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TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT AND EMPLOYEE RETENTION IN SELECTED BEVERAGE FIRMS IN SOUTH-SOUTH NIGERIA.

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ABSTRACT

This study examined the relationship between training and development and employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria. Specifically, the study assessed the relationship between off-the-job training and employee retention, as well as the relationship between on-the-job training and employee retention. A cross-sectional survey research design was adopted. The study covered a population of 211 employees, from which a sample size of 136 was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan formula. A structured questionnaire was used for data collection, and 130 valid responses were obtained and analysed. Descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis were employed to analyse the data at a 0.05 level of significance. The findings revealed that off-the-job training had a positive and statistically significant relationship with employee retention ($B = 1.153$, $t = 9.908$, $p < 0.001$). Conversely, on-the-job training had a negative but statistically significant relationship with employee retention ($B = -0.301$, $t = -3.035$, $p = 0.003$). The overall regression model was statistically significant ($F = 135.242$, $p < 0.001$), with an R-square value of 0.680, indicating that the two dimensions of training and development jointly explained 68.0% of the variation in employee retention. The study concluded that training and development are important considerations in employee retention, although their

individual relationships with retention differ. It was therefore recommended that beverage firms should strengthen relevant off-the-job training programmes and review their existing on-the-job training practices to ensure that workplace learning adequately supports employees' professional development and retention.

KEYWORDS: Training and development, off-the-job training, on-the-job training, employee retention, beverage firms.

1.1 INTRODUCTION

The success and sustainability of organisations depend largely on their ability to attract, develop and retain employees who possess the knowledge, skills and competencies required to achieve organisational objectives. In the contemporary business environment, characterised by technological advancement, changing consumer preferences, intense competition and increasing operational costs, organisations require a competent and stable workforce to maintain productivity and sustain their market position. Employees constitute an important organisational resource because their knowledge, experience, commitment and capabilities influence product quality, operational efficiency, innovation and overall organisational performance. Employee retention, therefore, represents an important human resource management concern because the continuous loss of experienced employees may result in increased recruitment and training costs, loss of organisational knowledge, disruption of operational activities and reduced organisational effectiveness.

Employee retention refers to an organisation's ability to maintain its workforce over time by providing favourable working conditions, career development opportunities and appropriate human resource practices that encourage employees to remain. One important strategy for achieving this is training and development, which involves deliberate organisational efforts to improve employees' knowledge, skills, abilities and professional competencies. Training generally focuses on equipping employees with the skills required to perform their present responsibilities effectively, while development emphasises their long-term professional growth and preparation for future responsibilities. Studies have associated organisational development opportunities with improved employee attachment and reduced intention to leave, suggesting that employees may be more willing to remain in organisations where their professional growth is valued (Ng et al., 2024).

In the beverage industry, training and development is particularly important because production, packaging, quality assurance, marketing and distribution activities require

employees to possess relevant technical, operational and managerial competencies. Beverage firms operate in a competitive environment where product quality, hygiene, equipment maintenance, workplace safety, inventory management and timely distribution are essential to organisational survival. Employees working in production departments require practical knowledge of operating processing and packaging equipment, while quality-control personnel need competencies in product inspection, hygiene management and quality assurance. Similarly, employees in marketing, logistics and distribution require appropriate communication, customer-service and supply-chain management skills.

These competencies must be continuously strengthened to enable employees to respond effectively to changes in production technology, regulatory requirements and consumer expectations. In Nigeria, the beverage industry includes firms involved in the production and distribution of soft drinks, bottled water, malt drinks, beer and other consumable beverages. The industry's operational requirements make employee competence and workforce stability particularly important. Where organisations fail to provide adequate training and development opportunities, employees may experience difficulties performing their duties, reduced confidence and limited career advancement prospects, potentially increasing their willingness to seek employment elsewhere. Conversely, investment in employee training may improve job competence, demonstrate organisational support and strengthen employees' attachment to their employers. Awoniyi et al. (2022), in their study of training and development in selected beverage companies in South-West Nigeria, found that training and development positively and significantly influenced employee productivity. Similarly, Omukpai et al. (2025), in their study of quoted food and beverage manufacturing companies in South-South Nigeria, reported a positive and significant relationship between training and employee productivity. Although these studies established the relevance of training to organisational outcomes, their primary focus on productivity rather than employee retention leaves an important issue for further investigation.

