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MEDIATING ROLE OF EMPLOYEE PERFORMANCE ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN LEADERSHIP TRAINING AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT IN FEDERAL POLYTECHNIC MUBI, ADAMAWA STATE NIGERIA

OLATADE OLUMIDE MARTINS; PROF. ITODO JOHN ITODO; & MR. GABRIEL NDAFTE

Department of Business Administration and Entrepreneurship, Faculty of Administration and Management Sciences, Adamawa State University, Mubi, Nigeria.
Corresponding Author: john243@adsu.edu.ng
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Abstract

This study examined the impact of leadership training on employee performance and organisational development in Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The research was motivated by the need to understand how structured leadership development programmes influence staff effectiveness and the broader institutional capacity for growth and sustainability in tertiary institutions. The study adopted a quantitative research design, utilising a structured questionnaire to collect data from 415 respondents drawn from academic and administrative staff of the institution. Descriptive statistics were used to analyse respondents' demographic characteristics while the Haye's Process Macro for SPSS Version 5.0 was used for mediation analysis, and employee performance was found to partially mediate the relationship between leadership training and organisational development, indicating both direct and indirect effects. The study concludes that leadership training is a critical determinant of employee performance and a key driver of organisational development in Federal Polytechnic Mubi. It recommends continuous strengthening of leadership development programmes, improved change management strategies, and enhanced institutional support systems to maximise training effectiveness.

Keywords: leadership training, employee performance, organisational development, Federal Polytechnic, and Nigeria.

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Introduction

Globalisation, technological change and growing expectations of institutional accountability have placed renewed pressure on organisations to develop the leadership capabilities required to sustain effectiveness and respond to changing demands. Tertiary institutions are particularly affected because their contribution to national development depends not only on the quality of teaching and research but also on the effectiveness of their administrative systems and the capacity of their workforce to translate institutional objectives into results. Leadership, therefore, extends beyond the authority associated with formal positions; it involves developing the capabilities through which employees understand organisational priorities, exercise sound judgement and contribute to institutional improvement. Leadership training represents one mechanism for building these capabilities by strengthening the knowledge and behaviours required for effective leadership practice (Day et al., 2014). Its organisational value, however, cannot be assumed merely because training has been provided. The more consequential question is whether the competencies acquired through training translate into improved employee performance and whether such improvements contribute to organisational development. This distinction shifts attention from leadership training as an administrative activity to its effectiveness as a means of strengthening institutional capacity.

International scholarship has increasingly treated leadership development as an important component of organisational effectiveness, particularly in institutions facing complex governance arrangements and competing performance expectations. Research on leadership development highlights the significance of developing individual capabilities alongside the social and organisational conditions through which leadership is practised (Day et al., 2014; DeRue et al., 2012). Within higher education, leadership development has also attracted attention because institutional improvement depends partly on how leaders mobilise employees, manage organisational change and support professional learning (Bolden et al., 2012). Nevertheless, the benefits of leadership training are neither automatic nor uniform. Training may improve participants' knowledge without necessarily changing workplace behaviour, particularly where institutional routines, inadequate resources or weak accountability systems restrict the application of newly acquired competencies. A more rigorous assessment must therefore distinguish between participation in leadership training and its consequences for employees' actual work. Employee performance provides a plausible link in this relationship because institutional development depends, in part, on employees converting individual capabilities into effective task execution, constructive work behaviour and contributions to organisational objectives.

These issues have particular significance in Nigeria, where tertiary institutions operate within demanding administrative and resource environments while being expected to improve educational delivery and institutional effectiveness. Universities, polytechnics and colleges of education depend on the coordinated contributions of academic and non-academic employees, yet concerns about administrative inefficiency, weak productivity and workplace tensions continue to feature in discussions of institutional performance (Yusuf & Ibrahim, 2017). Previous scholarship has associated leadership and human resource development challenges with difficulties in achieving organisational effectiveness, although the extent and causes of these difficulties may

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. R. Rena [South Africa]

differ across institutions (Adeyi et al., 2018; Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014). Leadership training could help address these challenges by equipping personnel with competencies relevant to decision-making, communication and organisational change. However, its effectiveness depends on whether training opportunities address actual institutional needs and whether employees can apply what they learn in their respective roles. Consequently, the relationship between leadership training and organisational development warrants investigation as a process rather than a presumed outcome. In particular, understanding how employee performance connects leadership development initiatives to institutional improvement may provide a more useful explanation of the conditions under which training produces organisational benefits.

