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RESEARCH ARTICLE

Linking Faculty Leadership to Productivity: The Role of Team Building and Professional Development in Universities of South-South Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the role of faculty leadership in linking team building and professional development to academic staff job performance in universities of South-South Nigeria. Guided by two hypotheses, the study adopted a correlational research design. The population comprised 29,558 academic staff in public universities across the six South-South states, from which a sample of 795 was drawn through cluster sampling. Data were collected using a validated instrument, the Team Building, Professional Development and Academic Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (TBPDAJQPQ), with a reliability index of 0.82. Out of 795 questionnaires administered, 701 were successfully retrieved and analyzed using simple linear regression. The findings revealed that both team building and professional development by Deans of faculties significantly predict academic staff job performance. Team building was found to enhance collaboration, motivation, and productivity among academic staff, while professional development initiatives strengthened staff capacity, job satisfaction, and commitment to institutional goals. The study concluded that leadership practices which prioritize teamwork and continuous professional growth are vital drivers of staff productivity in Nigerian universities. It was recommended that Deans institutionalize team-building strategies, strengthen professional development opportunities, and that universities provide adequate resources and policies to sustain these practices.

Keywords: Faculty leadership, Team building, Professional development, Academic staff, Job performance, South-South Nigeria

INTRODUCTION

Universities are knowledge-driven institutions whose effectiveness depends largely on the productivity of their academic staff. Productivity in higher education is often measured through outputs such as quality teaching, research publications, student supervision, community service, and grant acquisition. Leadership at the faculty level plays a pivotal role in coordinating these functions, setting performance expectations, and creating supportive environments for staff to thrive. In contemporary higher education, leadership is no longer perceived as the prerogative of a single individual but as a relational process that fosters

teamwork, collaboration, and continuous capacity building (Kasalak et al., 2022).

Globally, research demonstrates that leadership practices that emphasize team building and professional development significantly enhance organizational outcomes in universities (Alonderiene & Majauskaite, 2016; Stone-Johnson, 2022). In the Nigerian context, leadership effectiveness at the faculty level is often linked with the ability to mobilize teams, provide opportunities for continuous learning, and support academic staff in overcoming challenges of workload, limited resources, and changing student demographics (Okoro et al., 2024). Thus, examining how faculty leadership promotes team building and

professional development becomes critical in understanding how leadership shapes staff productivity in South-South Nigerian universities.

Leadership in higher education has undergone a paradigm shift from autocratic and transactional orientations toward participatory, collaborative, and developmental models. Team building is defined as the process of developing cohesion, trust, and effective collaboration among staff and has been identified as an essential mechanism through which leadership influences productivity (Renz, 2016; Yukl, 2020). In university settings, team building fosters knowledge sharing, innovation, and collective responsibility for research and teaching outcomes (Stone-Johnson, 2022).

Similarly, professional development is a structured training, workshops, mentorship, and scholarly engagement provides academic staff with new knowledge and pedagogical competencies required for effective job performance. Studies reveal that institutions that invest in professional development experience higher levels of academic staff motivation, research output, and teaching effectiveness (Gibbs & Coffey, 2019; Ololube, 2021). Recent Nigerian research indicates that professional development activities positively predict lecturers' instructional competence and job satisfaction, which are key drivers of productivity (Onuoha et al., 2023).

In the South-South region of Nigeria, universities face persistent challenges including underfunding, infrastructural limitations, brain drain, and workload stress (Akinnuoye, 2021). These factors underscore the importance of leadership practices that emphasize collective effort and staff capacity building as strategies for enhancing productivity. Evidence suggests that when deans and faculty leaders engage in team building and promote professional development, staff are more likely to be innovative, resilient, and productive (Urhefe-Okotie & Mole, 2024). Despite these insights, empirical studies focusing on the link between faculty leadership, team building, professional development, and productivity in South-South Nigerian universities remain limited.

The productivity of academic staff in Nigerian universities continues to be a major concern, with reports of low research output, inadequate grant attraction, and challenges in sustaining teaching quality (Ogbodo, 2025). In South-South Nigerian universities, the situation is exacerbated by systemic issues such as inadequate funding, overstretched facilities, and declining staff morale. While global and national studies suggest that leadership that

prioritizes team building and professional development can significantly enhance productivity (Kasalak et al., 2022; Okoro et al., 2024), there is limited empirical evidence on how these leadership practices are enacted by faculty leaders in the South-South context.