Two important dimensions of training and development considered in this study are on-the-job training and off-the-job training. On-the-job training refers to a learning process through which employees acquire practical knowledge and skills while performing their normal work responsibilities, either through learning-by-doing or under the guidance of supervisors and experienced colleagues (Korpi & Tåhlin, 2021; UNESCO-UNEVOC, 2009). Off-the-job training, on the other hand, involves organised learning activities conducted separately from employees' routine work activities, such as workshops, seminars, professional courses and formal training programmes (Korpi & Tåhlin, 2021). It provides employees with

opportunities to acquire broader knowledge, develop professional capabilities and improve their career prospects. When employees perceive that their organisations are investing in their professional growth, they may develop stronger organisational attachment, job commitment and willingness to remain with their employers (Ng et al., 2024; Jun & Eckardt, 2023). However, the effectiveness of training depends on its relevance to employees' job responsibilities, the quality of instruction, organisational support and the applicability of acquired knowledge to workplace activities (Jun & Eckardt, 2023). Empirical evidence from Nigeria also supports this relationship. Aruoren and Echewa (2023), in their study of La-Sien Bottling Company Limited and Multipro Consumer Products Limited, with headquarters in Rivers State, found that employee training and development were positively and significantly related to employee retention. Their findings reinforce the relevance of training and development to workforce stability in consumer goods organisations.

Despite the importance of training and development in strengthening employee competencies and organisational effectiveness, employee retention remains a significant human resource management concern, particularly in manufacturing organisations operating within competitive labour markets. In selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria, the need to retain experienced employees is important because production and distribution activities depend on technical knowledge, familiarity with organisational procedures, quality-control standards and effective coordination among departments. The departure of experienced employees may lead to additional recruitment and replacement-training expenses, loss of organisational experience, reduced operational continuity and possible interruptions in production activities. Although previous studies, including those of Awoniyi et al. (2022) and Omukpai et al. (2025), have examined training in relation to employee productivity, and other Nigerian studies have investigated training and development in relation to employee retention, there remains a need to establish the separate contributions of on-the-job and off-the-job training to employee retention within selected beverage firms in the South-South region.

The main objective of the study is to examine the effect of training and development on employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria.

The specific objectives are to:

1. Examine the effect of on-the-job training on employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria.

2. Determine the effect of off-the-job training on employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria.

1.2 Research Hypotheses

The following null hypotheses will guide the study:

H_{01}: On-the-job training has no significant effect on employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria.

H_{02}: Off-the-job training has no significant effect on employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Conceptual Framework

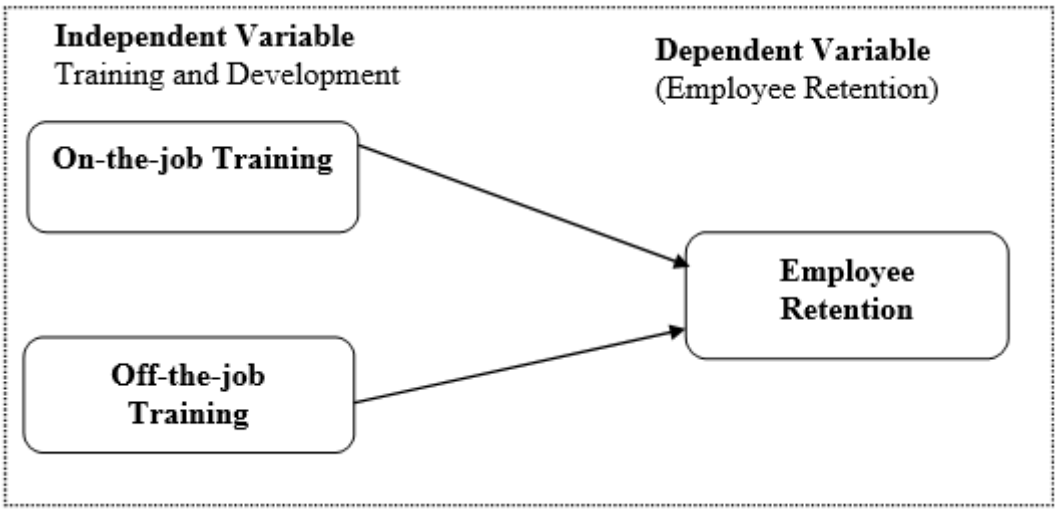


Figure 1: Conceptual Framework showing the effect of Training and Development on Employee Retention of Beverage Firms in South-South Nigeria.

2.1.1 Concept of Training and Development

Training and development is a human resource management practice through which organisations improve employees' knowledge, skills, abilities and competencies to enhance their effectiveness and prepare them for changing job responsibilities. Training focuses on equipping employees with the specific knowledge and practical skills required to perform their present duties effectively, whereas development emphasises continuous learning, professional growth and preparation for future organisational responsibilities. According to Adeyemo, Iliyasu, Tende, Dike and Omonibo (2024), training and development constitute important organisational practices for improving employee satisfaction and supporting workforce stability. Similarly, Gorondutse and Umar (2024), in their study of tertiary

educational institutions in Kano State, Nigeria, established that training and development positively influenced employee performance and commitment. These findings demonstrate that training and development go beyond improving immediate job performance to include strengthening employees' capabilities and organisational relationships.

