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STAFF TRAINING AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE IN HOTEL FIRMS IN OWERRI, IMO STATE, NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study focused on staff training and organizational performance in hotel firms in Owerri, Imo States, Nigeria. The study adopted descriptive survey research design and questionnaire served as the instrument for data collection. Data collected were analysed using mean statistic. Pearson product moment correlation coefficient, with the help of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0 was used to test the hypotheses. It was discovered that orientation, and seminar have positive and significant effect on repeat purchase and customer retention. The study concluded that the achievement of high performance in firms depends on the nature and effectiveness of sales force training through on-the-job training, orientation and seminar/workshop. Based on the findings, the study recommended that there is need for regular orientation of sales staff to enhance their ability in the area of repeat purchase and customer retention. Also, hotel firms should always expose their sales staff on the best sales strategies so as to achieve repeat purchase and customer retention. The work has contributed to knowledge because it covers the relationship between sales force training and performance of hotel firm in Owerri, Imo States, Nigeria.

Key Words: Staff Training, Organizational Performance, Orientation, Seminar, Repeat Purchase and Customer Retention.

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Introduction

Generally, the human resource in the organisation are made of up people from diverse background, with different qualifications and experiences, there is need for effective and regular human resource training and development. If people from various backgrounds are not trained and developed, they will not effectively focus towards the achievement of one goal; hence the need for training of employees. On the objectives of human resource training in an organisation, Ijezie (2023); Still, Gudiff and Gavoni (2018); and Stanton and Briskirk (2019) identified as follows: to increase employee productivity, reducing wage cost, increasing profit, reduce the level of supervision needed to ensure a smooth operation, promote greater conformity and standardisation of operations, enhancing efficiency, provide a higher customer service level/a higher degree of customer satisfaction. Other objectives of human resource training are to develop employee skill and knowledge, help employees understand the company's policies, regulations, benefits and privileges; lower employee turnover, improve employee morale as well as improve customer relations etc (Adebumiti & Faniran, 2024).

According to Chatterjere (2019), the objectives of human resource training are to establish a sound relationship between the worker and his job - the optimum worker-task relationship; upgrade skills and prevent obsolescence; develop healthy, constructive attitudes; and impart broad-based knowledge relating to the firm's plant, machine, material and product. It also include to prepare employees for future assignments; increase productivity; minimise operational errors; enhance employee confidence and morale; bring down costs of production, and bring down labour turnover and absenteeism (Adebumiti & Faniran, 2024). To achieve the above human resource training objectives, different organisations adopt different human resource training programmes or techniques. Among those programmes are on-the-job training, such as coaching, understanding/assistant to position, position rotation, and recommended reading/tapes.

Also, there is off-the-job training, which is another human resource training programme. It covered lecturers/conferences/seminars, role playing, demonstration, case studies, discussion groups and field trips (Kotler & Keller, 2019; Still, Cundiff & Govoni, 2018). The goal of human resource training programmes is to achieve higher performance of the organisation. In this study, the major training programmes i.e. orientation, on-the-job training and seminar/workshop among others serve as road map to improve performance. Orientation training is given to newly employed staff to make them understand the organisational objective and get familiarised in the system (Ijezie, 2023). On-the-job training is un-official training through which employees learn of the job and through their superior. In addition, seminar and workshop are organised to make staff learn new skills which they will bring on the job. The goal of the above training programme is to ensure effective performance of the organisation.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In organisations like hotel firms, lack of training of employees in most cases lead to inadequate repeat patronage, lack of customer retention, poor customer base, low productivity, poor level of profits and low level of growth in the business (Adebumiti & Faniran, 2024; Ijezie 2023; Still, Gudiff & Gavoni 2018). The above challenges affect companies like hotels and hinder their sustainability

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and overall performance. However, the extent to which business organisations effectively implement staff training has not been well established in literature. Here, most of the empirical researches accessed by the researcher on staff training did not cover the relationship between staff training and performance, especially for hotel firms in Owerri, Imo States.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objective of this study is to examine staff training and organizational performance of hotel in Owerri, Imo States, Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

1. assess the association between orientation and repeat purchase;
2. investigate the relationship between seminar and customer retention.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Based on the objectives of the study, the researcher posed the following research questions to guide the study:

1. What is the extent of association between orientation and repeat purchase?
2. Do seminars significantly affect customer retention?

RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

In order to answer the research questions, the researcher developed the following hypotheses:

Ho_1: Orientation does not significantly associate with repeat purchase.

Ho_2: There is no significant relationship between seminar and customer retention.