The three principal constructs in this study represent distinct but related dimensions of organisational effectiveness. **Leadership training** refers to a planned process through which individuals acquire or strengthen the knowledge and competencies needed to exercise leadership effectively, including decision-making, communication and change management (Northouse, 2021). **Employee performance** concerns the extent to which employees fulfil their assigned responsibilities and contribute to organisational objectives through effective task execution and relevant work behaviours. **Organisational development** denotes a planned, organisation-wide process of improving institutional capacity and effectiveness through changes in organisational practices, structures and human resource capabilities (French & Bell, 2008). Although conceptually distinguishable, these constructs may be connected through a sequential process: leadership training develops relevant capabilities, employees apply those capabilities in their work, and improved performance may contribute to wider organisational development. Existing literature offers theoretical and empirical grounds for expecting positive relationships among leadership development, employee effectiveness and organisational outcomes (Avolio & Hannah, 2021; DeRue et al., 2012; Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014). Yet these relationships should not be treated as interchangeable. Better individual performance does not necessarily produce institutional development unless employees' contributions are supported by appropriate organisational systems, resources and management practices. Examining the proposed relationships together is therefore necessary to establish whether employee performance offers a credible explanatory mechanism.

Despite the established interest in leadership development and organisational effectiveness, a more specific question remains insufficiently resolved within the scope of the literature presented here: **to what extent does employee performance mediate the relationship between leadership training and organisational development?** Much of the rationale for leadership training rests on the expectation that stronger leadership capabilities will improve workplace performance and, ultimately, organisational outcomes. However, evidence of a relationship between training and organisational effectiveness does not, by itself, demonstrate that employee performance transmits that relationship. Nor does evidence that training improves performance establish that the resulting performance improvements are sufficient to advance organisational development. These distinctions are especially relevant in public tertiary institutions, where institutional outcomes may also depend on resource availability, administrative procedures and wider governance arrangements. Although previous studies have discussed leadership effectiveness, employee productivity and human capital development (Adeyi et al., 2018; Obi-Anike & Ekwe, 2014;

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. R. Rena [South Africa]

Onasanya et al., 2022), the cited literature does not, on its own, establish whether the proposed indirect relationship has been adequately tested in Federal Polytechnic Mubi. The present study consequently addresses a context-specific empirical question by examining the direct relationship between leadership training and organisational development alongside the indirect relationship operating through employee performance. Its contribution will depend on demonstrating this gap against a systematic review of relevant empirical studies, rather than assuming that limited research in the selected institution necessarily constitutes a novel theoretical contribution.

The proposed relationships can be grounded in Human Capital Theory and transformational leadership theory, although the two perspectives explain different aspects of the research model. Human Capital Theory argues that investments in individuals' knowledge and capabilities can generate productive returns by strengthening their capacity to perform work effectively (Becker, 1964). Applied to this study, the theory provides a rationale for expecting leadership training to improve employee performance and for improved performance to contribute to organisational development. Its explanatory value nevertheless depends on recognising that the returns on training are contingent on employees having opportunities to use their acquired competencies and on the institution being able to convert individual improvements into collective gains. Transformational leadership theory, as developed in the work of Bass and Riggio (2006), offers a complementary behavioural perspective by explaining how leadership can encourage employees to engage with organisational goals and contribute beyond minimum expectations. Although transformational leadership theory primarily concerns leadership behaviours and their influence on followers, rather than training as an intervention in itself, it helps explain why leadership competencies developed through training may matter for employee behaviour and organisational improvement. Together, these perspectives support the proposed mediation model: Human Capital Theory explains the investment-to-performance logic, while transformational leadership theory helps illuminate the behavioural processes through which leadership capabilities may influence employees. Neither theory, however, establishes the mediation effect empirically; that remains a question for the study to test.

Against this background, the study examines the **mediating role of employee performance in the relationship between leadership training and organisational development at Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria**. Specifically, it seeks to determine whether leadership training is associated with organisational development, assess the relationship between leadership training and employee performance, establish the relationship between employee performance and organisational development, and test whether employee performance mediates the relationship between leadership training and organisational development. By bringing these relationships into a single analytical framework, the study moves beyond the general proposition that training is beneficial and investigates the process through which its organisational value may be realised. The findings are expected to contribute context-sensitive evidence to research on leadership development and public tertiary institutions, while offering practical insight into whether institutional investment in leadership training is accompanied by improvements in employee performance and organisational development. In doing so, the study seeks to inform leadership development decisions at Federal Polytechnic Mubi and provide a basis for further investigation in comparable Nigerian tertiary institutions.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. R. Rena [South Africa]

