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Influence of Training and Career Development on Employee Engagement among nonacademic staff of University

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Abstract

Opportunities for development of career, skill and performance improvement, sense of personal accomplishment, plan training and career development with manager, skills needed to deliver objectives is a result of training and career development among non-academic staff of the University in Nigeria. This paper empirically explored the influence of training and career development on employee engagement. Structured Close-ended questionnaire survey were employed to collect data from the non-academic staff of the Nigeria university, and Structural Equation Modeling, Partial Least Squares technique was used to analyze the 150 responses out of the 237-population representing 63.34%. The results indicated that training and career development has significant influence on employee engagement. The implication is that this study's model can predict the training and career development influence on engaged employee of the sampled non - academic staff of the university, the framework of this study is a contribution to knowledge because it complements the literature, extending the Social Extend Theory (SET) to employee engagement at the university level and recommendations were highlighted.

Keywords: Employee engagement, training and career development

1.0 Introduction

Harter, Schmidt and Hayes (2002) affirmed that having engaged employees leads to business unit outcomes of enhanced customer satisfaction, productivity and profit. A problem lies in the fact that the university of technology Minna management are continually being confronted with the three pressing challenge as to how they can engage the workforce. For instance, a recent study by a worldwide consulting company found that four employees out of ten aren't engaged worldwide (AON Hewitt Report 2012). According to Choudhary et al. (2013), for an

organization expecting maximum output from workers, a good leadership is essential. Gallup (2003) found that actively disengaged workers are 10 times more likely to say they will leave their organizations within a year (48%) than engaged staff (4%). Their 2003 survey in the US and Canada of 1000 workers found that only 1/4 were actively "engaged" in their work with a huge group of between 56% and 60% not engaged and 17% actively disengaged. Gallup's further found that actively disengaged (uncommitted) workers cost US businesses between \$270 and \$343 billion a year due to low productivity. This



study will assess the influence of training on employee engagement at the university in Nigeria. The problem of the employee engagement has become a major concern and a national issue for the Nigerian universities' major stakeholders. This unwanted development has led to the organizing of workshops and seminars to address the problem of employee engagement in Nigeria universities (Makera, 2018).

Studies have been conducted by scholars to examine the problem of employee's unengagement in an attempt to address the issues associated with the employee engagement. For instance, a study by Ayers (2006) contrast disengagement to a cancer that can gradually wear down an organization. Consumer satisfaction, employee retention, and productivity are all under threat except burnout and disengagement can be restricted. Unfortunately, numerous studies confirm that employees in general are not occupied with their jobs. Rampersad (2006) found that satisfaction scores with all major categories of work in the U.S. have dropped, and a touch over half of the responded employees rated themselves as engaged, or highly engaged. This lack of engagement has an effect on big and small organizations all over the world, causing them to incur excess costs, to not perform on essential tasks, and to bring about widespread customer dissatisfaction (Rampersad, 2006).

Much engaged employees make a substantial dedication to their office and may conceive authoritative accomplishment (Saks, 2006).

There are many literatures on training and career development of employees globally but little efforts have been put particularly on the effect of training and career development of employees in an organization. In Nigeria, few studies have covered diverse aspects of training or training and career development but very limited have touched on the

relationship between training and career development of employee's engagement. According to Alnaqbi (2011) training is not simply a means of arming employees with skills they need to perform their jobs, it is often deemed to be representative of an employer's commitment to their workforce. In spite of these provisions, there is still manifest disaffection between employers and employees on one strand and between management and employees on the other. Employee disengagement is still a common problem in University in Nigeria today, and it significantly affects bottom-line performance level (Nathan, 2014). Hence the need to study training and career development influence on employee engagement among non-academic staff of the university.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Employee Engagement

