



# Effect of Human Capital Development on Employees' Performance in Nigerian Communications Commission Abuja, Nigeria

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## Abstract

In today's knowledge-driven economy, an organization's greatest asset is no longer its physical infrastructure but the capacity, competence, and commitment of its people. Human capital development has emerged as a strategic imperative for enhancing employee performance and sustaining institutional effectiveness. This study explores the impact of training and career development on employee performance at the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Abuja. Using a descriptive survey research design and a census of all 242 employees, primary data were collected via structured questionnaires, with 228 valid responses analysed using multiple regression through EViews 12. The results show that both training and career development significantly influence employee performance, with career development having a notably stronger effect. The regression model yielded an R-squared value of 0.9704, indicating that 97.04% of the variation in employee performance is explained by the two variables. These findings affirm the relevance of human capital theory and underscore the necessity for continuous investment in workforce development. The study recommends that NCC adopt structured training initiatives and implement a strategic career development framework to foster employee motivation, efficiency, and long-term organisational growth.

**Keywords:** Human Capital Development, Training, Career Development, Employee Performance.

## Original Research Article

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## INTRODUCTION

The effectiveness of any organisation, whether private or public, hinges largely on the quality and performance of its workforce. In today's rapidly evolving global economy, organisations are increasingly recognizing that their most important asset is not machinery, buildings, or finances, but people particularly the knowledge, skills, and capabilities they possess. This recognition forms the basis of human capital development (HCD), which refers to the strategic investment in employees through training, education, and career enhancement to improve their capacity for productive work. Training is a foundational element of human capital development. According to Noe (2017), training involves a systematic process through which employees acquire job-related knowledge, skills, and behaviours. Armstrong (2014) asserts that training is essential not just for individual improvement but also for aligning employees' competencies with organisational goals. It facilitates adaptability, innovation,

and consistent performance, especially in environments marked by rapid technological and regulatory changes, such as the communications industry. As Swanson and Holton (2009) suggest, training is not just an operational activity but a strategic tool that empowers employees to contribute meaningfully to organisational success.

Closely related to training is the concept of career development, which refers to the structured efforts made by both employers and employees to foster long-term professional growth. Greenhaus, Callanan, and Godshalk (2010) describe career development as a continuous, lifelong process involving planning, self-assessment, goal setting, and accessing growth opportunities within or beyond the current job role. Hall (2002) introduces the idea of a "protean career," in which individuals take personal responsibility for their career paths, but he also acknowledges the critical role of organisations in providing mentorship, promotion paths, and learning opportunities. For public institutions like the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), career development initiatives are vital in



maintaining an agile, motivated, and skilled workforce capable of delivering regulatory excellence.

The outcome of these investments in human capital is often measured through employee performance, the degree to which employees meet or exceed job expectations and contribute to organisational effectiveness. Campbell (1990) defines performance as behaviour that is under the control of the individual and contributes to organisational goals. Robbins and Judge (2019) argue that high performance is not merely a function of talent, but a product of continuous learning, motivation, and environmental support. This view aligns with Becker's (1964) human capital theory, which posits that employees who receive consistent investment in their capabilities become more productive, efficient, and valuable to their employers.

In the Nigerian context, human capital development has gained increasing attention in both academic and organisational spheres. Scholars such as Okoye and Eze (2016) and Ogunode (2022) argue that training and career development are essential for enhancing the effectiveness of public service delivery. Particularly in knowledge-intensive sectors like telecommunications, where innovation and regulatory responsiveness are essential, the need for strategic human capital development cannot be overstated.

This study, therefore, seeks to explore how training and career development as components of human capital development influence employee performance within the Nigerian Communications Commission, Abuja. By drawing from global and local theoretical perspectives, the study provides a conceptual foundation for assessing the relevance and impact of these variables in a critical public regulatory institution.

