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## Effect of Career Development on Employee Performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, Anambra State, Nigeria (2013 – 2023)

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**Abstract:** The study examined the effect of career development on employee performance at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The aim of the study was to understand how career development initiatives affect employee performance within an academic setting like Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The study was guided by three specific objectives, and accordingly, three research questions and hypotheses were formulated. The study was anchored on the Human Capital Development Theory and utilized a descriptive survey research design. The population of the study consisted of 4,952 staff members of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The Taro Yamane (1964) formula was used to calculate a sample size of 371. Data were collected only from primary sources through the use of questionnaire, in-depth interviews and focus group discussions. The data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) and inferential statistics, including factor analysis, t-test, and linear regression model. The demographic profiles were processed using descriptive statistics, and the first three objectives were subjected to factor analysis. Subsequently, the three objectives were analyzed using descriptive statistics (such as percentages, mean, and standard deviation) and the Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression model. T-test and F-test statistics were used to test the hypotheses and the overall model fitness. All analyses were conducted using SPSS version 23. The findings revealed that all the three coefficients; training, mentoring, and professional development have significant positive effect on employee performance at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The study concluded that training, mentoring, and professional development are significant determinants of employee performance. Among other recommendations, the study suggests enhancing training programs, given their significant effect on employee performance, and encourages Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, to invest in the continuous improvement and expansion of its training initiatives.

**Key words:** Career Development, Employee Performance, Factor Analysis, training, mentoring, and professional development.

### 1. Introduction

The wake of 21st century has witnessed a rapid change in technological and economic factors, which has also accentuated change in societies around the world. These remarkable changes in the world have led to redefining the nature of careers and jobs in the America, Europe, Asia and Africa. With the rapid changes in the overall systems of the economies of these nations, with respect to socioeconomic, demographic, and technological aspects, a high demand for the highly educated, skilled workforce has been created to cater for the requirements of the technically demanding working environment. Career development therefore, has been recognized globally as crucial requirements, which influence the career growth opportunities that remains a key determinant of employee organizational productivity, irrespective of the type or the nature of the

organization (Subashini, 2019 & Delbari, Rajaipour & Abedini, 2021). In American organizations for instance, career development has evolved overtime. In recognition of the need to boost career development in USA, the National Career Development Summit: (A Call to Action) was convened by the Coalition for Career Development. The Summit brought together leaders from government, education and business to design a plan to make career readiness a central priority in the United States of America national education system. All attendees were encouraged to come to the Summit with a pledge of what they or their organization would do to promote high-quality career development in the United State of America education system.

More so, in Europe, the European Training Foundation (ETF) works with European Union (EU) neighboring and Central Asian countries to further develop national career development support systems following a structured and systematic approach. The strong interlinkages between career development support, lifelong learning and the requirement of all countries to ensure quality education outcomes, economic outcomes, and social outcomes highlights the relevance of career development support and makes the case for its prioritization. Lifelong career guidance and counseling, career education, and career development support for workers in formal and informal contexts are catalysts for policies aiming at economic growth, social equity, and innovation closely aligned with the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Within the individual organizations like the higher education sector, efforts towards ensuring career development have started gaining momentum in the last decade with this effort mostly focusing on the academic staff against the non-academic staff. In the Nigerian higher education sector, Nnamdi Azikiwe University inclusive, two broad categories of employees are recognized: academics and non-academics, regardless of the category, these parties are equally important for accomplishment of the aims of the institution. Successful organizations regardless of size need employees who have the necessary knowledge and skills to make an effective contribution as drivers towards achieving a competitive edge in the organization (Amaeshi, 2019). Thus, career development practices are key strategic considerations in stimulating employees' performance for all organizations regardless of size, sector, market or profile.

Career development entails preparing individuals to assume different or higher responsibilities within the organization (Firman, 2021). It is usually seen as the pattern of work related experience that spans the course of a person's life. Development is usually associated with increasing the intellectual or emotional abilities needed to accomplish a better job. The aim of all career development programs is to match the needs and goals of employees with the career opportunities available in organizations today and in the future (Delbari, Rajaipour & Abedini, 2021). Career development programmes are beneficial to organizations because it helps to improve the skills, knowledge and experience of employees towards their work. It benefits not only the individual employee, but also the organization. Providing career development opportunities restrict employees from leaving the organization and increases their loyalty (Kibui, Gachunga & Namusonge, 2014). Most organizations may use career development programmes to assist their employees to properly plan their careers because it is believed that, generally employees react positively to career development and advancement opportunities. Employee performance is the result achieved by an employee both in quality and quantity that can be seen from the skills and abilities of employees in completing their work in accordance with set standards and responsibilities given by the organizations (Luh & Dewi, 2020). It is the rate at which employees are able to complete tasks assigned to them. This could be measured in terms of employee output, quality service delivery and achievement of set targets. The development of the capacity and capability of employees has a fundamental impact on service efficiency, effectiveness, target achievement, and employee output in the organization. Modern organizations are increasingly paying close attention to the validity of their recruitment practices and are becoming equally vigilant about developing their employees' career in order to ensure they achieve optimum performance both in the present and the future (Mwanje, 2020). Career development is the basis of employee confidence and competence (Robbins, 2020). Career development aids organizations in bridging the gap between current performance and expected future performance. Organizations

that give their employees opportunity for career advancement through career management in the organization helps them plan for their future and that of the enterprise to avoid turnover, which will affect performance or service delivery (Kakui & Gachunga, 2016). Organizations aspire to be successful in today's extremely competitive markets need employees with the right competencies to assist in achieving a competitive edge in the industries.

