Skills Training and Workers' Productivity in Cross River State, Nigeria

Agba, A. M. Ogaboh♦
University of Calabar

Eteng, Felix O. & Coker, F. G.
University of Calabar

Abstract

The paper seeks to examine the effect of skills training on workers' productivity in Cross River State, Nigeria. Survey method was adopted which employed closed-ended questionnaire. This was administered to 588 participants who were selected based on Taro Yamane's sample size determination formula. The data from respondents were analysed using simple percentage and Pearson product moment correlation coefficient technique (rxy). The study reveals that literacy and technical skills training significantly influenced workers' productivity. The paper calls for revival of career development culture among formal organisations through well-structured and strategic training programmes for workers in Cross River State. This finding therefore provides empirical evidence that would assist in redesigning training policies in Cross River State and elsewhere in Nigeria.

Keywords: Skills training, workers' productivity, Cross River State, Nigeria.

Introduction

Employees' productivity enhancement remains a near-daunting challenge in private, public, civil society, non-government, faith, and community based organisations in Nigeria (Ushie, Agba, Ingwe & Igbaji, 2015). Plethora of studies revealed a number of factors that could be responsible for dwindling performance of workers. These factors include – poor remuneration, incentives, work environment, social security, and pension schemes (Ikeji, Nwosu & Agba, 2011; Agba, Mboto & Agba, 2015). Others are corruption (Agba, Ikoh, Ushie & Agba, 2008), and general poor condition of service (Agba & Ushie, 2010; Ushie, Agba & Okorie, 2015, Ushie, Igbaji & Agba, 2015). These findings are quite revealing, however, enhancing productivity of workers in the country remains a high profile challenge to management across various organisations.

As many organisations continue to experience down times, it suggests that managements are not utilising research findings or that there are other unidentified/undermined factors that significantly affect workers' productivity. For instance, Erez and Judge (2001) observe that management attitude towards workers especially where they regard employees as liability rather than asset, affects employees' productivity. Similarly, Coker (2015) identified lack of laid down training policies as important cause of low productivity among workers in Nigeria.

The current divide among scholars, policy makers, management of formal organisations and students on the possible cause of productivity problem; and the apparent want of empirical

♦ Correspondence: Dr. Agba, A. M. Ogaboh Department of Sociology, University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria. University of Calabar, P.M.B. 1115, Calabar, Nigeria. Email-ogabohagbagroup@yahoo.com phone +123 08072727272

data on the correlates between skills training and employee productivity in Cross River State in particular and Nigeria in general informed this study. Thus, this paper is posed to bridge the knowledge gap and empirically investigate the effect of skills training on employees' productivity in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Literature review

Literacy skills and workers' productivity

Training generally is concrete attempt by management to assist an employee to obtain essential knowledge and skills necessary for the proficient implementation of assigned task (Nwachukwu, 2004; Kinicki & Kreitner, 2007). It is an enlightenment programme that enables an employee to function effectively and carryout his/her current job well (Dale, 1980; Mathis & Jackson, 1985; Hall & Goodale, 1986). It includes all conscious attempts by management to enhance the productivity levels of employees through well-organised knowledge and skills acquisition programmes (Umoh, 2001; Inyang & Akpama, 2002; Dessler, 2008; Monappa & Saiyadain, 2008).

Literacy skills training is an enlightenment programme that enhances the *metacognitive skills* of employees and support their achievement of other skills and the capacity to gain further knowledge and workers' productivity (Hanlan, Magee, Peacocke, Peacocoke & Slater, 2004; Hudson, 2007; Robbins & Judge, 2009). Large volume of literature revealed that, a great number of employees are deficient in essential literacy skills required at workplace. This deficiency accounts for huge productivity lost yearly in many countries including the United States of America (Robbins & Judge, 2009).

Although, there are plethora of studies on the relationship between literacy skills training and employees' productivity, Coker (2015) argue that there are still want of empirical evidence to support this claim in Cross River State, Nigeria. According to Coker, a good number of researches on the relationship between literacy skills training and workers' productivity is done within the context of military organisations. This suggests that the application or generalisation of such findings in conventional organisations may be limited and at times controversial.

Technical skills training and workers' productivity

Technical skills training are management direct effort aimed at assisting employees to gain essential knowledge that enables them to adapt effectively and efficiently to the dynamics of workplace technology and methodologies. Coker (2015) observes that technical skills training are becoming more fashionable in many organisations because of jobs alteration resulting from dynamics in technology and methodologies. Bohlander and Snell (2004) posit that technical skills training enables employees to complete fresh set of tasks and master extensive range of duties.

Technical skills training importantly elevate the performance of workers as well as boost the competence and innovativeness of work organisations (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart & Wright, 2003; Cole, 2004; Youndt, Subramanian & Snell, 2004; Hsu, Lin, Lawler & Wu, 2007). This suggests that the success of formal organisations whether private or public depends significantly on its technical skills training programmes (Shrader & Siegel, 2007; Selvarajan, Ramamoorthy, Flood, Guthrie, MacCurtain & Liu, 2007).