## Statement of Research Problem

Despite increasing recognition of human capital development as a critical driver of organisational success (World Bank, 2020; ILO, 2021), many public institutions in Nigeria, including the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), continue to experience challenges related to suboptimal employee performance, skill gaps, and limited career progression (Eze et al., 2022; Okolie & Iloanya, 2023). While training and career development are widely acknowledged as essential strategies for enhancing workforce capability (OECD, 2021; Onah & Ugwu, 2021), there is often a disconnect between these initiatives and measurable improvements in employee output (Adelakun & Oyekola, 2023; Akinwale, 2022). In many public agencies, training programmes are poorly structured, career advancement plans are under-implemented, and employee development is not always aligned with strategic institutional objectives (Obisi et al., 2021; Uzundu & Nnadi, 2024).

This gap limits the ability of organisations like the NCC to fully utilize their human capital, adapt to evolving technological and regulatory landscapes, and meet their public service mandates (NCC Annual Report, 2023). Thus, there is a pressing need to empirically investigate how effectively training and career development practices impact employee performance within the Commission. Without such insight, the NCC may continue to underutilise staff capacity and fall short in delivering on its

critical role within Nigeria's dynamic communications sector (Ajayi & Ogunyemi, 2022).

## Research Objectives

The main objective of this study is to examine the effect of human capital development on employee performance in the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Abuja.

The specific objectives are to:

- i. Assess the effect of training programmes on employee performance in NCC Abuja.
- ii. Examine the influence of career development opportunities on employee performance in NCC Abuja.

## Conceptual Framework

### Human Capital Development

Human capital development refers to the process of enhancing the productive capacities of individuals through investments in education, training, health, and other human welfare components. It is widely regarded as a foundational pillar for sustainable economic growth and organisational competitiveness (World Bank, 2020). According to Becker's human capital theory, skills and knowledge acquired through education and experience increase an individual's productivity and earnings potential (Becker, 1993). In modern organisations, human capital development is not just about acquiring skills but about aligning talent development with strategic goals (OECD, 2021).

In Nigeria, public sector agencies often lag in effectively deploying human capital development initiatives due to budgetary constraints, outdated training methods, and lack of performance evaluation metrics (Akinwale, 2022). Strengthening human capital has been linked to improved innovation, employee engagement, and national productivity (ILO, 2021).

### Training

Training is a structured process of equipping employees with the technical and soft skills required to perform their current or future job roles efficiently. It is one of the most direct interventions in human capital development. Research shows that well-structured training programs significantly improve organisational productivity, especially when they are continuous and tailored to actual job needs (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, & Wright, 2021). In the Nigerian context, ineffective training delivery and inadequate follow-up have been cited as major causes of low performance in public institutions (Adelakun & Oyekola, 2023). Training that lacks alignment with real job demands often results in minimal or no improvement in job performance, leading to poor return on investment (Obisi et al., 2021).

### Career Development

Career development encompasses the strategies, policies, and practices used to support employee career growth,



advancement, and satisfaction over time. It involves career planning, mentoring, promotions, succession planning, and skill enhancement opportunities (Greenhaus, Callanan, & Godshalk, 2019). Career development is a motivational tool that boosts employee loyalty, morale, and organisational commitment (Okolie & Iloanya, 2023). However, in many public sector environments, including Nigeria's regulatory bodies, career development initiatives are often poorly implemented or perceived as politicised, leading to employee dissatisfaction and stagnation (Uzundu & Nnadi, 2024). An effective career development structure should be transparent, merit-based, and closely tied to performance indicators.

## Employee Performance

Employee performance refers to the degree to which individuals execute their job duties and contribute to the achievement of organisational goals. Performance is typically assessed through metrics such as productivity, quality of work, timeliness, innovation, and collaboration. According to Armstrong and Taylor (2020), high employee performance is a product of various interlinked factors, including clear expectations, training, career progression, feedback systems, and motivation. Studies in the Nigerian public sector have shown that a lack of skill development, poor supervisory support, and the absence of career growth pathways negatively affect employee performance (Eze et al., 2022; Ajayi & Ogunyemi, 2022). Aligning performance management with employee development strategies can significantly enhance institutional efficiency and effectiveness.

## Empirical Review

Kirungi and Benard (2024) investigated "Staff Training and Development as Important Tools for Achieving Organisational Objectives in Mbarara City Council," the study adopted a qualitative approach using semi-structured interviews and secondary literature. The focus was on how training influenced employee behaviour and overall organisational effectiveness. Results showed that staff development led to better service delivery, increased accountability, and enhanced employee motivation. The study found that organisations with structured training systems recorded higher levels of efficiency and stakeholder satisfaction. Based on these findings, the researchers recommended that public sector HR managers develop sustainable training models, promote a culture of continuous learning, and align development programs with broader strategic goals.