CONCEPTUAL REVIEW

The major issues in the conceptual review are the review of the major concepts like training, performance and indices in the objectives. They were presented in the model below:

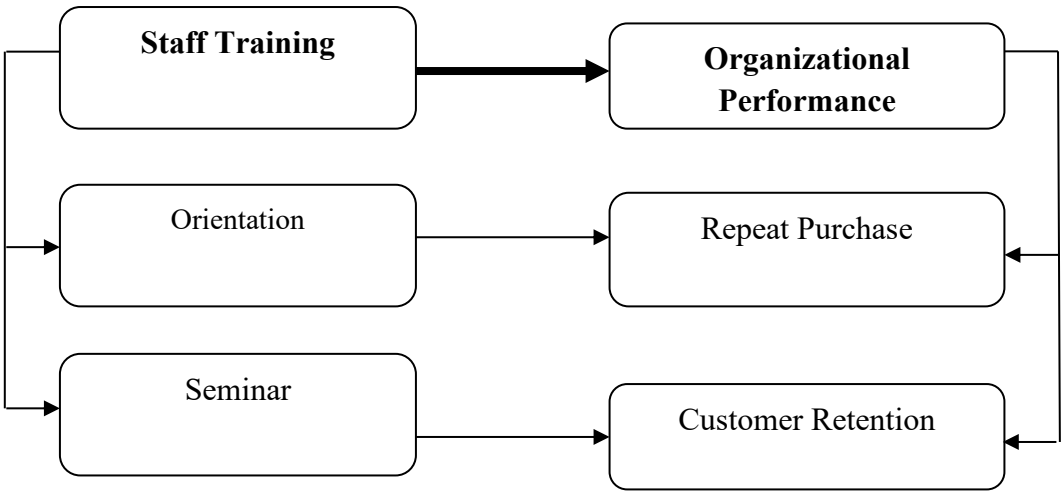

Fig. 1: Operational framework on staff training and organizational performance of hotels in Owerri, Imo States, Nigeria.

Source: The Researcher, 2026

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Training

In the views of Ifediba (2019), training is "a learning process whereby people acquire skills, concepts, attitudes or knowledge to aid in the achievement of goals". By defining human resource training as a process, the implication is that it is continuous. Fanibuyan (2023) defined training as the systematic process of altering the behavior and or attitudes of employees in a direction to increase organisational goals and development as programme generally aimed at educating supervisory employees above and beyond the immediate technical requirement of the job and have a main objective of the improvement of the effective performance of all managers. Human resource training is the application of gained knowledge and experience. Training can be defined as organised activity aimed at imparting information and/or instructions to improve the performance of staff to help him or them attain a required level of knowledge or skill to improve the organisation.

Hall and Goodale (2015) defined training as "a planned effort by an organisation to facilitate the learning of employee job-related knowledge and skills by its employee to further organisational goals". According to Ijezie (2016), training is planned organisational efforts or activities concerned with helping on staff/employee acquire specific and immediately usable skills, knowledge, concepts, attitudes and behaviours to enable him or her perform more efficiently and effectively on his present job. It's related to improving upon the present job experience. It is concerned with technical/manual skills to non- managerial staff. Sales force training is no doubt a critical aspect of sales force management. According to Ayodele (2019), training the human resource of a company enables the staff to do better in their present tasks.

There are various types of training that an organisation may adopt in training its human resource so as to enhance performance. These are outlined below:

1. **Orientation:** When new people are employed, there is need to put them into the culture of the organisation. That is why Rolph, Rajiv and James (2017) were of the view that orientation is all about introducing the new staff members to their position, and responsibilities. This is mainly concerned with acquainting new employees with the organisation, so that they will know their functions, expectations, target, so as to help and improve patronage. The basis of patronage is rooted in understanding the needs of customers and giving them individual attention, good products, and good customer care and attention which will serve as a motivational factor for them to come back (Toosi & Kohonali, 2011). To achieve patronage, business operators should know that customers have an expectation on the business quality, price, and customer focused services.
2. **Seminar:** Seminar is an organised and well managed training method for staff aimed at impacting management functions to employees. Seminar is an organised forum for employees which enables the participants to discuss the challenges of the business and strategic for improvement (Molokwu, 2018 & Onah, 2005). Though employees are made to understand the best ways to achieve customer retention for the organisation. Here, opportunities are provided for participants to pool of ideas, to discuss ideas and facts, to test assumptions and to draw conclusions. These methods are expected to help develop the problem – solving and decision – making facilities of the personnel as well as present new and complicated issues for deliberation (Rolph, Rajio & James, 2017).