In the context of this study, training and development is examined through two dimensions: on-the-job training and off-the-job training. On-the-job training refers to a learning process through which employees acquire practical knowledge and skills while performing their normal work responsibilities under the guidance of supervisors, experienced colleagues or designated trainers. It includes coaching, mentoring, job rotation, practical demonstrations and work instruction. Off-the-job training, on the other hand, involves organised learning activities conducted outside employees' immediate work environment, including workshops, seminars, conferences, professional courses and formal training programmes. Igbinosun and Imahsunu (2026), in their empirical study of Nigerian Bottling Company Limited, Benin City, specifically examined on-the-job and off-the-job training as components of employee training and development. Their findings demonstrated that on-the-job training significantly predicted employee productivity, while off-the-job training had a strong positive relationship with quality of output. This evidence highlights the relevance of both training approaches in developing employees' competencies within the Nigerian beverage manufacturing industry.

Furthermore, training and development is important to employee retention because employees may develop stronger organisational attachment when they perceive that their employers are committed to their professional growth and career advancement. Opportunities for continuous learning may improve job satisfaction, employee commitment and willingness to remain with an organisation. Umana, Umana and Odohoedi (2024), in their study of commercial banks in Akwa Ibom State, Nigeria, found that training and development had a positive and statistically significant influence on employee retention. However, Adeyemo et al. (2024), in their investigation of listed insurance companies in Nigeria, found that training frequency and quality significantly influenced job satisfaction but did not significantly affect turnover intention. These findings indicate that the relationship between training and employee retention may depend on organisational conditions and other workplace factors. Therefore, this study conceptualises training and development as the systematic provision of workplace-based and external learning opportunities through on-the-job and off-the-job training to improve employees' competencies, professional growth and willingness to remain in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria.

2.1.2 On-the-Job Training

On-the-job training refers to a systematic learning process through which employees acquire relevant knowledge, practical skills and work experience while performing their assigned responsibilities within the organisation. It involves learning through actual work activities under the supervision and guidance of experienced employees, supervisors or designated trainers. Common methods of on-the-job training include coaching, mentoring, job rotation, apprenticeship, job instruction and practical demonstration. According to Okwurume (2023), on-the-job training is an important employee-development practice that enables workers to acquire practical competencies and improve their efficiency and standard of performance. Unlike classroom-based learning, this approach allows employees to gain experience within their actual work environment and become familiar with organisational procedures, equipment and performance expectations.

In beverage firms, on-the-job training involves practical instruction and guidance provided to employees in production, packaging, quality control, maintenance, marketing and distribution departments. For instance, production employees may receive practical instruction on operating processing and packaging machines, while quality-control personnel may be guided on product inspection, hygiene procedures and quality assurance. This training approach can contribute to employee retention by improving workers' confidence, reducing difficulties associated with job responsibilities and demonstrating management's commitment to employee development. Okwurume (2023), in a study of 121 employees of deposit money banks in Rivers State, found that on-the-job training had a significant relationship with efficiency and standard performance. Similarly, Aruoren and Echewa (2023) found that employee training and development were positively and significantly related to employee retention in La-Sien Bottling Company Limited and Multipro Consumer Products Limited, both headquartered in Rivers State. Although the latter study examined training and development jointly, its findings provide relevant Nigerian evidence of the potential contribution of employee-development practices to workforce stability.

2.1.3 Off-the-Job Training

Off-the-job training refers to an organised learning process through which employees acquire additional knowledge, technical skills and professional competencies outside their immediate work environment. It involves structured training activities designed to improve employees' understanding of their responsibilities, introduce them to new developments in their occupations and prepare them for changing organisational demands. Common methods include workshops, seminars, conferences, professional courses, classroom instruction,

simulation exercises and external training programmes. Yakubu, Abubakar and Daniel (2023) examined off-the-job training as a dimension of training practice among deposit money banks in Kano State, Nigeria, demonstrating its relevance as a distinct approach to employee learning and development. Off-the-job training provides employees with opportunities to concentrate on acquiring new knowledge without the immediate pressures of their daily work activities.

In selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria, off-the-job training may involve sponsoring employees for professional courses in production technology, quality management, occupational health and safety, inventory management and supply-chain operations. It may also include management workshops and seminars aimed at improving employees' leadership, communication and decision-making capabilities. Such opportunities may enhance employees' professional growth, increase their perception of organisational support and strengthen their willingness to remain with their employers. However, the contribution of off-the-job training to employee retention depends on the relevance of training programmes, the quality of facilitators, management support and opportunities to apply acquired knowledge after training. Okwurume (2023) reported that off-the-job training had a significant relationship with employee efficiency among deposit money banks in Rivers State, although its relationship with standard performance was weak. Furthermore, Aruoren and Echewa (2023) established a positive and significant relationship between employee training and development and employee retention in Nigerian consumer goods companies. These findings provide a basis for investigating whether off-the-job training contributes to employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria.