Muogbo et al. (2022) examined "Train Me and I Will Be Better: Effect of Training and Development on Employee Performance in an Organization. The study explored how training initiatives influence employee performance at First Registrars and Investor Services Ltd. The researchers utilised a mixed-method approach comprising questionnaires, in-depth interviews, and focus group discussions across eight branches of the organisation. Their sample included 80 employees. Findings revealed that structured training programs significantly enhanced employee competence, commitment, and job

satisfaction. Staff who received regular training showed improved task execution and aligned more closely with the firm's goals. The authors recommended continuous training, employee empowerment, and internal advancement opportunities to boost long-term performance and organisational loyalty.

Anosa (2021) explored "Human Capital Development and Organizational Productivity in Selected Manufacturing Firms in South-East Nigeria," the researcher employed a survey research design to assess how components like training, knowledge sharing, and employee engagement affect productivity. A sample of 302 employees was selected using Taro Yamane's formula, and data were analysed using descriptive statistics and t-tests. The findings indicated that training and development had a significant positive effect on productivity, alongside employee engagement. However, learning capacity did not show a significant statistical relationship with productivity. The study concluded that consistent training and strong engagement policies are key to organisational success. It recommended institutionalising periodic training, integrating engagement strategies into HR policies, and increasing access to internal knowledge resources.

Mamah and Ogbuabor (2021) in their research titled "Effect of Training on Employees' Performance: Evidence from Nigerian Banking Industry," the authors conducted a descriptive survey of employees in selected banks in Enugu State, Nigeria. The study sampled 369 staff and employed regression analysis to examine the relationship between training and performance metrics. Findings revealed that training significantly improved employee effectiveness, confidence, and job satisfaction. It also helped bridge skill gaps and enhance adaptability to new technologies. The authors concluded that consistent and relevant training is a vital driver of performance in the banking sector. They recommended that banks allocate more budget to employee development, tailor training to specific roles, and track post-training outcomes for continuous improvement.

Aina and Akinbode (2018) This study, titled "Training and Development as a Tool for Enhancing Employee Performance in Nigerian Manufacturing Firms," used a cross-sectional survey method to analyse responses from 150 manufacturing sector employees. The authors applied descriptive and inferential statistics, including regression models, to assess the effect of training initiatives. Results confirmed that training not only boosted individual performance but also contributed to organisational competitiveness. Employees who received regular job-related training performed tasks more efficiently and showed greater job commitment. The researchers advised that manufacturing firms create annual training plans, involve staff in training decisions, and periodically evaluate the impact of such programs on key performance indicators.

Ogbuabor and Nwosu (2017) explored "Training and Employee Performance in Selected SMEs in Southeast Nigeria," the researchers used survey methods to evaluate how employee training influences productivity in small and medium-sized enterprises. A sample of 225 respondents from different SMEs participated in the study. Data analysis was done using





correlation and regression techniques. The study found that training had a statistically significant impact on employee output, communication skills, and customer satisfaction. However, it also noted that many SMEs lacked formalised training structures. The authors recommended that SMEs invest in low-cost, high-impact training programs and establish routine performance assessments linked to employee development efforts.

Olatunle, et al. (2015) in their study titled "Effects of Career Development on the Performance of Small and Medium Textile Manufacturing Enterprises in Nigeria," Olatunle and colleagues adopted a quantitative survey methodology using structured questionnaires. The study sampled SMEs in both Northern and Southern regions of Nigeria, focusing on textile manufacturing firms. The researchers employed regression analysis to test their hypotheses. Findings indicated that career development interventions specifically career information, career counselling, and career advancement had a statistically significant influence on both employee and organisational performance. The study concluded that effective career development strategies enhance productivity and thus recommended that SMEs should institutionalise structured career development programs to support employee growth and organisational effectiveness.

