

# The Influence of Training Participation on Employee Performance and Employee Intention to Leave Manufacturing Firms in sub-Saharan Africa: A study of Ghana

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**Abstract:** *The purpose of this paper is to investigate how training participation influences both employee performance and employee intention to turnover in manufacturing firms in sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). Using a cross-sectional survey of a multinational manufacturing firm in Ghana through structural equation modelling and regression analysis, we tested two asymmetrical hypotheses of employee training participation leading to outcomes of employee performance and employee intention to turnover. Findings showed that employee performance is positively related to training participation in the manufacturing sector. Also, the findings demonstrated that training participation in the manufacturing sector is positively related to employee intention to leave their firms. These findings explain the effect of valence and human motivation to the needs of training participation and outcome. An investigation of training participation and employee performance with intention to leave or turnover are rarely assessed at the same time; specifically, training participation in manufacturing firms in SSA. Thus, manufacturing firms must be aware that different motivation and expectations of training participation are hunted for by employees as they are engaged in training organized by their respective firms.*

**Keywords:** Training participation, Employee performance, Intention to Leave, valence-instrumentality, Sub-Saharan Africa.

## Introduction

Different dimensions of training have been found to influence employees' reaction to their organization (Dermol and Čater, 2013; Ibrahim et al., 2017; Kampkotter and Marggraf, 2015). Arguably, when employees participate in organizational training, they contribute positively in terms of performance to their various organizations (Abugre and Adebola, 2015; Armstrong, 2009). Thus, it appears training participation keeps employees current on their job functions to learn new skills which can improve their satisfaction with the firm thereby enhancing their retention rate.

Employee training participation refers to workers involvement in a range of formalized programs which would enable them to perform on their current job efficiently (Evans and Davis, 2005). Additionally, it entails the systematic and planned instruction and development activities to promote learning among employees (Armstrong, 2009). As a result, training participation in firms can either be general or specific. Training participation is described as general when it offers employees with a broad horizon of knowledge for the general labour market. On the other hand, training participation is described as specific when firm specific training is offered to employees to improve their knowledge on specific skills and abilities pertaining to a unique industry (Benson, 2006). Consequently, the primary goal of any training program is to impart on employees a new set of knowledge, skills, ability and behavior, or attitude (Dessler, 2006; DeNisi and Griffin, 2005). Hence, the survival of any firm in this competitive world lies in its ability to train its human resource to be creative and innovative, and who will invariably enhance performance and increase the firm's competitive advantage (Chukwu, 2016; Dermol and Čater, 2013).

Though training participation is an active means that enables individual employees to make use of their capabilities and potentials, it is argued that as training increases the value of employees, it also increases the likelihood of their being pursued by rival companies (Green, 2000; Benson, Finegold and Mohrman, 2004). Thus, the authors suggest that companies that train their employees extensively may end up generating higher turnover of employees. The reason is that, the trained personnel leave the company for better paid jobs where they can use the skills they have acquired as a leverage. Therefore, one of the most commonly cited reasons why some organizations under invest in training is the risk of employee turnover (Brum, 2007). However, there is no consensus in the literature about the connection between turnover and investment in training that leads to performance (Nguyen et al., 2010). Turnover and performance at the individual and organizational levels are closely interrelated. For that reason, a firm should consider how it predicts a training and development program that can affect an employee's effort in terms of performance as well as the employee's intension to leave the organization. Similarly, a firm should anticipate how the cost of training employees can affect how much they (employees) contribute to the organization, and how often they leave for other firms in contrast with untrained employees (Fallon and Rice, 2015). This is particular so as most organizations in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) are confronted with the dilemmas of employee performance and employee turnover resulting from training participation. Despite these significant developments, our knowledge of how training participation impacts employees' performance and their intentions to leave has been overlooked by scholars. Hence, the significance of this work.

Accordingly, the present study has two aims. The first aim is to examine how training participation can influence the performance of trained workers. The second aim is to evaluate the contention that training participation would lead to employee intention to leave and consequently turnover. By these objectives, this work makes three major contribution to human resource development. First, this work aims to validate the theoretical link between training participation and employee performance leading to institutional performance. Thus, we argue that

manufacturing firms in Africa can be globally competitive by taking the responsibility of the growth prospects of their employees through training and career growth initiatives.

