

**EFFECT OF STAFF TRAINING ON JOB PERFORMANCE AMONG NON-
ACADEMIC STAFF IN UNIVERSITY OF BENIN (2020-2025)**

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ABSTRACT

In recent years, staff training has become a strategy in improving the efficiency of public universities, especially in developing countries where administrative performance is a key determinant of the quality of service delivery. This study assesses the effect of staff training on job performance among non-academic staff in the University of Benin, Benin City, Nigeria for the period 2020-2025. This research used Human Capital Theory to investigate the relationship between training and performance, differential effects of training methods, and challenges in implementation. A descriptive survey design was adopted. Data were collected from 368 non-academic workers through structured questionnaires and analysed using descriptive and inferential statistics. The results show that there is a statistically significant positive relationship between staff training and job performance ($p=0.004$), there is a significant impact of different training methods on employee performance ($p=0.001$) and there are significant differences between trained and untrained staff ($p=0.033$). The main difficulties are the lack of incentives, the heavy workload and the insufficient financing. The study concludes that training improves performance in the University of Benin when it is practically orientated, structurally supported and institutionally reinforced through incentive mechanisms. And therefore, they study recommends that there should be institutionalisation of continuous training programmes, diversification of training modalities, equal access to training opportunities, and removal of structural barriers to maximise human capital development in public universities.

Keywords: Staff Training, Job Performance, Non-Academic Staff, Public University, Human Capital, Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Staff training has become a central component of human resource development in modern organisations especially in the public sector institutions where service delivery and administrative efficiency are critical to the sustainability of the institution. Employees are the main drivers of organisational performance (Catcher & Snyder, 2021). The quality, competence and adaptability of its workforce is key for the effectiveness and long-term viability of any organisation. In this connection, the continuous improvement of employee capacity is closely related to the ability of institutions to respond to rapid technological advances, administrative reforms and increasing operational requirements. Therefore, in a period of rapid institutional change, employees must constantly update their knowledge, skills and competencies to remain effective, relevant and contribute meaningfully to organisational objectives.

Therefore, staff training is not seen as a discretionary activity, but rather as a strategic necessity for organisational growth and improved job performance. Training improves employees' knowledge, skills, competencies and work attitudes necessary for effective job execution (Edwin, 2021). It is also considered as a planned learning experience that aims to bring about relatively permanent changes in the employees' capabilities and behaviour and thereby improve their job performance (Joseph & Nsirim, 2024). Similarly, Afolabi and Daniel (2024) stress that training is a necessity not a luxury for organisations that crave for efficient and effective productivity. Staff training in institutional settings, especially in public universities, not only fosters the growth of individual employees but also improves the general effectiveness and service delivery of the organisation. Public universities in Nigeria are working in a dynamic environment with brain drain, retirements, voluntary resignations and migration which has significantly affected the availability of skilled manpower (Mallo, Benjamin & Buba, 2023).

Therefore, it is imperative that universities invest in continuous staff development programmes to close competence gaps and maintain institutional standards. The University of Benin was established in 1970 and is one of the leading federal universities in Nigeria. It invests considerable resources in the training of its academic and non-academic staff through workshops, seminars, conferences, on-the-job training, off-the-job training and formal educational

programmes, like other higher education institutions. University non-academic staff are involved in the day-to-day administration, technical operations and service delivery of the university. Their efficiency influences directly the institutional efficiency and the accomplishment of organisational objectives.

However, staff training programmes are broadly divided into on-the-job and off-the-job methods. On-the-job training is training that is delivered at the place of work and is focused on training you to do the job by actually doing the job. Off-the-job training is training that happens away from the place of work and is focused on theoretical training. In the University of Benin, both methods were applied between 2020 and 2025 and the differential impact on job performance is the focus of this study. The University of Benin implemented on several staff training programmes between 2020 and 2025. These include training leave, study leave, sabbatical leave, workshops, seminars and on the job capacity-building programmes. All in all, 324 non-academic staff were involved within this period. The interventions aimed at enhancing employees' technical competence, administrative efficiency and adaptability within the institutional framework. Despite these formal training initiatives, concerns remained about the extent to which such programmes resulted in any measurable improvement in job performance.

