Relationship between Talent Management and Organisational Performance in Hospitality Industry in Nigeria

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Abstract: The study examined the relationship between talent management and organisational performance in hospitality industry in Nigeria. Performance was measured using process optimization and customer experience and the Resource-Based View Theory was used to underpin the study. Cross sectional survey design was used for the study. The total of twenty eighty (28) management staff drawn from selected hotels from Enugu, Abia and Bauchi were used for the population and sample for the study. In this study, the census sampling technique was employed. The researchers collected data on a micro level unit of analysis using a five-point Likert scale questionnaire and the research instrument was validated through exert vetting and approval while Cronchbach Alpha Coefficient was used to test reality of the instrument. Data collected was analyzed and presented using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. The hypotheses were tested using Spearman Rank Order Correlation. The findings revealed a significant relationship between talent management and performance of hospitality industry in Nigeria. Specifically, the findings showed that talent management had significant positive relationships with process optimization and customer experience as measures of performance. Thus, the study recommends that Hotels should make it their top priority to implement effective techniques of personnel management, including constant training, skill development of the staff, and performance-based incentives. Indeed, by investing in professional development, hotels will be able to raise operational effectiveness, increase employee competency, and enable perfect process optimization.

Keywords: Customer Experience, Hospitality Industry, Organisational Performance, Process Optimization and Talent Management.

Introduction

Driven by a mix of elements including a rising middle class, more foreign tourism, and the growing relevance of business travel, the Nigerian hotel sector has seen notable expansion recently. Key to Nigeria's economy, the hotel industry is essential for creating jobs, boosting local businesses, and enhancing the nation's international reputation (Matthew et al., 2021). Nevertheless, the sector suffers difficulties that influence its general performance despite its expansion possibilities, especially with regard to operational efficiency, customer happiness,

and service quality. Talent management is one of the main elements that could affect the viability and performance of the hotel industry (Jepchumba, 2021). Talent management is the set of techniques and policies used by companies to draw in, grow, and keep qualified staff members who help to realize corporate objectives. According to Hassanein and Özgit (2022), good talent management may significantly affect an organization's capacity to provide high-quality services and satisfy consumer expectations in the very competitive and customer-oriented hotel sector.

The hotel business in Nigeria depends on a highly qualified staff to uphold service standards as a result, innovation and talent management in the sector has grown to be a major concern (Jepchumba, 2021). Many Nigerian hotels, meanwhile, find it difficult to attract, grow, and keep outstanding staff. Low employee engagement, inadequate training opportunities, and restricted career growth chances taken together typically lead to high turnover rates and low employee motivation. The lack of qualified experts in the hotel industry, especially in managerial roles, aggravates the problems these companies deal with even more (Talawanich & Wattanacharoensil, 2021). As a result, the performance of hospitality companies is often impaired, which results in unequal service delivery and reduced degrees of client satisfaction. This emphasizes the significance of knowing talent management strategies and how they affect the success of Nigerian hotels.

Many studies have demonstrated that better organizational performance in many sectors is exactly correlated with efficient personnel management. Improving service quality, operational efficiency, and customer experience for the Nigerian hotel sector depends on talent management techniques including recruiting, training and development, performance management, and staff retention tactics (Syla, 2023). Businesses who follow best standards in personnel management are more likely to improve employee performance, lower attrition, and create a healthy corporate culture fit for their strategic objectives. Furthermore, companies which support the professional development of their staff and provide a suitable workplace are more likely to keep a competitive edge in a sector where service quality is a primary difference (Jibril & Yeşiltaş, 2022).

Even while talent management is becoming more and more important, the Nigerian hotel sector has particular difficulties putting good plans into reality. With changing demand for services, limited financial resources, and infrastructure flaws affecting company operations, the sector sometimes runs under difficult economic times (Xiang et al., 2021). These limitations might influence the capacity and will of hotels to make investments in personnel management strategies. Furthermore influencing the difficulties in attracting qualified individuals to the industry are socio-cultural elements including the view of hospitality occupations as low-status or temporary work prospects. These difficulties force academics to investigate how talent management strategies may be customized to fit the particular requirements of the Nigerian hotel sector and how they affect the success of companies in this field (Urme, 2023).