The concept of leadership

Leadership is a multifaceted social process through which individuals influence others towards shared organisational goals, with its effectiveness shaped by leaders' behaviours, relationships and situational demands. Contemporary scholarship increasingly moves beyond trait-based explanations to emphasise ethical conduct, follower development and contextual responsiveness (Banks et al., 2024; Oliveira & Santos, 2024; Wang et al., 2024). This broader perspective encompasses transformational leadership, which promotes shared vision and intellectual stimulation (Solaja, 2024), authentic leadership, which emphasises moral integrity and transparency (Almutairi, 2025), and digital leadership, which strengthens collaboration and adaptability in technology-driven environments (Kluge & Kuzmanovic, 2024). Such approaches can enhance employee engagement, professional learning and organisational effectiveness, although their outcomes depend on how leadership practices align with employees' needs and institutional circumstances (Knipfer & Bendig, 2024). Moreover, leadership development requires deliberate capability-building through social interaction and contextual experience (Kovach, 2024). Leadership is therefore best understood as an evolving relational capability that connects individual development with organisational progress.

The Concept of Training

Training and development constitute strategic human resource management practices through which employees acquire the competencies required for effective performance and continued professional growth. Training involves the planned modification of behaviour through structured learning, instruction and work experience, whereas development focuses on employees' longer-term potential and adaptability to future responsibilities (Armstrong, 2021; Beardwell & Hidden, 2014; Cole, 2020). Although training addresses specific performance requirements, development supports continuous learning and career progression (Armstrong, 2001; Campbell, 1971; Reynolds, 2024). Contemporary scholarship further positions these practices as investments in human capital that bridge competency gaps, encourage innovation and improve organisational productivity (Hinkin & Tracey, 2021; Hosen et al., 2024; Islami & Mulolli, 2024). Through mentoring, workplace learning and digital training, organisations can strengthen employee satisfaction and reduce turnover (Keltu, 2024; Lou et al., 2024; Siddiqui, 2018). Consequently, sustained investment in training and development can enhance organisational competitiveness, although its effectiveness depends on aligning learning interventions with institutional needs and performance objectives (Dessler, 2019; Jackson, 2008; Aswathappa, 2017; Kinya et al., 2020).

Leadership Training and Development

Leadership training and development are strategic organisational investments that strengthen leaders' competencies and prepare employees for greater responsibilities. Through structured learning, coaching and mentoring, organisations can improve leadership behaviour, employee motivation and the capacity to translate institutional objectives into effective performance (Lacerenza et al., 2017; Olrich et al., 2015; Kishore & Fonceca, 2023). Leadership development is most effective when aligned with organisational strategy, as poorly coordinated initiatives may fail

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. R. Rena [South Africa]

to produce meaningful outcomes (Turner et al., 2018). Coaching further supports this process by promoting self-awareness, constructive feedback and problem-solving, thereby improving workplace relationships and individual performance (Fazel, 2018; Whitmore, 2017; Ellinger & Keller, 2021). More broadly, training helps address competency gaps arising from technological change and evolving work demands, while strengthening productivity and adaptability (Nadler, 2014; Beardwell & Holden, 2017). These benefits can extend to employee morale and retention (Cole, 2022), although their realisation depends on sustained organisational support. Consequently, leadership training may contribute to organisational development through improved employee performance, rather than through training participation alone (Armstrong, 2023; Subramony et al., 2018).

Employee Performance

Employee performance is a multidimensional construct encompassing work behaviours and outcomes, assessed through productivity, efficiency, quality and the extent to which employees meet established objectives (Holton, 1995; Armstrong, 2000; Zuama et al., 2015; Trisnawati et al., 2018). Effective performance management therefore requires clear expectations, participatory goal-setting and regular feedback to align individual contributions with organisational priorities (Cummings & Worley, 2005; Price, 2005; Armstrong, 2023). Performance measurement should combine relevant indicators, including output, timeliness, attendance and work quality, while recognising that excessive emphasis on quantity may undermine standards (Armstrong, 2016; Noe, 2021; Price, 2015). Approaches such as performance appraisal and balanced scorecards offer complementary perspectives on individual and organisational effectiveness. Moreover, productivity reflects the relationship between outputs and the resources consumed, making employee competence a critical consideration in organisational competitiveness (International Labour Organization, 2015; Mathis & John, 2003). Consequently, leadership training may strengthen employee performance by developing relevant capabilities, although improvements depend on appropriate work systems and effective managerial support (Brumbranch, 2018; Steed, 2020).