Statement of the Problem

Public universities in Nigeria have been burdened with the responsibilities of knowledge creation, administrative coordination and quality service delivery. The effectiveness of these institutional functions depends largely on the competence and operational capacity of academic and non-academic staff. As a result, significant financial and human resources are committed to staff training programmes in the hope that such investment will improve employee efficiency and overall institutional performance. This is consistent with the human capital view which argues that training increases the productive capacity of employees and results in improved organisational results (Okotie, Ugiagbe & Edegware, 2023). Concerns remain about the proportionality of the outcomes of these programmes to the resources committed, despite continued investment in staff training initiatives. Over the last decade, Nigerian public universities have witnessed the erosion of skilled manpower through brain drain, retirement, voluntary resignations and migration (Mallo

et al., 2023). Institutions have consequently ramped up their training activities to bridge competence gaps and ensure operational stability. However, empirical studies continue to document challenges of inefficiency, administrative bottlenecks and constraints in service delivery in tertiary institutions. This suggests that the association between investment in training and measurable performance outcomes is under-researched (Paul & Audu, 2019; Joshua & Olla, 2023).

The University of Benin has also institutionalised formal staff training programmes which include on-the-job and off-the-job training initiatives. Data from the Labour Relations and Staff Training Division (University of Benin, 2026) revealed that a total of 324 non-academic staff members took part in formal training activities between the years 2020 and 2025. The interventions were aimed at improving operational efficiency, administrative capacity and performance of service delivery. However, regular training programmes do not automatically translate into measurable improvements in job performance. In this article performance is operationalised by indicators as the efficiency with which a task is executed, the level of productivity, the confidence to execute the tasks assigned and the quality of the work produced. Although staff members are frequently nominated for training, there is scant empirical evidence that participation in training programs has produced statistically significant improvements in these performance dimensions. In other words, although there is institutional commitment to staff training, measurable performance outcomes of those investments are underexplored.

Justifying this focus on non-academic staff, this group of employees is directly responsible for the administrative coordination, technical support, records management, and the day-to-day operations that ensure the institution's efficient functioning. Their performance is mainly manifested in administrative efficiency and quality of service delivery and are a suitable population to assess operational outcomes of training interventions. Against this background, this study aims at critically examining the effect of staff training on job performance among non-academic staff in the University of Benin. The study is particularly focused on the relationship between training and performance, impact of different training methods and challenges affecting effective implementation.

Objectives of the Study

The general objective of this study is to examine the effect of staff training on job performance among non-academic staff in the University of Benin.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the relationship between staff training and job performance in the University of Benin.
2. Assess the impact of different training methods on employee performance in the University of Benin.
3. Identify the challenges faced by the University of Benin in implementing effective training programmes.

Research Hypotheses

The following hypotheses are formulated in null (H_0) and alternative (H_a) form and will be tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H_{01} : There is no significant relationship between staff training and job performance in the University of Benin.

H_{a1} : There is significant relationship between staff training and job performance in the University of Benin.

H_{02} : Different training methods have no significant impact on employee performance in the University of Benin.

H_{a2} : Different training methods have significant impact on employee performance in the University of Benin.

H_{03} : There are no significant challenges faced by the University of Benin in implementing effective training programmes.

H_{a3} : There are significant challenges faced by the University of Benin in implementing effective training programmes.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Conceptualisation of Job Performance

Job performance is a multidimensional construct, which is the behavioural patterns and their underlying determinants (Alromaihi, Alshomaly & George, 2017). Ahmed, Majid, and Zin (2019) said that employee performance is important in the success, sustainability, and profitability of an organization. Employee performance is not only about technical ability but also the willingness, commitment, and sincerity of performing duties. Job performance is operationally defined as the extent to which an individual can successfully accomplish assigned tasks by relying on skills, experience, dedication and efficient time usage (Hemakumara, 2020). Armstrong (2020) describes performance management as a systematic and ongoing process of goal setting aligned with organisational strategy, monitoring of performance, evaluation and the ongoing development of employee knowledge and skills. In recent times, the improved performance of organisations has increasingly been linked to the effective use of technology supported by a highly motivated and adaptable workforce (AlOmari, Alomari & Aljawarneh, 2020). Employee performance is the main factor for organisational sustainability and profitability, according to Ahmed, Majid and Zin (2019).