Most existing Nigerian studies have examined leadership styles in relation to job satisfaction or performance at departmental or library levels (Onuoha et al., 2023; Urhefe-Okotie & Mole, 2024), leaving a gap in understanding how faculty-level leadership practices such as team building and professional development drive overall productivity. Furthermore, anecdotal evidence suggests that many deans and faculty leaders are not adequately prepared for leadership roles and often lack the structures to foster teamwork or provide professional development opportunities for staff (Akinnuoye, 2021). This raises critical questions: To what extent do faculty leaders in South-South Nigerian universities employ team building as a strategy to enhance productivity? How effectively do they promote professional development among academic staff? And what is the nature of the relationship between these leadership practices and academic staff productivity. It is based on these problems that this study examined linking Faculty Leadership to Productivity: The Role of Team Building and Professional Development in Universities of South-South Nigeria

Purpose of the Study

The main purpose of this study was to examine linking Faculty Leadership to Productivity: The Role of Team Building and Professional Development in Universities of South-South Nigeria.

Specifically, the study sought to determine whether:

1. Team building by Deans of faculties predicts academic staff job performance in universities in south-south Nigeria.
2. Professional development by Deans of faculties predicts academic staff job performance in universities in south-south Nigeria.

Research Questions

The following research questions directed the study.

1. To what extent does team building by Deans of faculties predict academic staff job performance in universities in south-south Nigeria?
2. To what extent does professional development by Deans of faculties predict academic staff job performance in universities in south-south

Nigeria?

Statement of Hypotheses

The following hypotheses guided the study:

1. Team building by Deans of faculties does not significantly predict academic staff job performance in universities in south-south Nigeria.
2. Professional development by Deans of faculties does not significantly predict academic staff job performance in universities in south-south Nigeria.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Also, Moses, Caroline, Jacklyne and David (2019) examined the factors that were associated with the teamwork approach at the job environment and their contribution on the employee performance and as a result overall performance of Kenyatta University. The study took a detailed form to analyze the subject using data to describe different perspectives in order to meet the study objective fully. The population targeted was faculty members of Kenyatta University and to cover consumer satisfaction students were involved. The study was an analysis of 100 respondents where the questionnaires were distributed among various schools and in the supportive sector which included the cafeteria and health department. The sampling was purposive in the selection of the respondents and mainly focused on experience period at the faculties. The main instrument used to collect data for this study was mainly a questionnaire and an interactive interview. The instrument was structured in a simple format where simple questions, open-ended, were framed based on the set objectives of the study. The findings indicated that teamwork has proven to be closely predict d to the performance of the individual employee. This concurs with earlier research work which indicates that teamwork helps to enhance productivity, boosts effectiveness and also efficiency at the workplace. The various faculties and the supporting sectors should seek to enhance the teamwork in attaining their mandate through the participation of every employee.

Again, Shouvik, and Mohammed (2018) examined the impact of teamwork on occupational performance. The objective of this research was to highlight the effects of teamwork on faculty members in Dhofar university and their performances and also to examine the factors associated with the concept of teamwork in job environment. This study focuses on

analyzing the impact of teamwork on the employees of Dhofar university. Several factors predict d to teamwork were analyzed, such as the concept of trust, leadership and structure and performance evaluation and rewards. The results reveal that is a strong and significant connection between the independent variables viz. teamwork, climate of trust, leadership and structure, performance evaluation and rewards and the performance of the faculty members of Dhofar university in Sultanate of Oman. Similarly, Gokhan, Tunahan and Owen (2022) examine the effect of team building on employee productivity at Eastpharma Company. The study adopted the descriptive research design. The target population was 289 employees from EastPharma Company. The collection of the data was done using questionnaires. It was discovered that team building is positively and significantly predict d to employee productivity. The study concluded that when the efficiency in team building improves by one unit, the employees' productivity in firms in Turkey will increase by units while other factors that influence the employees' productivity are held unchanged. Employees who work as teams have more productivity than those who work individually. Team building improves compatibility between team members and creates harmony that increases the productivity and success of the firm. Team building is often considered an ideal approach for developing high-performing teams with preferable interpersonal skills, team resilience and a better understanding of firms' goals. It enables employees to relieve stress from ongoing work and refresh their minds. The study recommended more emphasis should be on promoting the employees' team building to increase their production. The goals of an organization cannot be achieved by not working in unity. Team building is often considered an ideal approach for developing high-performing teams.