The term employee engagement was regarded as a wide-ranging containing various forms of engagement (psychological state engagement, behavioral engagement, traits engagement) and each of these requires different concept, for instance" proactive personality (traits engagement), involvement (psychological state engagement) and organizational citizenship behavior (behavioral engagement)" (Macey and Schneider, 2008). Shaw (2005) states that engagement is the 'translation of employee potential into employee performance and occupational success'. Engagement is the feelings of emotional energy and strength in the workplace (Shirom, 2003). Work environment is not a predictor of employee engagement (Nasidi, Makera, Kammarudeen and jemaku, 2019). Engaged employees are referred to those that have profound connection to their company, work with a passion and feel, move the organization forward and drive innovation (Gallup Organization, 2006). Furthermore, Liu (2016)



was of the view that employee engagement of knowledge worker comprises of five factors: pleasant harmony, dedication, organizational identity, vigor, absorption. A model of employee engagement was developed by Soane et al. (2012), the model consists of three components; positive affect, activation and work-role focus. Xiao and Duan (2014) stated that employee engagement was a conceptualization with five dimensions: initiative, loyalty, effectiveness, identity and commitment. Nasidi, et al. (2018) found that highly

“engaged workers make a substantive contribution to their agency and should envisage success of the organization contrary to the present, cause poor performance, declining productivity, low rate of employee engagement and therefore, the behavioural attitude of the bureaucratic system”. The relationship between team and co-worker relationship and employee engagement is low (Makera, Nasidi, Kamaruddeen and jemaku, 2019).

2.2 Training and Career Development

Training and career development is another significant factor which is to be considered in the process of employee's engagement since it helps the employees to give attention to a focused work. Service precision is improved through training and hence influences service performance and employee engagement (Paradise, 2008). When the employees are more engaged in their job as a result of built up confidence due to training and learning development programmes, which further motivates them. As suggested by Alderfer (1972) that it is equivalent to rewarding people, if an employee is offered a chance to grow. He emphasized that “satisfaction of growth needs depends on a person finding the opportunity to be what he or she is most fully and become what he or she can”. The management needs to give more significance

to career path ladder through training and career growth which will lead to timely opportunities for growth and development. This automatically improves the level of engagement.

Training and opportunities for career development is yet another means of engaging workers to accomplish and sustain high performance levels. Training improves service delivery, accuracy and effectiveness in the workplace. When employees are well trained, the level of competence, ability to cope with job demand, and motivation to perform better improves tremendously. This is consistent with Kahn (1990) and Murphy & DeNisi's (2008) theories of psychological condition where training is considered as essential for providing employees with innate resources such as skills and knowledge to enable them to fully engage in their roles to increase performance. However, sometimes lack of performance may have little to do with inadequate training and development of employees. In this study training and career development is regarded as a continuing process which individuals or staffs of an organization undergo a series of stages, where each is reflected by a relatively unique hemes, task and issues (Grecnhaus et al, 2000). **3. Underpinning Theory** In defining the influence of training and career development association with Nigerian employee engagement university, the current study heavily relies on social exchange theory and affective events theory (Weiss, & Cropanzano, 1996; Blau 1964). Social exchange theory in this study, provides opportunity in explaining the influence of training and career development on employee engagement of the nonacademic staff of the university.

Consistently, employee engagement with a developmental focus (e.g., training and career development, employee involvement) were

found to be related to employee engagement, whereas non-developmental, more short-term focused (e.g., rewards) were not (Snape & Redman, 2009).

3.1 Social Exchange Theory (Set)

The SET rule recommends that if the organization invests time, effort and money in training and career development, employees should reciprocate by applying Kahn's (1990) theory by not just coming to work, but rather investing a greater amount of cognitive, more commitment and physical energies for the realization of the organizational goals. According to Saks (2006), a stronger theoretical rationale for explaining employee engagement can be found in social exchange theory (SET). SET argues that obligations are generated through a series of interactions between parties who are in a state of reciprocal interdependence.

4. Framework

The study's framework in Figure 1 shows independent variable (training and career development) and the dependent variable (employee engagement) relationship.

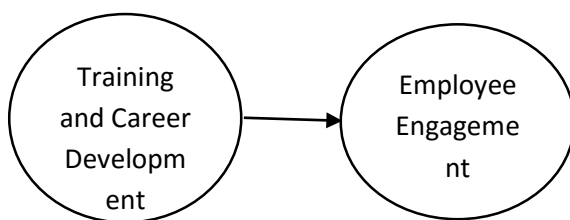


Figure 1. Framework 5.