Training of Staff

Training is one of the most basic human resource management activities, which involves a systematic application of structured processes that will allow employees to acquire the required knowledge and skills to perform their duties effectively (Armstrong, 2020). Training is a strategic instrument to attain organisational objectives, upgrade employee and employer performance and maintain long term competitiveness in the current dynamic and rapidly changing organisational environment (Ruttledge & Cathcart, 2019). It is a conscious investment in human capital, aimed at enhancing productivity and institutional outcomes (Garavan, McCarthy & Carbery, 2020). Training is a process of preparing an employee to perform job tasks in a certain way, according to Edwin (2021). Joseph and Nsirim (2024) define training as a learning experience that leads to relatively permanent changes in an individual's capabilities.

Training is a planned and systematic activity of the organisation that is aimed at providing employees with job-related knowledge, skills, abilities and behavioural competencies that are directly relevant to the improvement of their performance at work (Noe & Hollenbeck, 2019). Training needs assessment is a critical element that identifies the gap between the actual performance of employees and the desired performance as per the organisational requirements (Lussier & Hendon, 2020). Training and development is described by Obadahun, Kadir, and Abu-Bakar (2022) as a systematic learning process that improves employee performance in the short and long term. Nurlita, Yetti, and Handini (2022) highlight the role of training and development in transforming employee attitudes, knowledge, and abilities through planned learning experiences. Training isn't just about learning a skill fast. Organisations that focus on ongoing learning have reduced turnover rates as employees feel recognised, valued and motivated by career advancement opportunities (Adebayo & Ilesanmi, 2022). Garavan, McCarthy and Carbery (2020) also believe training is one of the best ways in improving employee performance while facilitating the effective attainment of organisational goals.

Method of Training

Training methods can be broadly classified into two categories, on-the-job and off-the-job training. E-learning is a separate modern method of training. On-job training provides knowledge and skill on the task in the actual working environment, closely relating competencies with job requirements (Alipour et al., 2016). Common forms are job instruction training, job rotation, coaching, apprenticeship and mentoring. Coaching, job rotation, job instruction and orientation training significantly improve employee performance, and Tanzanian banks utilise mostly on-the-job techniques (Ngailo, 2019). These methods combine learning with work experience, resulting in quick adaptation to organisational expectations, while also building competence and confidence. Training off the job is conducted away from the work place, often simulating the work environment for uniform, systematic training (Gupta, 2018). Methods include vestibule training, simulation exercises, classroom lectures, audio-visual instruction, case studies, role playing, programmed instruction, and business games. Off-the-job training enhances staff motivation a critical performance factor, by giving them time and space for focused learning and reflection (Vasanthi and Rabiyyathul 2019). E-learning or Online Training has become a popular and easily accessible

modality. Kumar, Wotto and Belanger (2018) stress the remote access and self-paced learning ability while Singh and Thurman (2019) emphasise the complete online interaction it facilitates. However, Abuhammad (2020) and Azhari and Fajri (2022) mention issues such as the need for self-discipline, technical skills, possible loneliness and the digital divide among underserved populations.

Empirical Review on Training and Job Performance

The link between staff training and job performance has been a subject of previous empirical studies in various institutional settings. Training contributes to organisational goals and improved productivity (Hammond and Churchill, 2018). Likewise, Chanana (2021) suggests that training improves employees' self-esteem, recognition, and sense of responsibility that may indirectly affect motivation and performance. Furthermore, Akilandeswari (2022) states that effective training programs are useful in adopting new technologies and reduces operational errors. Empirical studies have also found statistically significant relationships between training and performance outcomes. Landa (2018) revealed that training was positively related to employee performance. Kenny and Nnamdi (2019) disclosed that training was an important predictor of performance as it enhanced employee competencies. Luo, Ma and Li (2021) stated that training simultaneously with supervisory mentoring has a significant influence on job satisfaction and task performance, which means that the organisational context may moderate the effects of training. Continuous training of staff in the higher education sector has a positive impact on academic job performance, according to Ogunode, Ukozor, and Agbo (2024). In the same vein, Demekaa, Bamidele and Okereke (2024) reported a positive link between staff training and the performance of university library staff.