## **2. Statement of the Problem**

In an ideal organizational setting, career development is a strategic priority that aligns with both individual and organizational goals, leading to improved employee performance and overall organizational success. Effective career development programs are designed to enhance employees' skills, knowledge, and competencies, enabling them to meet current job demands and prepare for future roles. Organizations that prioritize career development often experience higher levels of employee engagement, job satisfaction, and productivity. These outcomes are supported by structured training, mentoring, professional development, and continuous learning opportunities that are systematically integrated into organizational policies. In educational institutions, particularly universities like Nnamdi Azikiwe University, career development is crucial for academic and non-academic staff to maintain high standards of teaching, research, and administrative efficiency, which are essential for the institution's growth and reputation.

Despite the recognized importance of career development, many organizations, including Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, seem to deviate significantly from this ideal. There are indications that the university's existing initiatives may not be fully sufficient to meet the needs of its staff. Many employees report dissatisfaction with the opportunities for career advancement, professional development, and training, which are critical components of career development. This dissatisfaction is often due to a lack of clear career progression pathways, limited access to developmental programs, and inadequate support from the university's management. The challenges faced by the university are exacerbated by limited resources, administrative inefficiencies, and a growing demand for quality education, all of which contribute to a decline in employee morale, productivity, and overall performance. The situation is further compounded by high turnover rates, particularly among academic staff, who seek better opportunities in institutions that offer more robust career development programs.

The implications of the current situation are far-reaching and detrimental to the university's ability to achieve its mission of providing quality education and contributing to national development. The lack of effective career development initiatives may lead to a decline in organizational commitment, increased turnover, and reduced performance among staff, which in turn affects the quality of education and research output at the university. This situation highlights a critical gap in the literature, as existing studies have not adequately addressed the specific challenges and needs related to career development at Nnamdi Azikiwe University. While previous research has acknowledged the importance of career development in enhancing employee performance, there is a need for more focused studies that explore the unique context of Nigerian universities and provide actionable recommendations for improving career development initiatives. This present study aims to fill this gap by examining the effect of career development on employee performance at Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, 2013 -2023.

## **3. Objectives of the Study**

The broad objective of the study is to examine the effect of career development on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, 2013 – 2023. Specifically, the study seeks;

- i. To determine the extent to which training affects employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, 2013 – 2023.
- ii. To explore the effect of mentoring on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, 2013 – 2023.

- iii. To analyze the effect of professional development on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, 2013 – 2023.

#### 4. Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were formulated to guide the study.

- i.  $H_0$ : Training has no effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.
- ii.  $H_0$ : Mentoring has no effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.
- iii.  $H_0$ : Professional development has no effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.

#### 5. Review of Related Literatures

Career development is the lifelong process of managing learning, work, leisure, and transitions in order to move toward a personally determined and evolving preferred future. In the context of human resource development, career development is often linked to employee performance and organizational success. This literature review examines the effect of training, mentoring and professional development on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.

##### *Training*

Training, as a concept, holds a significant place in the context of employee development and organizational growth. Noe et al. (2017), posit that training involves the planned efforts of an organization to facilitate the learning of job-related competencies, knowledge, skills, and behaviors by employees. This emphasizes the intentionality and structure behind training initiatives, where the goal is to equip employees with the tools necessary for effective job performance. Aguinis and Kraiger (2019), add that training is seen as a key component of the broader human resource development (HRD) function, which focuses on developing employees' skills in alignment with organizational objectives. This perspective views training as a strategic investment that contributes to the overall competitiveness and sustainability of the organization

##### *Mentoring*

Mentoring, within the context of career development, is seen as a process in which a more experienced individual, known as the mentor, provides guidance, support, and feedback to a less experienced person, known as the mentee, to foster the latter's personal and professional development (Clutterbuck, 2016). It is further viewed as been rooted in the idea of knowledge transfer and so is a systematic method of transferring critical organizational knowledge, skills, and norms from senior employees to newer or less experienced employees (Ragins & Kram, 2017).

##### *Professional Development*

Professional development is a multi-layered concept that has been widely discussed in the context of career development across various fields and disciplines. Guskey (2018) is of the opinion that professional development is a systematic effort to bring about positive change in the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of professionals. In this regard, it is not a sporadic or isolated activity but rather a continuous and purposeful pursuit that aligns with the overarching goals of career development. The National Staff Development Council (NSDC) adds that the collective responsibility of professional development is in enhancing organizational performance, suggesting that professional development goes beyond individual improvement to contribute to the broader goals of the organization or institution.

##### *Training and Employee Performance: The Nexus*

The relationship between training and employee performance is a critical area of study in organizational behavior and human resource management. Training as conceptualized is a systematic process aimed at improving the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of employees to meet

the current and future demands of their jobs (Noe, 2020). This process is integral to the development of employee competencies, which directly impacts their performance. Employee performance, on the other hand, refers to the efficiency and effectiveness with which employees execute their tasks and contribute to organizational objectives (Armstrong, 2021). The alignment of employee skills with job requirements is crucial for achieving high performance levels, and this alignment is often facilitated through targeted training programs. A study by Peltier, Schibrowsky and Drago (2020), found that employees who underwent training in new technologies exhibited higher productivity levels compared to those who did not receive such training. This improvement in performance can be attributed to the fact that trained employees are more confident and competent in their roles, which reduces errors and increases efficiency.