Second, we contribute to the valence-instrumentality expectancy approach to human resource development. By this, we suggest the significance of identifying, and strengthening the factors responsible for attracting and retaining talent in manufacturing firms in Africa. The key elements of employment brand within the manufacturing firms are the company's performance track record, its growth prospects, working culture and reputation in the public eye. Thus, the emotional orientations of employees toward outcomes could lead to satisfaction to stay or dissatisfaction to leave.

Third, we develop insight that advances theory in the training and development field of HRM. By this, we provide evidence on the controversy that training participation would not necessarily retain employees but would also empower employees to leave the firm which is useful for the science of training human resource development (HRD) in organizations in Africa.

### **Conceptual Model and Rationale for Training Participation**

According to Campbell (1989), there is a renewed interest in the influence of trainee motivation on training effectiveness. Therefore, researchers must endeavour to offer a greater attention to issues such as individual and situational influences on trainees' motivation and trainees' cognitions regarding the significance of organizational training and the desired outcomes. According to Vroom (1964), the valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory framework concerns the affective orientations of individuals toward outcomes, and this can be interpreted as the consequences or anticipated satisfaction of the individual to the outcome. For example, training participation as a HR process can influence an employee's affective orientation towards performance (Abugre and Adebola, 2015; Ibrahim et al., 2017; Úbeda-García et al., 2014) as well as turnover (Bambacas and Kulik, 2013; Kampkotter and Marggraf, 2015; Park et al., 2015). Consequently, several writers have suggested that a valence-instrumentality-expectancy approach should prove useful for studying training motivation (Williams et al., 1991; Mathieu et al., 1992). The reason is that employees are motivated to participate in training for various reasons. As some may be motivated to be trained as a result of enhancing their performance and thereby contributing to organizational outcome (Grober et al., 2002), others may be motivated to build their careers (Bloisi, 2007; Fallon and Rice, 2015) leading to their employability elsewhere (Cappelli, 1999; Cheng and Waldenberger, 2013; Fallon and Rice, 2015). Therefore, training participation is capable of enhancing worker performance in the workplace, and at the same time capable of activating worker intention to leave the organization for market reasons.

In the current study, we assess the influence of training participation on employee performance and turnover as individuals can either be motivated to increase their performance whilst working or to leave the organization for better conditions elsewhere. Employees behaviors and motives are determined by their individual motivational forces and actions which are a function of three distinct perceptions: valence, expectancy, and instrumentality (Vroom, 1964). First, valence explains the importance employees would attach to a particular reward, for example, the degree

of an anticipated reward after receiving or participating in training. Second, expectancy describes how employees' beliefs are shaped by the effort that leads to performance. For example, upon receiving training, their energy to perform increases either within or without. Lastly, instrumentality explains employees' belief that performance is related to rewards, for example, when employees perform in work organizations, they expect to receive some rewards. The absence of these rewards may lead to turnover while the acquisition of these rewards may lead to performance. Consequently, the valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory describes how individual motivational forces can direct employees' specific behavioral alternatives, in deciding behavior options for a course of action taken. Thus, the valence-instrumentality-expectancy approach which describes individual's affective orientation to outcomes is employed to understand the interlinking rationale of training participation as a causal variable to employee performance on one hand, and employee intention to turnover on the other.

## **Training Participation in Organizations**

Given the rising competitive nature of manufacturing firms in developing economies, and the increasing demand for skills-based training and employee competencies, training participation and skills-based training programs have become significant for firms in Africa (Abugre and Adebola, 2015). However, many firms face the challenge of how best to encourage participation in training and learning activities, given their apparent benefits to their employees' work performance and long-term career advancement (Bednall et al., 2014), and which may also result in their intention to leave for greener pastures elsewhere (Bambacas and Kulik, 2013). The concept of training participation has been described and applied variously by numerous researchers and scholars (Armstrong, 2009; Khanfar, 2011; Rahman and Nas, 2013; Rao, 2011). For example, Evans and Davis (2005) argue that training participation can be seen as the involvement of employees in the extensiveness of formalized programs to develop knowledge, skills and abilities. Similarly, Dessler (2006) views training participation as a process of equipping workers with the necessary skills, knowledge, and capabilities required for proper performance of tasks or achievement of corporate goals. Armstrong (2009) added that training participation is the process of empowering workers with skills, knowledge, and abilities to build firm or organizational capabilities and to enhance corporate effectiveness and efficiency. It is regarded as the deliberate efforts that companies make to engage their workers to learn the needed job-related knowledge, skills and behaviors (DeNisi and Griffin, 2005). Accordingly, Khanfar (2011) is of the view that training participation and development of employees is a significant way of enabling individual workers to utilize their skills and abilities acquired to improve performance in organizations. Generally, two main types of training participation constitute training in firms: employees' participation in general organizational training, and employees' participation in organizational / firm-specific training.