2.1.4 Concept of Employee Retention

Employee retention refers to the ability of an organisation to maintain its employees over a sustained period by implementing appropriate human resource management practices that encourage them to remain in their jobs. It involves deliberate organisational efforts to minimise unnecessary employee turnover, preserve valuable human capital and maintain workforce stability. Employee retention is important because experienced employees possess organisational knowledge, technical competencies and work-related experience that contribute to operational efficiency and organisational performance. According to Hom, Lee, Shaw and Hausknecht (2017), employee turnover and retention are influenced by several individual and organisational factors, including job satisfaction, organisational commitment, leadership practices and employment opportunities. Similarly, Dechawatanapaisal (2018)

explained that organisational practices that strengthen employees' attachment and engagement can contribute to their intention to remain with their employers. Therefore, employee retention should be considered a strategic human resource management priority, particularly in manufacturing organisations where employee experience and technical knowledge are essential for maintaining production standards.

In selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria, employee retention involves the ability of management to encourage skilled, experienced and competent employees to continue working within the organisation rather than seek alternative employment. This is particularly important because beverage production requires employees with practical knowledge of processing equipment, packaging operations, quality control, safety procedures and distribution activities. The departure of experienced employees may result in increased recruitment and replacement-training expenses, loss of organisational knowledge and disruption of production activities. Consequently, organisations need to adopt human resource practices that strengthen employees' job satisfaction, organisational commitment and perceptions of career opportunities. Training and development may contribute to this objective by providing employees with opportunities to improve their competencies, acquire new knowledge and advance professionally. Aruoren and Echewa (2023), in their study of consumer goods companies in Nigeria, found that employee training and development were positively and significantly associated with employee retention. Similarly, Umana, Umana and Odohoedi (2024) reported a positive relationship between training and development and employee retention among commercial banks in Akwa Ibom State. These findings indicate that investment in employee development can be an important consideration in promoting workforce stability. Accordingly, this study conceptualises employee retention as the ability and willingness of employees in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria to continue their employment with their respective organisations, supported by opportunities for learning, professional development and favourable organisational practices.

2.2 Theoretical Review

The study is anchored on two relevant theories: Human Capital Theory and Social Exchange Theory. These theories provide explanations for how training and development, particularly on-the-job and off-the-job training, may influence employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria.

2.2.1 Human Capital Theory

Human Capital Theory was originally developed by Becker (1964) and explains how investment in individuals' knowledge, skills, education and competencies contributes to

improved productivity and economic value. The theory views employees' knowledge and skills as valuable assets that organisations can develop through education, training and practical experience. According to the theory, investment in human capital improves employees' capabilities, increases their efficiency and enables organisations to achieve better operational outcomes. Training and development therefore represent important investments through which organisations strengthen their workforce and improve their competitive advantage. In the context of this study, on-the-job training enables employees to acquire practical skills through workplace experience, coaching, mentoring and job instruction, while off-the-job training provides opportunities to acquire additional knowledge through workshops, seminars, professional courses and other structured learning programmes.

The relevance of Human Capital Theory to this study lies in its explanation of the importance of developing employees' competencies as a means of strengthening organisational effectiveness and workforce stability. In selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria, employees require specialised knowledge and practical skills to operate production equipment, maintain product quality, observe safety standards and perform distribution activities effectively. Providing appropriate training opportunities can improve employees' competence, confidence and professional growth, thereby increasing their value to the organisation. Employees may also be encouraged to remain where they perceive that their acquired skills are recognised and that opportunities exist for continuous development. However, Human Capital Theory does not independently explain why employees choose to remain with an organisation after receiving training. This limitation makes it necessary to complement the theory with Social Exchange Theory, which explains how employees respond to organisational investment and support.

2.2.2 Social Exchange Theory

Social Exchange Theory was advanced by Homans (1958) and further developed by Blau (1964). The theory explains relationships between individuals and organisations in terms of reciprocal exchanges involving benefits, obligations, trust and mutual expectations. It proposes that when one party provides valuable benefits or support, the receiving party may feel an obligation to reciprocate through favourable attitudes and behaviours. In organisational settings, employees may respond positively when employers demonstrate concern for their welfare, professional growth and career development. Training and development can therefore be regarded as an organisational investment that communicates recognition, support and concern for employees' future capabilities. When employees perceive that their organisations are committed to improving their knowledge and skills, they

may reciprocate through greater commitment, improved performance and willingness to remain with the organisation.