### ***Mentoring and Employee Performance: The Interface***

The interface between mentoring and employee performance has significant implications for both individual and organizational outcomes. A supportive mentoring relationship can foster a sense of belonging and recognition, which are crucial for job satisfaction (Allen, Eby & Lentz, 2018). When employees feel valued and supported, they are more likely to be motivated, committed, and engaged in their work. High levels of engagement have been shown to correlate with higher productivity, quality of work, and overall performance (Harter, Schmidt, & Hayes, 2022). Thus, mentoring indirectly boosts performance by enhancing the emotional and psychological well-being of employees. Likewise, mentoring can facilitate the transfer of knowledge and best practices across the organization, leading to a more skilled and competent workforce (Swap, Leonard, Shields & Abrams 2021). When employees perform well individually, it contributes to the overall performance of their teams and departments, creating a ripple effect that enhances organizational performance. Additionally, mentoring can help build a culture of continuous learning and development within the organization, which is crucial for sustaining long-term success in a competitive business environment (Garavan, Hogan, & Cahir-O'Donnell, 2019).

### ***The Nexus between Professional Development and Employee Performance***

The nexus between professional development and employee performance plays a pivotal role in enhancing the capabilities of employees and thereby improving organizational outcomes. Employees who perceive that their organization is invested in their growth and development are more likely to feel valued and satisfied with their job (Chiaburu & Tekleab, 2016). This satisfaction translates into improved performance as employees are more committed to their roles and are less likely to seek employment elsewhere. Organizations that prioritize professional development ensure that their employees are equipped with the latest knowledge and skills needed to navigate these changes effectively. This, in turn, enhances employee performance by enabling them to perform their tasks more efficiently and effectively, leading to increased productivity and innovation (Noe et al., 2018). In addition to improving job-specific skills, professional development also enhances employees' soft skills, such as communication, leadership, and teamwork. These skills are essential for effective collaboration and the smooth functioning of teams within organizations. Employees with strong soft skills are better equipped to handle interpersonal relationships, manage conflicts, and lead projects, all of which contribute to improved performance (Robles, 2016). For instance, leadership development programs can prepare employees for managerial roles, enabling them to lead teams effectively and drive organizational success.

## **6. Theoretical Framework**

### ***Human Capital Theory***

This study is anchored on Human Capital Theory which posits that individuals and organizations alike benefit from investments in human capital, leading to improved economic outcomes at both the micro and macro levels.

## Proponents of the Theory

The Human Capital Theory is associated with the works of economists Theodore Schultz (1902–1998) and Gary Becker (1930–2014).

### *Tenets of the Theory*

The first tenet is that individuals acquire knowledge and skills that increase their ability to perform tasks, leading to greater productivity and higher income. This investment in human capital is not limited to formal education but also includes on-the-job training, professional development, and health improvements. The second tenet is that the returns on investment in human capital, much like physical capital, manifest as increased productivity and, consequently, higher earnings. The third tenet is that human capital is cumulative and depreciates over time if not maintained. Continuous learning and skill development are necessary to sustain and enhance human capital. Lastly, Human Capital Theory asserts that there are externalities associated with human capital investments. For instance, an educated workforce contributes not only to the productivity of an organization but also to the broader economy, fostering innovation and economic growth.

### *Relevance and Application of the Theory to the Study*

The theory provides a clear framework for understanding how career development initiatives, such as training programs, professional development, and educational opportunities, can lead to enhanced employee performance by increasing their skills and competencies. This is particularly relevant in an academic environment like Nnamdi Azikiwe University, where the continuous development of staff is crucial for maintaining high standards of teaching, research, and administrative efficiency.

## 7. Methodology

### *Research Design*

This study adopted a descriptive survey research design. This design was chosen because it allows for the collection of detailed information regarding the characteristics, opinions, and behaviors of the target population. The descriptive survey method is appropriate for this study as it aims to accurately describe the current state of the phenomenon under investigation without manipulating any variables.

### *Area of Study*

Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, commonly referred to as UNIZIK, served as the area of this study. Established in 1991, the university is a federal institution located in Awka, the capital of Anambra State, Nigeria, with an additional campuses in Nnewi and Agulu. Named after Dr. Nnamdi Azikiwe, a prominent Nigerian statesman and the country's first president, the university aims to provide a comprehensive educational experience, fostering intellectual growth and societal advancement.

### *Population of the Study*

The population of this study consisted of all staff members of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, including both academic and non-academic staff across all the faculties in the university. Currently, the university has a total staff population of 4952 (NAU Personnel (Statistics), 2024), which forms the population of the study.

**Table 1: Population of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka by Faculty**

S/N	Faculties	Academic staff	Non-academic staff	Total	Percentage
1.	Agriculture	109	138	247	5.0
2.	Art	341	148	489	9.9
3.	Basic Medical Sciences	56	59	115	2.3
4.	Biosciences	216	243	459	9.3

5.	Education	343	228	571	11.5
6.	Engineering	218	387	605	12.1
7.	Environmental Sciences	169	210	379	7.7
8.	Health Sciences and Technology	102	79	181	3.7
9.	Law	71	52	123	2.5
10.	Medicine	138	40	178	3.6
11.	Basic Clinical Science	46	52	98	2.0
12.	Management Sciences	287	124	411	8.3
13.	Pharmaceutical Sciences	87	94	181	3.7
14.	Physical Sciences	279	288	567	11.4
15.	Social Sciences	253	95	348	7.0
	<b>Total</b>	<b>2715</b>	<b>2237</b>	<b>4952</b>	<b>100</b>

Source: NAU Personnel (Statistics), 2024.