Leadership Training (LT) and Organizational Development (OD)

Organisational development (OD) involves planned efforts to strengthen organisational capability through changes in systems, structures and culture. Leadership training supports this process by equipping leaders to align decisions with institutional goals and facilitate adaptation, learning and sustainable growth (Yukl, 2013). Moreover, leadership development builds internal leadership capacity for sustained transformation (Day et al., 2014). At Federal Polytechnic, Mubi, its contribution depends on translating acquired leadership skills into institutional practice, particularly through participative decision-making and strategic alignment, thereby strengthening organisational effectiveness rather than merely improving individual competence.

Leadership Training and Employee Performance

Leadership training can improve employee performance by strengthening leaders' self-efficacy and behavioural flexibility, while goal-setting and regular feedback encourage greater employee

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. R. Rena [South Africa]

engagement (Avolio & Hannah, 2008; Latham & Locke, 2007). Empirical findings associate training with improved performance and autonomy-supportive leadership (Kishore & Fonceca, 2023; Mamo, 2020; Hardre & Reeve, 2019), alongside positive behavioural changes arising from relevant workplace skills development (Rohan & Madhumita, 2017; Satterfield & Hughes, 2007; Trisnawati et al., 2018; Habon et al., 2019; Ghalawat et al., 2020; Christiana et al., 2021). Beyond individual outcomes, effective development may foster motivation, customer loyalty and stronger organisational returns, reflecting a reciprocal relationship between training and performance (Myles, 2020; Lisk, 2016). Organisations that embed development and shared ethical values may also achieve better performance and stakeholder retention (Learner, 2017; Seligman, 2018; Noe, 2021). However, limited research specifically examines leadership development, justifying further investigation.

Employee Performance and Organizational Development

Employee performance is central to organisational development, as capable and motivated staff contribute to institutional goals and service efficiency. Armstrong (2014) argues that performance, supported by effective human resource practices and leadership, advances organisational success, while Wright and McMahan (2011) identify human capital as a foundation for competitive advantage and sustainable growth. Empirical research similarly associates employee performance with organisational productivity, innovation and profitability (Handayani et al., 2021; Kareem & Hussein, 2019; Oluwaseun, 2020; Adaobi & Snr, 2022; Vanitha & Ganesh, 2024). Furthermore, human resource development initiatives can strengthen organisational effectiveness, with employee development contributing to improved performance and long-term growth (Jacobs & Washington, 2003; Kareem & Hussein, 2019; Oluwaseun, 2020; Adaobi & Snr, 2022; Vanitha & Ganesh, 2024). Thus, leadership training may foster institutional development through improved employee performance, provided that acquired capabilities translate into effective workplace practice.

Mediation Role of Employee Performance in the Relationship between Leadership Training and Organizational Development