The purpose of this study is to look at how hotel company success in Nigeria relates with personnel management strategies. This study aims to give insightful analysis for hotel managers and legislators by looking at how different talent management approaches—such as recruitment and selection, employee development, and retention programs—afford influence on service quality, employee performance, and general corporate outcomes. Knowing how good talent management affects organizational performance can enable

companies in the hotel sector maximize their human resource policies, improve service delivery, and eventually allow the sector to develop and be long-term successful.

The study was guided by the following objectives:

i. To determine the relationship between talent management and process optimization of selected hotels in Nigeria.

ii. To examine the relationship between talent management and customer experience of selected hotels in Nigeria.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The Resource-Based View Theory

The Resource-Based View Theory stems from Penrose's Theory of the Growth of the Firm (Sousa et al., 2021). Penrose and later Barney (2001) theorized that resources were sources of competitive advantage. This is a departure from neo-classical economics because it allowed that firm resources could be heterogeneous. Illig, (2023) added to the RBV debate, that qualifications were necessary for resources to be sources of competitive advantage. In particular, inimitability was a key to a resource being a potential source of differentiation and competitive advantage. Cotlings, et at., (2009) argued that talent is unique due to its innate abilities and implicit understanding, which amply validates the expectation that talent will provide an edge over competition (Al-Dalahmeh, 2023).

Another key development was when Khan et al., (2024) argued that firm performance is resource-driven. This was the traditional thought on the topic. They concur with RBV authors and argued that Talent and its applications have a significant effect on company performance and viable competitive edge per later work done. Azeem et al., (2021) contribution was to view resources as a way to gain a long-term competitive edge. They defines resources as; "all assets, capabilities, organizational processes, firm attributes, information, knowledge, etc., controlled by a firm that enable the firm to conceive of, and implement, strategies that improve its efficiency". They concluded that resources may provide sources of long-term competitive advantage if they are precious, scarce, unique, and cannot be substituted (VRIN). Talent, although not explicitly mentioned here by Barney, meets the qualification of being a firm-owned asset, giving it the potential to generate a sustainable competitive advantage (Musami, 2023).

The growth and direction of talent management have been influenced by the evolution of management theory to the point where historical advancements have altered the perceptions of individuals in the working environment. According to Nwanakezie and Ogona (2021), formal transactions like payment and disciplinary procedures were handled by the personnel management function, but scientific management evaluated employees as a cost and disregarded the human element. The Industrial Revolution brought about the first notable shift in employee behaviour at work, altering their behaviours. As a result of the absence of unity in definition and theoretical framework,
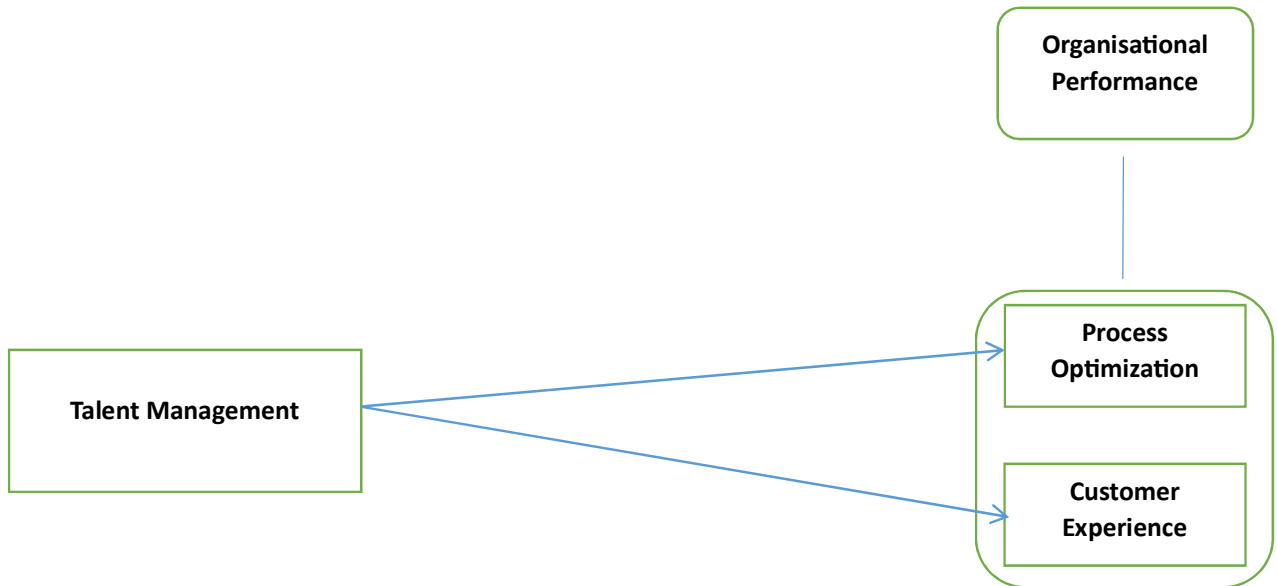
Conceptual Framework