Investing on technical skills training of workers has larger positive business effects. It yields more benefit than investing in equipment and non-human resources (Ying Chu Ng, 2004; Seleim, Ashour & Bontis, 2007; April, 2010; Ivancevich, 2010). Technical skills training improve workers abilities to rejuvenate as well as enhance the outlook and efficiency of the organisation

(Salas & Cannon-Bowers, 2001; Salas & Kosarzycki, 2003; Chen & Klimoski, 2007). Similarly, Tharenou, Saks and Moore (2007) posit that technical skills training is the corner stone and the pillar upon which employees' productivity enhancement is built.

Method

The study used survey method. Survey was adopted because it enables the precise and impartial gathering of information on existing phenomena, such as establishing the relationship between skills training and employees' productivity. Closed-ended questionnaire was served on 588 respondents. Two sampling techniques were adopted in this study. Purposive sampling technique was used to select the two formal organisations for the study. Taro Yamane sample size determination technique was used to select 316 respondents from the first organisation (Pamol Nigeria Ltd) and 272 from the second organisation (Real Plantations Ltd).

Formula for Taro Yamane sample size determination technique is:

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

Where,

n = Sample size
N = Total population
e = Error limits (0.05 on the basis of 95% confidence level).

From the above Yamames sample size determination technique, the sample size for the first organisation (Pamol Nigeria Ltd) was calculated as:

$$n = \frac{1510}{1 + 1510\ (0.05)^2}$$
$$= \frac{1510}{1+1510 \text{ X } 0.0025}$$
$$= \frac{1510}{4.775}$$
$$n = 316$$

Sample for the second organization (Real Plantations Ltd):

$$n = \frac{850}{1 + 850\ (0.05)^2}$$
$$= \frac{850}{1+850 \text{ X } 0.0025}$$
$$= \frac{850}{3.125}$$
$$n = 272$$

Elucidated questionnaire was collected and coded into statistical package for social scientists (SPSS) version 18. Simple percentage, tables were used to present demographic information of respondents. The research hypotheses were formulated and tested using Pearson product moment correlation statistical technique at 0.05 level of significance.

Theoretical consideration

Three-fold approach to training and employee development theory was adopted in this study. The pioneering work on the theory was done by McGehee and Thayer in 1961. The theory suggested a three-fold approach to select the type of training and development programmes an employee should undergo to improve his/her productivity. According to McGehee and Thayer, the *three-fold approach* or *three-level of analyses* that determines the type of training and development in an establishment includes – organisational analysis, task analyses and personal analyses. Organisational analysis considers the ability of the establishment to carry out or support the training programme. It suggests that organisations should only support employees' skills training that they can sponsor. Training that are beyond the capacity of any organisation should be avoided.

Task analyses according to McGehee and Thayer (1961) examines employee's knowledge, abilities, skills and other personal characteristics required to carry out or perform a task in an organisation. It implies that for any training programme to be successful and kick-up workers' productivity/performance, management must carefully analyse employees' existing skills, ability, knowledge and other personal attributes. This would enable management to know where workers have deficiency and draw out good and adequate training programmes for them.

Person analyses focused on individual employee's personal needs, and specific or personal characteristics. Analysing the need of individual workers enables management to assist or help the *worker* improve his/her performance at workplace. It addresses specific training needs of individual worker. It allows management to identify the strength and weakness of individual worker and provide specific training programme(s) that will improve his/her performance in the agency or organisation.

The relevance of McGehee and Thayer's three-fold approach to workers training programme cannot be overemphasised. It amplifies the types of analyses that are needed to achieve success in training programmes as well as boost employees' productivity. It establishes the correlate between good training programmes and employees productivity. This study is therefore guided by the theoretical postulate of McGehee and Thayer.

Presentation and findings

The main variables of the study were identified, their mean and standard deviation calculated. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 18 was used to perform frequency counts, percentages, mean, standard deviation and Pearson product moment correlation analysis (PPMC).The variables of the study as identified include the following: Literacy skills, technical skills, and workers' productivity. The first two variables mentioned above are the independent variable while workers' productivity was identified as the dependent variable.

Table 1 revealed respondents' demographic information. The spread of respondents in respect to gender shows that majority 61.4 percent (N = 167) are males while only 38.6 percent (N = 105) are females for Real Plantations Limited; and 61.7 percent (N = 195) are males while only 38.3 percent (N = 121) are females for Pamol Nigeria Limited representing 61.6 percent (N = 362) males and 38.4 percent (N = 226) females total for the two organisations. This is very true about the population since those organisations are labour intensive and require physical strength of males.