Theoretical Framework

The study is based on Human Capital Theory, which offers a basic explanation of the relation between staff training and job performance in organisations. The theory was first proposed by Mincer (1958) and Schultz (1961) and later developed by Becker (1964). Human Capital Theory suggests that investment in education and training increases the productive capacity of individuals resulting in better organisational performance and economic outcomes. Human Capital

Theory is based on the idea that people possess knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities that can be developed through deliberate investment in education and training. According to Schultz (1961) education and training expenditures should be considered as investment rather than consumption because they generate future returns in the form of higher productivity. Becker (1964) also stated that training increases the marginal productivity of employees and thus their value to the organisation. Training is understood in this regard as a strategic human resources investment aimed at enhancing institutional effectiveness.

The theory posits that organisations that invest in training and developing employees will lead to employees acquiring greater capabilities, which will enhance their efficiency, effectiveness and adaptability in performing their job tasks. Therefore, organisations get more output, better service delivery, fewer mistakes and an overall improvement in performance. As the study notes, training provides employees with the expertise and abilities needed to perform certain job functions well (Edwin, 2021). It is also described as a learning process that leads to relatively permanent gains in job performance (Joseph & Nsirim, 2024). These views are consistent with the proposition of Human Capital Theory where training is a direct factor of productivity. Staff training in the University of Benin is a deliberate investment of the institution to improve the competence of non-academic staff. Non-academic staff carry out administrative, technical and support functions, which are critical to the effective functioning of the university. Their performance affects institutional efficiency and service delivery. Between 2020 and 2025, the University intends to enhance the human capital base of its workforce through investment in various forms of training such as on-the-job training, off-the-job training, workshops, seminars, study leave and training leave.

The first objective of the study is to review the relationship between staff training and job performance. Human Capital Theory is highly relevant to this objective. The theory says that trained employees have better knowledge and skills, so they show better efficiency, productivity, confidence and quality of work. The second aim of the theory supports the effect of different training techniques on employee performance. There are different types of human capital investment such as on-the-job training, off-the-job training, job rotation, coaching, mentoring and

e-learning. According to the theory, the quality and relevance of training affect the extent of performance improvement. If the training methods are well designed and are in line with the requirements of the job, it is probable that the employees will show better competence and effectiveness.

Also, Human Capital Theory gives understanding of the third objective of the study which is to identify challenges to the implementation of effective training programmes. Theoretically, any constraint that hampers investment in human capital, such as inadequate funding, high workload pressure or lack of incentives, reduces the potential returns on training investment.

METHODOLOGY

The study used survey research design to investigate the effect of staff training on job performance of non-academic staff in the University of Benin, Benin City. The design was appropriate for it allowed for systematic collection and analysis of data on existing training practices, performance outcomes and institutional challenges without manipulation of variables. The study population consisted of all the non-academic staff in the University of Benin, totalling 4645 employees (University of Benin Record and Statistics, 2025). In order to determine a suitable and representative sample size, the study adopted the Taro Yamane formula (1973). This formula is widely used in social science research for calculating sample size from a known population. The formula is stated as:

$$n = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where:

n = sample size

N = population size

e = level of significance or margin of error

Using the population size of 4,645 and an acceptable margin of error of 5% (0.05), the sample size is calculated as follows:

$$n = \frac{4,645}{1 + 4,645 (0.05)^2}$$

$$n = \frac{4,645}{1 + 4,645 (0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{4,645}{1 + 4,645 \times 0.0025}$$

$$n = \frac{4,645}{1 + 11.6125}$$

$$n = \frac{4,645}{12.6125}$$

$$n = 368.3$$

Therefore, the sample size for the study was approximately 368 respondents. The sample size determined using the Taro Yamane (1973) formula at 5% margin of error resulted in a sample of 368 respondents. Stratified random sampling technique was adopted to ensure that non-academic staff were proportionately represented from the various administrative units and departments of the University of Benin. The population of 4,645 non-academic staff was first divided into identifiable strata based on the major administrative divisions of the institution which include the Registry, Bursary, Works Department, Library Services, Student Affairs, ICT Unit, Health Services and other central administrative units as officially structured by the university. The number of staff in each of the department was taken from the record and statistics of the University of Benin (2025). Then, the sample size of 368 respondents was proportionally distributed across the departments by applying proportional allocation formula:

$$ni = \frac{Ni}{N} \times n$$

ni = sample size for each department

N_i = population of each department

N = total population (4,645)

n = total sample size (368)

This ensured that departments with larger staff strength had a correspondingly larger representation in the sample, while smaller departments had proportionally fewer respondents. Within each stratum, simple random sampling was then employed to select individual respondents.

