

TRAINING AND EMPLOYEE CREATIVE PERFORMANCE: A STUDY OF CHEVRON NIGERIA

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Abstract

Training activities organized by an organization makes demand on employee potentials hence, ongoing training and upskilling of the workforce can encourage creativity To this end this study examined the role of training in stimulating employee creative performance particularly in the Nigerian context. A descriptive research design was used to collect information from employees of Chevron Nigeria. The study used multivariate analysis to test the hypothesis stated based on the objective of the study. Findings revealed that training has a significant effect on employee creative performance of Chevron Nigeria Employees. The findings expounded the dynamic influence of training in fostering creative performance in employees.

Keywords: Training; Employee, Creative performance; Nigeria

1. INTRODUCTION

Organizations in Nigeria have long been concerned with boosting employee creativity to achieve better results. Originally, emphasis was placed on understanding what individual traits are vital for employees to be creative however, creativity management has broadened to consider what organizations can do to institute the right conditions for employees to be creative, what managers can do to manage employees for creative performance and what can be done to enhance employee-specific factors to improve creative performance (Engetou, 2017). Employee creative performance is therefore viewed as a complex and dynamic construct within the creative process, involving the interaction of organizational, managerial and employee factors (Basadur & Basadur, 2011; Tierney & Farmer, 2011). This is why employee training becomes necessary considering that employees who receive relevant training are more able to perform in their job. This is because training gives employees a greater understanding of their responsibilities within their role, and in turn build their confidence. This confidence enhances their overall performance and this can only benefit the company (Tsai, 2011). Employees who are proficient and on top of fluctuating industry ideals can help their company hold a position as front-runner and strong player within the industry. Therefore, considering that training activities make demands on employee potentials hence, ongoing training and upskilling of the workforce can encourage employee creative performance (Dymock & Billett, 2010). This is hinged on the fact that new ideas about products, work processes and procedures can be formed or developed as a direct result of training. A relevant study by Abudullah et.al (2014) examined the role of training on employee innovativeness. Similarly, Nawaz (2014) assessed the impact of employee training and empowerment on employee creativity through employee engagement. More recently, Doran and Ryan (2017) examined the role of stimulating employees' creativity and idea generation in encouraging innovation behavior in Irish firms.

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However, there seems to be a paucity in research regarding the role of training in stimulating employee creative performance particularly in the Nigerian context hence, the motivation for this present study.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Employee creative performance refers to generation of novel and valuable ideas regarding products, procedures, and processes at work (Zhang, 2015). While many studies have been conducted to demonstrate the relationship between training and work-related outcomes such as employee satisfaction, empowerment, employee engagement, employee productivity or performance, few studies have focused on the relationship with employee creativity, especially in the Nigerian context. Training employees to effectively do their jobs has been seen in most modern research as the most important activity managers undertake to improve their competitiveness (Saks & Belcourt, 2006; Yadaz, 2016) Gandolfi (2009) explained how liberalization and globalization transformed the corporate training scenario and addressed countless challenges. Martínez-Ros & Orfila-Sintes (2012) suggested that training strategies affect innovation-related decisions positively. Preissl (2000) argued that acquiring new skills and qualifications are relevant innovation sources. Wong & Pang (2003) also identified training and development programs as a critical factor in enhancing creativity in the workforce. Hence, training may enhance the ability to think creatively and make better, timely and productive decisions (Banaji, Burn & Buckingham, 2006; Yadaz, 2016). A good training regime can motivate employees to contribute creatively to decisions in the workplace and achieve creative performance (Hollenbeck, DeRue&Guzzo, 2004; Martínez-Ros & OrfilaSintes, 2012). Nevertheless, in the literature, particularly in the Nigerian context, the specific link between training and employee creative performance has not been discussed extensively and therefore calls for more research. Identifying this gap motivated the following hypothesis: *H₀₁*: Training does not have a significant effect on employee creativity

3. METHODOLOGY

A descriptive research design was used to collect information from employees of Chevron Nigeria. Survey was engaged as research method and the data collected were obtained through the distribution of structured copies of questionnaire to employees of the organization. The choice of Chevron is hinged on the fact that as a leading oil and gas company in Nigeria it is known for its culture of consistent training regime. The study population as obtained from the human resource department of the organization is given as 3100 full time employees. Three hundred and fifty one (351) copies of questionnaire were administered based on the recommendations of Bartlett, et.al, (2001). Two hundred and fifty one (251) copies of questionnaire representing about 72% were retrieved. The study used multivariate analysis to test the hypothesis to examine the effect of training on employee creative performance in the selected organization. Employee training was assessed using a three-item measure. These items are: building technical skills; developing work related knowledge; work proficiency. Employee creative performance was assessed using a three item measure. These items are; product development ideas; improved work

procedure ideas; improved work processes ideas. Responses ranged by 5-point Likert scaling from 1= “Strongly disagree” to 5= “Strongly agree.”