## **General and Specific Training in Organizations**

In his seminal commentary on investment in human capital, Becker (1962) made a distinction between employees' participation in general training and employees' participation in specific training as products of organizational human capital investment. In fact, Becker (1962) defined

general training as training or organizational human capital investment that increases a worker's productivity for not only the firm that provided the training, but for other employers too. Similarly, he defined specific training as a human capital investment that increases productivity only for the employer who provided the training. In later years, Becker (1993) offered further explanation that general organizational training is a training that is offered to employees with the aim of raising their ability to improve their overall performance not only in their current organizations, but also for their future use with other organizations in the general labor market. Examples of such training participation include apprenticeship training, computer training and college-based courses. Therefore, an organization that offers general training need to pay remunerations that are “commensurate with an employee’s new level of productivity and skills acquired or risk losing the employee to other organizations” as it potentially increases their turnover intentions (Brum, 2007, p. 5). On the other hand, firm-specific or simply specific organizational training is training that seeks to improve the ability, skills and knowledge of employees in order to enhance their performance only in the present organization that sponsors the training for them (Benson, 2006). Other empirical works from the human capital and training literature have endeavoured to proxy for general versus specific training by linking them to the different effects of on-the-job versus off-the-job training (Lynch 1991), or by linking them to the different effects of firm versus college/classroom training (Loewenstein and Spletzer 1997). Accordingly, Lynch (1991) argued that employees who participate in on-the-job training are less likely to quit their current organization, while employees who participate in off-the-job training are more likely to leave their current employer. Likewise, Loewenstein and Spletzer (1997) claimed that employees who participate in company training are less likely to leave their job, whereas employees who participate in college training have the mobility patterns comparable to those with no training. Consequently, Loewenstein and Spletzer (1999) stressed that on-the-job and company training participation offer a more specific training than off-the-job and college training participation which give a more general training that motivate job mobility.

Whether general or specific training, a major challenge of employee training participation research is to understand the factors that increase the prospects of sustained performance at the workplace. Thus, the focus of this study is to investigate training participation of employees and how this training participation affects employees’ performance and, also their intentions to leave.

## **Training Participation and Employee Performance**

The issue of training participation and performance has gained significant research attention among scholars (Abugre and Adebola, 2015; Ibrahim et al., 2017; Úbeda-García et al., 2014). In a qualitative research which focuses on mechanics in Northern India, Barber (2004) found that on-the-job training leads to more innovation and tacit skills of workers. Equally, Shah et al. (2014) assessed the influence of on-the-job training on employee performance in microfinance banks at Khairpur-India. In their findings, they concluded that training is vital for enhancing the effectiveness of workers. Additionally, while the preceding studies concentrated on training methodology (Ibrahim et al., 2017), training methods or strategies (Abbas and Yaqoob, 2009), some scholars have examined how training quality (Dermol and Čater, 2013), training policy

(Úbeda-García et al., 2014) and employee training participation and development planning (Wise, 2014) can impact performance.

These prior studies suggest that there are positive outcomes of training participation of employees. They suggest that training outcomes can make training beneficiaries perform more efficiently and effectively. It is, however, important to recognise that while training and employee performance have been examined in various sectors, manufacturing sector employees have not received significant attention as evident in the above reviews or studies, particularly in Ghana. In line with the above, we hypothesized that:

**H1:** *Training participation positively predicts employee performance in manufacturing firms in sub-Saharan Africa.*

## **Training Participation and Employee Intention to Leave**

Organizational training participation is believed to be a major determinant of employees' intention to leave. This is because; training can motivate employees' intention to leave their organizations for better jobs elsewhere or motivate them to stay and perform their duties. As beneficiaries of training may be motivated to reciprocate their organizations' investment by increasing their work output, some employees may tend to increase their intentions to leave and work for perceived better or well-endowed firms due to increase in new skills. Consequently, various writers (Ghosh and Reio, 2013; Kampkotter and Marggraf, 2015; Kraimer et al., 2011; Rahman and Nas, 2013) have examined the effect training participation can have on employees' intention to leave or stay. Some found that training participation significantly reduces employees' intention to leave (Newman et al., 2011; Park et al., 2015; Ghosh and Reio, 2013) while others (Bambacas and Kulik, 2013; Cheng and Waldenberger, 2013; Fallon and Rice, 2015) indicated that training participation encourages employees to leave their present organizations for better organizations.