The relevance of Social Exchange Theory to this study is that it provides an explanation of how on-the-job and off-the-job training may influence employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria. When management provides practical workplace instruction, coaching, mentoring, workshops and professional development opportunities, employees may interpret these activities as evidence that the organisation values their contributions and is interested in their future. This perception may strengthen trust, organisational attachment and the willingness to maintain the employment relationship. Conversely, where employees experience inadequate training opportunities and limited organisational support, they may perceive an imbalance in the employment relationship and become more willing to seek alternative employment. Therefore, Social Exchange Theory provides a basis for explaining why employees who receive meaningful training and development opportunities may demonstrate stronger intentions to remain with their organisations.

2.3 Empirical Review

Igbinosun and Imahsunu (2026), in their study titled Employee Training and Development as a Driver of Workers' Performance in Nigerian Manufacturing: Empirical Evidence from Nigerian Bottling Company Ltd, Benin City, examined the influence of employee training and development on workers' performance in Nigerian Bottling Company Limited, Benin City, Edo State. The study adopted a quantitative cross-sectional survey design with a population of 390 full-time employees, from which a sample of 120 respondents was selected using the Taro Yamane formula and proportionate stratified random sampling. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire and analysed using simple and multiple linear regression, Pearson correlation and analysis of variance. The findings revealed that on-the-job training significantly predicted employee productivity ($\beta = 0.713$, $R^2 = 0.508$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that on-the-job training explained 50.8% of the variation in employee productivity. The study concluded that systematic training interventions were important determinants of employee performance and recommended regular training-needs assessments and the institutionalisation of structured training programmes. Although the study provides relevant evidence from a beverage manufacturing company, it focused on employee productivity rather than employee retention. Consequently, the extent to which on-the-job training influences employees' willingness to remain in beverage firms remains insufficiently established.

Okwurume (2023), in a study titled Employee Training and Organizational Performance of Selected Banks in Rivers State, investigated the relationship between employee training and organisational performance among deposit money banks operating in Rivers State, Nigeria. The study adopted a quasi-experimental research design and surveyed 121 bank employees using a structured questionnaire. The data collected were analysed using Spearman Rank Order Correlation with the aid of SPSS version 20.0. The findings revealed that on-the-job training had a significant relationship with organisational efficiency and standard performance. The study concluded that workplace training contributes to improved employee effectiveness and organisational performance. It recommended that organisations should make deliberate efforts to train and develop employees to improve operational efficiency and performance standards. Although the study was conducted in Rivers State, its focus on banking organisations and organisational performance differs from the present study, which examines employee retention in selected beverage firms. This creates a contextual and empirical gap regarding the influence of on-the-job training on employee retention in the beverage industry.

Yakubu, Abubakar and Daniel (2023), in their study titled Effect of Training Practice on Employees' Job Performance at Deposit Money Banks in Kano State, Nigeria, examined the effect of on-the-job and off-the-job training on employees' job performance in deposit money banks in Kano State. The study adopted a survey research design and covered a population of 1,382 employees, from which a sample of 372 respondents was determined using the Yamane sample-size formula. A convenient sampling technique was used in selecting respondents, while data were collected through an adapted structured questionnaire. The researchers analysed the data using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) with SmartPLS 3.0. The findings revealed that off-the-job training had a positive but statistically insignificant effect on employee job performance, whereas on-the-job training had a positive and significant effect. The study concluded that off-the-job training programmes must be properly designed and aligned with employees' actual job responsibilities to produce meaningful organisational benefits. It recommended that management should ensure that external training programmes are relevant to employees' work requirements. Although the study distinguished between the two training approaches, its concentration on employee job performance in the banking sector leaves a gap concerning the relationship between off-the-job training and employee retention in beverage firms in South-South Nigeria.

Bello and Mela (2022), in their study titled In-Service and Off-the-Job Training and Workers' Performance in Federal University Gashua, Yobe State, Nigeria: The Nexus, investigated the

influence of in-service training and staff development on workers' job performance and optimal productivity at Federal University Gashua, Yobe State. The study adopted a survey research design and used a population of 244 employees, from which a sample of 152 respondents was selected through simple random sampling. However, 134 completed questionnaires were returned and used for analysis. Data were analysed using analysis of variance and multiple regression analysis, while the hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance. The study examined formal and external training opportunities as part of employee development and established the importance of structured training in improving workers' performance and productivity. It recommended that organisations should provide continuous training and development opportunities to strengthen employees' knowledge and work capabilities. However, the study was conducted in a public university and concentrated on employee performance rather than employee retention. Thus, its findings cannot fully explain how off-the-job training influences employees' decisions to remain in private beverage manufacturing organisations in South-South Nigeria.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study adopted a cross-sectional survey research design. The design was considered appropriate because it enabled the researcher to obtain data from a relatively large number of respondents across the selected beverage manufacturing organisations in South-South Nigeria at a specific point in time. It also provided a suitable basis for examining the effects of the study variables and generalising the findings to the study population. The population of the study comprised 211 management staff of the six selected beverage manufacturing firms in South-South Nigeria. The population figures were obtained from the Human Resources (HR) units of the respective Firms. The distribution of the study population is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1: Population Distribution of the Selected Beverage Firms.