The spread of respondents in terms of age shows that for Real plantations, majority 27.2 percent (N = 74) are between the ages of 46 – 55 years, 26.5 percent (N = 72) are between the ages of 36-45 years, 22 percent (N = 60) are between the ages of 26 – 35 years, 18.4 percent (N = 50) are 56 years and above while only 5.9 percent (N = 16) are 25 years and below. For Pamol, majority 27.5 percent (N = 87) are between the ages of 46 – 55 years, 23.4 percent (N = 74) are 56 years

and above, 20.3 percent (N = 64) are between the ages of 26 – 35 years, 19.9 percent (N = 63) are between the ages of 36-45 years while only 8.9 percent (N = 28) are 25 years and below. Total for the selected organisations shows that, 27.4 percent (N = 161) are between the ages of 46 – 55 years, 22.9 percent (N = 135) are between the ages of 36-45 years, 21.1 percent (N = 124) are between the ages of 26 – 35 years, and 56 years and above while only 7.5 percent (N = 44) are 25 years and below. All the age group are represented since the recruitment process into these organisations does not discriminate against age but interested in the skills.

The result in Table 1 also shows that, in Real Plantations, majority of the respondents 49.6 percent (N = 135) have gained 11-15 years of working experience in their present job, 19.5 percent (N = 53) have gained 16-20 years of experience, 15.8 percent (N = 43) have gained 6-10 years of experience, 15.1 percent (N = 41) have gained less than 6 years of working experience, there was no respondent who had gained more than 20 years of working experience. For Pamol, majority of the respondents 46.5 percent (N = 147) have gained 11-15 years of working experience in their present job, 18.7 percent (N = 59) have gained less than 6 years of working experience, 18.4 percent (N = 58) have gained 16-20 years of experience, 15.8 percent (N = 50) have gained 6-10 years of experience, while only 0.6 percent (N = 2) have gained 21 – 30 years working experience. Total for the selected organisations reflects that majority of the respondents 47.8 percent (N = 282) have gained 11-15 years of working experience in their present job, 18.8 percent (N = 111) have gained 16-20 years of experience, 17 percent (N = 100) have gained less than 6 years of working experience, 15.8 percent (N = 93) have gained 6-10 years of experience, and only 0.6 percent (N = 2) have gained 21 – 30 years working experience. The drop in the group with highest number of working experience could be explained by two factors, one possible factor could be attrition, and the second factor could be retention.

The compartmentalization of respondents in terms of highest educational level reveal that for Real Plantations, majority of the respondents 37.8 percent (N = 103) have completed secondary school education, 27.6 percent (N =75) have either B.Sc/HND/BA/B.Ed or its equivalent, 20.6 percent (N = 56) have only first school leaving certificate while only 14.0 percent (N = 38) have completed either a master's degree or its equivalent. For Pamol, majority of the respondents 40.5 percent (N = 128) also have completed secondary school education, 23.4 percent (N =74) have only first school leaving certificate, 23.1 percent (N = 73) have either B.Sc/HND/BA/B.Ed or its equivalent, while only 13.0 percent (N = 41) have completed either a master's degree or its equivalent. This represents total for the selected organisations as 39.3 percent (N = 231) of respondents have completed secondary school education, 25.2 percent (N =148) have either B.Sc/HND/BA/B.Ed or its equivalent, 22.1 percent (N = 130) have only first school leaving certificate while only 13.4 percent (N = 79) have completed either a master's degree or its equivalent.

As presented in table 1, there are seven compulsory department in each of the selected organisation, the spread of respondents in respect to department shows that for Real Plantations, 50.7 percent (N = 138) are in plantation department, 18.8 percent (N = 51) are in factory section, 9.2 percent (N = 25) are in engineering department, 6.10 percent (N = 36) are in finance department, 7.7 percent (N = 21) are in human resource department, 4.4 percent (N = 12) are in finance department, 3.7 percent (N = 10) are in the marketing department, while only 1.1 percent (N = 3) are in purchasing department. Also, 4.4 percent (N = 12) belong to department not enlisted in the questionnaire maybe messengers. For Pamol, 53.4 percent (N = 169) are in plantation department, 15.5 percent (N = 49) are in factory section, 8.5 percent (N = 27) are in human resource department, 8.2 percent (N = 26) are in engineering department, 4.4 percent (N = 14) are in finance

department, 1.9 percent (N = 6) are in purchasing department, 1.3 percent (N = 4) are in the marketing department, while 6.6 percent (N = 21) belong to department not enlisted in the questionnaire maybe messengers and security. Total gives 52.2 percent (N = 307) of respondents in plantation department, 17 percent (N = 100) in factory section, 8.7 percent (N = 51) in engineering department, 8.2 percent (N = 48) in human resource department, 4.4 percent (N = 26) in finance department, 2.4 percent (N = 14) in the marketing department, while only 1.5 percent (N = 9) are in purchasing department. Also, 4.4 percent (N = 12) belong to department not enlisted in the questionnaire.

