

# Assessment of E-Training Digital Innovation and Organisational Performance: A Post COVID-19 Experience in Nigeria

Olufemi Epebinu<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Department of Business Administration, Adekunle Ajasin University, Akungba-Akoko, Nigeria.

Elizabeth Abiola-Oke<sup>2</sup>

<sup>2</sup>Department of Tourism Studies, Redeemers University, Ede, Nigeria

**Abstract:-** This study examined the effect of e-training as a digital innovation practice on organisational performance among brewery firms in the southwestern region of Nigeria. The multistage sampling was engaged to arrive at 332 employees using Slovin (1960) sample size determination formulae. A questionnaire was used as a research instrument. Partial Least Squares-Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM) was deployed as a data analysis tool. *The findings of the study revealed a significant and positive effect of e-training on Organizational Performance (OP) within the model ( $\beta = 0.429$ ,  $t = 8.188$ ,  $f^2 = 0.226$ ,  $R^2 = 0.184$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The policy implies that the Brewery firms should uphold the e-training activities indicators identified in the study and sustain the deployment of the four performance measurement indicators. The firms are to invest more in e-training strategies to retain employees and gain sustainable capacity.*

**Keywords:-** e-Training, Organisational Performance, Partial Least Squares -Structural Equation Modelling (PLS-SEM), Covid-19 Pandemic.

## I. INTRODUCTION

Digital innovation is taking the lead over the conservative way of managing employees in the corporate world, mainly observed in developed to developing countries. Employees' management in corporate organisations, referred to as human resources management, has been experiencing some innovation propelled by globalisation. Digital innovations are now being deployed to harness their relevance in the workplace. Employees must undergo progressive training, whether on or off the job, to gain efficiency and effectiveness. Digital innovation's emergence has impacted how organisations train their employees to drive organisational performance. A significant digital way in which training has been provided is electronic training (e-Training).

E-Training is a concept referred to as the deployment of digital innovation technologies to aid training activities on employees within an organisation. This concept is an innovation from the human resource management practice referred to as training. Cascio (1995) had described training as the concept which consists of planned programme designed to improve performance at the individual level,

group and organisational levels. Despite the trend in digital innovations as it affects training activities, the deployment has yet to greatly commanded empirical research in the developing world (Abiodun, Adeyemi & Osibanjo, 2013).

Meanwhile, corporate organisations were affected globally during the emergence of COVID-19 pandemic in the year 2020 which resulted to post-pandemic challenges. The pandemic brought limitations to the efficiency of employees within organisations globally. The pandemic brought about some financial inconsistencies in the business world (Brown & Crawford, 2021). This experience in the post-pandemic had brought a vast corporate concern, especially in the management of employees' development as it affects the organization.

The brewery sector is a lucrative segment of the economy in both developed and developing countries. ABInBev and Heineken are presently the top world players with a huge production capacity of 561.4 million hectoliters and 241.4 million hectoliters, respectively in year 2020. The Nigerian brewery sector is next to the South African, the largest in Africa, (Shobayo & Elumah, 2018). Beer production in Nigeria grew from 6.8 million hectoliters in 2004 to 15.446 million hectoliters annually in 2019 and is expected to grow beyond this, after the current production capacity of International Breweries Plc. (Iheagwam & Babatunde, 2021). The industry in Nigeria is dominated by three global players, ABInBev, Heineken and Diageo, through their subsidiaries: International Breweries Plc, Nigerian Breweries Plc and Guinness Nigeria Plc. Nigeria.

Several studies have attempted to examine e-training as a combined component with other practices within electronic human resource management (e-HRM) but have yet to consider e-training as an independent component to know its direct effect on organisational performance (Abiodun; *et al*, 2013). In order to establish a nuance, this study helps address the gaps in previous research. It contributes to the need for more literature and empirical studies on e-training as a stand-alone e-HRM component. The main objective of this study is to determine the effect of e-Training on organizational performance in the Nigerian Brewery Industry with a formulated, Null Hypothesis H01 stating as; e-training has no significant effect on organisational performance.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

### ➤ *E-Training*

E-training is an offshoot of training, as a human resource management practice in the organisation. Kamal, Aghbari and Atteia (2016) defined e-training as combining technology with learning, delivered using telecommunication and information technologies, and a type of training delivered on a computer that supports learning and organisational objectives. In the era of globalisation, numerous organisations are embracing e-training as a preferred method, owing to its capacity to reach large audiences across diverse regions and countries. This approach not only reduces costs but also enables the efficient dissemination of information. E-training is highly regarded as a favoured learning channel due to its global accessibility and the abundance of resources it offers.