Department	Staff Population (N_i)	Proportional Sample (ni)
Registry	900	71
Bursary	650	52
Works	800	63
Library	500	40
ICT	395	31
Student Affairs	600	47
Health Center	300	24
Others	500	40
Total	4,645	368

Source: Authors Computation

The primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire consisting of 25 items in two sections. Section A collected demographic data of the respondents, while Section B measured variables related to staff training, training methods, job performance and the challenges that affect the effective implementation of the training Programmes. Responses were recorded on a five point Likert scale from Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

The instrument was validated by experts in Public Administration and Measurement and Evaluation for its face and content validity. The researcher personally administered the questionnaires across departments and all the 368 copies were returned representing 100% response rate. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 25, was used to analyse the data. Descriptive statistics (frequency counts and percentages) were used to provide an overview of the demographic data and response patterns. Inferential statistics was used in testing the formulated hypotheses at 0.05 level of significance. The inferential statistics used was Pearson regression analysis. The regression model investigated the effect of staff training, training

methods, training status and institutional challenges on job performance. The null hypotheses were rejected when p-values were ≤ 0.05 .

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

Relationship Between Staff Training and Job Performance

The first objective focused on examining the relationship between staff training and job performance, as presented in the 2026 field survey conducted at the University of Benin. Respondents demonstrated strong positive perceptions: 60.1% strongly agreed and 24.2% agreed that investing in staff training leads to better performance; 78.5% strongly agreed and 11.1% agreed that continuous training improves staff efficiency; 81.8% agreed that training increased their confidence in performing tasks; 73.6% agreed and 15.8% strongly agreed that training improved productivity; and 47.8% strongly agreed and 40.5% agreed that their quality of work improved after training.

Hypothesis One, stating that there is no significant relationship between staff training and job performance, was tested using Pearson's correlation. The results showed Staff Training with a t-statistic of 0.951 and a p-value of 0.004, which is less than the 0.05 significance level (Consequently, the null hypothesis was rejected, confirming a statistically significant relationship between staff training and job performance. This finding aligns with Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964; Schultz, 1961), which posits that investment in employee development enhances productive capacities and performance outcomes. It corroborates Landa (2018), who established a significant positive relationship between training and employee performance, and Kenny and Nnamdi (2019), who identify training as a primary predictor of performance through enhanced capabilities and competencies. The strong agreement that continuous training improves efficiency (89.6% combined positive response) suggests that training should be conceptualised not as a one-time intervention but as an ongoing strategic necessity, consistent with Afolabi and Daniel's (2024) argument that training is a necessity rather than a luxury for organisations desiring efficient productivity.

Impact of Different Training Methods on Employee Performance

The second objective was to investigate the effect of different training methods on performance. The on-the-job training was highly endorsed as a common method to improve practical skills (28.0% strongly agree, 62.0% agree) as shown in field survey conducted in University of Benin, 2026. Off-the-job methods such as workshops and seminars were also supported (58.2% strongly agree, 29.6% agree). Job rotation was agreed to improve versatility and adaptability (67.4% strongly agree, 26.1% agree).