Kakui and Gachunga (2016) examined the "Effect of Career Development on Employee Performance in the Public Sector: A Case of National Cereals and Produce Board," Kakui and Gachunga used a descriptive survey method. The population comprised 200 staff at the National Cereals and Produce Board in Nairobi, and 100 respondents were selected through stratified random sampling. Structured questionnaires were administered, and data were analysed using SPSS version 20. The results demonstrated that on-the-job training and career mentoring positively impacted employee performance by increasing competencies, reducing intimidation, and promoting motivation. The authors recommended a strategic emphasis on mentoring and training to bridge gaps in employee performance and foster long-term organisational productivity.

Ntadom et al. (2021) explored the "Effect of Career Development on Organisational Performance: A Study of Selected Higher Institutions in Anambra State, Nigeria," adopted a cross-sectional survey design. Data were collected using structured Likert-scale questionnaires from a sample of 399 respondents out of a population of 57,710 students. The study employed ANOVA regression analysis with the aid of SPSS version 23. Results indicated that career development significantly influenced organisational performance in higher education institutions. Considering these findings, the authors recommended training programs that promote collaborative decision-making, environmental relevance in content delivery, and decentralisation. These measures were proposed to close the performance gap and increase institutional effectiveness.

Malobi et al. (2022) investigated "Career Management and Organisational Performance of Teaching Hospitals in South East, Nigeria," Malobi examined how various elements of career management affect performance outcomes. The study

employed a survey design, with a population of 19,176 teaching hospital staff and a sample size of 3,346 respondents determined using the Borg and Gall formula. Data were analysed using multiple regression in SPSS version 23. The study found that career planning, training, rewards, motivation, and organisational commitment all had significant positive effects on organisational performance. The author recommended regular workshops and a structured incentive system to strengthen employee knowledge and morale, thereby boosting overall organisational output and efficiency.

## Theoretical Framework

Human Capital Theory, as developed by Theodore Schultz (1961) and expanded by Gary Becker (1964), provides a robust framework for understanding the relationship between organisational investment in people and their performance outcomes. The theory posits that individuals are economic agents whose skills, knowledge, and abilities function like capital meaning they can be enhanced through strategic investments such as education, training, and professional development. These enhancements yield measurable returns in the form of increased productivity, innovation, and overall performance (Becker, 1993; Armstrong, 2009).

In the context of this study, training represents a critical dimension of human capital investment. According to the theory, when organisations provide relevant and continuous training to their workforce, they effectively increase the value of their human capital. This not only equips employees with the technical and soft skills needed to execute their roles efficiently but also increases their adaptability in a dynamic work environment (Noe, 2017; Ogbuabor & Nwosu, 2017). Empirical studies affirm that well-structured training significantly correlates with improved employee effectiveness, motivation, and organisational outcomes (Aina & Akinbode, 2018).

Similarly, career development aligns with Human Capital Theory through its focus on long-term skill acquisition, personal growth, and professional advancement. Career development encompasses activities like mentoring, career counselling, promotions, and further education all of which contribute to increasing the capacity and utility of an individual within the organisation (Kakui & Gachunga, 2016; Olatunle et al., 2015). By facilitating career progression, organisations tap into the motivational and aspirational dimensions of human capital, thereby encouraging retention, loyalty, and discretionary effort (Malobi, 2022).

Employee performance, the dependent variable in this study, is viewed as the direct outcome or "return" on human capital investment. From the theoretical lens, performance is not merely a result of natural ability or experience; it is the product of deliberate capacity-building efforts. When employees are trained and given opportunities for career growth, they are more likely to perform at higher levels, contributing meaningfully to organisational goals (Anosa, 2021; Muogbo & Obananya, 2022). Thus, Human Capital Theory provides a compelling rationale for why organisations should invest in both training



and career development to drive sustained performance and competitiveness.

In summary, Human Capital Theory serves as the intellectual foundation for this study, reinforcing the idea that investment in people through training and career development yields tangible benefits in terms of employee performance. It justifies the assumption that skill development and career growth are not costs, but strategic investments with high performance payoffs (Schultz, 1961; Becker, 1993).