### Sample Size Determination

To determine a sample size of the population, the Taro Yamani (1964), understated formula was applied;

The formula is given by;

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

Where n is the sample size,

N = the population size, and

e = the level of precision (allowable error) that is 5% or 0.05.

Thus, using the total population of the study we have;

$$N = 3923$$

$$e = 5\% = 0.05.$$

$$n = \frac{4952}{1+(4952 \times 0.05^2)}$$

$$n = \frac{4952}{1+(4952 \times 0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{4952}{1+12.38}$$

$$n = \frac{4952}{13.38}$$

$$n = 370.1046338$$

$$n = 371.$$

The sample size is three hundred and sixty-three selected from the population. The proportion was based on the staff strength of each faculty. They were divided in the following proportion among the fifteen faculties as shown in table 3.2. The distribution of questionnaire to the respondents in each of the faculties under study was based on the percentage of staff in each faculty to the overall number of staff chosen for the sample.

Therefore,

$$\text{Faculty of Agriculture} = \frac{5.0}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 18.6 \sim 19$$

$$\text{Faculty of Arts} = \frac{9.9}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 36.7 \sim 37$$

Faculty of Basic Medical Sciences	$= \frac{2.3}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 8.5 \sim 8$
Faculty of Biosciences	$= \frac{9.3}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 34.5 \sim 34$
Faculty of Education	$= \frac{11.5}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 42.7 \sim 43$
Faculty of Engineering	$= \frac{12.1}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 44.9 \sim 45$
Faculty of Environmental Sciences	$= \frac{7.7}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 28.6 \sim 29$
Faculty of Health Sciences and Technology	$= \frac{3.7}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 13.7 \sim 14$
Faculty of Law	$= \frac{2.5}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 9.3 \sim 9$
Faculty of Medicine	$= \frac{3.6}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 13.4 \sim 13$
Faculty of Basic Clinical Science	$= \frac{2.0}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 7.4 \sim 7$
Faculty of Management Sciences	$= \frac{8.3}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 30.8 \sim 31$
Faculty of Pharmaceutical Sciences	$= \frac{3.7}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 13.7 \sim 14$
Faculty of Physical Sciences	$= \frac{11.4}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 42.3 \sim 42$
Faculty of Social Sciences	$= \frac{7.0}{100} \times \frac{371}{1} = 26.0 \sim 26$

**Table 2. Sample Size Distribution Table**

<b>Faculties</b>	<b>Population</b>	<b>Sample size</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Agriculture	247	19	5.0
Arts	489	37	9.9
Basic Medical Sciences	115	8	2.3
Biosciences	459	34	9.3
Education	571	43	11.5
Engineering	605	45	12.1
Environmental Sciences	379	29	7.7
Health Sciences and Technology	181	14	3.7
Law	123	9	2.5
Medicine	178	13	3.6
Basic Clinical Science	98	7	2.0
Management Sciences	411	31	8.3
Pharmaceutical Sciences	181	14	3.7
Physical Sciences	567	42	11.4
Social Sciences	348	26	7.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>4952</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>100</b>

**Source:** Researcher's compilation (2024)

### **Sampling Technique**

The sampling technique adopted for this study was stratified random sampling. This technique was deemed most appropriate because it allowed the researcher to divide the population of Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, into distinct strata, specifically academic and non-academic staff. Within each stratum, participants were then randomly selected to ensure that both categories of staff were proportionally represented in the study. This approach provided a balanced and



representative sample, enabling more reliable insights into the effect of career development on employee performance across different staff groups within the university.

**Sources of Data**

This study relied exclusively on primary sources of data, collecting information directly through questionnaire, surveys, interviews, and observations to ensure the originality and relevance of the data used for analysis.

**Data Collection Instrument**

Questionnaire was the main data collection instrument for this study. The choice of this instrument was necessitated by the extensive review of literature and the specific objectives of the study. Taylor, et al (2017), asserted that the use of questionnaire is a sensible way forward if factual information is needed from substantial number of people. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended questions. In view of the advantages and the need to gather more information, questionnaire was administered to staff to solicit their views concerning the effect of career development on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. In addition to the questionnaire, relevant data were also obtained through in-depth interview and focus group discussion to gain deeper insights and a more thorough understanding of individual experiences and viewpoints. The focus group discussion was guided by a detailed focus group discussion guide, which included a series of open-ended questions and topics designed to explore participants' perspectives in depth. This triad approach allowed for a more robust and nuanced understanding of the research topic.

**Validity of the Research Instrument**

The purpose of the validation was to remove any obscure or ambiguous questions in the instrument and to ensure that the instrument actually measures what it is expected to measure (that is, the subject of the study). Therefore, some copies of the structured questionnaire were given to some experts and specialists in scale measurement at the Faculties of Education and Management Sciences, Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka to obtain their opinion on face and content validity of the instrument. The opinion of these experts enabled the researcher to restructure and modified the instrument to suit the research objectives.

**Reliability of the Research Instrument**

Reliability test to check the consistency of the various groups of variables in the measuring instrument over time was conducted using the test-re-test procedure and the Pearson Correlation Coefficient. Forty copies of the questionnaire were administered on staff in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, who were not included in the sample and the result collated. After two weeks, the same instrument was again administered on the same group of respondents and the results collated. Thereafter the two results were subjected to Pearson Correlation Analysis to check for consistency. A Pearson Correlation Coefficient of 0.985 was obtained, thus indicating that the instrument was highly reliable.

