive capacities of the employee; equipping the workers with the requisite tools for effectively adjusting in line with their roles and relationships within the workplace or organisation.

## REFERENCES

- Abebe, H. (2018). *Effect of compensation on employee productivity in the case of Kality Foods Manufacturing Factory, Addis Ababa* [Master's thesis, Addis Ababa Science and Technology University]. Addis Ababa Science and Technology University.
- Adebobola, T. O., Adetunmbi, A. O., & Omoniyi, O. O. (2023). Cost challenges facing Nigerian manufacturing industries using generating sets as main source of power supply. *ABUAD Journal of Engineering Research and Development (AJERD)*, 6(1), 22–30.
- Akinyele, S. T. (2010). The influence of work environment on workers' productivity: A case study of selected oil and gas industries in Lagos, Nigeria. *African Journal on Business Management*, 4(3), 299–307.
- Azeez, D. (2023, November 10). MAN highlights six key challenges facing the manufacturing sector in Nigeria. *Brand Times*.
- Armstrong, P. (2020). *Effectiveness and managerial assessment employee training* (2nd ed.). British Library.
- Armstrong, P. (2020). *Effectiveness and managerial assessment employee training* (2nd ed.). British Library.
- Belefkah, A., Espina, A. G., Pacana, A., & Salas, V. (2019). Training needs of businesses in the retail industry: A business case in the United Arab Emirates. *Journal of Research in Emerging Markets*, 1(3), 40–54.
- Binta, M., Muhammad, I., Ahmed, Z., Bazza, A.M. & Magaji, B. (2019). Performance Appraisal on Employee Productivity in Federal Ministry of Education Headquarters Abuja. *Asian Journal of Contemporary Education*. 3, No. 2, 121-131.



- Chahtli, R., Batool, N., & Javed, U. (2021). Impact of training and development on employees' perceived performance and productivity. *PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt/Egyptology*, 18(14), 688–697.
- Egiyi, M. A., & Eze, R. C. (2022). The influence of risk management on organizational efficiency. *Annals of Management Sciences*, 9(1), 10–15.
- Ekwochi, E. A. (2012). Effects of performance appraisal on productivity in an organization. *Review of Public Administration and Management*, 1(2).
- Falolah, O., Osibanjo, A. O., & Ojo, S. I. (2014). Effectiveness of training and development on employees' performance and organizational competitiveness in the Nigerian banking industry. *Bulletin of the Transylvania University of Braşov*, 7(56), 161–170.
- Ghamari, A., Zeinabadi, H., Arasteh, H., & Behrangji, M. (2018). Organizational productivity with the maintenance of human resources talents: Providing a model (A study on National Iranian Gas Company). *Urban Economics and Management*, 6(3), 145–162.
- Khalil, J., Pitafi, A. A., & Yasin, N. (2022). Role of knowledge management in worker's productivity and organizational performance: Empirical study of South Punjab, Pakistan. *Journal of Social Research Development*, 3(2), 311–329.
- Khan, A. C., Khan, A. F., & Khan, M. A. (2011). Impact of training and development on organizational performance. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, 11(7), 1–7.
- Mohammed, N. A., Mohammed, D., & Gana, J. (2022). The impact of training and development on employee productivity in the 21st century. *African Journal of Management and Business Research*, 3(1), 41–58.
- Nasir, A. E. (2011, September 23). Commentary on silent factories, empty warehouses. *This Day*.
- Odhiambo, J. O. (2018). *Effect of training and development on employee performance at Safaricom Company Limited* (Doctoral dissertation, KCA University). KCA University.
- Olasanmi, O. O., Olajide, O. O., & Ojubanire, O. A. (2021). Determinants of employee productivity in listed manufacturing firms in Southwestern Nigeria. *International Journal of Applied Management and Technology*, 20(1), 10.
- Singh, S., & Chaudhary, N. (2022). Employee productivity: An analysis of dimensions and methodology through systematic literature review. *The Empirical Economics Letters*, 21(4), 183–204.
- Uzochukwu, A. C., Nwankwo, E. C., & Okafor, S. O. (2023). Effect of reward system on employee's productivity in Nigeria hospitality industry. *World Journal of Advanced Research and Reviews*, 17(01), 361–373.