Figure 1:   **Research Framework for the Study**

Source: **Kolawole, (2023) Modified**

Concept of Talent Management

Talent management is the strategic means by which an organization attracts, develops, retains, and deploys people with required skills and competencies needed to deliver results (Mishra, 2022). The different HR activities it includes are workforce planning, recruiting, onboarding, training and development, performance management, succession planning, and employee retention methods. Unlike traditional human resource approaches, the concept of talent management focuses on the development and alignment of employees to achieve long-term organizational goals (Kaliannan et al., 2023). It identifies potential stars, develops them, and puts them in key positions where their full potential is tapped. In the context of skill shortages, growing competition for the best talent, and shifting employee expectations, it has also become relevant for companies today (Singh Dubey et al., 2022).

It views the staff members as assets and builds an atmosphere that allows their potential to be fully met. This means that ongoing professional development is just as important as picking out the right personnel. In turn, structured programs, including mentoring, competence evaluations, and leadership development will aide a company in making sure that its staff can multitask and adapt in accordance with the demands from today and beyond (Sadorf, 2024). Underlined by talent management is also the employee's engagement and motivation in connecting his or her aspirations with the company's vision, career development opportunities, and the culture of appreciation and rewarding (Zahari, 2023). All these

activities reduce the turnover rate, increase the happiness and loyalty of the employees, and, finally, contribute to better functioning of the company in general.

Beyond internal HR operations, talent management decides the viability of a company in the market (Zharfpeykan & Akroyd, 2022). Companies that have already addressed personnel management are more suited to handle outside environmental changes, including new technology and consumer demand changes. Productivity and creativity are driven by talent management; it also helps to define the company brand to attract more to future workers (Pandita, 2022). Talent management in sectors like hospitality is a strategic need because service quality depends on it; thus, the organizations have the right people with the right talent in the right jobs, thereby enabling them to provide superior service and gain sustainable success (Hassanein & Özgit, 2022).

Oragisational Performance

The degree of organizational performance depends much on the quality of client experiences it provides as well as the efficacy of its procedures (Miebaka et al., 2018). To reach corporate goals, process optimization emphasizes on improving procedures, lowering inefficiencies, and increasing output. Through bettering of procedures, companies may guarantee consistency in service delivery, lower expenses, and improve operational effectiveness. Maintaining excellent service standards in the hotel sector largely depends on process optimization (Chan et al., 2021). This helps streamline check-in/check-out processes, enhances efficiency in housekeeping, and maximizes supply chain logistics. The developments not only save money and time but also help to create a flawless operational flow that is very vital in a customer-centric, fast-paced surroundings (Adubasim et al., 2018).

Conversely, customer experience is fundamental for organizational performance especially in sectors where success directly depends on customer happiness (Rane et al., 2023). From first contact to post-service interaction, customer experience is everything a consumer encounters with a company. Exceptional customer experiences in the hotel industry are attained by means of tailored services, prompt response to consumer questions, and capacity to predict and satisfy consumer wants (Buhalis & Moldavska, 2022). Higher degrees of client satisfaction and loyalty resulting from good experiences translate into recurring business and excellent ratings. Companies which give customer experience first priority usually find a clear relationship between financial performance and satisfaction.