**Table 3: Reliability Test (Correlation Result)**

		<b>Section A</b>	<b>Section B</b>
Section A	Pearson	1	0.985
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)		0.000
	N	40	40
Section B	Pearson	0.985	1
	Correlation		
	Sig. (2-tailed)	0.000	
	N	40	40

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

**Method of Data Analysis**

Data collected for this study was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequencies, percentages, mean, and standard deviation) and the inferential statistics such as factor analysis, t-test statistics and the linear regression model. The demographic profiles was processed using descriptive statistics. Objectives one to three was subjected to factor analysis for the purpose of data reduction in order to avoid having spurious result. Thereafter, the three objectives was processed using descriptive statistics (like percentages, mean and standard deviation) and the regression model of the Ordinary Least Square (OLS). T-test and F-test statistics was used to test the hypotheses of the study and the overall fitness of the model. All the analyses was done using SPSS version 23. Linear regression model of the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) approach was used to analyze the objectives in order to ascertain the influence and also determine the relationship between the independent variables and dependent variable in the conceptualized model of the study. The use of Ordinary Least Square (OLS), is informed by the fact that under normality assumption for  $\alpha_i$ , the Ordinary Least Square (OLS) estimator is normally distributed and is said to be best, unbiased linear estimator (Gujarati and Porter, 2008). Thus, the model of this study, is stated as follows:

Train, Ment, ProfDev

*The functional form of the model is*

$$EP = f(\text{TRAIN}, \text{MENT}, \text{PROFDEV}) \dots\dots\dots(1)$$

*The mathematical form of the model is*

$$EP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ TRAIN} + \beta_2 \text{ MENT} + \beta_3 \text{ PROFDEV} \dots\dots\dots(2)$$

*The econometric form of the model is*

$$EP = \beta_0 + \beta_1 \text{ TRAIN} + \beta_2 \text{ MENT} + \beta_3 \text{ PROFDEV} + \alpha_i \dots\dots\dots (3)$$

Where; EP = Employees Performance

TRAIN = Training

MENT =Mentoring

PROFDEV = Professional Development

$\beta_0$  = Intercept of the model

$\beta_1 - \beta_4$  = Parameters of the model

$\alpha_i$  = Stochastic error term.

**Apriori Expectations**

**Table 4: Economic a priori expectation**

Parameters	Variables		Expected Relationships	Expected Coefficients
	Regressand	Regressor		
$\beta_0$		Intercept	(+/-)	$0 < \beta_0 > 0$
$\beta_1$	EAC	TRAIN	+	$\beta_1 < 0$
$\beta_2$	EAC	MENT	+	$\beta_2 < 0$
$\beta_3$	EAC	PROFDEV	+	$B_3 < 0$

**Source:** Researcher's compilation (2024)

The economic apriori expectation refers to the theoretical expectations of each of the nature of relationship between the dependent variable and the independent variables. A positive '+' sign indicates that the relationship between the dependent and independent variables is direct and moves in the same direction i.e. increase or decrease together. On the other hand, a '-' shows that there is an indirect (inverse) relationship between the dependent and independent variables i.e. they move in opposite or different direction.

8. Data Presentation and Analysis

Demographic Profile of the Respondents

Table 5: Distribution of Respondents According to Gender

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative (%)
Male	199	57.2	57.2
Female	149	42.8	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>100</b>	

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

Table 5 shows that one hundred and ninety-nine of the respondents representing 57.2% respondents are males while one hundred and forty-nine of the respondents representing 42.8% of the respondents are females. This implies that both gender were duly represented in the study.

Table 6: Distribution of Respondents According to Age

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative (%)
18-30	88	25.3	25.3
31-40	104	29.9	55.2
41-50	113	32.5	87.7
51-60	24	6.9	94.6
61-70	19	5.4	100
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

As shown in table 6, eighty-eight respondents, representing 25.3% of the respondents are between the ages of 18-30. One hundred and four respondents, representing 29.9% of the respondents, are between the ages of 31-40. One hundred and thirteen respondents, representing 32.5% of the respondents, are between the ages of 41-50. Twenty-four respondents, representing 6.9% of the respondents are between the ages of 51-60, while nineteen respondents which account for 5.4% of the respondents are between the ages of 61-70. The table shows that majority of the respondents are between 41-50 years of age.

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents According to Educational Qualification

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative (%)
NCE/ND	11	3.2	3.2
HHD/B.Sc	48	13.8	17
M.Sc/PhD	289	83.0	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

From table 7, all the respondents had formal education. Eleven of the respondents representing 3.2% had NCE/National Diploma. Forty-eight respondents representing 13.8% had HND/BSc while two hundred and eighty-nine respondents representing 83% of the respondents had M.Sc/PhD. The table indicates that majority of the respondents has M.Sc/Ph.D as their educational qualification.

Table 8: Distribution of Respondents According to Years of working Experience

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative (%)
1-5	185	53.2	53.2
6-10	81	23.3	76.5
11-15	78	22.4	98.9
15-30	4	1.1	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source:** Field Survey, (2024)

With respect to working experience, table 4 reveals that one hundred and eighty-five respondents representing 53.2% of the respondents had 1-5years working experience. Eighty-one respondents representing 23.3% of the respondents had 6-10years. Seventy-eight respondents representing 22.4% of the respondents had 11-15years working experience while four respondents representing 1.1% of the respondents had 15-30years working experience. The implication of the table is that majority of the respondents has 1-5 years working experience.