S/N	Beverage Firms	Population
1.	Nigerian Bottling Company Limited (NBC)	50
2.	International Breweries Plc (Port Harcourt operations)	45
3.	La Sien Bottling Company Limited	25
4.	Champion Breweries Plc	35
5.	Guinness Nigeria Plc	36
6.	Palm Nectar Breweries Limited	20
	Total	**211**

Source: Human Resources Units of the Selected Beverage Firms (2026).

The sample size for the study was determined using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula for determining sample size. For a population of 211, the table indicated a sample size of 136 respondents. The sample size was therefore considered adequate for the study. Since the study population was distributed across six different Firms, the sample of 136 respondents was proportionately allocated to the beverage Firms to ensure that each Firm was represented according to its share of the total population. The proportionate allocation was determined using the formula:

$$n_i = \frac{N_i}{N} \times n$$

Where:

n_i = Sample size allocated to each firm

N_i = Population of each firm

N = Total population of the six firm

n = Total sample size

The same procedure was applied to the remaining hospitals. The resulting proportionate sample allocation is presented in Table 3.2.

Table 3.2: Proportionate Allocation of Sample Size.

S/N	Beverage Firms	Population (N_i)	Proportionate Sample
1.	Nigerian Bottling Company Limited (NBC)	50	32
2.	International Breweries Plc (Port Harcourt operations)	45	29
3.	La Sien Bottling Company Limited	25	16
4.	Champion Breweries Plc	35	23
5.	Guinness Nigeria Plc	36	23
6.	Palm Nectar Breweries Limited	20	13
	Total	**211**	**136**

Source: Researcher's computation (2026)

A proportionate stratified sampling procedure followed by simple random sampling was used to select the respondents. The six selected Firms constituted the sampling strata. The total sample size of 211 respondents was first distributed proportionately among the Beverage Firms based on their respective staff populations, as shown in Table 3.2. Thereafter, simple random sampling was used to select respondents from the management staff within each Beverage Firms. This procedure ensured that respondents were selected from each Beverage

Firms in proportion to its population size and that eligible members of the population had an equal opportunity of being selected. Data were collected using a structured questionnaire developed in line with the objectives and hypotheses of the study. The questionnaire employed a five-point Likert scale, ranging from 5 = Strongly Agree (SA), 4 = Agree (A), 3 = Undecided (U), 2 = Disagree (D), to 1 = Strongly Disagree (SD). The instrument was structured into sections covering the relevant dimensions of the independent and dependent variables. The validity of the research instrument was established through content and construct validity. For content validity, copies of the questionnaire were subjected to expert evaluation by specialists in Business Management and related fields to determine the adequacy, relevance, clarity and appropriateness of the items in measuring the study variables. Construct validity was further assessed using Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA). Items with factor loadings of 0.50 and above were considered acceptable for retention. The reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to determine the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. The reliability test was conducted after the pilot administration of the instrument. A Cronbach's alpha coefficient of 0.70 or above was considered acceptable for establishing satisfactory internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha reliability test is presented in Table 3.3.

Table 3.3: Cronbach's Alpha Reliability Coefficients of the Research Instrument.

Variables/Dimensions	**Number of Items**	**Cronbach's Alpha**
On-the-job Training	5	0.82
Off-the-job Training	5	0.85
Employee Retention	5	0.79
Overall	15	**0.86**

Source: Field Survey, (2026)

The reliability of the research instrument was assessed using Cronbach's Alpha coefficient. As presented in Table 3.3, the Cronbach's Alpha coefficients for the dimensions ranged from 0.79 to 0.88, while the overall reliability coefficient was 0.86. These values exceed the commonly accepted threshold of 0.70, indicating a satisfactory level of internal consistency among the questionnaire items. Therefore, the research instrument was considered reliable and suitable for the study.

The data collected were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. Descriptive statistics, particularly frequency, percentage, mean and standard deviation, were used to summarise the responses and describe the demographic characteristics of the respondents.