Methodology

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design to assess the impact of human capital development specifically training and career development on employee performance at the Nigerian Communications Commission (NCC), Abuja. Since the entire staff population consisted of

242 employees, a census sampling technique was used, allowing the researcher to collect data from the whole population. Primary data were gathered using structured questionnaires on a five-point Likert scale, while secondary data were obtained from relevant reports and literature. Only 228 questionnaires were valid for the analysis. The instrument’s validity was ensured through expert review and a pilot test, with reliability confirmed using Cronbach’s Alpha scores above 0.70.

Data was analysed using Eviews version 12. Descriptive statistics summarized demographic details and response patterns, while inferential analysis specifically multiple linear regression was used to test hypotheses and establish the relationship between human capital development variables and employee performance. Ethical approval was obtained, and all participants were assured of confidentiality and voluntary participation.

Data Analysis and Findings

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

	TRN	CRD	EP
Mean	2.539474	2.745614	2.706140
Median	2.000000	3.000000	3.000000
Maximum	5.000000	5.000000	5.000000
Minimum	1.000000	1.000000	1.000000
Std. Dev.	1.143156	1.278844	1.226203
Skewness	0.399292	0.040261	0.027966
Kurtosis	2.150873	1.720972	1.746180
Jarque-Bera	12.90815	15.60276	14.96433
Probability	0.101574	0.200409	0.300563
Sum	579.0000	626.0000	617.0000
Sum Sq. Dev.	296.6447	371.2456	341.3114
Observations	228	228	228

Source: E-Views output

The descriptive statistics reveal that respondents perceive career development (mean = 2.75) and employee performance (mean = 2.71) more positively than training (mean = 2.54). The median values reinforce this pattern, with CRD and EP having medians of 3.00, while TRN is lower at 2.00, suggesting that opinions on training were slightly less favourable. All three variables span the full Likert scale (1–5), indicating varied responses. Standard deviations show moderate variability, highest for CRD (1.28) and lowest for TRN (1.14). The skewness values for all variables are slightly positive but close to zero, meaning the distributions are nearly symmetrical.

Kurtosis values below 3 indicate that the distributions are platykurtic somewhat flatter than a normal distribution. The Jarque-Bera normality test confirms that all three variables are approximately normally distributed, as their p-values (TRN = 0.1016, CRD = 0.2004, EP = 0.3006) are above the 0.05 threshold. This means the data meet the assumptions required for parametric tests such as regression and correlation. Overall, the analysis indicates that while employee training may be rated lower, the variables are statistically suitable for further inferential analysis, and perceptions of career development and performance are generally moderate to favourable across respondents.

**Table 2: Regression Analysis**

Dependent Variable: EP  
Method: Least Squares  
Date: 07/24/25 Time: 15:49  
Sample: 1 228  
Included observations: 228

Variable	Coefficient	Std. Error	t-Statistic	Prob.
C	0.070798	0.034412	2.057358	0.0408
TRN	0.176791	0.032582	5.426067	0.0000
CRD	0.796319	0.029125	27.34159	0.0000
R-squared	0.970402	Mean dependent var	2.706140	
Adjusted R-squared	0.970139	S.D. dependent var	1.226203	
S.E. of regression	0.211891	Akaike info criterion	-0.252421	
Sum squared resid	10.10198	Schwarz criterion	-0.207298	
Log likelihood	31.77600	Hannan-Quinn criter.	-0.234215	
F-statistic	3688.490	Durbin-Watson stat	0.616519	
Prob(F-statistic)	0.000000			

**Source: E-Views output**

The regression model shows a very strong explanatory power, with an R-squared value of 0.9704, meaning that 97.04% of the variation in employee performance (EP) is explained jointly by training and career development. The adjusted R-squared (0.9701) confirms the model's robustness even after accounting for the number of predictors. Both independent variables are statistically significant, as their p-values are less than 0.05. Specifically, training (TRN) has a coefficient of 0.1768 ( $p = 0.0000$ ), meaning that a one-unit increase in training is associated with a 0.1768 increase in employee performance, holding other variables constant. Career development (CRD) shows a much stronger effect, with a coefficient of 0.7963 and a t-statistic of 27.34, suggesting a very strong and significant positive influence on employee performance.