The distribution of respondents in respect to position held in selected organisations as presented in table 1 shows only seven possible positions. In Real Plantations, majority of the respondents 35.7 percent (N = 97) are in the position of tappers, 25 percent (N = 68), are in the position of labours, 11 percent (N = 30) are just regular staff, 8.8 percent (N = 24) are in the position of supervisors, 7.7 percent (N = 21) are in the position of headsmen, 6.6 percent (N = 18) are in the position of managers, 1.8 percent (N = 5) are in position of Directors, while 3.3 percent (N = 9) respondents did not have their position reflected in the questionnaire. In Pamol, majority of the respondents 32.9 percent (N = 104) are in the position of tappers, 19.6 percent (N = 62) are in the position of labours, 19.3 percent (N = 61) are just regular staff, 9.2 percent (N = 29) are in the position of headsmen, 8.9 percent (N = 28) are in the position of supervisors, 7.9 percent (N = 25) are in the position of managers, 1.9 percent (N = 6) are in position of Directors, while only 0.3 percent (N =1) respondent did not reflect his position in the questionnaire. Total for the two organisations shows majority of the respondents 34.2 percent (N = 201) in the position of tappers, 22.1 percent (N = 130) in the position of labours, 15.5 percent (N = 91) regular staff, 8.8 percent (N = 52) in the position of supervisors, 8.5 percent (N = 50) in the position of headsmen, 7.3 percent (N = 43) in the position of managers, 1.9 percent (N = 11) in the position of Directors, while 1.7 percent (N =10) respondents did not have their position reflected in the questionnaire.

As presented in table 1, there are two types of training which respondents are eligible for: local (in- house) and external training. In Real Plantations 47.8 percent (N=130) of the respondents have accessed to only local (in-house) training, 22.4 percent (N=61) were exposed to external training while 29.8 percent (N=81) were exposed to both types of training. In Pamol 81 percent (N=256) of the respondents have accessed to only local (in-house) training, 8.2 percent (N=26) were exposed to external training while 10.7 percent (N=34) were exposed to both types of training. Total for the two organisations shows that 65.6 percent (N=386) of the respondents have accessed to only local (in-house) training, 14.8 percent (N=87) were exposed to external training while 19.5 percent (N=115) were exposed to both types of training.

Table 1: Demographic Information of Participants

	Gender		Total
	Male	**Female**	
Real Plantations LTD	(61.4)167	(38.6)105	(100)272

PAMOL	(61.7)195	(38.3)121			(100)316	
Total	(61.6)362	(38.4)226			(100)588	
	Age					**Total**
	25yrs and below	26-35yrs	36-45yrs	46-55yrs	56yrs and above	
Real Plantations LTD	(5.9)16	(22.0)60	(26.5)72	(27.2)74	(18.4)50	(100)272
PAMOL	(8.9)28	(20.3)64	(19.9)63	(27.5)87	(23.4)74	(100)316
Total	(7.5)44	(21.1)124	(22.9)135	(27.4)161	(21.1)124	(100)588
	Years of working experience					**Total**
	below 6yrs	6-10yrs	11-15yrs	16-20yrs	21-30yrs	
Real Plantations LTD	(15.1)41	(15.8)43	(49.6)135	(19.5)53	(0)0	(100)272
PAMOL	(18.7)59	(15.8)50	(46.5)147	(18.4)58	(0.6)2	(100)316
Total	(17.0)100	(15.8)93	(47.8)282	(18.8)111	(0.6)2	(100)588
	Highest Educational Qualification				**Total**	
	FSLC	WASC/ SSCE	B.Sc/HND /BA/B.Ed	MA/M.Sc/M BA/M.Ed & above		
Real Plantations LTD	(20.6)56	(37.8)103	(27.6)75	(14.0)38	(100)272	
PAMOL	(23.4)74	(40.5)128	(23.1)73	(13.0)41	(100)316	
Total	(22.1)130	(39.3)231	(25.2)148	(13.4)79	(100)588	

	Department								**Total**
	Human resource	**Marketing**	**Finance**	**Purchase**	**Engineering**	**Plantation**	**Factory**	**Other**	
Real Plantations LTD	(7.7)21	(3.7)10	(4.4)12	(1.1)3	(9.2)25	(50.7)138	(18.8)51	(4.4)12	(100)272
PAMOL	(8.5)27	(1.3)4	(4.4)14	(1.9)6	(8.2)26	(53.4)169	(15.5)49	(6.6)21	(100)316
Total	(8.2)48	(2.4)14	(4.4)26	(1.5)9	(8.7)51	(52.2)307	(17)100	(5.6)33	(100)588

	Position						**Total**
	Supervisor	**Staff**	**Headmen**	**Labour**	**Tapper**	**Others**	
Real Plantations LTD	(8.8)24	(11)30	(7.7)21	(25)68	(35.7)97	(3.3)9	(100)272
PAMOL	(8.9)28	(19.3)61	(9.2)29	(19.6)62	(32.9)104	(0.3)1	(100)316
Total	(8.8)52	(15.5)91	(8.5)50	(22.1)130	(34.2)201	(1.7)10	(100)588

	Local (in-house)	**External**	**Both**	**Total**
Real Plantations LTD	(47.8)130	(22.4)61	(29.8)81	(100)272
PAMOL	(81)256	(8.2)26	(10.7)34	(100)316
Total	(65)386	(14.8)87	(19.5)115	(100)588

Table 2 shows the responses of participants to literacy skills training, with four response options of either "strongly agree, agree, disagree or strongly disagree". As presented in table 2, majority of the respondents indicated that they either strongly agreed or agreed to 4 items in this sub-scale. "Items 1, (Our company runs in-service training programme), item 3 (In-service training programme are open to all employees), item 4 (Our management encourages employees to make use of available training opportunities) and "items 5" (Training does not prepare employees for promotions and higher responsibility). Respondents strongly disagreed or disagreed to only 1 item, "item 2" (In-service training programmes are exclusively for management staff in our organization).