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Organizational Performance

Performance is concerned with the overall growth or sales increase in an organisation in terms of stock turnover, customer base, turnover and market share. Ayodele (2019) argued that the extent to which organisations that directly or indirectly involve in sales achieve their objectives as it concerns number of products sold, number of new customers attracted to the organisational fold and extent of revenue made from such sales determine the level of performance in an organisation. The concept of performance is core to businesses because the major objective of businesses is to make profits. Performance is a multi-dimensional construct the measurement of which varies depending on a variety of factors. For Norman (2018), high performance includes the way and manner the organisation achieves its sales objectives.

Goal Setting Theory

The theory was formulated by Edwin Locke in 1960s. The theory indicates that the major sources of motivation at the work place are the intentions to work towards the goals. Goals play significant roles by informing employees their expectations at the work place. As a specific goal enhances performance within an organisation, therefore goal setting theory supports the value of goals. Acceptance of difficult and challenging goals results into enhanced performance in an organisation as opposed to easy goals. Moreover, availability of feedback at the work place brings about better performance than non-availability of feedback.

According to Bernadine and Walter (1999), goals should be very specific, moderately difficult and employees should be committed to achieve these goals. Rewards should be tied in together with the goals so as to enhance performance at the work place. Goals that is specific in nature yield high levels of outputs as opposed to goals that are general in nature. This is because specific goals act as internal stimulus of the processes within organisations. Holding other factors for example acceptance of goals constant, it can be stated that the more difficult the goals, the greater the level of performance at the work place. Companies that want to further their mission, do so by setting realistic goals. Goal setting facilitates formalisation of organisational statements, implementation of missions and vision statements.

Therefore, goals are significant motivators at the work place by providing employees with realistic and tangible targets that can be achieved easily. Evaluation involves employee performance comparison with the objectives that has been described in the beginning of the appraisal period. Evaluation tells about the performance of employee by which employees have met their goals. Regular assessment makes employees focus their attention on what is expected of them, give feedback to employees and motivates the employees to perform effectively. Feedback tells employee that his work done well and also illustrates what is needed to improved. The good appraisal and supervisor must communicate to employee that how the performance of them can improved and motivates him.

EMPIRICAL REVIEW

Empirical studies were summarised thus:

Nwanko, Okoh and Uwaebuka (2024) examined the impact of staff training on performance of organisation using Union Bank of Nigeria Plc as the focal point. Based on the above, the research

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formulated four objectives, four research questions and three research hypotheses to guide the study. Survey research design was employed and questionnaire was used as the instrument of data collection. The data collected were subjected to face validity and test retest reliability method. The data collected were presented in tables and analysed using simple percentage and hypotheses were tested using chi-square. Also, some empirical studies were consulted and analysed. The findings revealed that there is significant impact of orientation/induction training on organisational productivity.

Udehele and Ike (2024) focused on manpower training and development in Imo State civil service using Imo State Ministry of Works Owerri as the focal point. Descriptive survey research design was adopted by the researcher and questionnaire served as instrument of data collection. The data collected were presented in tables and analysed using simple percentage and chi-square. The researcher used the population of the entire Ministry of Works in Imo State which is 300 from where 180 staff were sampled. But, only 170 questionnaires were collected out of the 180 distributed. The findings revealed that there is significant relationship between manpower training and employee productivity in Imo State Civil Service.

Adebumiti and Faniran (2024) studied problems associated with human resource training in India. The study was a survey method. In all, 150 respondents were effectively interviewed. Data were collected through interview, and analysed using percentage, and bar chart. The study reveals that poor training is a major problem.

Hussain, Ali, Ibrahim, Noreen and Ahmad (2021) worked on impact of staff training on consumer perception and purchase intention in Pakistan. Survey was used through interview, and data were analysed using mean. It was revealed that training of sales representative inspired consumer to have good perception and intention.

Uyi (2021) analysed the impact of staff training on profitability of banks in Benin City, Edo State (2010-2018). The work used ex-post facto method and data were collected using secondary data and analysed using multiple regression statistics. It was discovered that staff training has long run positive relationship with profit after tax, return on asset, and return on investment in the banks.

Ihemereze (2020) examined the effect of sales force training on sales performance using Tummy Tummy Foods Industry Ltd Nnewi in Anambra State as the study unit. Descriptive survey research design was used and questionnaire served as the instrument of data collection. The population of this study was composed of the entire 46 management staff of Tummy Tummy Foods Industry Ltd Nnewi (the manufacturer of Tummy Tummy Instant Noodle). Out of 46 copies of the questionnaire distributed, only 44 were properly filled and used. The data collected were presented in tables and analysed and tested by simple percentage and chi-square respectively. The study discovered that push money offer has positive effect on sales volume, sales force capacity building enhances profitability, and attractive mixed compensation has positive effect on sales volume.