Hypothesis Development

Going by the social exchange theory (Blau, 1964) and previous empirical studies (Yusuf, kamaruddeen, bahaudin, 2016; Nasidi, kamaruddeen, bahaudin, 2016; Nasidi, Kamaruddeen, Barau and Nuhu 2018; Huang et al., 2003, Joarder & Sharif 2011) regarding this study, hypothesis will be developed for validation and empirical testing. Two

variables were contained for this study: employee engagement (dependent variable), conceptualized as onedimensional, while (training and career development) as independent variable. Thus, one hypothesis was developed, tested and validated for this study.

5.1 Training and Career Development and Employee Engagement

Previous studies have found that training and career development is positively related to employee engagement (Shulgana, 2011). The scholar further emphasized that training and career development is among the factors that have a strong impact on employee engagement. It was argued by Sree et. al (2010) who asserts that training and career development will have a positive influence on employee engagement; they recommended that training and meaningful work should be part of organizational policy.

Sardar, Rahrnan, Asad et al (2011) stated that lack of training and career development can lead to employee disengagement at certain levels. In his opinion, the organizations with high level of commitment and encourages several training and career development opportunities at work influenced significantly the organizational outcome. For instance, job satisfaction, turnover, organizational commitment and employee engagement (Muselid, 1995). Kahn (1990) agrees by affirming that employees provided with training and career development opportunities and learning, improves their experience they feel their work is valued and meaningful in the context of their environment.

Therefore, in line with the aforementioned studies which statistically proved, a significant relationship between training and career development and employee engagement, the study has hypothesized that.



H1: Training and Career development has significant influence on employee engagement. **6. Methodology**

A quantitative approach was used in this study, the adoption of cross-sectional design was also considered. following Alderfer (1972) a simple random sampling technic was employed. A structured survey questionnaire was administered to the nonacademic staffs of the university in Nigeria for data collection. Following previous literature, the items were adapted, the items for measuring training and career development was adapted from Makera (2017) and employee engagement adapted from Gallup Organization (2002). A fivepoint Likert scale ranging from 1. = “strongly disagree,” 2. = “disagree,” 3. = “neutral,” 4. = “agree,” and 5. = “strongly agree was employed to measure all the variables in this study. The statistical package for social sciences (SPSS) was used for the data screening and Smart PLS 3 Structural Equation Model was used for the analysis. 620 non-academic staff of the Federal University of Technology Minna, Nigeria, are the population of respondents, the sample frame was obtained from the university human resource department. The sample size of the population 620 nonacademic staffs of the University of Technology Minna is 237. A formula by Dillman (2007) was used to determine the sample size:

$$Ns = \frac{(NP)(P)(1 - P)}{(NP - 1)(B/C)^2 + (P)(1 - P)}$$

Where:

Ns= the actual sample size

Np= size of population, which is 620 P= the population proportion expected to be chosen among the two response categories is 0.5

B= sample error at 0.05 (5%) C= confidence level at 0.05 is 1.96.

Therefore, the sample size of this study is

calculated as follows:

$$Ns = \frac{(620)(0.5)(1 - 0.5)}{(620 - 1)(0.05/1.96)^2 + (0.5)(1 - 0.5)}$$

$$Ns = \frac{155}{0.65235}$$

n= 237

In this study one hundred and fifty (150) questionnaires were duly completed, returned and retained for the analysis out of (237) two hundred and thirty-seven questionnaires administered, thus, representing 63.34% response rate.

Measurement and Operationalization of Variables, according to Sekaran (2006) “the relationship between independent and dependent variables can be either negative or positive”. One main independent variable was used for this study, the training and career development and the dependent variable for this study is employee engagement.