Another study by Ahmad, Abdulmajeed, Omar, Yasin, Baharom, Mohd and Muhd (2018) performed research to assess effectiveness of teambuilding as a performance method in the telecommunications industry. The objectives were to: Examine need for team building as a performance method; establish effectiveness of team building as a performance method; and check out cost-effective strategies of boosting the effectiveness of team building in the telecommunications industry in Portugal. The research was carried out in Lisbon utilizing Altice Portugal as the study case. Descriptive study layout was utilized to gather quantitative and qualitative data

from a target population of 2,500 Altice employees consisting of sales marketing and sales individuals, retail managers and human resources managers involved in operational activities. Quota sampling technique was made use of to choose a sample of 480 respondents to gather quantitative data utilizing structured surveys. Qualitative data was gathered from 20 key informant interviewees and focused group discussions. After the real study, a total of 482 data sets were confirmed and approved for analysis. The information was evaluated utilizing frequency distribution and Pearson's correlation methods to get the appropriate conclusions from the results. Outcomes of the research revealed that team building is still a prominent performance approach as reported by around 75% of individuals. Particularly, firm goals and conditions of the work environment had favorable effect on the need and selection for team building as a performance method in telecommunications sector. It was discovered to be perfect in providing skills that assist workers come to be responsible team players, resistant and with better skills to satisfy sales targets. Around 60.4% determined that without a doubt team building is an effective performance approach. The research also established that teambuilding had favorable impact on enhanced performance of employees in telecommunications sector. Also the research suggests that in order for team building to be more economical, it should be created as a regular program with specific purposes and quantifiable result. Such outcome should be evident, significant and long-lived. It also recommends that further research should be handled on the challenges influencing the performance of teambuilding, and comparative studies need to likewise be done across various sectors to develop where team building is most effective and pertinent.

Also, Keith, Anderson, Gaskin and Dean (2018) reported that personal and socio-cultural disparities among team member in detergent firms in the Northwest specifically and Austria in general comprise of an issue to effective team building, consequently generating variances among team member. It ends up being vital to ascertain the connection in between harmonization and productivity in chosen detergent firms in Northwest, Austria. The fundamental goal of the research is to check out team building and worker productivity in chosen detergent firms in Northwest, Austria, while the research particularly identified the association between harmonization and productivity of the chosen detergent firms in Northwest, Austria. The

research utilized descriptive study style with a sample size of 548 individuals. SPSS version 20 was utilized to analyze data. The research disclosed that when there is harmony amongst the workers of a company, there is cohesion, trust, dedication, and understanding of the group dynamics, thus increasing the productivity of workers of the chosen detergent firms in Northwest, Austria. It was consequently suggested that detergent firms in Northwest, Austria ought to use managers who will be encumbered with the responsibility of building harmony and trust among the workers while building teams for efficient productivity; and additionally guarantee that team building need to opt for plan that will checkmate the excesses of the teams.

A study by Sanyal and Hisam (2018) presents the importance of team building, along with those behavioral science principles about team-building in a company. Therefore the research seeks to determine the effect team building has on firm productivity. The objective of the research was to recognize aspects predicted with team building, determine the positive or adverse impacts of team building on workers and to take a look at the influence of team building on firm productivity. Features of an effective job group and some essential dimensions of supervisory leadership comprising of inputs on how participants of a task group can contribute to team-building. We are supposed to be endowed with team awareness, a feeling of purpose, an interaction among ourselves and connection in the contentment of our demands in a unitary way. Basically, we are interconnected by some common, recognizable features bound by the element of team building for the achievement of same desirable goal. A leadership design that focuses on team-building consequently ensures not only that a job gets done however it is done successfully, properly and sympathetically. Team building is crucial in the current business environment as companies seek team-based frameworks to improve their productivity. Team building is the process of forming teamwork in a firm. Team building events allow for interactions and encourage workers to work as a team and know each other well. Team building improves compatibility between team members and creates harmony that increases the productivity and success of the firm. Team building is often considered an ideal approach for developing high-performing teams with preferable interpersonal skills, team resilience and a better understanding of firms' goals. It enables employees to relieve stress from ongoing work and refresh their

minds. The study recommended more emphasis should be on promoting the employees' team building to increase their production. The goals of an organization cannot be achieved by not working in unity. Team building is often considered an ideal approach for developing high-performing teams.