RESEARCH METHODS

In this study, survey research design was used. The population of this work is 108 respondents. It covered the employees in the middle level and senior position in the hotels under study. Census approach was used to study the entire population as sample. The use of census was necessary since we have manageable and small population. Questionnaire was used as primary source of

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data. The data collected in this study were presented using Mean Statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient with the aid of Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 21.0.

Data Presentation and Analysis

It should be noted that out of 108 copies of the questionnaire distributed, only 100 copies were properly filled and returned.

Research question one: What is the extent of association between orientation and repeat purchase?

Table 1: Responses on the extent of association between orientation and repeat purchase.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	-4	-3	-2	-1	N	∑Ξ	X	Decision
		SA	A	D	SD				
1	The orientation training I received has enabled me to convince my customers to make repeat purchase	50 (50%)	47 (47%)	2 (2%)	1 (1%)	100	346	3.5	Positive
2	Orientation has add values to my work duties	40 (40%)	41 (41%)	10 (10%)	9 (9%)	100	312	3.1	Positive
	I am performing effectively based on orientation training I received	51 51%	46 46%	1 1%	2 2%	100	346	3.5	Positive
4	Neglecting orientation training will reduce sales performance	48 48%	49 49%	1 1%	2 2%	100	343	3.4	Positive
	Grand mean							**3.4**	

Source: Field Survey (2026).

It is seen in table 1 that all the items are positive. This is because item 1 has a mean of 3.5, item 2 a mean of 3.1, item 3 a mean of 3.5 and item 4 a mean of 3.4. Since all the items have mean scores more than 2.5. We conclude that orientation significantly associate with repeat purchase.

Research question two: Does seminars significantly affects customer retention?

Table 2: Responses on if seminars significantly affects customer retention.

S/N	Questionnaire Items	(4) SA	(3) A	(2) D	(1) SD	N	∑X	X	Decision
1	My organisation regularly organise seminars for sales staff which has enhanced customer retention	43 43%	51 51%	2 2%	4 4%	100	333	3.3	Positive
2	Seminar training for the staff add value to sales improvement	48 48%	49 49%	1 1%	2 2%	100	343	3.4	Positive
3	Seminar and workshop training and development have improved my skill	50 50%	47 47%	2 2%	1 1%	100	346	3.5	Positive

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S/N	Questionnaire Items	(4) SA	(3) A	(2) D	(1) SD	N	∑X	X	Decision
4	In my organisation, staff training through seminar adds value to firm brand recognition which enhances repeat purchase for the business	40 40%	41 41%	10 10%	9 9%	100	312	3.1	Positive
	Grand mean							**3.3**	

Source: Field Survey (2026).

It is seen in table 2 that all the items are positive. This is because item 1 has a mean of 3.5, item 2 a mean of 3.1, item 3 a mean of 3.5 and item 4 a mean of 3.4. As all the items have mean scores more than 2.5 and above. We conclude that there is significant relationship between seminar and customer retention.

TESTING OF RESEARCH HYPOTHESES

Fig. 2: Concise table for hypotheses testing.

S/N	Hypotheses	Statistical Tools Applied (Software Results)	Result
H1	Orientation significantly associate with repeat purchase	Pearson Correlation = 0.88 Sig = 0.05 N = 100 Mean for table 4.6 = 3.4	**POSITIVE**
H2	There is significant relationship between seminar and customer retention	Pearson Correlation = 0.87 Sig = 0.05 N = 100 Mean for table 4.7 = 3.3	**POSITIVE**

DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

The major findings of this study are discussed thus:

Test of hypothesis one indicated that orientation significantly associate with repeat purchase as it has a grand mean of 3.4. This is in line with the view of Ike (2019) who stated that the sales force capacity building leads to improved performance of organisations.

Test of hypothesis two indicated that there is significant relationship between seminar and customer retention as it also has a grand mean of 3.3. In the view of Okoye (2016), any sales firm that wants to achieve its goals through improve sales must always train its sales staff through workshop so that they will know the best strategies to adopt and achieve the business target.

CONCLUSION

This study is on staff training and organizational performance of hotels in Owerri, Imo States, Nigeria. Here, staff of organizations can only perform their functions well if they are well trained. This study concludes that the achievement of performance in firms depends on the nature and effectiveness of training through on-the-job training, orientation and seminar/ workshop training.

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RECOMMENDATIONS

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

1. There is need for regular orientation of sales staff to enhance their effectiveness in customer acquisition, and retention.
2. There is need for regular training of sales force so as to achieve improved sales volume and marketing performance of business.

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