Hence, it is obvious that training participation can play significant roles in reducing as well as increasing turnover intentions among workers. For training participation to engender employee intention to leave, it is argued that general employee training produces experiences as well as expertise that are equally important or relevant to other companies. This therefore leads to increased intention to leave among trained workers. This is because these trained workers can become easy target for companies to poach (Cheng and Waldenberger, 2013; Green et al., 2000; Sieben, 2007; Benson et al, 2004). Consistent with this finding, Pedler et al. (1991) and Senge (1990) argued that companies that organize effective training for their workers create more turnover intention among their workers. They explain that trained workers quit their companies or institutions for better paid jobs. They also leave to work for firms where they will be allowed to utilize the skills or the knowledge they have acquired. Pedler et al. (1991) and Senge (1990) further maintained that training participation and development programs improve the value of the workers. It also enhances their career growth, and this increases the probability of their being "poached" by competitor firms.

Moreover, training and development of employees help them to become accustomed to the current methods of doing a particular work resulting from the new expertise, knowledge and abilities gained from the training. This allows them to become more employable in other organizations (Fallon and Rice, 2015; Pedler et al., 1991; Senge, 1990). In line with this, Smith (2010) supported Seibert and Kraimer (2001) and suggest some reasons why training may generate more turnover intention among employees. According to them, people may take part in training with the motive of getting opportunities to network with colleagues and significant others. These new contacts may in turn open doors for job transitions. Similarly, training participation can engender intention to leave among employees when they feel that career opportunities in their institution are poorly matched with their career aspirations (Benson et al., 2004; Kraimer et al., 2011). This consequently can motivate them to trade off their organizations' opportunities for those in rival organizations.

The foregoing discussions clearly demonstrates that in spite of the widely held notion that firms can promote retention of their workers through training participation initiatives, training has also a dark side, that is; it can facilitate the development of workers' intention to leave the firms that sponsored or invested in their trainings and development. Consequently, we hypothesize that:

**H2:** *Training participation positively predicts employees' intention to leave in manufacturing firms in sub-Saharan Africa.*

## **Research Methodology and Design**

This study sought to investigate the effect of training participation on employees' performance and, their turnover intentions in a large manufacturing company in Ghana. To achieve the purpose of this research, we adopted a cross-sectional survey design in the form of a quantitative methodology. The population of interest for this study is defined as all employees of the automotive manufacturing firm under study who have benefited or participated in previous training programmes in the current organization. The choice of the automotive industry is because the automotive industry is currently being affected by constant technological advancement which have heightened industry competition globally. Consequently, it is expected that most of the stakeholders in the industry will invest in their employees by way of training them regularly to build their capacity in new technologies in order to meet the changing needs of customers. Similarly, there appear to be a large number of workers in the manufacturing sector fleeing to developed economies for greener pastures after some years of training. Hence, our motivation to investigate a firm in the manufacturing industry using the current firm.

### ***Sampling Procedure and Data collection***

We initially obtained ethics approval to conduct this study. After obtaining the ethics approval, we contacted the HR Manager of the manufacturing firm based in Accra -the capital city of Ghana to explain the nature of the study. After a face-to-face meeting with the HR manager, he

gave approval to conduct the study. We then approached the workers in the firm to inform them about our research having gotten permission and support from the HR manager.

The company has a total of 125 employees but to be included in the study, an employee should have been a full-time worker and, also participated in at least a training session after joining the firm. Accordingly, the most conveniently available employee who is a full-time worker and who has participated in at least a training programme before was sampled for this study. Hence, one hundred (100) survey questionnaires in hard copies were personally distributed to the willing participants. Contacts of volunteered participants were taken by the researchers to be able to trace them for the completed questionnaires if they did not want to personally drop or hand them over to the HR manager who promised to collect them for us. We encouraged voluntary participation of the respondents, and ensured that the respondents' rights to be informed, right to privacy and right to choose are respected by maintaining confidentiality of all the information they gave to aid this study. Accordingly, all ethical protocols regarding the data collection were observed and utilized.