E-training refers to utilising digital multimedia technologies and the Internet to enhance the learning experience. It achieves this by enabling easy access to media services and facilitating remote exchanges and collaboration. E-training involves acquiring knowledge, skills, and attitudes through digital innovations for communication, information retrieval, skill acquisition, and interaction between the trainee and the trainer, whether as an individual or a group.

Naouel and Larbi (2016) emphasised the significance of e-training activities in their research. They specifically focused on the rapid advancements in innovations, applications, and integration of digital technologies with education, learning, information, and communication. Their study shed light on the relevance of e-training in harnessing these digital innovations for practical training and educational practices. E-training ensures inclusivity by enabling many trainees to participate in various levels of training in alignment with the principle of equal opportunities and education for all. By minimising material costs and saving time and effort in acquiring specific training, e-training offers a more efficient approach. It fosters an interactive relationship between trainees and trainers, promoting engagement and collaboration. Moreover, e-training enhances the trainee's computer proficiency, harnessing the power of digital innovations and leveraging the internet to enhance skills and capabilities in the workplace.

### ➤ *Organisational Performance (Op)*

This concept refers to the sum of accomplishments achieved by all businesses and departments within an organisation. These accomplishments are united within an organisation within a given period. The goal is either meant for a specific stage or an overall extent. The idea of organisational performance is affiliated to the survival and success of an organisation (Lee & Huang, 2012; Ahmed & Shafiq, 2014)

Meanwhile, organisational performance has been observed to be at the heart of a firm's survival, recognised as a central outcome variable, ranging from areas such as

human resource management research to, strategy and information systems (Singh, Darwish & Potocnik, 2016). Research across these areas aims to explain how OP can be enhanced, shaped and sustained to help businesses improve their profitability and long-term survival (Bititci, Garengo, Dorfler & Nudurupati, 2012). Organisational Performance has been described as an asset of both financial and non-financial indicators capable of assessing the degree to which organisational goals and objectives have been accomplished (Kaplan & Norton, 1996).

Moreover, Kurien and Qureshi (2011) claimed that the empirical and theoretical validity of some of the frameworks on organisational performance measurement is established, whereas information about others is unavailable. Among others in the literature, the available ones include Balanced Score Card (BSC), Performance Prism, Performance Pyramid, and The Supply-Chain Operations Reference (SCOR) Model. This study adopted the Balanced Score Card (BSC), which is globally accepted in the literature as a model for organisational performance measurement (Kaplan & Norton, 1996; Ibrahim & Lloyd, 2011; Hofmann, 2014).

A balanced scorecard offers a concise and holistic overview of the business process using a set of well-balanced measures from four distinct perspectives. It combines financial and non-financial perspectives of organisational performance (Ibrahim & Lloyd, 2011). The four perspectives are as follows: Financial perspective, Customer perspective, Internal perspective, Learning and innovation perspective. The financial perspective represents the organisation's long-term goal- to provide superior returns based on the capital invested in the unit. The customer perspective represents measures that depend on the type of customers desired and the value that the organisation provides to them.

The internal business perspective, according to (Kaplan & Norton, 1996), entails the procedures that an organisation must develop and master to be successful. This reflects the concentration on elements like product innovation and development. The internal business process perspective further refers to the staff's internal business and strategic management processes.

The learning and growth perspective is the backbone of a successful scorecard because it involves employee skills and information systems (Kaplan & Norton, 1996). Learning and growth perspective include such issues as employee satisfaction and alignment of employee skills with jobs.