**Table 9: Distribution of Respondents According to Marital Status**

Variable	Frequency	Percent (%)	Cumulative (%)
Married	296	85.1	85.1
Single	47	13.5	98.6
Widow/Widower	5	1.4	100.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>348</b>	<b>100.0</b>	

**Source:** Field Survey, (2024)

From table 9, Two hundred and ninety-six respondents representing 85.1% of the respondents are married. Forty-seven respondents representing 13.5% of the respondents are single, while five respondents representing 1.4% of the respondents are widow/widower. The table indicates that majority of the respondents are married.

**Factor Analysis**

The variables of the objectives were variously subjected to factor analysis using the Principal Component Analysis (PCA), with the aid of SPSS version 23. Prior to performing PCA, the suitability of the data for factor analysis was assessed using Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin measure of sampling adequacy and the rotation method is the varimax with Kaiser Normalization. The PCA was initially used to process the data because the researcher sought to reduce large amount of data to uncover the underlying principal factors that explain the topic under investigation.

**Table 10: Factor Analysis Results with Varimax Rotation on Effect of Training on Employee Performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka**

Comp extracted	IT training offered by the university has helped me become more proficient in utilizing modern tools and technologies for my work.	
Training 1	Leadership and management training programs at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have developed employees' abilities to take on leadership roles effectively.	0.904
Training 2	Workshops and seminars organized by Nnamdi Azikiwe University have significantly improved employees' knowledge in their respective fields.	0.912
Training 3	IT training offered by the university has helped me become more proficient in utilizing modern tools and technologies for my work.	0.931
Training 4	On-the-job training programs offered at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have enhanced employees' skills and job performance.	0.865
Training 5	Research and academic development training provided by the university has enhanced staff ability to conduct independent research and contribute to academic publications.	0.919
	<b>Cum % variance</b>	<b>81.7%</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, (2024)

Note that items eigen values of variables less than 0.4 were excluded.

Table 10 above shows the eigen values with respect to items regarding effect of training on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. Although one principal component emerged, the output shows that the appropriate label for the item is “IT training offered by the university has helped me become more proficient in utilizing modern tools and technologies for my work”. The import of this is that the main construct that influences employees performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka with respect to training, is that IT training offered by the university has helped employees become more proficient in utilizing modern tools and technologies for their work.

**Table 11: Factor Analysis Results with Varimax Rotation on Effect of Mentoring on Employee Performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka.**

Comp extracted	Formal mentoring programs at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have helped employees develop the necessary skills to excel in their roles.	
Mentoring 1	Formal mentoring programs at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have helped employees develop the necessary skills to excel in their roles.	.932
Mentoring 2	Peer mentoring within departments at Nnamdi Azikiwe University has improved the sharing of knowledge and expertise among employees.	.878
Mentoring 3	One-on-one mentoring relationships between senior and junior staff have positively impacted employees’ career development at Nnamdi Azikiwe University.	.903
Mentoring 4	Group mentoring sessions at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have enhanced teamwork and collaboration among employees.	.851
Mentoring 5	Virtual mentoring initiatives have provided flexible support and guidance to employees, improving their performance.	.922
<b>Cum % variance</b>		<b>78.6%</b>

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

Note that items eigen values of variables less than 0.4 were excluded.

Table 11 above shows the eigen values with respect to items regarding the effect of mentoring on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. One principal component emerged; the output shows that the appropriate label for the item is that “Formal mentoring programs at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have helped employees develop the necessary skills to excel in their roles.” This implies that the key variable influencing employees performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka with respect to mentoring is that formal mentoring programs at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have helped employees develop the necessary skills to excel in their roles.

**Table 12: Factor Analysis Results with Varimax Rotation on Effect of Professional Development on Employee Performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka**

Comp extracted	Continuous education and advanced degree programs offered to staff at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have enhanced employees' knowledge and expertise in their fields.	
Professional Dev. 1	Continuous education and advanced degree programs offered to staff at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have enhanced employees' knowledge and expertise in their fields.	0.946
Professional Dev. 2	Participation in professional workshops and conferences has significantly contributed to employees' professional growth at Nnamdi Azikiwe University.	0.901
Professional Dev. 3	The university’s sabbatical and exchange programs have provided staff with new insights and approaches, leading to professional growth.	0.912
Professional Dev. 4	The university's sponsorship or encouragement of professional certification programs has helped staff acquire new	0.886

	qualifications that enhance their expertise and job performance.	
Professional Dev. 5	The provision of collaborative research grants by the university has allowed staff to partner with colleagues and external researchers, significantly enhancing their performance.	0.944
<b>Cum % variance</b>		<b>82.6%</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, (2024)

Note that items eigen values of variables less than 0.4 were excluded.

Table 12 above shows the eigen values with respect to items regarding the effect of professional development on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. One principal component emerged; the output shows that the appropriate label for the item is “Continuous education and advanced degree programs offered to staff at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have enhanced employees' knowledge and expertise in their fields.” The import of this is that the key component extracted in the main variable is that continuous education and advanced degree programs offered to staff at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have enhanced their knowledge and expertise in their fields.