The entire process of data collection lasted for about one and half months when the final batch of completed questionnaires was collected. Thus, a simple random procedure to obtain as many respondents as possible yielded a total of 89 respondents. The demographic characteristics of the research participants are presented in Table 1 below.

**Table 1. Demographic Characteristics of the Research Participants**

<b>Demographic Characteristics</b>		<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
<b>Gender:</b>	Male	52	58.43
	Female	37	41.57
<b>Age:</b>	20 years or less	5	5.62
	21 -40 years	66	74.16
	41 – 60 years	18	20.22
<b>Education:</b>	Senior High/Secondary	41	46.07
	Diploma	27	30.34
	Higher National Diploma	8	8.98
	Bachelor Degree	11	12.36
	Master Degree	2	2.25
<b>Organizational Tenure:</b>	1 -5 years	15	16.85
	6 – 10 years	22	24.72
	11 – 15 years	25	28.09
	16 years and more	27	30.34

Sample size = 89

### ***Data Collection Instrument and Measurement***

Data for this study was collected using a previously validated scale by other researchers. All items were measured using 5-point Likert scales. The instrument had four sections. The first part of the instrument dealt with participants' demographic details such as gender, age, level of education, and organizational tenure which were used as control variables.

The second part of the instrument dealt with employee performance using Podsakoff and MacKenzie's (1989) eight-item scale for job performance. These items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. It has a reliability value of 0.85. Sample items include *I feel successful on my job when I perform better than my colleagues; I accomplish something where others failed.*

The third part of the instrument measured training participation. The 14-item scale was adopted from Al-Alawiyat (2010). The items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. Sample items included: *Participating in training can give me new opportunities; Overall, the training I participated in meets my needs; my department provides training opportunities to meet the changing needs of the workplace.* Reliability value is 0.80.

The final part which constituted the Intention to leave was measured with three item-scale developed by Babin and Boles (1998). The items were measured on a 5-point Likert scale with 1=strongly disagree to 5=strongly agree. A sample item from this scale is: *It is highly possible that I will be looking for a new job.* Reliability value is 0.85.

### ***Data Analysis and Results***

The data was analysed using both confirmatory factor analysis (CFA) through structural equation modelling (SEM) and hierarchical regression analysis. First, the CFA is used to ascertain the validity and reliability of the measurement model and to determine each of the item construct fitness. Thus Table 2 shows all the items that were loaded successfully and their reliability scores (Cronbach alpha ( $\alpha$ ) coefficient, composite reliability (CR) scores, and average variance extracted (AVE) scores). Even though one of the three constructs had an AVE value below 0.50 the minimum threshold suggested by Fornell and Larcker (1981), in totality, the values support convergent validity of the constructs. Additionally, we adopted a discriminant validity analysis (see Table 3) to offset some of the moderately low values of the CFA indices by strengthening the validity and reliability of the construct measures.

Second, the use of hierarchical regression is to test the study hypotheses by assisting the researchers to determine the effect of training participation on employee performance and intention to leave while controlling for gender and organizational tenure in the regression model, since regression analysis is good at predicting the relationship between variables. The analysis was done with the aid of AMOS and SPSS software version 22.0.

**Control variables**

We used organizational tenure and gender of employees to control for employee training participation and their performance or intentions to leave. The two control variables were measured by duration (in years).

The results indicated that *both organizational tenure and gender of employees are not associated with employee performance* ( $\beta = 0.066, p < 0.01$ ) and *Intentions to leave* ( $\beta = 0.179, p < 0.01$ ). Thus, the results indicate that neither tenure nor gender of workers are likely to impact training participation on employee performance and their intentions to leave, all things being equal.

**Table 2. Validity & Reliability of Confirmatory Factor Analysis with Cronbach’s  $\alpha$  for Study Measures**

Variables	Loading	T- value
<b>Employee Performance (<math>\alpha = 0.85, CR = 0.50, AVE = 0.50</math>)</b>		
EP4: I feel successful on my job when I perform better	0.464	
EP3: I accomplish something where others failed	0.689	1.999*
<b>Training Participation (<math>\alpha = 0.80, CR = 0.69, AVE = 0.50</math>)</b>		
TP8: Role playing is key to training in this department	0.743	
TP7: Training participation gives me new opportunities.	0.835*	-2.723
TP5: Overall, the training I participate in meets my needs.	0.522	-1.866
TP3: My department provides training opportunities to meet the changing needs of the workplace.	0.073	0.315
<b>Intention to Leave (<math>\alpha = 0.85, CR = 0.32, AVE = 0.29</math>)</b>		
IL2: It is highly possible I’ll be looking for a new Job	0.755	
IL1: I frequently think of quitting this Job	0.563	0.820

**Note:** EP = Employee Performance, TP = Training Participation, IL = Intention to Leave,  $\alpha$  = Cronbach Alpha, CR = Composite Reliability and AVE = Average Variance Explained.