### ➤ *Theoretical Underpinning: Resources-Based View (Rbv)*

Theory by Barney (1991) is a managerial framework used to determine the strategic resources with the potential to deliver a competitive advantage to a firm. The firm can exploit these resources to achieve sustainable competitive advantage. Barney (1991) examined, as widely cited in his article, the theoretical analyses and interpretation of organisations' resources to understand how organisations achieve a sustainable advantage through their resources. It takes an inside-out or firm-specific perspective on why

organisations succeed or fail in the marketplace. It can further be expressed as the most valuable element of organisational competitive advantage as the human resources of the firm, which, in terms of this theory, is regarded as valuable, unique, inimitable, and not easily substitutable (Barney, 1991). E-training as a digital innovation practice can be viewed as a tool which enables organisations to achieve this competitive advantage. E-training digital innovation tools help diminish costs and accelerate the processes likely to make human resource activities more effective.

➤ *Empirical Review*

Wolor, Solikhah, and Fidyallah (2020) conducted a study titled 'Effectiveness of E-Training, E-Leadership, and Work-Life Balance on Employee Performance during COVID-19.' The study's objective was to provide valuable insights into the impact of e-training, e-leadership, work-life balance, and work motivation on the performance of employees from the millennial generation, particularly in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. The study's population comprised the millennial generation employees at one of Honda motorcycle dealers in Jakarta, Indonesia, having a sample size of 200. The analytical tool used was PLS-SEM. The findings of the study revealed that e-training, e-leadership, and work-life balance have a positive influence on work motivation and the performance of employees.

Jang, Kim and Yoo (2017) researched 'The impact of E-Training on HR retention in the mid-sized firm'. The study examined the impact of online training on job duration. The authors estimated the turnover rate and found some exciting aspects using that set obtained from private security companies. It was found that employees who took the online training had a lower probability of retiring than the ones who did not. It was revealed that job donations vary depending on the type of training and job functions. According to the study, it was suggested that companies could mitigate turnover rates by providing customised e-training programs based on the specific job positions of their employees.

Kamal, Al Agbari, and Affela (2016) conducted a financial study titled "e-Training and Employees Performance: A Financial Study on the Ministry of Education in the Kingdom of Bahrain." Their research focused on examining the impact of e-training on employee performance within the Ministry of Education in Bahrain. Using an analytical descriptive research approach, the study involved a questionnaire administered to 194 employees

working in the Ministry. The study's findings revealed a positive and significant relationship between e-training and employees' performance. The researchers also suggested that future implications include gathering additional data to validate and enhance the framework, potentially incorporating comprehensive dimensions.

Amara and Atia (2016) conducted a descriptive study titled "E-Training and its Role in Human Resources Development." Their research aimed to explore e-training as a new approach in human resource development, considering the advancements in information technology and the importance of scientific progress in training practices. The study was conducted at the European Centre for Research Training and Development in the UK. The findings concluded that e-training plays a crucial role in the institution's rehabilitation and development of human resources. It was further determined that e-training offers institutions a cost-effective opportunity to align with technological advancements and enhance their staff's efficiency, enabling them to achieve their organisational objectives better.

**III. METHODOLOGY**

This research study employed a survey design method focusing on the Brewery sector in Nigeria. The target population consisted of skilled employees from selected quoted brewery firms in the country's South-west region, which serves as the commercial hub. Among the four quoted brewery firms in Nigeria, the study specifically selected the First Brewery firm and the first indigenous brewery firm. The total population encompassed 1,941 individuals. The sampling technique employed for this study was a multi-stage sampling procedure, with a determined sample size of 332 using Slovin's formula (Slovin, 1960).

The data for this study were collected through a well-structured questionnaire administered to the selected sample from the target population. The questionnaire served as the primary source of data collection. Descriptive statistics, such as frequencies and percentages, were utilised to analyse the demographic responses provided by the respondents. In addition, inferential statistical analysis was conducted using Partial Least Squares Structural Equation Modeling (PLS-SEM) as the chosen tool.