A study by Owede (2023) examined how continuing professional training of teachers affects their job performance in public schools in Bayelsa State. To guide the study, three each of research objectives, questions and research hypotheses were formulated for the study. Sample population of 700 respondents were selected through the purposive and simple random sampling technique from twenty secondary schools. Data was collected through a self-structured questionnaire and were validated by experts. Its reliability was tested using the test retest with a reliability coefficient of 0.84. The research questions were analyzed with weighted mean while the hypotheses were tested using the chi-square and student $-t$ statistics at 0.05 significant level. All the null hypotheses were rejected and the alternatives accepted. Findings show that workshops and in-service trainings are the only programmes available for teachers' professional development. It has a significant effect on their job performance, improving their efficiency in lesson preparation and delivery, instructional materials selection and improvisation and student counseling and discipline. This study recommends that more professional development programmes should be planned and implemented, incentives should be provided for teachers' professional development, improvement of the teaching learning environment (physical and social) with motivation and encouragement of professional teachers through special welfare packages.

Similarly, Malami, and Onen (2023) examined the impact of Continuous Professional Development (CPD) on the job performance of academic staff at Sokoto State University in Northwest Nigeria, focusing on teaching, research, and community service functions. Utilizing a cross-sectional survey design, data were systematically gathered from 216 academic staff members through a structured questionnaire survey. Various descriptive and inferential statistics, including regression analysis, were employed. The findings underscored the significant positive impacts of CPD on teaching and community service performance, emphasizing a favorable correlation between professional development initiatives and these aspects of academic responsibilities. However, the research

identified a statistically insignificant impact of CPD on research performance within the academic staff at Sokoto State University. Thus, the study concluded that while CPD significantly enhances teaching and community service proficiency, its influence on research performance appears inconsequential in this academic context. The research proposed recommendations to optimize CPD program effectiveness at Sokoto State University, explicitly addressing challenges associated with research activities. By providing nuanced insights into the varied impacts of CPD on academic responsibilities, this study contributes to targeted interventions and strategies for comprehensive professional development in the academic sphere.

Again, Benedict (2022) sought to determine the impact of teachers' professional development on academic performance in senior high schools in Ghana and the mediating role of teachers' professional knowledge. A survey was conducted, and valid questionnaires were retrieved from 4,102 teachers in selected public senior high schools from four regions (including 77 districts and 97 public senior high schools) across the Southern, Middle, and Northern belts of Ghana. The results of the study showed that professional development has a significant positive prediction with professional knowledge. Also, professional development and professional knowledge were positively predicted to academic performance and respectively. Finally, the results of the study showed that professional knowledge partially mediated the prediction between professional development and academic performance. The study, therefore, concluded that professional development leads to improvements in the academic performance of students through improvements in teachers' professional knowledge and other characteristics of teachers that were not accounted for by this study. Among other things, the study recommends that teachers should be encouraged to engage in diverse professional development activities that respond to the inadequacies in their professional competencies.

Also, Sadiqa (2016) investigated the "Impact of Staff Development Programmes on the Performance of Teachers in Secondary Schools in Yola Metropolis, Adamawa State". The study raised five objectives, these are: to determine the impact of in-service training on the performance of teachers in secondary schools, examine the impact of conference on the performance of teachers, assess the impact of workshop on the performance of teachers, assess the

impact of workshop on the performance of teachers, ascertain the impact of seminar on the performance of teachers and find out the impact of mentoring on the performance of teachers in secondary schools in Yola metropolis, Adamawa state. Research questions and hypotheses were also formulated in line with the raised objectives of the study. Many predict d literature were reviewed based on the raised objectives. Descriptive survey design was employed for the study. The population of the study was 1,458 teachers. Random sampling technique was used to derive sample from each zonal office. Thus, the sample of the study was 285 teachers and 10 ministry of education officials. Data was collected personally in 13 schools through the use of constructed questionnaire. The collected data was presented by use of frequency and percentages, and later analysed using Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) statistical technique. Five hypotheses were tested, thus hypotheses 1,3, 4 and 5 were retained. While, hypothesis 2 was rejected and Scheffe test was employed to ascertain the extent of differences of opinions of the three categories of respondents. The finding of the study revealed that teachers' performance was positively impacted through regular in-service training, workshops, seminars and mentoring. On the basis of findings and conclusions, the study recommended that, there should be formal policy guidelines for training of teachers, opportunity should be made for every teacher to attend in-service training programme, educational conferences etc. Adequate funds should be provided by the ministry of Education for staff development programmes.