**Table 13: Factor Analysis Results with Varimax Rotation on Extent to which Employee Performance is influenced by Career Development**

Comp extracted	The university’s career development initiatives have positively impacted employees work efficiency and productivity.	
Emp Performance 1	Access to training and skill development programs has directly contributed to employees professional growth and performance.	0.920
Emp Performance 2	Career development support from the university has improved employees ability to handle more complex tasks and responsibilities.	0.879
Emp Performance 3	Career development workshops and seminars have equipped employees with new skills that positively impact their daily job activities.	0.960
Emp Performance 4	Participation in career development programs has improved employees ability to meet job expectations and responsibilities.	0.950
Emp Performance 5	The university’s career development initiatives have positively impacted employees work efficiency and productivity.	0.961
<b>Cum % variance</b>		<b>86.0%</b>

**Source:** Field Survey, 2024

Note that items eigen values of variables less than 0.4 were excluded.

Table 13 above shows the eigen values with respect to items regarding extent to which employees’ performance is influenced by career development. One principal component emerged; the output shows that the appropriate label for the item is the university’s career development initiatives have positively impacted employees work efficiency and productivity. The import of this is that the key component extracted in the main variable is that the university’s career development initiatives have positively impacted employees work efficiency and productivity.

*Descriptive Statistics Result*

**Table 14: Effect of Training on Employee Performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka**

Variables	N	Mean	Std Dev	Remark
IT training offered by the university has helped me become more proficient in utilizing modern tools and technologies for my work.	348	4.03	1.177	Accepted
Leadership and management training programs at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have developed employees' abilities to take on leadership roles effectively.	348	4.30	0.716	Accepted
Workshops and seminars organized by Nnamdi Azikiwe University have significantly improved employees' knowledge in their respective fields.	348	4.13	0.911	Accepted
On-the-job training programs offered at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have enhanced employees' skills and job performance.	348	4.51	0.551	Accepted
Research and academic development training provided by the university has enhanced staff ability to conduct independent research and contribute to academic publications.	348	4.38	0.701	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>4.27</b>	<b>0.811</b>	Accepted

**Source:** Field Survey, (2024)

All the variables met the theoretical mean threshold of 3.0 which is the established mean cut-off. Thus, the descriptive statistics suggests that training significantly affects employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka with a grand mean of 4.27.

**Table 15: Effect of Mentoring on Employee Performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka**

Variables	N	Mean	Std Dev	Remark
Formal mentoring programs at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have helped employees develop the necessary skills to excel in their roles.	348	4.46	0.721	Accepted
Peer mentoring within departments at Nnamdi Azikiwe University has improved the sharing of knowledge and expertise among employees.	348	3.48	1.382	Accepted
One-on-one mentoring relationships between senior and junior staff have positively impacted employees' career development at Nnamdi Azikiwe University.	348	3.65	1.172	Accepted
Group mentoring sessions at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have enhanced teamwork and collaboration among employees.	348	3.74	1.055	Accepted
Virtual mentoring initiatives have provided flexible support and guidance to employees, improving their performance.	348	3.52	1.066	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>3.77</b>	<b>1.079</b>	Accepted

**Source:** Field Survey, (2024)

As shown in table 15, all the variables in the mentoring phenomenon construct met the theoretical mean threshold of 3.0. We, therefore, conclude that mentoring has significant effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka with a grand mean of 3.77.

**Table 16: Effect of Professional Development on Employee Performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka**

Variables	N	Mean	Std Dev	Remark
Continuous education and advanced degree programs offered to staff at Nnamdi Azikiwe University have enhanced employees' knowledge and expertise in their fields.	348	4.40	0.867	Accepted
Participation in professional workshops and conferences has significantly contributed to employees' professional growth at Nnamdi Azikiwe University.	348	4.37	0.862	Accepted
The university's sabbatical and exchange programs have provided staff with new insights and approaches, leading to professional growth.	348	4.32	0.652	Accepted
The university's sponsorship or encouragement of professional certification programs has helped staff acquire new qualifications that enhance their expertise and job performance.	348	4.26	0.738	Accepted
The provision of collaborative research grants by the university has allowed staff to partner with colleagues and external researchers, significantly enhancing their performance.	348	4.34	0.738	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>4.34</b>	<b>0.771</b>	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, (2024).

As shown in table 16, all the variables meet the theoretical mean threshold of 3.0 which is the established mean cut-off. Thus, the descriptive statistics suggests that professional development has significant effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka with a grand mean of 4.34 and standard deviation of 0.771.

**Table 17: Extent to which Employee Performance is influenced by Career Development**

Variables	N	Mean	Std Dev	Remark
Access to training and skill development programs has directly contributed to employees professional growth and performance.	348	4.39	0.767	Accepted
Career development support from the university has improved employees ability to handle more complex tasks and responsibilities.	348	3.86	1.114	Accepted
Career development workshops and seminars have equipped employees with new skills that positively impact their daily job activities.	348	4.33	1.008	Accepted
Participation in career development programs has improved employees ability to meet job expectations and responsibilities.	348	4.24	1.117	Accepted
The university's career development initiatives have positively impacted employees work efficiency and productivity.	348	4.40	0.747	Accepted
<b>Grand Mean</b>		<b>4.24</b>	<b>0.951</b>	Accepted

Source: Field Survey, (2024).

From Table 17, it is observed that all the variables construct that examines the extent to which employee performance is influenced by career development, meets the theoretical mean threshold



of 3.0. Thus, the descriptive statistics suggests that employee performance is influenced by career development with a mean of 4.24 and standard deviation 0.951.