- *Data Analysis and Discussion of Findings*
- *Social-Demographic Information of Respondents*

Table 1 Demographic Profile of the Employees in Brewery Firms

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
<b>Sex</b>		
Male	164	58.0
Female	119	42.0
Total	<b>283</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>AGE</b>		
Below 20years	14	4.9
20-29 years	112	39.6
30-39 years	116	41.0

40-49 years	31	11.0
50-above	10	3.5
Total	<b>283</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Marital Status</b>		
Single	94	33.2
Married	185	65.4
Divorced	3	1.1
Separated	1	0.4
Total	<b>283</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Literacy Level</b>		
WASSCE/GCE	20	7.1
NCE/OND	46	16.3
HND/B.SC	132	46.6
Post Graduate	85	30.0
Total	<b>283</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Length of Service in the organisation</b>		
1-5years	155	54.8
6-10years	83	29.3
11-15years	28	9.9
16-20years	8	2.8
21 + years	9	3.2
Total	<b>283</b>	<b>100.0</b>
<b>Department within the organisation</b>		
Human Resource	78	27.6
Corporate Affairs	26	9.2
Production	65	23.0
General Administration	39	13.8
Sales & Distribution	19	6.7
IT	18	6.4
Finance	26	9.2
Others/Specify	12	4.2
Total	<b>283</b>	<b>100.0</b>
Total	<b>283</b>	<b>100.0</b>

Source: Field survey, 2022

#### ➤ Measurement Model Reliability and Validity Test

The measurement model for this study adhered to the requirements of PLS-SEM. Table 2 presents the internal consistency reliability of the constructs, which were assessed using different metrics. The Cronbach's alpha (CA) values ranged from 0.607 to 0.857, rho<sub>A</sub> ranged from 0.604 to 0.863, and Composite reliability ranged from 0.792 to 0.906. All of these values exceeded the minimum standard threshold of 0.70, as prescribed by Hair, Risher, Sarstedt, and Ringle (2019), indicating that internal consistency reliability was achieved.

Table 2 and Figure 1 illustrate that the loadings of the indicators surpassed the standard value of 0.7, demonstrating strong indicator reliability. Additionally, the Average Variance Extracted (AVE) values in Table 2 exceeded the threshold of 0.5, indicating that, on average, the latent variables explained more than 50% of the variance in the measured variables. To assess discriminant validity, the Fornell-Larcker criterion and Heterotrait-monotrait (HTMT) ratio were employed, as presented in Tables 3 and 4, respectively. The results from these tables confirmed that the model exhibited discriminant validity, indicating that the latent variables were distinct from one another.

Table 2 Results of Internal Consistency and Convergent Validity for Effect of e-Training On Organisational Performance

	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>rho<sub>A</sub></b>	<b>Composite Reliability</b>	<b>Average Variance Extracted (AVE)</b>
<b>bET</b>	<b>0.607</b>	<b>0.604</b>	<b>0.792</b>	<b>0.559</b>
<b>cCS</b>	<b>0.857</b>	<b>0.863</b>	<b>0.891</b>	<b>0.543</b>
<b>cES</b>	<b>0.778</b>	<b>0.779</b>	<b>0.849</b>	<b>0.530</b>
<b>cFP</b>	<b>0.844</b>	<b>0.845</b>	<b>0.906</b>	<b>0.763</b>
<b>cPI</b>	<b>0.773</b>	<b>0.782</b>	<b>0.847</b>	<b>0.527</b>

Source: Field survey (2022)