Going forward, Idakwoji, and Makolo (2022) investigated the Impact of Staff Development Programmes on the Performance of Academic Staff in Colleges of Education in North – Central Geographical Zone, Nigeria. Eight objectives were set with corresponding Research Questions and Hypotheses to guide the study. The objectives were to determine the impact of In-service training, Mentoring, Orientation programmes, Conferences, seminars, workshops, symposia and Information and Communication Technology (ICT) training on the Job Performance of Academic Staff of Colleges of Education in North-Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and the target population was 3642 academic staff in the 15 Colleges of Education in North-Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria. A total of 586 respondents were selected using simple random sampling technique. The sampled members

responded by filling and returning the copies of the questionnaire drawn from the eight (8) Colleges of Education in the North-Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria. Data collected by the use of a structured questionnaire developed by the researcher were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies, percentages and the mean scores. The findings of this study revealed that in-service training programmes, mentoring and orientation have several impacts on the job performance of academic staff of Colleges of Education in the North-Central Geographical Zone of Nigeria. Also, Conferences, Seminars. In conclusion, staff development programmes have significant impact on the performance of academic staff of Colleges of Education in their subject matter delivery. Based on the findings, recommendations were made, which include among others; regular, planned and continuous mentoring programmes should be formalized and structured to help new staff in College Education adapt easily.

Another study by Osei-Owusu (2022) examined the impact of Professional Development Programmes on Teachers' Knowledge and Academic Performance of Senior High School Students in Ghana. sought to determine the impact of teachers' professional development on academic performance in senior high schools in Ghana and the mediating role of teachers' professional knowledge. A survey was conducted, and valid questionnaires were retrieved from 4,102 teachers in selected public senior high schools from four regions (including 77 districts and 97 public senior high schools) across the Southern, Middle, and Northern belts of Ghana. The results of the study showed that professional development has a significant positive prediction with professional knowledge. Also, professional development and professional knowledge were positively predicted to academic performance. Finally, the results of the study showed that professional knowledge partially mediated the prediction between professional development and academic performance. The study, therefore, concluded that professional development leads to improvements in the academic performance of students through improvements in teachers' professional knowledge and other characteristics of teachers that were not accounted for by this study. Among other things, the study recommends that teachers should be encouraged to engage in diverse professional development activities that respond to the inadequacies in their professional competencies.

METHODOLOGY

The research design that was adopted for this study was the correlational design. Correlational research design is a research approach that attempts to find the nature of the non-causal relationship existing between a set of variables, which cannot be determined by the researcher or manipulated but are present naturally within a group or sample. South-South Nigeria is one of the six geopolitical zones in Nigeria representing both a geographic and political region of the country. It comprises six states of Akwa Ibom, Bayelsa, Cross River, Delta, Edo, and Rivers respectively.

The population of the study comprised academic staff in all public universities (State and Federal universities) in South-South Nigeria. Information obtained from the Academic Planning Unit Divisions of the universities (2024) revealed that academic staff numbered 29,558 across all public universities in South-South Nigeria.

The sampling technique adopted for this study was the cluster sampling technique. Cluster sampling is a probability sampling technique used when it is difficult or impractical to create a comprehensive list of all individuals in a population such that instead of sampling individuals directly, the population is divided into groups, known as clusters which can be based on geography, institutions, or other natural groupings and the researcher randomly select a segment as sample of the study (Manikaros & Avgerinos, 2023). In using the cluster sampling method, the total number of academic staff was divided into the six States in the South-South Zone of Nigeria as clusters. Thereafter, the researcher selected the faculties of the respective universities in each cluster. The total number of academic staff in each faculty was further clustered into males and females out of which the research randomly selected 2.69 percent of the male and female academic staff as sample for the study. The sample for the study comprised 795 academic staff drawn from all the faculties in State and Federal universities in the South-south of Nigeria representing 2.69 percent of the total population of the study. Among the 795 academic staff selected for the study, 423 were males and 372 were females.