**Discriminant Validity Analysis**

It can be noted that AVE values are able to assess discriminant validity by simply comparing the square root of the AVE with the squared correlation between the construct items. Discriminant validity exists when the square root of AVE is greater than the squared construct correlations (Hair, Black, Babin, Anderson, and Tatham, 2010; Fornell and Larcker, 1981). As shown in Table 3, all the constructs in this study have demonstrated a good discriminant validity (bold figures). Below the figures are the goodness-of-fit indices for the measurement model or construct validity. The overall fitness of the measurement model (see figures italicized in Table 3) is validated by meeting the various threshold indices (Hu and Bentler, 1999).

**Table 3. Fornell-Lacker Discriminant Validity Analysis & Fit Indices for the Measures**

Variables	IL	OP	EP
IL	<b>0.54</b>		
TP	0.37	<b>0.62</b>	
EP	0.08	0.52	<b>0.56</b>

Goodness-of-fit Statistics of Measurement Model: CMIN/Df = 0.875; GFI = 0.970; PCLOSE = 0.741; CFI = 1.000; SRMR = 0.63; RMSEA = 0.000.

**Note:** GFI= Goodness of Fit Index; CFI= Comparative Fit Index; SRMR= Standard Root Mean Residual; RMSEA=Root Mean Square Error of Approximation.

**Table 4. Correlation of Training, Employee Performance and Intention to Leave**

Measures	Mean	SD	1.	2.	3.	4	5
1. Employee Performance	3.72	0.51	1				
2. Intention to Leave	4.16	0.73	-0.11	1			
3. Training Participation	4.07	0.57	0.48**	0.40**	1		
4. Organizational Tenure	7.07	3.80	0.08	-0.05	0.08	1	
5. Gender	-	-	0.18	-0.00	0.28**	0.08	1

\*\* p< .01

Equally, Table 4 shows the correlation matrix of employee performance, intention to leave, gender, organizational tenure and training participation. The internal correlations between the independent variables demonstrate low correlation figures signifying the absence of multicollinearity. Thus, our data shows a strong fit to test our study hypotheses.

**Table 5. Hierarchical Regression Results Predicting Employee Performance and Intention to Leave from Training Participation**

Measures	<u>Employee Performance</u>		<u>Intention to Leave</u>	
	Model (1)	Model (2)	Model (3)	Model (4)
Gender	0.179 (1.684)	0.052 (0.523)	0.003 (0.030)	-0.117 (-1.142)
Organizational Tenure	0.066 (0.626)	0.038 (0.386)	-0.048 (-0.447)	-0.075 (-0.763)
Training Participation	-	0.464*** (4.690)	-	0.439*** (4.285)
R <sup>2</sup>	0.038	0.236	0.002	0.180
ΔR <sup>2</sup>	-	0.198	-	0.177
F-test	1.711	8.751***	0.100	6.202***

\*\*\*p<0.01      Sample size (n) = 89      t- values are in parenthesis

Table 5 shows the results of the regression analysis. The first hypothesis sought to ascertain the impact of training participation on employee performance. The hierarchical regressions in Model (1) and Model (2) were performed to test this hypothesis. The results as shown in Model (2) demonstrates that training participation has a significant positive effect on employee performance ( $\beta = 0.464$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). This means that the more employees received training the more their performance will improve. Also, the coefficient of determination (r-squared) showed that training participation accounts for 23.6% (i.e.  $R^2 = 0.236$ ) variations in employee performance. In addition, the overall model is significant [ $F = 8.751$ ;  $df1 = 3$ ,  $df2 = 85$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ].

The second hypothesis sought to determine the effect of training participation on intention to leave among workers. The hierarchical regression results in Model (3) and Model (4) were performed to test the second hypothesis. As shown in Model (4), training participation positively and significantly predict intention to leave ( $\beta = 0.439$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ). These results suggest that, the more workers are trained, the higher they nature their intentions to leave. Furthermore, the coefficient of determination (r-squared) implies that training participation contributes 18.0% (i.e.  $R^2 = 0.180$ ) to intention to leave among workers. More so, the overall model is significant [ $F = 6.202$ ;  $df1 = 3$ ,  $df2 = 85$ ;  $p < 0.001$ ].