Table 3 shows the responses of respondents to the sub-scale on technical skills training with four response options of either "strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree". As revealed in table 3, majority of the respondent indicated that they either strongly agreed or agreed to all the items in the sub-scale "Items 1, (Our organization is so much interested in training its work force), "item 2" (Our organization has a structured staff training programme), "item 3" (Workers are excited about training opportunity), "item 4" (Workers are indifferent about training programmes)" and "Items 5" (We have equipment designated specially for training use).

Table 4 shows the responses of respondents to the sub-scale on workers' productivity with four options of either "strongly agree, agree, disagree and strongly disagree". As revealed in table

4, majority of the respondent indicated that they either strongly agreed or agreed to all the items in this sub-scale. “item 1” (Knowledge acquired through training can lead to improved performance), “item 2” (On the job training programme plough back on employee’s performance), “item 3” (Training is a boot for performance) “item 4” (Productivity is return on investment) and “item 5” (Training motivates workers to produced better and earn promotions).

Table 2: Literacy Skills Training Sub-Scale

ITEM 1						**Total**
		Our company runs in-service training programme				
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of industry	Real Plantations Ltd	(1.8)5	(17.7)48	(66.5)181	(14)38	(100)272
	PAMOL	(2.8)9	(15.5)49	(64.9)205	(16.8)53	(100)316
Total		(2.3)14	(16.5)97	(65.7)386	(15.5)91	(100)588
ITEM 2						**Total**
		In-service training programmes are exclusively for management staff in our organization				
		SD	**D**	**A**	**SA**	
Name of industry	Real Plantations Ltd	(1.5)4	(14.7)40	(58.5)159	(25.3)69	(100)272
	PAMOL	(3.4)10	(15.8)50	(59.4)188	(21.4)68	(100)316
Total		(2.4)14	(15.3)90	(59.0)347	(23.3)137	(100)588
ITEM 3						**Total**
		In-service training programme are open to all employees				
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of industry	Real Plantations Ltd	(1.5)4	16.2)44	(62.1)169	(20.2)55	(100)272
	PAMOL	(3.5)11	(14.9)47	(60.4)191	(21.2)67	(100)316
Total		(2.6)15	(15.5)91	(61.2)360	(20.7)122	(100)588
ITEM 4						**Total**
		Our management encourages employees to make use of available training opportunities				
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of industry	Real Plantations Ltd	(1.5)4	(13.6)37	(61.0)166	(23.9)65	(100)272
	PAMOL	(4.4)14	(17.4)55	(54.7)173	(23.4)74	(100)316
Total		(3.1)18	(15.6)92	(57.6339	(23.6)139	(100)588
ITEM 5						**Total**
		Training does not prepare employees for promotions and higher responsibilities				
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of industry	Real Plantations Ltd	(1.5)4	(11.8)32	(64)174	(22.8)62	(100)272
	PAMOL	(2.5)8	(15.2)48	(60)189	(22.5)71	(100)316
Total		(2.0)12	(13.6)80	(61.7)363	(22.6)133	(100)588

**The number of people who responded to each item is as indicated while percentages are written in parenthesis.*

Table 3: Technical Skill Training

ITEM 1				**Total**
	Our organization is so much interested in training its workforce			
	SD	D	A	SA

Name of	Real Plantations Ltd	(0.7)2	(9.2)25	(66.5)181	(23.5)64	(100)272
industry	PAMOL	(3.5)11	(16.1)51	(57.3)181	(23.1)73	(100)316
Total		(2.2)13	(12.9)76	(61.6)362	(23.3)137	(100)588
ITEM 2		**Our organization has a structured staff training programme**				**Total**
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of	Real Plantations Ltd	(0.7))2	(11.0)30	(59.9)163	(28.4)77	(100)272
industry	PAMOL	(1.9)6	(13.9)44	(58.2)184	(25.9)82	(100)316
Total		(1.4)8	(12.6)74	(59.0)347	(27.0)159	(100)588
ITEM 3		**Workers are excited about training opportunity**				**Total**
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of	Real Plantations Ltd	(0.7)2	(12.9)35	(66.6)181	(19.8)54	(100)272
industry	PAMOL	(2.5)8	(13.4)42	(62.6)198	(21.5)68	(100)316
Total		(1.7)10	(13.1)77	(64.5)379	(20.7)122	(100)588
ITEM 4		**Workers are indifferent about training programmes**				**Total**
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of	Real Plantations Ltd	(0.7)2	(12.1)33	(63.2)172	(23.9)65	(100)272
industry	PAMOL	(3.2)10	(15.2)48	(62.0)196	(19.6)62	(100)316
Total		(2.0)12	(13.8)81	(62.6)368	(21.6)127	(100)588
ITEM 5		**We have equipment designated specially for training use**				**Total**
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of	Real Plantations Ltd	(2.2)6	(9.9)27	(66.5)181	(21.3)58	(100)272
industry	PAMOL	(2.8)9	(16.1)51	(56.3)178	(24.7)78	(100)316
Total		(2.6)15	(13.3)78	(61.0)359	(23.1)136	(100)588