The overall model is highly significant as indicated by the F-statistic of 3688.49 and a p-value of 0.0000, confirming that training and career development jointly have a significant effect on employee performance. The low standard error of regression (0.2119) and residual sum of squares (10.10) indicate a good model fit with minimal prediction error. The Durbin-Watson statistic of 0.6162, however, is relatively low, which may suggest some degree of positive autocorrelation in residuals, a potential issue to watch for in time-series or sequential data. In

summary, the model provides compelling statistical evidence that both training and career development significantly enhance employee performance, with career development having the stronger effect.

### Test of Hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>** : The regression output shows that training (TRN) has a coefficient of **0.1768** with a **p-value of 0.0000**, indicating statistical significance at the 5% level. This means that for every one-unit increase in training, employee performance increases by 0.1768 units, holding other variables constant. The low p-value confirms that the effect of training on employee performance is not due to chance, thus establishing a meaningful and positive relationship.

**H<sub>02</sub>** : Similarly, career development (CRD) has a much stronger effect, with a **coefficient of 0.7963** and an exceptionally high **t-statistic of 27.34**. The **p-value is 0.0000**, signifying a highly significant impact on employee performance. This strong statistical evidence suggests that improvements in career development contribute substantially to enhancing employee performance, making it the more influential of the two variables in the model.

**Table 3: Summary of Hypotheses**

Variable	Hypothesis	Coefficient	p-value	Decision
Training (TRN)	H <sub>01</sub> : $\beta_1 = 0$ (Training has no effect on employee performance)	0.1768	0.0000	Reject H <sub>01</sub> : Significant positive effect
Career Development (CRD)	H <sub>02</sub> : $\beta_2 = 0$ (Career development has no effect on employee performance)	0.7963	0.0001	Reject H <sub>02</sub> : Highly significant positive effect

**Source: Researchers Compilation**



## Discussion of Findings

The results of this study are in good agreement with a large body of literature that emphasizes the value of career development and training in raising employee performance, according to the empirical review. Kirungi and Benard (2024), who discovered that structured training systems at Mbarara City Council enhanced service delivery, motivation, and accountability, agree with the study's notable positive training effect. Employees who received regular training also showed better task execution, commitment, and satisfaction, according to Muogbo et al. (2022). These claims are supported by the current model's observed training coefficient (0.1768), which also supports the findings of Aina and Akinbode (2018), who found that job-specific training increases organizational and individual competitiveness. The results of this study also support those of Mamah and Ogbuabor (2021) and Ogbuabor and Nwosu (2017), who confirmed that ongoing, pertinent training closes skill gaps and improves adaptability in both large and small organizational settings. Employee performance was found to be significantly impacted by career development, which supports a number of empirical studies. For instance, in Nigeria's textile manufacturing industry, Olatunle et al. (2015) found a statistically significant correlation between career development interventions and increased organizational output. In a similar vein, Kakui and Gachunga (2016) discovered that career planning and mentoring greatly increased employee motivation and output in Kenya's public sector. The study's high career development coefficient (0.7963) is consistent with research by Ntadom et al. (2021) and Malobi et al. (2022), both studies highlighted the importance of structured career management in fostering employee commitment and institutional effectiveness. Together, these findings support the human capital theory by showing that intentional investments in career development result in notable increases in worker effectiveness, job satisfaction, and organizational productivity.

## Conclusion and Recommendations

This study investigated how training and career development affected workers' performance at the Nigerian Communications Commission. With an R-squared value of 0.9704, the regression results showed a very high explanatory power, meaning that the two independent variables account for 97.04% of the variation in employee performance. Training and career development were both found to be statistically significant, but the impact of career development was greater. These results demonstrate that improving employee performance is largely dependent on human capital development, especially in the areas of skill acquisition and career advancement. The findings also concur with the body of empirical data, confirming the applicability of human capital theory in the context of the Nigerian public sector.

The study recommends that organizations Establish Continuous and Structured Training Programs: The Nigerian Communications Commission should establish job-role-specific, well-structured training schedules because training has a major impact on employee performance. Both technical and

soft skills should be included, and their applicability and efficacy should be regularly assessed. Create a Strategic Career Development Framework the Commission should create clear career advancement pathways since career development was found to have the greatest impact on performance. To increase employee commitment, motivation, and productivity, this should involve internal promotion opportunities, career counseling, and mentoring.

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