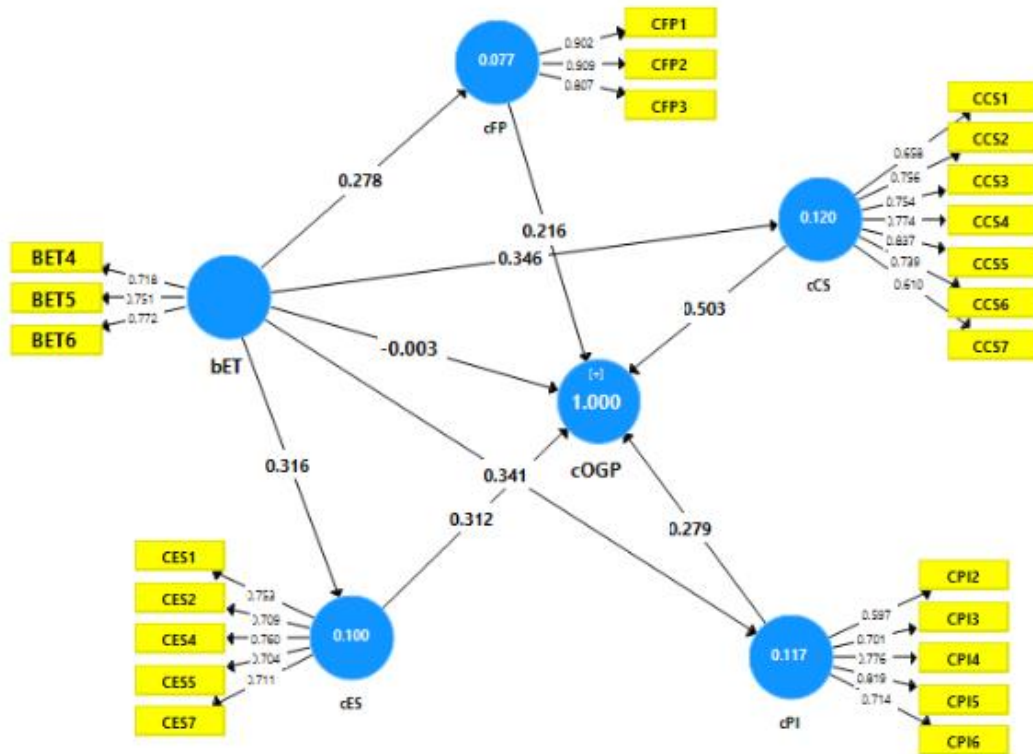


Fig 1 Measurement Model for E-Training on Organisational Performance  
Source: Field survey. (2022)

Table 3 Fornell-Larcker Criterion Test for E-Training on Organisational Performance

	<b>bET</b>	<b>cCS</b>	<b>cES</b>	<b>cFP</b>	<b>cOGP</b>	<b>cPI</b>
<b>bET</b>	<b>0.748</b>					
<b>cCS</b>	0.345	<b>0.736</b>				
<b>cES</b>	0.314	0.533	<b>0.728</b>			
<b>cFP</b>	0.277	0.344	0.413	<b>0.874</b>		
<b>cOGP</b>	0.424	0.868	0.767	0.616	<b>0.572</b>	
<b>cPI</b>	0.337	0.450	0.356	0.358	0.692	<b>0.726</b>

Source: Field survey (2022)

Table 4 HTMT Criterion Test for E-Training on Organisational Performance

	<b>bET</b>	<b>Ces</b>	<b>cES</b>	<b>cFP</b>	<b>cOGP</b>	<b>cPI</b>
<b>bET</b>						
<b>cCS</b>	0.473					
<b>cES</b>	0.444	0.652				
<b>cFP</b>	0.381	0.406	0.507			
<b>cOGP</b>	0.570	0.965	0.925	0.730		
<b>cPI</b>	0.477	0.543	0.455	0.447	0.861	

Source: Field survey (2022)

➤ *Structural Model Assessment*

After establishing the measurement model and confirming its satisfactory performance, the study proceeded to the structural model. The initial step involved assessing potential collinearity issues among the constructs. The primary focus of the structural model was to understand the predictive capabilities of the variables, as indicated by the coefficient of determination of R<sup>2</sup> and path coefficients.

A series of regression analyses were conducted to compute the path coefficients, ensuring that collinearity issues did not bias the results. Examining Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) values for each predictor construct was used to determine the absence of significant collinearity. It was ensured that the VIF values remained below the threshold of 5, as recommended by Hair et al. (2019). As depicted in Table 5, the constructs were appropriately constructed, and collinearity was not critical.



Given the absence of collinearity issues, the R<sup>2</sup> value was calculated to determine the overall effect size and variance explained in the endogenous construct (dependent variable) by the exogenous constructs (independent variables). As presented in Table 7 and Figure 2, the R<sup>2</sup> value for the organisational performance (OP) endogenous

latent construct was 0.184. This implies that the independent constructs account for 20% of the variance in organizational performance, indicating that approximately 20% of the observed changes or variations in organizational performance can be attributed to the e-training initiatives implemented within the organization.