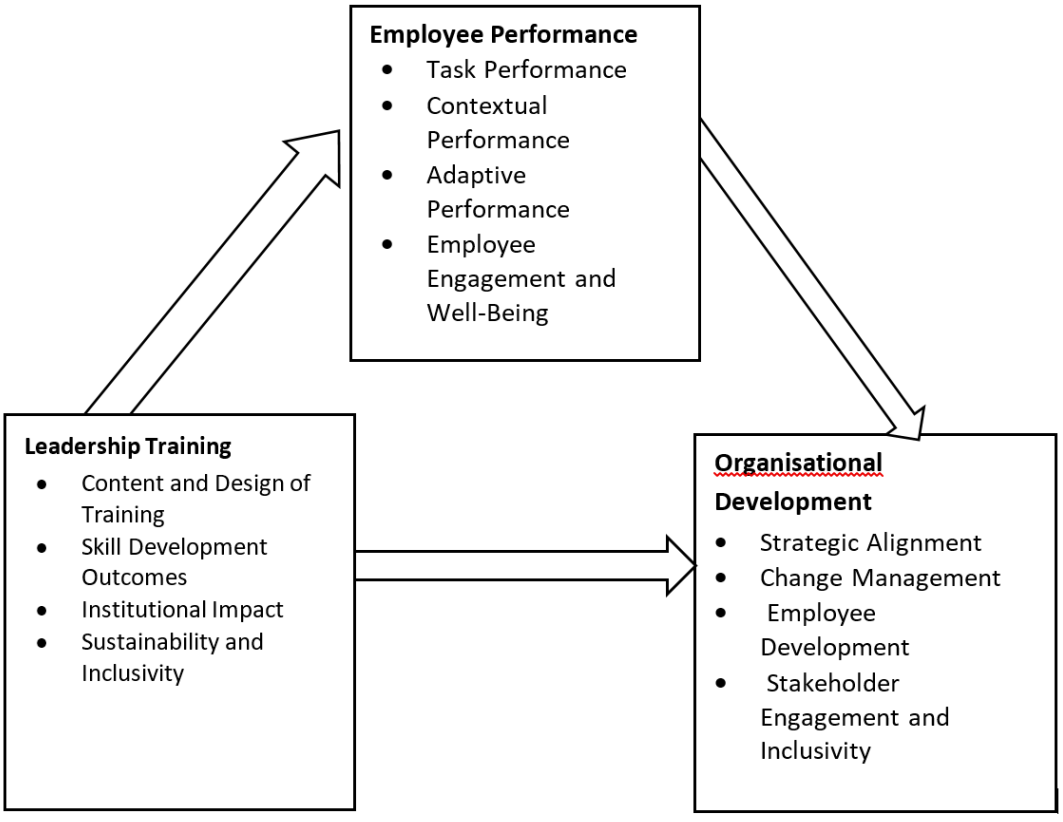
Employee performance may mediate the relationship between leadership training and organisational development by translating improved employee capabilities into stronger institutional outcomes. Evidence links training and development with better organisational performance through this mechanism (Handayani et al., 2021; Paul & Shah, 2023; Adaobi & Snr, 2022; Vanitha & Ganesh, 2024). Furthermore, leadership development and transformational leadership can strengthen employee engagement, commitment and readiness for change, supporting performance improvements (Irawati et al., 2024; Indriastuti & Fachrunnisa, 2020; Jiatong et al., 2022; Pandey, 2024). Job satisfaction and engagement may also contribute to this process, while organisational commitment reinforces the benefits of supportive development practices (Kareem & Hussein, 2019; Tansky & Cohen, 2001). However, these relationships should not be assumed to be automatic: training must translate into changed workplace behaviour before improved individual performance can contribute meaningfully to sustained organisational development.

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. R. Rena [South Africa]

Theoretical Framework

This study is anchored in Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964), Organisational Development Theory and Transformational Leadership Theory. Human Capital Theory posits that investment in education and training enhances employees' productive capabilities, supporting innovation and institutional effectiveness; however, its application may be constrained where suitable opportunities to utilise acquired skills are limited, particularly in developing economies. Nevertheless, it provides a basis for examining how leadership training, seminars and workshops improve staff performance and institutional outcomes. Organisational Development Theory complements this perspective by emphasising planned change, employee involvement and alignment between organisational structures and strategic objectives (Cummings & Worley, 2014; Burke, 2017; French & Bell, 1999). Furthermore, Transformational Leadership Theory explains how leaders inspire employees through ethical role-modelling, shared vision and intellectual stimulation (Bass, 1985; Bass & Avolio, 2004; Judge & Piccolo, 2004). Together, these theories explain how leadership training can strengthen employee capabilities, improve performance and facilitate sustainable organisational development.

Conceptual Model



The conceptual model illustrates the relationship between leadership training, employee performance and organisational development in tertiary institutions. Leadership training encompasses communication skills, ethical responsibility, student mentorship and community

engagement. Employee performance reflects improved student learning, research output and effective resource utilisation. Organisational development is indicated by stronger academic outcomes, increased research publications, effective leadership structures, digital transformation and financial sustainability. The model positions leadership training as the independent variable, with employee performance and organisational development as dependent variables, suggesting that leadership development may contribute to institutional progress through improved staff performance.

Methodology

The study employed a quantitative cross-sectional survey design to examine the relationships between leadership training, employee performance and organisational development at Federal Polytechnic, Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The study population comprised 2,331 employees, including 808 academic and 1,523 non-academic staff. Using Yamane's (1964) formula, an initial sample of 341 respondents was determined and increased by 30% (102 respondents), resulting in 443 questionnaires to accommodate non-response and incomplete returns, with reference to Israel (2013). Convenience sampling was used to select accessible and willing participants across staff categories, although its non-probability nature limited generalisability. Primary data were collected using the Leadership Training, Employee Performance and Organisational Development Questionnaire (LTEPODQ), whose face and content validity were assessed through expert review. Cronbach's alpha was used to evaluate the internal consistency of items measuring each construct. Data were analysed using descriptive statistics and Hayes's PROCESS macro, version 5.0, to estimate direct and indirect effects, with bootstrapping used to generate confidence intervals for the indirect effect. Given the cross-sectional design, mediation findings were interpreted as statistical associations rather than definitive causal relationships. Participation was voluntary, confidentiality was maintained, and data were securely stored and used solely for research purposes in accordance with applicable ethical requirements.

Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

The following demographic characteristics (gender, age, educational qualification, cadre of the respondents and marital status) are discussed and the frequency distribution and percentages are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Characteristics of the Respondent

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
Gender		
Male	299	72.0
Female	116	28.0
Total	**415**	**100.0**
Age Distribution		
18-25 Years	19	4.6
26-36 Years	106	25.5
37-46 Years	225	54.2
47 Years and above	65	15.7
Total	**415**	**100.0**

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. R. Rena [South Africa]

Characteristics	Frequency	Percent (%)
Educational Qualification		
SSCE/GCE	26	6.3
OND/NCE	103	24.8
BSc/MSc	279	67.2
PhD and above	7	1.7
Total	**415**	**100.0**
Marital Status		
Single	82	19.8
Married	320	77.1
Divorced	13	3.1
Total	**415**	**100.0**

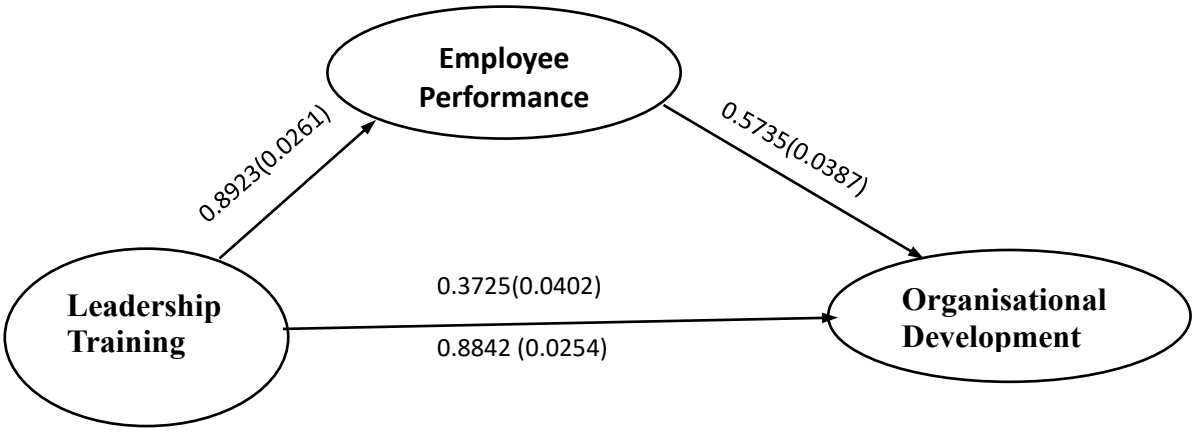
Source: Field Survey, (2026).

Table 1 summarises respondents' demographic characteristics, providing context for interpreting their workplace experiences. Males constituted 299 respondents (72.0%), compared with 116 females (28.0%), indicating a marked gender imbalance that may give male perspectives greater weight in the findings. Most respondents were aged 37–46 years (225; 54.2%), followed by those aged 26–36 (106; 25.5%), suggesting a predominantly mid-career workforce. Educationally, 279 (67.2%) held BSc or MSc qualifications, while only seven (1.7%) possessed PhDs or higher, indicating substantial tertiary-level attainment but limited doctoral representation. Regarding marital status, 320 respondents (77.1%) were married, 82 (19.8%) were single and 13 (3.1%) were divorced. Collectively, these characteristics describe an experienced, largely degree-educated workforce; however, demographic patterns alone cannot establish how employees' backgrounds influence their perceptions of leadership training or organisational development.

Mediation of Employee Performance

HO: Employee Performance Mediates the relationship between Leadership Training and Organisational Development in Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Adamawa state, Nigeria.

This hypothesis was analysed using the Hayes, (2013) process macro and the coefficients obtained are presented in figure 1.