4. RESULTS

Table 1: Multivariate Test

Multivariate Tests^a								
Effect		Value	F	Hypothesis df	Error df	Sig.	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^d
Intercept	Pillai's Trace	.937	1191.284 ^b	3.000	242.000	.000	3573.853	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.063	1191.284 ^b	3.000	242.000	.000	3573.853	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	14.768	1191.284 ^b	3.000	242.000	.000	3573.853	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	14.768	1191.284 ^b	3.000	242.000	.000	3573.853	1.000
TRAINING	Pillai's Trace	.246	3.638	18.000	732.000	.000	65.492	1.000
	Wilks' Lambda	.768	3.717	18.000	684.965	.000	62.906	1.000
	Hotelling's Trace	.283	3.778	18.000	722.000	.000	68.003	1.000
	Roy's Largest Root	.176	7.176 ^c	6.000	244.000	.000	43.056	1.000
a. Design: Intercept + TRAINING								
b. Exact statistic								
c. The statistic is an upper bound on F that yields a lower bound on the significance level.								
d. Computed using alpha = .05								

Source: Field Study Result (2019)

The results of the test shows that the p-values at ($P < 0.05$) for the four different multivariate tests are significant. These results reveal that there is a significant effect of training on all of the dimensions of employee creative performance considered as a group. This implies that engaging training in Chevron Nigeria has influenced the creative performance of employees of the organization.

Table 2: Tests of Between Subjects Effects

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects								
Source	Dependent Variable	Type III Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.	Noncent. Parameter	Observed Power ^d
Corrected Model	Product development ideas	8.097 ^a	6	1.350	3.304	.004	19.823	.931
	Improved work processes ideas	21.054 ^b	6	3.509	6.775	.000	40.648	.999
	Improved work procedure ideas	7.801 ^c	6	1.300	2.267	.038	13.600	.787
Intercept	Product development ideas	733.221	1	733.221	1794.956	.000	1794.956	1.000
	Improved work processes ideas	680.618	1	680.618	1314.055	.000	1314.055	1.000
	Improved work procedure ideas	743.303	1	743.303	1295.843	.000	1295.843	1.000
TRAINING	Product development ideas	8.097	6	1.350	3.304	.004	19.823	.931
	Improved work processes ideas	21.054	6	3.509	6.775	.000	40.648	.999
	Improved work procedure ideas	7.801	6	1.300	2.267	.038	13.600	.787
Error	Product development ideas	99.671	244	.408				
	Improved work processes ideas	126.380	244	.518				
	Improved work procedure ideas	139.960	244	.574				
Total	Product development ideas	4729.000	251					
	Improved work processes ideas	4565.000	251					
	Improved work procedure ideas	4812.000	251					
Corrected Total	Product development ideas	107.769	250					
	Improved work processes ideas	147.434	250					
	Improved work procedure ideas	147.761	250					
a. R Squared = .075 (Adjusted R Squared = .052)								
b. R Squared = .143 (Adjusted R Squared = .122)								
c. R Squared = .053 (Adjusted R Squared = .030)								
d. Computed using alpha = .05								

Source: Field Study Result (2019)

The second part of the results section gives univariate tests for the effects of training on each of the different dimensions of employee creativity. These p-values reveal that training had a significant effect on the results of building technical skills test ($p = .004$), the results of improving work processes test ($p = .000$), and the results of improving work procedures test ($p = .038$).

4.1 Discussion of Findings

Findings from the test of the stated hypothesis revealed that training has a significant effect on employee creative performance of Chevron Nigeria Employees. This aligns with the study of Nawaz et.al. (2014) which revealed that employee engagement partially mediates the relationship between human resource practices and employee creativity. However, the uniqueness of this study is that it specifically showed that training as a salient human resource practice directly fosters employee creativity as revealed in Chevron Nigeria. It also expounds the work of Muqadas et.al (2016) suggesting that the antecedents of knowledge sharing fosters creativity and work performance. To this end, this study considers training as a very important determinant of knowledge sharing in any organization geared at fostering creative performance of employees. Similarly the findings from the univariate tests showed that training fosters the generation of creative ideas for product development, work processes and work procedure improvements by employees. This expounds the dynamic influence of training in fostering creative performance by employees.

4.2 Conclusion and Managerial Implications

Although extant research have attempted to examine various antecedents of employee creativity in organizations nevertheless, the specific link between training and employee creativity has not been extensively discussed in the literature, especially in the Nigerian context. Therefore, based on the findings of this study it implies that engaging training influences the creative performance of employees. The significant effects of training on each of the different dimensions of employee creativity also expounds the dynamic influence of training in fostering creative performance in employees. Therefore, HR managers may focus training regimes on development of new and creative ideas regarding product development, work procedures and processes.

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