Employee engagement construct was operationalized as one-dimensional. A scale developed by Gallup Organization (2008) consisting of 12 items was used to measure employee engagement. A scale by Makera (2017) was utilized to measure training and career development. This instrument consists of 7 items. **7. Analysis and Result**

In conducting the statistical analysis for this study, Smart PLS 3 Structural Equation Model statistical software was used for the

Latent Construct s and Indicators	Stand ardize d Loadi ngs	Cronb ach's Alpha	Comp osite Reliab ility	AVE
Training and Career Developm ent		0.905	0.930	0.728
TCD01	0.697			
TCD02	0.887			
TCD03	0.895			



TCD05	0.897			
TCD06	0.843			
Employee Engagement		0.911	0.931	0.693
EPE012	0.840			
EPE01	0.783			
EPE05	0.819			
EPE09	0.876			
EPE10	0.812			
EPE11	0.860			

data analysis, primarily in the testing of the validity and reliability for the measures of the construct. This model consists of training and career development and employee engagement. **7.1 Measurement Model (Outer Model)** According to Hair *et al.*, (2011; 2014) in the measurement model assessment, the internal consistency reliability, the individual item's reliability, content validity, discriminant validity and convergent validity are considered and required as shown in the measurement model in figure 2 below.

Table 1. Loadings, Cronbach's Alpha, Composite Reliability and Average Variance Extracted

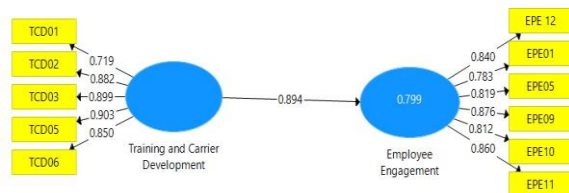


Figure 2. Measurement Model

6.2 Individual Item Reliability Hulland (1999); Hair *et al.* (2012; 2014) pointed out that the individual item reliability was assessed by examining the outer loadings of each construct's measure. Items with loadings between .40 and .70 should be retained (Hair *et al.*, 2014), it was realized that out of 19

items, 8 were deleted because they presented loadings below the threshold of 0.40.

Based on the aforementioned, the items retained for the study are 11 items. The loadings of the item ranges between 0.719 and 0.903 in the whole model as presented in figure 2 and Table 1.

7.3 Convergent Validity According to Hair *et al.* (2006) convergent validity refers to the degree at which the items represent the intended latent construct which certainly correlates with other measures of the same latent construct. Convergent validity was assessed by examining the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) of each of latent construct, in this study, based on Fornell and Larcker (1981)'s suggestion. Chin (1988) suggested that to achieve adequate convergent validity, the AVE of each latent construct should be 0.50 or more. In line with Chin (1998), the AVE values in table 1 ranged from 0.693 and 0.728 which revealed high loadings (>0.50) on their respective constructs, indicating that for all the constructs, the convergent validity has been established. **7.4 Discriminant Validity**

Duarte & Raposo (2010) referred to discriminant validity as the extent to which a particular latent construct differs from other latent constructs. Discriminant validity in the present study was determined using average variance extracted based on (Fornell and Larcker's, 1981) suggestion. He further emphasized that it was realized when the correlations among the latent constructs were compared with the square roots of the average variance extracted.

In addition, following the criterion of Fornell and Lacker (1981), discriminant validity was achieved. Firstly, there was the benchmark for estimating discriminant validity, therefore, Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that the (AVE) average variance extracted with a score of 0.50 or more is



acceptable. For adequate discriminant validity to be achieved, Fornell and Larcker (1981) suggested that the square root of the average variance extracted (AVE) has to be greater than the correlations among the latent constructs. See table 1 above for the values of the AVE which range between 0.693 and 0.728, signifying acceptable values.

Table 2. Latent Variable Correlations and Square Roots of Average Variance Extracted

7.5 Assessment of the Structural Model The assessment of the structural model is the next stage after ascertaining the measurement model in the present study. The procedure for the bootstrapping through a number of 5000 bootstrap samples and 237 sample size to assess the significance of the path coefficients was applied (Hair *et al.*, 2011; 2012; 2014). Structural model, according to Hair *et al.* (2006), illustrates about the reliance and dependence of relationships in the hypothesized model. In partial least squares (PLS), structural model takes before the directional relationships between the variables, their t-values and the path coefficient. Regarding path coefficient, partial least squares (PLS) is entirely like the standardized beta (Std. Beta) coefficient in regression analysis (Agarwal & Karahanna, 2000). Importantly, the core objective here is to assess the hypothesized relationships among the constructs (Training and Career Development and Employee Engagement). The study spotlights the evaluation model and then the assessment of the hypothesis of regression and correlation of variables. In the hypotheses structuring perspective, PLSSEM supports Parsimonious models those offer “as few parameters as possible for a given quality of model estimation results”. Furthermore, Hair *et al.* (2014) and Becker *et al.* (2012) suggested investigating the relationship of the constructs directly with dependent variable