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Prof. R. Rena [South Africa]

Table 2 presents the results of the mediation analysis examining whether employee performance mediates the relationship between leadership training and organisational development in Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria. The analysis was conducted using PROCESS Macro (Model 4) in SPSS with 5,000 bootstrap samples, which provides the estimates for the direct, indirect, and total effects. The findings showed that the indirect effect of EPM on OGD was positive and statistically significant (β = 0.5117, t = 10.234). There was a positive influence between LDT's direct impact on OGD (β = 0.3725, t = 9.2597, p = 0.000) and the result showed that the model's overall effect is statistically significant (β = 0.8842, t = 34.7833, p = 0.000). These findings suggest that Employee Performance mediates the relationship between Leadership Training and Organisational Development in Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Adamawa state, Nigeria. This means that employee performance partially explains how leadership training translates into organisational development and the mediation is complementary in nature. Leadership training improves employee performance, which in turn enhances organisational development outcomes. Table 2 also displays the mediation analysis summary.

Table 2: Mediation analysis Results

Relationship	**TE**	**DE**	**IE**	**CI**		**t-statistics**	**Remark**
				Upper Bound	Upper Bound		
LDT→EPM→OGD	0.8842 (0.0000)	0.3725 (0.000)	0.5117	0.4210	0.6176	10.234	*Complimentary Mediation*

TE = Total Effect, DE = Direct Effect , IE = Indirect Effect, CI = Confidence Interval, LDT = Leadership Training, EPM = Employee Performance and OGD = Organisational Development
Source: Computed using SPSS 31 from Field Survey data, (2026).

Discussion of Findings

The finding that employee performance partially mediates the relationship between leadership training and organisational development at Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Adamawa State, Nigeria, provides insight into how investment in leadership development may translate into institutional improvement. Rather than assuming that training automatically produces organisational development, the result suggests that its contribution is partly channelled through employees' work performance. This interpretation is consistent with Tharenou et al. (2007), who examined training and organisational-level outcomes and highlighted the importance of human resource outcomes as pathways through which training can influence organisational effectiveness. Similarly, Garavan et al. (2021) found a positive relationship between training and organisational performance, although the strength of this relationship varied according to contextual and temporal conditions. These findings support the argument that the organisational value of training depends not only on the acquisition of knowledge but also on its application in the workplace. In a public tertiary institution, improved employee performance may strengthen the execution of academic and administrative responsibilities, thereby supporting institutional development. However, organisational performance and organisational development are not interchangeable

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. R. Rena [South Africa]

concepts: the former concerns the achievement of organisational outcomes, whereas the latter also encompasses changes in institutional processes and the capacity to adapt. The contribution of the present finding therefore lies in identifying employee performance as a plausible mechanism linking leadership training to organisational development within a Nigerian public polytechnic.

Human Capital Theory provides a useful explanation for this relationship. Becker (1964) conceptualised education and training as investments that develop individuals' productive capabilities and generate potential economic returns. From this perspective, leadership training represents an investment in employees' knowledge and skills, while employee performance reflects how effectively these capabilities are translated into work-related contributions. This interpretation is consistent with the broader training literature, including the meta-analytic evidence reported by Garavan et al. (2021), which demonstrates the relevance of contextual conditions when assessing training outcomes. Nevertheless, the finding also exposes a limitation in treating human capital investment as sufficient for organisational improvement. Employees may acquire valuable competencies without being able to apply them where managerial support is weak or institutional procedures restrict their discretion. Human Capital Theory therefore explains why training may enhance productive capacity, but it does not, by itself, fully explain how individual capabilities become sustained organisational change. The observed mediation offers contextual support for the theory while indicating that the conversion of knowledge into performance depends on conditions within the workplace.

An organisational systems perspective suggests that employee performance can support institutional development by improving the implementation of decisions and coordination across academic and administrative units. However, funding constraints, bureaucratic procedures and limited decision-making authority may prevent individual improvements from generating wider institutional benefits, reinforcing the importance of organisational context (Garavan et al., 2021). Transformational Leadership Theory offers a complementary explanation: leadership training may help leaders develop behaviours that encourage employee learning and effective performance (Bass, 1985). Evidence from Akdere and Egan (2020) and Nguyen et al. (2023) supports the relevance of leadership practices to organisational outcomes, although differences in research settings and constructs limit direct comparison with Federal Polytechnic Mubi. The partial mediation finding also suggests that employee performance is not the only possible pathway linking training to organisational development; employee engagement and organisational learning warrant further investigation, consistent with Tharenou et al. (2007). Theoretically, this distinguishes employees' capabilities from their actual performance and the wider processes through which organisations learn. Practically, training should be aligned with job responsibilities and supported by opportunities to apply acquired skills. Nevertheless, cross-sectional mediation establishes an indirect statistical relationship, not causation. Longitudinal research using multiple performance sources and institutional indicators would provide stronger evidence of how leadership training contributes to organisational development.