Table 5 Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) For E-Training On Organisational Performance

	VIF
BET4	1.105
BET5	1.352
BET6	1.346
cCS	1.586
cES	1.535
cFP	1.292
cPI	1.342

Source Field survey (2022)

- Testing of Hypothesis.
- H<sub>01</sub>. E-Training is Insignificant on Organisational Performance in the Nigerian Brewery Industry.

Table 6 Structural Path Coefficients Analysis for E-Training on Organisational Performance

Hypothesised Path	Path coefficient	t-Value	p-Value	Bias	2.50%	97.5%	f <sup>2</sup>
bET -> cOGP	0.429	8.188	0.000	0.011	0.304	0.517	0.226

Source Field survey (2022)

Table 7 Testing of Hypothesis Two Results

Null Hypothesis	Beta	Standard Deviation (STDEV)	R Square	F Square	T Statistic	P Value	Decision
H <sub>02</sub>	0.429	0.052	0.184	0.226	8.188	0.000	Rejected

Source Field survey (2022)

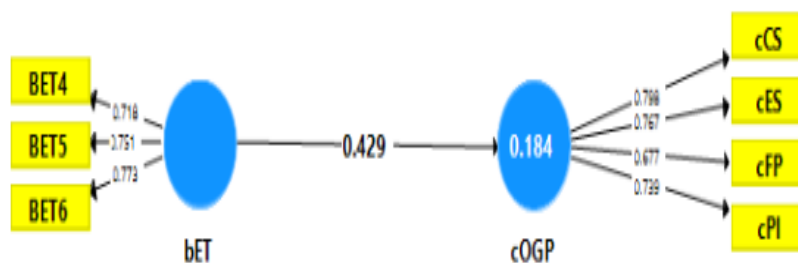


Fig 2 Path Coefficient of E-Training on Organisational Performance Source Field Survey: 2022.

#### IV. DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The hypothesis testing focused on investigating the impact of e-training on organizational performance in the Nigerian brewery industry. The results obtained from PLS-SEM analysis demonstrated the significance and relevance of the relationships within the structural model. Tables 6 and 7 provided insights into the R-square and effect sizes (f-square), respectively, while Figure 2 illustrated the R-square in the path model.

The findings of the study revealed a significant and positive effect of e-training on Organizational Performance (OP) within the model ( $\beta = 0.429$ ,  $t = 8.188$ ,  $f^2 = 0.226$ ,  $R^2 = 0.184$ ,  $p < 0.05$ ). The R-square value of 0.184 indicated that 20% of the variance in Organizational Performance is

explained by e-training activities, implying that for every unit increase in e-training indicators, Organizational Performance (OP) increases by 0.184. As a result, the null hypothesis, which suggests no significant effect of e-training on organisational performance in the Nigerian brewery industry, is rejected.

Overall, this study demonstrates that e-training, as a digital innovation, substantially and positively influences organizational performance within the Nigerian brewery industry. Indicators of e-training, such as the ability to conduct training anywhere, online training data management, cost reduction through e-training applications, and improved human resource service delivery, collectively exhibit significance within the model. These findings align with the research conducted by Wolor, Fidhyallah, and Solikhah

(2020), who observed that e-training positively affects employee efficiency and work-life balance, particularly during the COVID-19 pandemic. The evident impact of e-training innovations holds strong relevance to organisational performance in the post-pandemic era.

The policy implication drawn from this study is that organisations in the brewery industry should capitalise on digital technology, specifically through web-based platforms, to provide training for their employees. Electronic training offers the flexibility of anytime, anywhere learning, contributing to employee satisfaction and subsequently impacting the firm's overall performance.

## V. CONCLUSION AND AREA OF FUTURE STUDY

The study revealed that e-training activities had brought about changes in the performance level of organisations. The study found that e-training practice can be a stand-alone component of e-HRM to influence organisational performance, having deplored balanced scorecards as a measurement for performance. This study, therefore, recommends that future studies be carried out on other components of e-HRM to investigate their effect level on organisational performance empirically.

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