**The number of people who responded to each item is as indicated while percentages are written in parenthesis.*

Table 4: Workers' Productivity Sub-scale

ITEM 1		**Knowledge acquired through training can lead to improved productivity**				**Total**
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of	Real Plantations Ltd	6	39	154	73	(100)272
industry	PAMOL	12	58	163	83	(100)316

Total		18	97	317	156	(100)588
ITEM 2		**On the job training programme plough back on employee's productivity**				**Total**
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of industry	Real Plantations Ltd	6	33	158	75	(100)272
	PAMOL	14	53	168	81	(100)316
Total		20	86	326	156	(100)588
ITEM 3		**Training is a boost for productivity**				**Total**
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of industry	Real Plantations Ltd	4	40	154	74	(100)272
	PAMOL	15	51	165	85	(100)316
Total		19	91	319	159	(100)588
ITEM 4		**Productivity is return on investment**				**Total**
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of industry	Real Plantations Ltd	8	52	145	67	(100)272
	PAMOL	18	55	178	65	(100)316
Total		26	107	323	132	(100)588
ITEM 5		**Training motivates workers to produced better and earn promotion**				**Total**
		SD	D	A	SA	
Name of industry	Real Plantations Ltd	11	38	138	85	(100)272
	PAMOL	9	63	166	78	(100)316
Total		20	101	304	163	(100)588

**The numbers of people who responded to each item are as indicated while percentages are written in parenthesis.*

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis one

In the null form, hypothesis one states that, there is no significant relationship between literacy skills and workers' productivity. In this hypothesis the independent variable is basic literacy skills while the dependent variable is employees' productivity. To test the hypothesis, Pearson product moment correlation analysis was used to analyse the data. The result is presented in Table 5. Pearson product moment correlation analysis was conducted to investigate the relationship between literacy skills and workers' productivity. As presented in Table 5 the calculated r-value of 0.376 is greater than the critical r-value of 0.138 with 588 degree of freedom, this result implies that the null hypothesis which states that, there is no significant relationship between basic literacy skills and workers' productivity is rejected. It therefore means that, there is a statistical significant relationship between the two variables.

Table 5: Pearson Product Moment Correlation of Literacy Skills and Workers productivity

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-value	Sig.
Literacy skills	588	16.86	2.80		
				0.376**	.003*
Worker performance	588	17.73	2.41		

*Significant at P <.05; critical r-value = 0.138; df = 588.

Hypothesis two

In the null form hypothesis two states that, technical skills training does not significantly affect workers' productivity in selected agro based industries, the independent variable in this hypothesis is technical skills training while the dependent variable is employees' productivity. To test this

hypothesis Pearson product moment correlation analysis was used to analyse the data. The result is presented in Table 6.

Pearson product moment correlation analysis was employed to investigate the relationship between technical skills training and employees' productivity. As presented in Table 6, the calculated r-value of 0.281** is greater than the critical r-value of 0.138 with 588 degree of freedom, this result therefore implies that the null hypothesis which states that, technical skills training does not significantly affect employees' productivity is rejected. It therefore means that, technical skill training will boost employees' productivity in Cross River State, Nigeria.

Table 6: Pearson product moment correlation of technical skills training and workers' productivity

Variables	N	Mean	SD	r-value	Sig.
Technical skills training	588	17.24	2.45		
				0.281**	.000
Workers productivity	588	17.73	2.41		

*significant at P < .05; critical r-value = 0.138; df = 588.

Discussion of findings

The result of the analyses of data revealed that there is statistical significant relationship between literacy skills and employees' productivity in Cross River State. This was the result of test of hypothesis one. In support of this finding, Hanlan, Magee, Peacocke, Slater (2004) and Hudson (2007) state that literacy skills are occasionally regarded to mean 'meta-cognitive skills', which support the achievement of further skills and the capacity to gain further knowledge. Also as cited by Robbins and Judge (2009), jobs in formal organisations are skilled jobs which require literacy skills to understand the techniques because widespread illiteracy results to inability to compete in a global economy in which case, it is the responsibility of organizations to expose their employees to literacy skills.