Conclusion and Suggestions for Future Studies

This study examined the mediating role of employee performance in the relationship between leadership training and organisational development at Federal Polytechnic Mubi, Adamawa State,

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. R. Rena [South Africa]

Nigeria. Its central objective was to establish whether leadership training contributes to organisational development directly and indirectly through improvements in employee performance. The findings indicate that employee performance partially mediates this relationship, suggesting that leadership training is associated with organisational development both through its relationship with employee performance and through other pathways. This finding challenges the assumption that investment in leadership training automatically produces institutional improvement. Instead, it points to the importance of translating training into effective workplace performance if its wider organisational benefits are to be realised. The persistence of a significant direct effect, alongside a significant indirect effect, indicates that employee performance explains part, but not all, of the relationship between leadership training and organisational development.

The study contributes to the literature by clarifying a potential mechanism through which leadership training may support organisational development in a Nigerian public tertiary institution. The finding is consistent with Human Capital Theory (Becker, 1964), which conceptualises training as an investment in employees' productive capabilities and the mediation result suggests that the value of this investment depends partly on whether employees can apply their acquired knowledge and skills effectively in their work. It also offers a systems-oriented perspective on organisational development by connecting individual employee performance with broader institutional outcomes. From the standpoint of Transformational Leadership Theory (Bass, 1985), leadership training may help leaders develop practices that encourage learning and more effective employee contributions. Nevertheless, because the study examined leadership training rather than necessarily measuring transformational leadership behaviours, the findings should be interpreted as consistent with the theory's explanatory logic rather than as direct empirical confirmation of its specific propositions. These theoretical perspectives indicate that leadership training may contribute to institutional development through the interaction between employee capabilities, workplace performance and organisational conditions. The findings also have reveal some implications for the management of Federal Polytechnic Mubi that Leadership training should be aligned with institutional priorities and the actual responsibilities of employees, rather than evaluated solely through attendance or completion rates. Management should assess whether training improves employees' ability to perform their duties and whether those improvements are reflected in institutional processes. Providing opportunities to apply newly acquired skills, alongside appropriate supervisory support, may help convert training investments into more meaningful workplace contributions. However, employee performance should not be treated as the sole determinant of organisational development. Institutional resources, administrative procedures and the wider organisational environment may influence whether improved individual performance translates into sustained institutional progress. Leadership training is therefore best positioned within a broader organisational development strategy that recognises the importance of both employee contributions and enabling institutional conditions.

Despite these contributions, the study has limitations that should inform the interpretation of its findings because the research employed a cross-sectional survey, the results cannot establish the time-based sequence required to demonstrate conclusively that leadership training precedes improvements in employee performance and that these improvements subsequently produce

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
Prof. R. Rena [South Africa]

organisational development. The observed mediation should therefore be understood as a statistical indirect relationship rather than definitive evidence of causation. In addition, the principal constructs were measured using responses from the same participants, common-method bias and subjective perceptions might have influenced the estimated relationships. The study's focus on a single public tertiary institution also limits the extent to which its findings can be generalised to other institutions or sectors and the future research could address these limitations through longitudinal or multi-wave designs, the use of independent performance assessments and the inclusion of objective indicators of organisational development. Studies involving several tertiary institutions across different Nigerian states would also help establish whether the observed relationship holds across varying institutional contexts.

Further research should examine additional mechanisms that may explain the remaining direct relationship between leadership training and organisational development. Employee engagement, organisational learning and the workplace application of acquired skills are potential avenues for investigation, although their roles require empirical testing rather than assumption. Researchers could also examine whether organisational culture or managerial support influences the extent to which training translates into improved performance because such work would provide a more comprehensive account of the conditions under which leadership development investments generate institutional benefits. In conclusion, this study advances understanding of leadership training and organisational development by demonstrating the relevance of employee performance as a mediating mechanism at Federal Polytechnic Mubi. Its principal contribution is to show that the relationship between leadership training and institutional development is not adequately understood by considering training alone. Attention must also be given to how employees perform and to the organisational conditions that enable their contributions to support wider institutional progress because by establishing this pathway within a Nigerian public tertiary institution, the study provides a foundation for further research into how leadership development can be translated into sustained organisational improvement.

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