One instrument was used for this study. The instrument is a questionnaire titled "Building and Professional Development and Academic Staff Job Performance Questionnaire (TBP DASJPQ)". The questionnaire is made up of sections A, B and C. Section A was designed to obtain the demographic information of the academic staff in the universities such as Sex, years of experience, highest

qualification, and rank. Similarly, section B of the questionnaire was designed to measure Collaborative and Participatory leadership styles. Section C was designed to measure academic staff job performance. The section B had 20 items (10 items of each sub-variable) designed to measure Collaborative and Participatory leadership styles. The section C had 15 items designed to measure academic staff job performance and the items cut across the five dimensions of academic staff job performance. The items were designed using the four-point Likert scale of Strongly Agree (SA), Agree (A), Disagree (DA) and Strongly Disagree (SD).

The first two validators were experts in Higher Education from the Department of Educational Management, while the other two were experts from Measurement and Evaluation from the Department of Educational Foundation, all in Faculty of Educational Foundation Studies, University of Calabar. Based on their comments and suggestions, the items that were found irrelevant or ambiguous were either dropped or replaced with other items. To ascertain the instrument's reliability, a trial test was carried out using fifty academic staff from Ebonyi State University, Abakalike which was not part of the study. The Cronbach Alpha reliability method was used to establish the reliability coefficient of each sub-scale. The reliability indices of the instrument were .82.

The questionnaire was administered to the 795 academic staff from the two public universities who constituted the sample by the researcher personally with the help of four research assistants that were trained specifically for the purpose of this research exercise. The researcher obtained a letter from the Head of Department (HOD) of Educational Management, to enable him gain access to the respective institutions to administer the instrument. Permission was obtained from the HODs of subjects' departments, after which the instrument was administered to the academic staff. The purpose of the research was carefully explained to the academic staff. However, out of the 795 copies of the questionnaire that were administered, 701 were retrieved and used for analysis after checking for errors. Thus, the researcher recorded 88.2 percent returns rate. Descriptive statistics was used to summarize the data that were generated from the questionnaires. while the Simple Linear Regression was used to test the hypotheses.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Results

The generated data for this study was drawn from a sample of 795 respondents. However, a total of 701 questionnaires were successfully retrieved and were employed in the final analysis. The description of data was done using frequencies (simple percentages and bar charts) the results are presented in Table 5. The results in Table 5 showed that the demographic distribution of respondents for sex showed that female dominated with 466 (53.64%), followed by males with 325 (46.36%). For respondents' years of teaching experience, those with 10 years and below dominated 293 (41.80%) closely followed by those of 11-20years 165 (23.54) while the least were those with 31 years and above 115 (16.41%) For educational qualification (Higher qualification), those with M.Ed/Sc dominated

369 (52.64%) closely followed by those with PhD 210 (29.96%) while the least is PGD/B.Ed/B.Sc 122 (17.40%). Finally concerning rank, lecturer II dominated 298 (25.35%), followed by professors dominated the study 50 (5.67%) closely followed by senior Lecturer II 40(12.61), and the least were graduate assistants 9 (42.92%).

The descriptive statistics analysis was computed for the ten levels of the independent variables inherent in the research study (mean, standard deviation, standard error, maximum and minimum) were computed for the levels of dimensions of the independent variables (administrative practices), with the following dimension team building and professional development including the dependent variable academic staff job performance. The results are presented in Table 2.

Table 1. Demographic description of the study sample (701)

Demographic variable	Category	n	%
Sex	Male	325	46.36
	Female	466	53.64
	Total	701	100
Years of experience	10 years and below	293	41.80
	11-20 years	165	23.54
	21-30 years	128	18.26
	31 years and above	115	16.41
	Total	701	100
Higher qualification	PGD/B.Ed/B.Sc	122	17.40
	M.Ed/Sc	369	52.64
	PhD	210	29.96
	Total	701	100
Rank	Graduate Assistant	18	4.92
	Assistant Lecturer	100	26.73
	Lecturer II	290	25.35
	Lecturer I	122	15.13
	Senior Lecturer	56	12.61
	Associate Professor	97	9.58
	Professor	27	5.
	Total	701	100

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of the study variables performance(n=701)