However, perceptions of e-learning were split: while 60.3% strongly agreed that it supports flexible skill acquisition, 30.2% strongly disagreed, indicating inconsistent access or awareness. Mixed responses were observed for coaching and mentoring (52.2% strongly agree vs. 38.3% strongly disagree), indicating inconsistent implementation across departments. The t-statistic was 1.308 and the p-value was 0.001. The second hypothesis was rejected based on the results; different training methods have no significant impact on performance (University of Benin, 2026). This affirms the fact that the method of training has a major effect on the performance of employees which supports Ngailo (2019) who found that on the job techniques improved the performance and Vasanthi and Rabiyyathul (2019) who observed that off the job training improves motivation and performance. The good support for job rotation is consistent with the reported benefits of job rotation such as reducing boredom, improving career development and increasing cross-department communication (Samuel & Onoriode, 2018). Divergent perceptions of e-learning and coaching/mentoring highlight implementation gaps that need to be addressed. Kumar, Wotto, and Belanger (2018) and Abuhammad (2020) posit that the success of e-learning depends on variables such as infrastructure, online literacy, and institutional support that are unevenly distributed within the University of Benin.

Challenges in Implementing Effective Training Programmes

The Three identified implementation challenges shows a more complex picture. Contradicting common assumptions, most respondents rejected the idea that training selection is not transparent (63.3% strongly disagree, 3.3% disagree) or that training needs are not properly identified (63.3% strongly disagree, 3.3% disagree). These domains seem to have relatively fair

procedures. But three big problems came into sharp focus. 87.0% (53.8% strongly agree, 33.2% agree) confirmed that inadequate funding was a limiting factor in effectiveness of training. 91.9% (45.7% strongly agree, 46.2% agree) felt that workload constraints were preventing staff attendance. 91.3% (65.5% strongly agree, 25.8% agree) There are no incentives that deter participation. The third hypothesis was that there were no significant challenges. This was rejected because the t-statistic was 1.547 and p-value was 0.002 (University of Benin, 2026). This shows that there are significant challenges that hamper the effective implementation of training. These findings are consistent with Eze, Eze, Mbabazi and Ugwu (2023) who highlight the significance of training and performance improvement, and Ajayi and Okhankhaele (2019) and Nmadu and Khalil (2017) who point out resource limitations and workload as significant

CONCLUSION

The study investigated the effect of staff training on job performance among non-academic staff in the University of Benin. The study specifically investigated the relationship between staff training and job performance, the effect of different training methods and the challenges impeding the implementation of effective training programmes. The study found a positive and significant relationship between staff training and job performance. There was an increase in efficiency, productivity, confidence and quality of work among staff who attended training programmes. The statistical analysis showed that staff training has a significant effect on job performance which confirms the assumption that investment in human capital increases institutional effectiveness.

The study also revealed that different training methods can make a significant difference in employee performance. Job rotation, on-the-job training and off-the-job training were generally accepted as effective methods for improving adaptability and competence. The study further identified the major challenges that affect effective implementation of training programmes. Major constraints were lack of funding, high workload and lack of incentives. Staff generally viewed the process of selecting training and needs assessment procedures to be fair and transparent, but financial and structural constraints were identified as barriers to optimal training outcomes.

This study contributes to the existing literature by providing context-specific empirical evidence on the effect of staff training on job performance among non-academic staff in a Nigerian

federal university. This research reveals that training impacts performance through operational mechanisms such as improvement of efficiency, productivity and task confidence, and enhancement of quality of service, contrary to the generalised assumption that training automatically enhances performance in the University of Benin. The study contributes to the body of knowledge by determining that the performance improvement in public universities is significantly mediated by adaptability-improving training techniques such as job rotation and practical exposure on-the-job. It also underscores that structural constraints especially workload pressure and absence of incentives systems moderate the translation of training into performance gains.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The results of the study give rise to the following recommendations:

1. The University of Benin should improve on its existing staff development programmes by clearly associating them with measurable performance indicators such as efficiency, productivity and quality of service delivery. Train design should be outcome-oriented, not participation-oriented.
2. More attention should be given to improving the effectiveness of on the job and off the job training methods especially job rotation, mentoring and coaching. There needs to be a central mechanism for coordination to ensure uniform implementation and equitable access across the departments.
3. Investment in digital infrastructure should be increased to enhance access to e-learning platforms, fostering flexibility and inclusive skill development.
4. Training participation and completion should be formally integrated into performance appraisal systems and linked to promotion eligibility, recognition mechanisms, or other incentive structures in order to strengthen accountability and learning transfer.
5. Since workload was identified as a significant constraint, institutional scheduling reforms should incorporate designated training windows within official work plans to prevent conflict between operational responsibilities and capacity development.

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