## **Discussions of Findings**

This study investigated the effect of training participation on employees' performance and their intention to leave. Analysis from the results reveal how training participation impacts on both employee performance and their intention to leave. This section discusses the meaning of these results in terms of our research hypotheses in relations to employees' performance and turnover implications of the study.

### ***Does Training Participation Predict Employee Performance?***

The first hypothesis ( $H_1$ ) stated that, the effect of training participation will positively predict employee performance in manufacturing firms in Africa. Employee performance results from acquisition of both soft and hard skills essential for organizational performance, and it is an indicator of training participation of workers. Thus, our hypothesis was accepted suggesting that when employees participate in organizational training, their performance is enhanced resulting from the improved skills they acquired from the training. This means that training is a reactive factor that influences employees' ability to execute their organizational tasks positively. By this, both employees and the firm would benefit from the organized training which can be specific or general. Whilst employees would gain skills and new ways of doing a job task and thereby increasing their technical and operational skills, firms would benefit from the spill-over skills acquired by employees through the training programmes. Hence, the finding of this study is consistent with those of Úbeda-García et al. (2014) and Abugre and Adebola (2015). This means training participation, be it specific or general training reinforces the effectiveness of employees and triggers organizational or firm performance.

### ***Does Training Participation Predict Turnover Intentions of Employees?***

The second hypothesis (H<sub>2</sub>) stated that training participation positively predicted employee's intention to leave. Individual intentions are linked to their behavioral intentions which are motivated by their affective orientations towards an outcome – known as the valence-instrumentality expectation (Vroom, 1964). Thus, training participation is associated with the valence of training and linked to trainees' motivation to leave the organization. Accordingly, our H<sub>2</sub> positively predicted employee turnover intentions meaning that, when employees receive organized training, they are most likely to leave their organizations for other firms. This finding validates those of Fallon and Rice (2015), Pedler et al. (1991) and Senge (1990) who argued that training participation and development programmes improve the value of the workers, and enhance their career growth elsewhere and therefore, they may be motivated to move there. This explains further that when workers believe that they have improved their knowledge, skills and abilities through personal development and training, they tend to look elsewhere for better condition of work and thereby, increasing their intention to leave their firms.

The implication or importance of this finding is attributed to how employees perceive or interpret external outcomes as better than their present conditions, and therefore, the possibility to leave for the external attractions. This can be likened to the common phenomenon of the impact of brain drain in the extractive and automobile industries in Africa where contemporary skills of workers are very much desired by competitive firms abroad. Thus, it is common to see engineering workers in manufacturing companies jumping to analogous firms after acquiring certain levels of experience. This is in a daily occurrence in many developing countries especially those in the sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) region. Accordingly, most SSA economies are bleeding from experienced skills leaving not only in the manufacturing sectors, but higher educational institutions and the health sectors as well. This canker normally referred to as 'brain drain' is seriously affecting most African countries due to low income levels and other external motivational attractions. This problem renders most SSA institutions ill-endowed as these firms produce skillful employees only to export them involuntarily to more competitive firms rather than the expectations to stay and help to improve their own companies.

### **Theoretical and Managerial Contributions of Training participation in Manufacturing Firms**

This work is premised on training participation of employees and its effects on performance and turnover intentions of employees in manufacturing firms. A key question is the extent to which the findings make unique contributions, and thereby can be of broader relevance across manufacturing firms in developing countries. Theoretically, the results provide evidence of training participation on positive employee performance. By this, this work suggest that planned organizational training for employees would develop employee career growth and nurture their talent which would consequently yield superior and faster organizational growth. The implication is that individual effort to performance is motivated by the training received in the organization. This perspective focuses on talent development approaches which are measured as significant high-performance work practices that are associated with greater organizational performance (Garavan et al., 2012; Abugre and Nasere (2020) resulting from the training.

Therefore, this study extends the literature on employee performance through training participation of employee skills development with a focus on understudied manufacturing sector in SSA. A talented workforce through planned training and acquisition of skills is critical for manufacturing companies, and more so for those in SSA that are in the process of making large capital investments in plant expansion.