S/N	Variables	$\bar{X}$	Sd	Sem	Max.	Max.
1	Team building	15.0441	4.21719	.14976	6.00	20.00
2	Professional development	14.7528	4.50835	.16010	7.00	18.00
3	Academic staff job performance	26.7982	8.67538	.30807	8.00	31.00

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

Test of Hypotheses

Hypothesis one

Team building by Deans of faculties does not significantly predict academic staff job performance in universities in south-south Nigeria. To test this hypothesis of the study, simple linear regression analysis was employed with team building as a predictor (independent) variable and academic staff job performance (dependent) variable. The choice of simple linear regression was because the independent and dependent variables are continuously measured and the researcher predicts the dependent variable on the independent variable. The results obtained from the test statistical analysis are summarized and presented in Table 3.

Table 3 interprets the results of the simple linear regression analysis of team building and academic

staff job performance. An r-value of .085 was obtained, resulting in an R-squared value of .007. This implies that the variation in team building can account for about 0.7% of the total variation in academic staff job performance thus, the p-value (.016) associated with the computed F-value (9.871) is less than .05. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that the team building significantly predicts academic staff job performance with both the regression constant (29.444) and coefficient (-.176) making a significant contribution to the prediction model ($t = 25.860$ & -2.413 respectively, $p = .000 < .05$). The mathematical prediction of the regression model is depicted by the following equation $y = 29.444 + -.176x$ thus, $x =$ team building and $y =$ academic staff job performance.

Table 3. Summary of Simple Linear Regression Analysis for the relationship between team building by Deans of faculties and academic staff job performance in universities in South-South Nigeria

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	Sig
Regression	835.572	1	835.572	9.871	.016
Residual	59172.146	699	84.653		
Total	60007.718	700			
Model	B	Std Error	Beta	T	Sig
Constant	29.444	1.139		25.860	.000
Team building	-.176	.073	-.085	-2.413	.016

*significant at .05

R = 0.083

R² = 0.007

Adjusted R² = 0.006

Std. Error Mean = 8.64909

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

Hypothesis Two

Professional development by Deans of faculties does not significantly predict academic staff job performance in universities in south-south Nigeria. To test this hypothesis of the study, simple linear regression analysis was employed with professional development as predictor (independent) variable and academic staff job performance (dependent) variable. The choice of simple linear regression was because the independent and dependent variables are continuously measured and the researcher predicts the dependent variable on the independent variable.

The results obtained from the test statistical analysis are summarized and presented in Table 4.

Table 4 interprets the results of the simple linear regression analysis of professional development and academic staff job performance. An r-value of .134 was obtained, resulting in an R-squared value of .018. This implies that the variation in professional development can account for about 1.8% of the total variation in academic staff job performance thus, the p-value (.000) associated with the computed F-value (12.839) is less than .05. As a result, the null hypothesis was rejected. This means that

professional development significantly predicts academic staff job performance with both the regression constant (30.609) and coefficient (-.258) making a significant contribution to the prediction model ($t = 29.267$ & -3.810 respectively, $p = .000 < .05$).

The mathematical prediction of the regression model is depicted by the following equation $y = 30.609 + -.258x$ thus, x = professional development and y = academic staff job performance.

Table 4. Summary of Simple Linear Regression Analysis for the relationship between professional development by Deans of faculties and academic staff job performance in universities in South-South Nigeria.

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F-value	Sig
Regression	1074.294	1	1074.294	12.839	.000
Residual	58533.424	699	83.739		
Total	59607.718	700			
Model	B	Std Error	Beta	T	Sig
Constant	30.609	1.046		29.267	.000
Professional development	-.258	.068	-.134	-3.810	.000

*significant at .05

$R = 0.134$

$R^2 = 0.018$

Adjusted $R^2 = 0.017$

Std. Error Mean = 8.60228

Source: Researcher's Fieldwork, 2024

Discussions

The results revealed that there is a significant prediction of team building of Deans of faculties on academic staff job performance. It has been said that team building is essential to so many critical functions of a team, including communication, collaboration, morale and productivity. Most importantly, team building contributes to establishing and maintaining team trust, which is directly tied to innovation, effective decision making and employee retention. The purpose of team building activities is to motivate your people to work together, to develop their strengths, and to address any weaknesses. Team-building events provide a space for employees to understand how their organization expects them to behave. On top of that, they reduce toxicity in the work environment and bring everyone on the same page, improving the overall culture.