(s), rather than assessing the dependent variable with the high-order components directly. Following the above recommendations, this study has appropriately examined the relationships between training and career development as the predictor (s) and the criterion variable i.e. employee engagement to fulfill the objective of the study mentioned earlier. Figure 3 and Table 2 present the estimate for the structural mode.

Table 2. Latent Variable Correlations and

Latent variables		1	2
1	Employee	0.996	
2	Training and development	0886	0.911
			engagement career

Square Roots of Average Variance Extracted

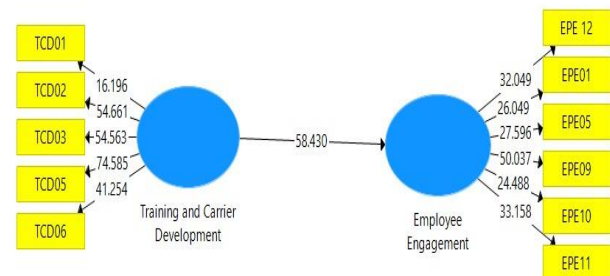


Figure 3. Structural Model

Figure 3 above is the structural model (bootstrapping) model for this study is for testing the hypothesis of the study the PLS algorithms and Bootstrapping were run.

At the outset, Hypothesis 1 predicted that in examining the influence of training and career development TCD on employee engagement EPE, the result indicated that training and career development had a significant influence on employee engagement EPE ($\beta = 0.894$, $t = 58.430$, $p <$



0.00), thus Hypothesis supported

7.6 Variance Explained in the Endogenous Latent Variables

The (R^2) R-squared is another important criterion for assessing the PLS SEM structural model, which is referred as the coefficient of determination (Henseler *et al.*, 2009; Hair *et al.*, 2011; 2012). Elliott & Woodward, 2007; Hair *et al.*, 2010 equally, referred to R^2 value to represent in the independent variable the proportion of variation that can be explained by one or more predictor variable (s). Although the research context determined the acceptable level of R^2 value, Falk and Miller (1992); Hair *et al.* (2010), recommended a minimum acceptable level of an R-squared value of 0.10. In the meantime, it was suggested by Chin (1998) that it can be considered when R^2 value is 0.19, 0.33 and 0.67, categorized respectively as weak, moderate and substantial in the PLS-SEM. Table 5. presents the R-squared values of the endogenous latent variable.

Table 4. Variance Explained in the Endogenous Latent Variables

Latent Variable	Variance Explained (R^2)
Employee Engagement	78%

Table 4 above shows the research model that explains 78% the total variance in employee engagement EPE. This means that the exogenous latent variable, training and career development explain 78% of the variance of the employee engagement EPE.

Therefore, **Table 3.**

Hypothesis

Hypothesis	Relation	Beta	Std. Error	T - Statistics	P Values
H1	Training and Career Development -> Employee Engagement	0.894	0.015	58.430	0.000

following Chin (1998) and Falk and Miller (1992) criteria, the acceptable level of R^2 value of the endogenous latent variables has been achieved and this was considered as substantial

7.7 Predictive Relevance The Stone-Geisser test of the predictive relevance of the research model using blindfolding procedures was applied in the present study (Geisser, 1974; Stone, 1974). In the partial least square's structural equation modelling, the Stone-Geisser test of predictive relevance is usually used as a supplementary assessment of the goodness-of-fit. (Duarte & Raposo, 2010). Although blindfolding was used in this study to ascertain the predictive relevance of the research model, it is worth noting that a "blindfolding procedure is only applied to endogenous latent variables that have a reflective measurement model operationalization" (Sattler, Völckner, Riediger and Ringle (2010 p. 320). Hence, the reflective measurement model "specifies that a latent or unobservable concept causes a variation in a set of observable indicators (McMillan & Conner, 2003, p. 1). In this study a blindfolding procedure was applied mainly to the endogenous latent variables, since the endogenous latent variable (s) were reflective in nature.