Inferential statistics were used to test the hypotheses formulated for the study. Specifically, multiple regression analysis was employed to determine the effect of each dimension of the independent variable on the dependent variable. The decision on the hypotheses was based on a 0.05 level of significance. The statistical analysis was conducted using Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS), version 27

4 RESULTS/FINDINGS

A total of 136 copies of the questionnaire were administered to respondents across the six selected beverage Firms in South-South Nigeria. Of this number, 130 copies were duly completed and returned, representing a response rate of 95.6%. The 130 completed questionnaires were considered adequate and constituted the basis for the subsequent data analysis. The remaining 6 copies of the questionnaire were either not returned or were not sufficiently completed for inclusion in the analysis, representing a non-response rate of 4.4%. The high response rate provided an adequate pool of usable responses for the statistical analysis of the study.

4.1 Descriptive Statistics Table

Statistics				
		Off-the-job- Training	**On-the-Job Training**	**Employee_Retention**
N	Valid	130	130	130
	Missing	0	0	0
Mean		3.8585	3.5738	3.7415
Std. Deviation		.77657	.91037	.80133
Skewness		-.510	-.431	-.411
Std. Error of Skewness		.212	.212	.212
Kurtosis		-.356	-.390	-1.053
Std. Error of Kurtosis		.422	.422	.422

The descriptive statistics presented indicate that 130 valid responses were obtained for each of the three study variables, namely off-the-job training, on-the-job training and employee retention, with no missing observations. The mean score for off-the-job training was 3.8585, with a standard deviation of 0.77657, indicating a relatively high level of agreement among respondents regarding the practice of off-the-job training in the selected beverage firms. Similarly, on-the-job training recorded a mean score of 3.5738 and a standard deviation of 0.91037, suggesting that respondents generally acknowledged the availability and practice of on-the-job training, although their opinions showed comparatively greater variation. Employee retention recorded a mean score of 3.7415 and a standard deviation of 0.80133, indicating a relatively favourable perception of employee retention among the respondents.

Furthermore, the skewness statistics for off-the-job training (-0.510), on-the-job training (-0.431) and employee retention (-0.411) were all negative, indicating that the distributions were slightly skewed towards higher response scores. The kurtosis values of -0.356, -0.390 and -1.053 respectively indicate relatively flatter distributions compared with the normal distribution. These values suggest that the study variables do not exhibit serious departures from distributional symmetry. Overall, the descriptive statistics reveal that respondents generally expressed favourable opinions regarding training and development practices and employee retention in the selected beverage firms. The results also provide preliminary evidence that the variables are suitable for further statistical analysis, subject to the relevant regression diagnostic tests.

4.2 Test of Hypothesis

Model Summary[b]

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Durbin-Watson
1	.825[a]	.680	.675	.45651	1.392

a. Predictors: (Constant), On_the_Job_training, Off_the_job_Training

b. Dependent Variable: Employee_Retention

ANOVA[a]

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	56.369	2	28.184	135.242	.000[b]
	Residual	26.467	127	.208		
	Total	82.836	129			

a. Dependent Variable: Employee_Retention

b. Predictors: (Constant), On_the_Job_training, Off_the_job_Training

Coefficients[a]

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.370	.209		1.768	.079
	Off_the_job_Training	1.153	.116	1.117	9.908	.000
	On_the_Job_training	-.301	.099	-.342	-3.035	.003

a. Dependent Variable: Employee_Retention

The model summary indicates a strong positive relationship between training and development and employee retention, with an R-value of 0.825. The R-square value of 0.680 shows that off-the-job training and on-the-job training jointly explain 68.0% of the variation in employee retention, while the remaining 32.0% is attributable to other factors not included in the model. The adjusted R-square of 0.675 further confirms the model's explanatory strength. The ANOVA results reveal that the regression model is statistically significant ($F = 135.242$, $p < 0.001$), indicating that off-the-job training and on-the-job training jointly have a

significant relationship with employee retention in the selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria.

The coefficient results show that off-the-job training has a positive and statistically significant relationship with employee retention (B = 1.153, t = 9.908, p < 0.001). Conversely, on-the-job training has a negative but statistically significant relationship with employee retention (B = -0.301, t = -3.035, p = 0.003). This implies that off-the-job training contributes positively to employee retention, whereas on-the-job training demonstrates an inverse relationship when off-the-job training is held constant. Overall, the findings indicate that the two dimensions of training and development significantly relate to employee retention, although their individual contributions differ in direction.

The constant has an unstandardised coefficient of 0.370, a t-value of 1.768 and a probability value of 0.079. Since the probability value is greater than 0.05, the constant is not statistically significant. The estimated regression equation is expressed as follows:

$ER = 0.370 + 1.153OJT_f - 0.301OJT_n$

Where:

ER = Employee Retention

OJT = Off-the-job Training

OJT = On-the-job Training

Overall, the regression results demonstrate that training and development jointly have a statistically significant relationship with employee retention in the selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria, explaining 68.0% of the variation in employee retention. However, the individual results reveal different relationships: off-the-job training has a positive and significant coefficient, whereas on-the-job training has a negative and significant coefficient. This suggests that the contribution of training and development to employee retention may depend on the nature, quality and manner in which training programmes are implemented. The findings therefore highlight the importance of strengthening off-the-job training programmes while reviewing the structure and effectiveness of existing on-the-job training practices.