One of the primary purposes of team-building exercises is to improve communication in the workplace. Exercise can help employees feel more comfortable with each other, so when they need to communicate, it's more effortless and natural. The findings agree with the findings of Moses, Caroline, Jacklyne and David (2019), Shouvik, and Mohammed (2018) and Gokhan, Tunahan

and Owen (2022) Ahmad, Abdulmajeed, Omar, Yasin, Baharom, Mohd and Muhd (2018) the findings showed that to be perfect in providing skills that assist workers come to be responsible team players, resistant and with better skills to satisfy sales targets. Around 60.4% determined that without a doubt team building is an effective performance approach. The research also established that team building had a favourable impact on the enhanced performance of employees in the telecommunications sector. Again, Keith, Anderson, Gaskin and Dean (2018), Sanyal and Hisam (2018), Kalogiannidis (2020) and Khan and Wajidi (2019) results reveal a substantial and strong connection in between the independent variables of teambuilding, trusting climate, framework and management, performance examination and rewards, and the productivity of the Agriculture Cooperative in Iraq. Team building improves compatibility between team members and creates harmony that increases the productivity and success of the firm. Team building is often considered an ideal approach for developing high-performing teams with preferable interpersonal skills, team resilience and a better understanding of firms' goals. It enables employees to relieve stress from ongoing work and refresh their minds.

The results revealed that the professional development by Deans of faculties has a significant prediction on academic staff job performance. Thus, professional development is the continued learning and training taken to get ahead in one's career. Professional development is about you and your commitment to actively evolving your professional knowledge, skills, and abilities so that you can remain competitive in the job. professional development enhances your confidence and self-esteem. Not only allowing deans to test our current knowledge and skills but by developing new knowledge to enhance our practice. This confidence can be further translated into advocacy and the challenge of poor practice. Professional development can lead to better job performance and increased job satisfaction. The finding agrees with the study of Owede (2023), Malami, and Onen (2023), Benedict (2022) and Sadiqa (2016) findings of the study revealed that teachers' performance was positively impacted through regular in-service training, workshops, seminars and mentoring. The results also agree with the study of Idakwoji, and Makolo (2022), Osei-Owusu (2022) and Ogbu, Ojo and Ozah (2018) findings from the study revealed that staff training has a significant impact on academic staff productivity. Finally, staff training has a significant effect on academic staff's work quality. Finally, Muma, Iravo and Omondi (701 4), Benedicta and Appiah (2020), Quarty (2022) and Chemutai and Khalili (2022) study found that staff training and development has an insignificant effect on the academic performance of lecturers at Rongo University ($p\text{-value}=0.000$). The study found that Rongo University provided little training to the academic staff and about half of the academic staff had received training since they got employed in Rongo University.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Conclusion

The findings of this study revealed that team building by Deans of faculties significantly predicts academic staff job performance in universities of South-South Nigeria. This underscores the importance of collaborative practices such as fostering trust, promoting cohesion, and encouraging collective problem-solving in enhancing staff productivity. It suggests that when deans deliberately cultivate teamwork, academic staff are more motivated, better supported, and more effective in delivering teaching, research, and community service. Similarly, the results demonstrated that professional development provided by Deans of faculties significantly predicts academic staff job

performance. This indicates that opportunities for continuous learning, training, mentorship, and scholarly engagement are vital in strengthening staff capacity to perform effectively. Professional development initiatives not only equip staff with new skills but also boost their confidence, job satisfaction, and overall commitment to institutional goals. Taken together, these findings affirm that leadership practices which prioritize team building and professional development serve as critical drivers of academic staff productivity.

Recommendations

It is hereby recommended that;

1. Deans should institutionalize team-building activities such as faculty retreats, workshops, collaborative research clusters, and regular consultative meetings to foster cohesion, trust, and collaboration among academic staff.
2. Universities should provide resources and time allocations for team-building exercises to ensure they become part of faculty culture rather than ad-hoc events.
3. Faculty leaders should prioritize continuous professional development by organizing regular training, mentorship programmes, seminars, and capacity-building workshops aligned with emerging trends in teaching, research, and technology.
4. Universities should collaborate with agencies such as the National Universities Commission (NUC) and TETFund to secure funding for professional development opportunities, including international conferences and research grants.

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