The result of the statistical analysis of hypothesis two shows that there is a significant relationship between technical skills training and employees' productivity, hence the rejection of the null hypothesis which states that technical skills training does not significantly affect employees' productivity in Cross River State, Nigeria. This implies that the adoption of technical skills training in formal organisations significantly leads to improved employees' productivity. Findings of Williams (2006), noted that an employee who has the opportunity to undergo training is equipped with the ability to perform better than his/her untrained counterpart, and that employee's productivity is key to organization's survival. This speaks of the relationship between technical skills training and employees' productivity. Agulanna and Awujo (2005) also in support of this finding, he opined that technical skills training brings improvement in the employee as an individual the team and the work community in general. It leads to increased productivity. It increases the range of workers' skills, leading to operational effectiveness and flexibility as well as builds a positive organisational culture geared towards customers' satisfaction.

In the same vein, Dale (1980), Hall and Goodale (1986), Inyang and Akpama (2002) and Kinicki and Williams (2006), have noted that technical skills training translates to improved employees' productivity which leads to positive results for an organization such as increased productivity and financial performance. They further noted that employees that have passed

through technical skills training were more beneficial to the organization and are described as the "cream of the crop" because of their contribution to the organization's prospect. Dessler (2008) stated that selection of qualified candidates during recruitment is not a guarantee for enhance productivity if training on technical skills is not carried out. In furtherance to this, Cole (2004); Youndt, Subramaniam, and Snell (2004); Hsu, Lin, Lawler and Wu (2007) agree that technical skills training brings about efficiency in performance, output, organizational competence and innovativeness. Shrader and Siegel (2007) emphasized the achievement of organizational success through technical skills training.

Similarly, Salas and Cannon-Bowers (2001); Salas and Kosarzycki (2003); Chen and Klimoski (2007); findings revealed a general corresponding association between technical skills training and organizational performance outcomes. According to Tharenou, Saks and Moore (2007), technical skills training would likely lead to workers' productivity as well as gains performance impact beyond the teams and firm performance. Zula and Chermack (2007), Monappa and Saiyadain (2008) also support these findings by the assertion that employee's awareness and proficiency towards a specific job increased through technical skills' training.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The objective of this paper was to examine the effect of skills training on workers' productivity in Cross River State, Nigeria. Specifically, the study examined the relationship between literacy skills, technical skills, and workers' productivity. Two research hypotheses were formulated to guide the study. Survey design was adopted for the study because of its relative importance in the collection of information directly from respondents with the use of questionnaire at relatively low cost and greater efficiency. Primary and secondary data were generated for this study through questionnaires and existing literatures on skills training and workers' productivity respectively. The sample of 588 respondents consisted of all the employees, both male and female (including managers and supervisors) of selected organizations in Cross River State, Nigeria. Pearson product moment correlation statistical analysis was used to analyse the data generated from the research instrument. The analysis revealed that: there is a significant relationship between skills training and workers' productivity; and that is, technical skills training significantly influenced workers' productivity.

These findings reveal that staff training is the nerve centre for effective and efficient workers' productivity in formal organizations. This is because it develops employee's skill and knowledge through instruction, demonstration and practice. We recommended that- management of formal organizations should be more committed to continuous skills training and retraining of staff to enhance their productivity. Again, skills training should be seen as a catalyst for improved organizational performance, thus, line managers should be made to be involved in the appraisal and the assessment of training needs of their subordinates. Well-designed and goal oriented training policy for workers should be put in place and judiciously followed by management in formal organizations.

References

Agba, A. M. O., & Ushie, E. M. (2010). Motivational incentives and staff turnover in the hospitality industry in Cross River State, Nigeria. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research*, 10(8), 18-28.

Agba, A. M. O., Ikoh, M. U., Ushie, E. M., & Agba, M. S. (2008). Bureaucratic corruption in Nigeria: The need for institutional reforms. *Journal of International Politics and Development Studies*, 4(1&2), 187-204. www.fapstudies.org.

Agba, A. M. O., Mboto, W. A. & Agba, M. S. (2013). Wages and other conditions: A critical assessment of factors in workers productivity in Nigeria. *International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences,* 3(7), 489-505.

Agulanna, E. C., & Awojo, A. C. (2005). *Human resource management practice: A graphic approach.* Owerri: Career Publishers.

April, B. A. (2010). *The impact of training on employee performance: A case study of HFC Bank (GHANA)* Ltd. 3(3), 15-17.

Bohlander, G. W., & Snell, S. A. (2004). *Managing Human Resources. 13th Ed.* Mason, Ohio: South-Western Publishing Co.

Chen, G., & Klimoski, R. J. (2007). Training and development of human resources at work: Is the state of our science strong? *Human Resource Management Review,* 17(2), 180–190.

Coker, F. G. (2015). Effect of training on employees' productivity in selected agro-based industries in Cross River State, Nigeria. Unpublished M.Sc. Thesis of the University of Calabar, Calabar, Nigeria.

Cole, G. A. (2004). *Management theory and practice (6th ed*.). Gasport, Great Britain: Thomson Learning.

Dale, B. (1980). Quality circles: The view from within. *Management Decision. 25(4), 5-9.*

Dessler, G. (2008). *Human resource management (11th ed.).* London: Tavistock Publications.