The second theoretical contribution is that, this work examined training participation of employee on their intention to leave. Although literature on training suggest that when employees receive training from their organizations, they (employees) would normally stay as they feel an urge for social exchange (Newman et al., 2011; Kampkotter and Marggraf, 2015). The findings from this study suggest otherwise. It is probably because writers have not paid much attention to employee valence and instrumentality expectation. The valence-instrumentality-expectation model explains the motivation of an employee's expectation that he/she has the ability to make a good contribution and an anticipated reward elsewhere (Vroom, 1964; Williams et al., 1991). Thus, this work contributes to the theoretical significance of the valence-instrumentality-expectancy theory which anchors this work and provides valuable insights into the process of employee training and their intentions to leave. In this way, our work argues that individuals are influenced by their affective outcomes therefore, based on the exchange processed by the individual after receiving training, he/she would be motivated to transfer his/her skills elsewhere or in different organization where he/she may feel more valued. This means when individuals are not satisfied with their needs and expectations, engagement with their current organization would not be effective irrespective of the amount of training they receive from the firm. Hence, many trained professionals from most developing countries are driven by their value expectation of developed countries resulting in high turnover in the context of the former.

Additionally, our work contributes and validates the works of Gersbach and Schmutzler (2012) and Rzepka and Tamm (2016) that, the negative effect of broad organizational training participation is the fact that the training is not specific to the organization that provides it, but also to the sector in general. Hence, the motivation for mobility and accessibility of jobs within the same industry. This implies that there is a high risk of trained employees will be poached by other organizations leading to turnover of employees in the originating organization. Accordingly, the value employees place on specific outcomes of training should be considered as aspects of needs assessment of training programmes in order to minimize turnover intentions of trainees.

In terms of managerial contribution, the collective findings of this work suggest potentially useful managerial lessons for practitioners and academics. Practically, the study suggests that organizations desiring strategic outcomes must establish training mechanisms that enable employees to perform on their duties with the new skills acquired. When manufacturing firms invest in training, they are really investing in people who will be motivated to make the best use of the invested capital to deliver results, leading to the totality of organizational performance.

Second, firms must learn from this work and be aware that different motivation and expectations of training participation are hunted for by employees. Whilst some employees may be motivated to increase their performance after training, others would be motivated to want to leave for other firms after training. HR managers and organizations must therefore study the trends of employees' demand in relations to their career development in order to minimize cost implications of turnover of employees after training. On the other hand, HR managers and firms must encourage organizational programs that help to develop their human resources into capable skills for this global competitiveness. The desirability to use firm specific training or general industrial training will depend on needs assessment of both the employees and the organization in question. Therefore, Management of manufacturing companies should go beyond organized training to assessing more of employee value for the training by improving employee engagement through a host of HR initiatives (e.g. better career planning and development, more participatory decision making, more equitable reward systems, etc.). When a low-performing employee leaves, it may be in the interest of the organization, and hence worthwhile. In contrast, when a high-performing employee leaves especially after training, it is dysfunctional and a serious concern to the firm. In developing countries, voluntary turnover is quite high, which is dysfunctional, and therefore, requires critical attention. This calls for continuous learning in most organizations in SSA environment as most SSA institutions and organizations are struggling to compete with the more technologically advanced companies in the developed world. Also, the possibility of introducing bond signing by employees who embark on both short and long-term training may be employed by management to arrest the turnover flow.

### **Limitations and Avenues for Future Research**

Like most empirical research, this study has its limitations. The first limitation includes the usage of cross-sectional data; therefore, care should be taken in making causal inference regarding the relationships in this study. Nevertheless, the researchers believe that it is a good start to measure the factors of employee training vis-à-vis performance and turnover of employees. Second, our data collection was based on one single manufacturing firm, and therefore generalization of the study may not be totally justified across other manufacturing organizations. Besides, the sample size is also too small to warrant a larger generalization. Nonetheless, in a single manufacturing company, a sample size of this nature is desirable and acceptable. Based on the above, future studies may take these weaknesses into consideration.

Thus, the findings of our work should be replicated in other SSA settings with different types of training programs. We recommend that the approach be expanded to include variables related to the motivation and transfer of behaviors learnt during training. We also consider the results of this study to be a first step toward the development of an integrative model of training motivation. Thus, future research needs to consider the scope and nature of training programs for example general or specific training and the individual and situational variables that influence training effectiveness.

Overall, the study highlights that training participation can lead to employee performance and at the same time employee turnover intentions. It offers insights into the importance of training to both manufacturing companies and the employees who work in these companies.

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