The Relationship between Talent Management and Orgainsational Performance

Driving organizational success mostly depends on talent management, especially in the hotel sector where customer happiness and service quality are much depending on staff performance (Jibril & Yeşiltaş, 2022). The business depends on providing first-rate visitor experiences, hence a qualified, driven, and involved team is very vital. The effective management strategies for talent would include attracting the best candidates, training and development on a continuous basis, and well-structured career paths that help hospitality organizations enhance employee performance, which is directly linked to customer satisfaction and finally to organizational success (Mwangi, 2020).

Retention of the best employees is very important in the hotel industry, as contacts with the staff greatly influence brand reputation (Ghani et al., 2022). Good personnel management helps to increase employee involvement and loyalty, hence lowering turnover rates—a

frequent problem in this industry. Employees that are happy and well-supported are more likely to provide outstanding service, therefore increasing customer satisfaction and motivating return business (Smith, 2021). Further enhancing organizational performance are companies which support the development of their staff by means of training and development, therefore enabling their innovation and adaptation to evolving market needs (Akdere & Egan, 2020).

Moreover, in the hotel sector personnel management significantly affects operational profitability and efficiency. Through matching employee responsibilities and competencies with organizational objectives, companies may maximize worker performance and lower recruiting and training related expenses resulting from significant turnover (Bao et al., 2021). Maintaining a constant degree of service quality is another benefit of this alignment as it helps companies to keep client loyalty in a very competitive market. In the hotel industry, the connection between talent management and organizational performance is underlined, and it therefore becomes a core determinant of success to invest in people so that employees are not only well prepared but highly motivated to contribute to the expansion and sustainability of the company (Son et al., 2020).

The above led to the formulation of the following hypotheses:

H01:   There is no significant relationship between talent management and process optimization of selected hotels in Nigeria.

H02:   There is no significant relationship between talent management and customer experience of selected hotels in Nigeria.

Methodology

The study adopted the cross-sectional survey in its investigation of the variables. Primary source of data was generated through structured questionnaire. The population of the study was drawn from management staff of selected hotels in Enugu, Abia and Bauchi States and is presented in the table below:

Table 1: Population of Management Staff of Selected Hotels

S/No	States	Names of Selected Hotels	Number of Management Staff
1.	**Enugu**	Hotel Sunshine Enugu	5
		The Andover Hotel	4
2.	**Abia**	Hotel du Golf	4
		Abia Hotels	6
3	**Bauchi**	Command Guest House	4
		Hazibal Suites	5
	Total		**28**

Source: Field Survey, 2024

The census sampling techniques was employed and the entire population of 28 was used as the sample size for this study. The research instrument was validated by expert vetting and approval while the reliability of the instrument was achieved by the use of the Cronbach Alpha coefficient with all the items scoring above 0.70.

Table 2: Reliability Statistics for the Study Variables

S/No	Construct/Variables	Number of Items	Number of Cases	Cronbach Alpha
1	Talent Management	4	28	.976
2	Process Optimization	4	28	.963
3	Customer Experience	4	28	.886

Source: SPSS Output, 2024

The hypothesis was tested using the Spearman Rank Order Correlation. The tests were carried out at a 0.05 significance level.

Data Analysis and Results

A significance level of 0.05 was chosen as the threshold for determining the probability of accepting the null hypothesis when $p > 0.05$, or rejecting the null hypothesis when $p < 0.05$. This study aimed at examining the relationship between talent management and performance of hospitality industry in Nigeria.

Table 3: Correlation Matrix Showing Relationship between Talent Management and Orgainsational Performance

			Talent Management	Process Optimization	Customer Experience
Spearman's rho	Talent Management	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.737**	.766**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000	.000
		N	28	28	28
	Process Optimization	Correlation Coefficient	.737**	1.000	.942**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.	.000
		N	28	28	28
	Customer Experience	Correlation Coefficient	.766**	.942**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.000	.
		N	28	28	28

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).
Source: SPSS Output, 2024

The table above illustrates the test for the previously postulated bivariate hypothetical statements.