4.3 DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The findings of the study revealed that off-the-job training has a positive and statistically significant relationship with employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria (B = 1.153, β = 1.117, t = 9.908, p < 0.001). This implies that employees who have

access to external training programmes, seminars, workshops, conferences and professional development courses are more likely to develop favourable perceptions of their organisations and demonstrate a greater willingness to remain. The finding suggests that off-the-job training provides employees with opportunities to acquire additional knowledge, improve their professional competencies and develop skills beyond their immediate job responsibilities. Such opportunities may enhance employees' perception that their organisations are concerned about their career advancement and long-term professional growth. This finding is consistent with the study of Aruoren and Echewa (2023), which examined employee training, development and empowerment as predictors of employee retention in consumer goods companies in Nigeria. Their findings established that employee training, development and empowerment were positively and significantly related to employee retention. The study is particularly relevant because it covered consumer goods companies in Rivers State, including La-Sien Bottling Company Limited. Similarly, Igbinosun and Imahsunu (2026), in their study of Nigerian Bottling Company Limited, Benin City, found that off-the-job training had a strong positive relationship with quality of output. Although their study examined employee performance rather than retention, it supports the argument that external training opportunities can improve employees' capabilities and contribute to organisational effectiveness.

The findings further revealed that on-the-job training has a negative but statistically significant relationship with employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria ($B = -0.301$, $\beta = -0.342$, $t = -3.035$, $p = 0.003$). This implies that, when off-the-job training is held constant, an increase in the measured level of on-the-job training is associated with a decrease in employee retention. The result is contrary to the expectation that workplace-based training should automatically improve employees' willingness to remain in an organisation. It may suggest that the existing forms of on-the-job training do not adequately address employees' expectations, career aspirations or development needs. For instance, where workplace training is characterised by repetitive tasks, inadequate coaching, limited mentoring, insufficient supervision or excessive work demands, employees may not perceive it as a meaningful opportunity for professional advancement. This finding contrasts with Igbinosun and Imahsunu (2026), who found that on-the-job training significantly predicted employee productivity at Nigerian Bottling Company Limited, Benin City. Their result suggests that practical workplace training can improve employees' ability to perform assigned responsibilities. Similarly, Awoniyi, Kazeem, Akilo and Awoniyi (2022), in their study of selected beverage companies in South-West Nigeria, established that training and

development had a positive and significant effect on employee productivity and recommended the adoption of both on-the-job and off-the-job training techniques. Although these studies focused on productivity rather than employee retention, their findings demonstrate the potential operational benefits of workplace training.

5. CONCLUSIONS/ RECOMMENDATIONS

The study examined the relationship between training and development and employee retention in selected beverage firms in South-South Nigeria, with particular emphasis on off-the-job training and on-the-job training. Based on the findings, the study concludes that training and development jointly have a statistically significant relationship with employee retention, explaining 68.0% of the variation in employee retention among the respondents. Specifically, the study concludes that off-the-job training has a positive and statistically significant relationship with employee retention. This suggests that external training programmes, workshops, seminars, conferences and professional development opportunities can strengthen employees' professional capabilities and encourage their continued commitment to their organisations.

However, on-the-job training was found to have a negative but statistically significant relationship with employee retention when off-the-job training was held constant. This indicates that the existing workplace training practices may not sufficiently translate into employees' willingness to remain with their organisations. It further suggests that the effectiveness of on-the-job training may depend on its relevance, implementation, employee support and connection with career development opportunities. Overall, the study concludes that training and development are important considerations in employee retention, but their individual contributions may differ according to the nature and quality of training provided. Therefore, beverage firms should adopt employee-centred training strategies that enhance professional growth, improve workplace learning experiences and create favourable conditions for retaining skilled and competent employees.

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

1. Off-the-job training**:** Management of beverage firms in South-South Nigeria should strengthen off-the-job training programmes by providing employees with opportunities to participate in external workshops, seminars, conferences, professional courses and specialised training programmes. These opportunities should be relevant to employees' job

responsibilities and career development needs, as the findings established that off-the-job training has a positive and statistically significant relationship with employee retention.

2. On-the-job training: Management of beverage firms should review and improve their existing on-the-job training practices, particularly coaching, mentoring, job rotation, practical demonstrations and workplace instructions. These training activities should be properly structured to ensure that employees acquire relevant skills, receive adequate supervisory support and perceive workplace training as a meaningful opportunity for professional development. This recommendation is necessary because the study found a negative but statistically significant relationship between on-the-job training and employee retention.

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