Particularly, a cross-validated redundancy measure (Q^2) was used in measuring the predictive relevance of the research model (Geisser, 1974; Chin, 2010; Hair *et al.*, 2013; Ringle, Sarstedt, & Straub, 2012b; Stone, 1974). According to Chin (1998); the benchmark for measuring how fit a model predicts the cases of misplaced data is referred to as Q^2 . As shown in figure 4 and table 5 below the research model with Q^2 statistic (s) greater than zero is considered to have predictive relevance (Henseler *et al.* 2009).

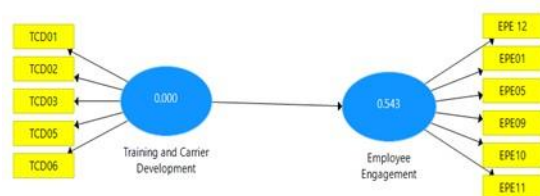


Figure 5. Predictive relevance

Table 5. Construct Cross- Validated Redundancy

Total Sso	sse	1-sse/sso	EPE	990.00	452.21
0.54					

Table 5 indicated that the cross-validation redundancy that measures Q^2 for the endogenous latent variable was above zero, indicating that the model has predictive relevance (Henseler *et al.*, 2009; Chin, 1998).

8. Discussion and Conclusion The study seeks to assess the influence of training and career development on employee engagement. In this study training and career development is regarded as a continuing process which individuals or staffs of an organization undergo a series of stages, where each is reflected by a relatively unique hemes, task and issues (Greenhaus *et al.*, 2000). Sardar, Rahrnan, *et al.* (2011) stated that lack of training and career development can lead to employee disengagement at certain levels. In his opinion, the organizations with high level of commitment and encourages several training and career development opportunities at work influenced significantly the organizational outcome. For instance, job satisfaction, turnover, organizational commitment and employee engagement (Huselid, 1995). Kahn (1990) agrees by affirming that employees provided with training and career development opportunities and learning, improves their experience they feel their work is valued and meaningful in the context of their environment.

One research hypothesis was formulated and tested using the PLS path modelling.

Hypothesis of this study states that training and career development has significant influence on employee engagement. As expected, the finding provides support for the hypothesis. It was found that the opportunities for development of career, skill and performance improvement, sense of personal accomplishment, plan training and career development with manager, skills needed to deliver objectives is a result of training and career development among nonacademic staff of the University in Nigeria. This is consistent with the previous studies of Shulgna (2011), Nasidi, Makera, Kamaruddeen and Jemaku (2018; 2019) found that training and career development is positively related to employee engagement. The scholar further emphasized that training and career development is among the factors that have a strong impact on employee engagement. It was argued by Sree *et. al* (2010) who asserts that training and career development will have a positive influence on employee engagement. The academic implication of this study is classified into two dimensions, influence of training and career development and employee engagement in the context of university and research model for this study. Most previous researchers did not address employee engagement at the university context. Therefore, this study makes effort to fill the research gap. The framework examines the influence of training and career development and employee engagement will provide a direction for future studies. Theoretically, the study assessed and test the model developed for training and career development with the aim of utilizing the dependent variable (employee engagement). The research study can provide policy makers and private organizations an instrument to assess how these factor training



and career development could affect adoption of a good management system. Underpinned by the social exchange theory, this study provided empirical evidence for bridging the knowledge gap with regards to measuring employee engagement among non-academic staff of the universities in Nigeria. The study has made a number of contributions. Firstly, the framework of this study is a contribution to knowledge because it complements the literature, extending the Social Exchange Theory (SET) to employee engagement at the university level. Secondly, the objective and hypothesis achieved in this study stand to be a contribution in itself and a contribution to employee engagement practice.

9. Recommendations It was recommended that training and meaningful work should be part of organizational policy.

Top management should continuously guide and motivate organization employees for better job performance, promote frequent staff training learning culture and career development, be open minded, staff motivation and intense support for the incentives among the staff of the university in Nigeria.

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