Erez, A., & Judge, T. A. (2001). Relationship of core self-evaluations to goal setting, motivation and performance. *Journal of Applied Psychology, 86(6), 1270-1279.*

Hall, D. T., & Goodale, J. G. (1986). *Human resource management: Strategy, design and implementation.* New York: McGraw-Hill.

Hanlan, C., Magee, D., Peacocke, C., Peacocke, T. & Slater, J. (2004). *The value added from elective learning in the army.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers Inc.

Hsu, I. C., Lin, C. Y. Y., Lawler, J. J., & Wu, S. H. (2007). Toward a model of organizational human capital development: Preliminary evidence from Taiwan. *Asia Pacific Business Review,* 13(2), 251-275.

Hudson, C. (2007). *Working mathematics for the 21st Century*? London: National Research and Development Centre (NRDC) for adult literacy and numeracy.

Ikeji, C. C., Nwosu, U. W., & Agba, A. M. O. (2011). Contributory pension scheme, workers commitment, retention and attitude towards retirement in the Nigerian Civil Service. *Global Journal of Management and Business Research,* 11(4), 51-59.

Inyang, B. J., & Akpama, A. M. (2002). *Personnel management practice in Nigeria.* Calabar: Merb Publishers.

Ivancevich, J. M. (2010). *Human resource management (8th ed*.). Boston: Irwin McGraw-Hill

Kinicki, A., & Kreitner R. (2007). *Organizational competitive in the market. Behaviour.* New York, NY: McGraw-Hill

Mathis, R. L., & Jackson, J. H. (1985). *Human resource management.* (4th ed). St. Paul: West Publishing Company.

McGehee, W., & Thayer, P. W. (1961). Training in business and industry. New York: John Wiley and Sons.

Monappa, A., & Saiyadain, M. (2008). *Personnel management (2nd ed.).* New Delhi: Tata McGraw-Hill.

Noe, R. A., Hollenbeck, J. R., Gerhart, B., & Wright, P. M. (2003). *Human resource management: Gaining a competitive advantage* (4th ed.). Boston: McGraw-Hill.

Nwachukwu, C. C. (2004). *Comparative management: An introduction.* Owerri: Springfield Publisher.

Robbins, S. P., & Judge, T. A. (2009). *Organizational behaviour (12th ed*.). New York, NY: Pearson Prentice Hall.

Salas, E., & Cannon-Bowers, J. A. (2001). The science of training: A decade of progress. *Annual Review of Psychology*, 52, 471–499.

Salas, E., & Kosarzycki, M. P. (2003). Why don't organizations pay attention to (and use) findings from the science of training? *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 14(4), 487–491.

Seleim, A., Ashour, A., & Bontis, N. (2007). Human capital and organizational performance: A study of Egyptian software companies. *Management Decision*. 45(4), 789-801.

Selvarajan, T. T., Ramamoorthy, N., Flood, P. C., Guthrie, J. P., MacCurtain, S., & Liu, W. (2007). The role of human capital philosophy in promoting firm innovativeness and performance: Test of a causal model. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 18(8), 1456-1470.

Shrader, R., & Siegel D. S. (2007). Assessing the relationship between human capital and firm performance: Evidence from technology-based new ventures. *Entrepreneurship Theory and Practice,* 893-908.

Tharenou, P., Saks, A., & Moore, C. (2007). A review and critique of research on training and organizational level outcomes. *Human Resource Management Review*, 77(3), 251–273.

Umoh, J. E. (2001). *Job performance and employee training and development (A case study of Shell Petroleum Development Company, Port Harcourt)*. Unpublished MBA Thesis, University of Uyo, Nigeria.

Ushie, E. M., Agba, A. M. O., & Okorie, C. (2015). Work environment and employees' commitment in Agro-based industries in Cross River State, *Nigeria. Global Journal of Human-Social Science: Sociology & Culture,* 15(6), 9-15.

Ushie, E. M., Agba, A. M. O., Ingwe, R. & Igbaji, P. M. (2015). Workers' productivity enhancement in Nigeria: Evidence on mentorship in a Nigerian university. *International Journal of Current Research*, 7(4), 15299-15307. April 2015. Online available at: http://www.journalcra.com.

Ushie, E. M., Igbaji, P. M., & Agba, A. M. O. (2015). Conflicts management in the administration of local government councils in cross river state, Nigeria. *Academic Research International*, Vol. 6(2), 428-436.

Williams, S. H. (2006). *Manpower development and training.* London: Routledge.

Ying Chu Ng., (2004), "Training determinants and productivity impact of training in China: A case of Shanghai. *Economics of Education Review*, 24, 275

Youndt, M. A., Subramaniam, M., & Snell, S. A. (2004). Intellectual capital profiles: An examination of investments and returns. *Journal of Management Studies*, *41*(2), 335–361.

Zula, K. J., & Chermack, T. J. (2007). Human capital planning: A review of literature and implications for human resource development. *Human Resource Development Review,* 6 (3), 245–262.