H01: There is no significant relationship between talent management and process optimization of selected hotels in Nigeria.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between talent management and process optimization of selected hotels in Nigeria. The *rho* value 0.737 indicates there is a relationship and it is significant at p 0.000<0.05. The correlation coefficient represents a positive correlation indicating a strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between talent management and process optimization of selected hotels in Nigeria.

H02:   There is no significant relationship between talent management and customer experience of selected hotels in Nigeria.

The correlation coefficient (r) shows that there is a significant and positive relationship between talent management and customer experience of selected hotels in Nigeria. The *rho* value 0.766 indicates there is a relationship and it is significant at p 0.000<0.05.   The correlation coefficient represents a positive correlation indicating a strong relationship. Therefore, based on empirical findings the null hypothesis earlier stated is hereby rejected and the alternate upheld. Thus, there is a significant relationship between talent management and customer experience of selected hotels in Nigeria.

Discussion of Findings

The findings revealed a significant relationship between talent management and performance of hospitality industry in Nigeria. Specifically, the findings showed that talent management had significant positive relationships with process optimization and customer experience as measures of performance. The findings of the study align with the study of Hongal and Kinange (2020) who highlighted that effective talent management significantly contributes to organizational performance by streamlining processes and enhancing customer satisfaction. Their study emphasized the role of identifying critical positions, developing high-potential employees, and ensuring that talent aligns with organizational goals, which subsequently leads to optimized service delivery and improved customer experiences.

Similarly, Jibril and Yeşiltaş (2022) in their study on the Malaysian hospitality sector, found that talent management practices, including recruitment, training, and retention of high-performing staff, positively impacted process efficiency and guest satisfaction. The study noted that well-trained and motivated employees were more effective in providing seamless service delivery, thereby enhancing the overall customer experience. Kravariti et al., (2023) findings showed that organizations with structured talent management practices achieved process optimization through reduced inefficiencies and improved service delivery. It was further demonstrated that customer experience was positively influenced by employees' competence and commitment, which stemmed from strong talent management strategies.

Furthermore, Kravariti et al., (2024) research on global talent management practices revealed that talent management drives operational excellence and customer engagement in service-oriented industries, such as hospitality. The study underlined that organizations with a focus on employee training, career development, and recognition were able to optimize their processes, reduce delays in service, and deliver superior customer experiences, which are critical to business success. John et al., (2024) findings demonstrated a strong positive correlation between talent management practices and key performance indicators, including process optimization and customer satisfaction. The study emphasized that retaining top talent led to consistent service delivery, increased operational efficiency, and enhanced guest experiences, ultimately boosting competitive advantage in the hospitality sector.

Conclusion and Recommendations

The findings of this study underscore the critical role of talent management in driving the performance of the hospitality industry in Nigeria. The study revealed a significant positive

relationship between talent management practices and key performance indicators, specifically process optimization and customer experience. By effectively managing talent through recruitment, training, and retention of skilled employees, hotels can streamline their operations, minimize inefficiencies, and enhance service delivery. Process optimization, as facilitated by well-trained and highly motivated employees, ensures seamless operations that improve productivity, reduce operational bottlenecks, and position hotels to compete effectively in a dynamic business environment.

Furthermore, the study demonstrated that talent management significantly contributes to improving customer experience, which is a vital factor for success in the hospitality industry. Engaging, developing, and retaining talented employees enable organizations to meet and exceed customer expectations, leading to improved satisfaction and loyalty. These findings highlight the need for hotel managers and policymakers to prioritize talent management as a strategic approach to achieving sustainable growth and competitiveness. By fostering a culture that values talent, invests in skill development, and aligns human resource strategies with organizational goals, the hospitality industry in Nigeria can significantly enhance its performance and deliver exceptional value to its customers.

The study thus recommended that:

i.   Hotels should make it their top priority to implement effective techniques of personnel management, including constant training, skill development of the staff, and performance-based incentives. Indeed, by investing in professional development, hotels will be able to raise operational effectiveness, increase employee competency, and enable perfect process optimization.

ii. The managers of the hotel should focus on talent retention programs, employee engagement, and customer service training to ensure that their staff is prepared to deliver superior customer experiences. Regular seminars on interpersonal communication, problem-solving, and service quality standards will help employees meet and surpass consumer expectations.

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