### *Regression Analysis Result*

**Table 18: Regression Result on Career Development and Employee Performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka**

Model	B	Std. error	T	Sig.
Constant (C)	0.075	0.091	28.579	0.000
<b>Training</b>	0.399	0.064	11.098	0.273
<b>Mentoring</b>	0.356	0.088	15.749	0.000
<b>Professional Development</b>	0.526	0.003	10.046	0.006
<b>R</b>	0.929			
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.863			
<b>Adj. R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.860			
<b>F-statistic</b>	331.601			0.000

Source: Field Survey, (2024)

### **Dependent Variable: Employee Performance**

To examine career development and employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, the weighted mean of the three independent variables were regressed on the dependent variable to enable us determine the nature of relationship between the dependent and independent variables, the overall fitness of the model using the F-statistics and probability value and the level of significance of the independent variables in influencing the dependent variables was determined using the t-test and probability value. The table above shows the regression result. It also shows the precision of the model which was analyzed using economic a priori criteria and statistical criteria.

## **10. Discussion of Findings**

### *Discussion Based On Economic A Priori Criteria*

Discussion using this criterion enables us to determine the nature of relationship between the dependent and independent variables. In this case, the sign and magnitude of each variable coefficient are evaluated against theoretical or economic a priori criteria/expectations. As showed in the table 4.12, it is observed that the regression line has a positive intercept as presented by the constant (c) = 0.075. This means that if all the variables are held constant or fixed (zero), employee performance increases by 7.5%. The result also conforms to the a priori expectation. This states that the intercept could be positive or negative, so it conforms to the theoretical expectation (Gujarati, 2008). Training has a positive relationship with employee performance. This implies that training and employee performance increase in the same direction. That is to say that training has a direct and positive relationship with employee performance. In other words, 1% increases in training will bring about 39.9% growths in employee performance. Mentoring has a direct and positive relationship with employee performance. In other words, 1% increase in mentoring will bring about 295.6% growths in employee performance. Professional development also have direct and positive relationship with employee performance. Therefore, 1% increase in professional development will bring about 52.6% increase in employee performance.

### *Discussion Based on Statistical Criteria*

In order to evaluate career development and employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, the analysis was also done based on statistical criteria by applying the coefficient of determination (R<sup>2</sup>) and the F-test. In general, the joint effect of the explanatory variables-independent variables-in the model account for 0.860 or 86.0% of the variations in employee performance. This implies that 86.0% of the variations in employee performance are

being accounted for or explained by the variations in training, mentoring and professional development while other independent variables not captured in the model explain just 14% of the variations in employee performance. All the three coefficients (training, mentoring and professional development) are significant determinant of employee performance.

**Test of Hypotheses**

The t-test is used to know the statistical significance of the individual parameters at 5% significance level. The result is showed on table 4.30 below.

**Table 19: Summary of T-Statistic**

<b>Variables</b>	<b>t-cal (t<sub>cal</sub>)</b>	<b>Sig.</b>	<b>Conclusion</b>
Constant (C)	0.075	0.000	Statistically Significant
<b>Training</b>	11.098	0.273	Statistically Significant
<b>Mentoring</b>	15.749	0.000	Statistically Significant
<b>Professional Development</b>	10.046	0.006	Statistically Significant
<b>F-statistic</b>	331.601	0.000	Statistically Significant

**Source:** Researchers computation, (2024)

We begin by bringing our working hypothesis to focus in considering the individual hypothesis. From table 15, the t-test result is interpreted below:

**Hypothesis One**

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Training has no effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.

**H<sub>a1</sub>:** Training has significant effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023

From table 4.15, the t-test value of training is significant. We, therefore, reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis which states that training has significant effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.

**Hypothesis Two**

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Mentoring has no effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.

**H<sub>a2</sub>:** Mentoring has significant effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.

From table 4.15, the t-test value of mentoring is significant at 0.000 level of significant. We, therefore, reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis that states that mentoring has significant effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.

**Hypothesis Three**

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Professional development has no effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.

**H<sub>a3</sub>:** Professional development has significant effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.

From table 4.15, the t-test value of professional development, is significant. We therefore reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis which state that professional development has significant effect employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.

## **Conclusion and Recommendations**

1. Training has significant positive effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.
2. Mentoring has significant positive effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.
3. Professional development has significant positive effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka 2013 – 2023.

In the final analysis, this study has examined career development and employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The study specifically determined the effect of training, mentoring and professional development on employee performance in Professional development has significant effect on employee performance in Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka. The study concludes that all the three coefficients (training, mentoring, and professional development) are significant determinants of employee performance.

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations are made:

1. Given the significant effect of training on employee performance, it is recommended that Nnamdi Azikiwe University, Awka, should invest in the continuous improvement and expansion of its training programs. The university should regularly assess the training needs of its staff and tailor the training content to address both current and emerging skills gaps. Additionally, training should be made accessible to all employees, with incentives for participation to encourage widespread engagement.
2. Strengthening Mentoring Systems: Since mentoring has been found to significantly affect employee performance, the university should formalize and expand its mentoring programs. This could include establishing structured mentorship initiatives where experienced staff members are paired with less experienced colleagues, fostering knowledge transfer, and career guidance. Regular evaluation and feedback mechanisms should be integrated to ensure the effectiveness of these mentoring relationships.
3. Promotion of Professional Development Opportunities: To leverage the positive effect of professional development on employee performance, the university should encourage and support its staff in pursuing professional development opportunities. This could involve providing financial support, study leave, or other incentives for employees to engage in workshops, conferences, advanced studies, or certifications that align with their career paths. Additionally, the university should create a culture that values continuous learning and professional growth, recognizing and rewarding staff who actively seek to enhance their professional skills.

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