

A COMPARATIVE STUDY ON THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN EMPLOYEE DEVELOPMENT AND PRODUCTIVITY IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN PLATEAU AND NASARAWA STATES, NORTH CENTRAL NIGERIA.

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Abstract

The expansion of employees' capabilities to function effectively in their present or future job and work in the organisation is referred to as employee development. These activities can be attained through formal education, job experience, professional relationships, and assessment of personality, skills, and abilities that can enhance an employee's professional growth. The study focused on a comparative study of the relationship between employee development and productivity in the hotel industry in Plateau and Nasarawa States, North Central Nigeria. The paper was motivated by the challenges of inadequate employee training and development in the hotel industry, which further affects productivity and efficiency in the workplace. The study sought to determine whether there was a link between employee development and productivity in the hotel industry. The descriptive-survey design method was adopted for the study, where fifty-seven (57) standardised questionnaires were administered to the managers of the selected hotels in the study areas. Descriptive statistics (frequency count, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) were used to analyse the data. An inferential statistic (chi-squared) was used to test the hypothesis. The findings revealed that there is a positive relationship between employee development and productivity; employee development impacts productivity; and there is a significant relationship between employee development and productivity in the hotel industry in Plateau and Nasarawa states, North Central Nigeria. The study concludes that employee development leads to enhanced productivity and so should be encouraged for effective and efficient productivity.

Keywords: employee development, employee productivity, hotel industry, Plateau and Nasarawa States.

Introduction

The expansion of employees' capabilities to function effectively in their present or future job in the organisation is considered employee development. Hence, the development of employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities constitutes a critical talent management initiative (Dachner, Elligson, Noe & Saxton, 2019). According to Noe, Clark, and Klien (2014), these development activities could be carried out through formal education, job experience, and professional relationships, and assessment of personalities, skills, and abilities aimed at enhancing employee professional growth. Similarly, the connection between the hotel sector's competitiveness and its productivity is obvious, and

the four basic factors that enhance productivity in the sector are: education, nutrition, availability of the labour force, and the extent of training and development of the employees' skills. Hence, Bello & Bello (2021) assert that employees' happiness has long been a consideration for a successful hospitality business. They report that the state of retail businesses in the COVID-19 world has established that employees' engagement has a direct impact on productivity and, subsequently, business profits.

The reports also reveal that businesses with a high level of engagement saw a 15% greater productivity rate, with 26% less staff turnover and 20% less absenteeism (Bello & Bello, 2021). Those who invested in their people's (employee development) programmes also featured higher than their competitors with regards to overall business productivity. It also states that the rewards of an engaged workforce are clear to most, but the process can be less so. The reports further explained that some employee drivers have a direct impact on job satisfaction. Research shows that 80% of employees feel engaged with their work when it aligns with the organizational values. As a result, 37% of employers saw an increase in stress-related sick days, while 60% reported a rise in staff mental health conditions (Han, Quan, Al-Ansi, Chung, Ngh, Ariza-Montes & Vega-Munoz, 2020). The literature also reveals that an employee's relationship with their line manager can have a direct impact on their productivity, happiness, and willingness to do their job, thereby making a positive relationship key to employee success (Yu, Ariza-Montes, Hernandez-Perlines, Vega-Monoz & Han, 2020; Tews, Michel & Ellingson, 2013). Thus, hotel management can invest in adequate leadership training to improve employees' skills.

Fairness and safety are also important factors in employee development and engagement. Employees need to feel respected, particularly by their senior leadership team. Fair treatment considers a range of indicators, from pay and workload to progression. Feeling safe is a crucial element of an employee's well-being; creating a trusting, confidential environment where workers can feel comfortable. Learning and development are crucial too. An employee can contribute to the growth of an organization when they are provided with growth opportunities. Productivity is ensured when employees are granted access to learning platforms where they can choose to improve their skills. Another driver is the presence of a favourable working environment. The work environment will have a direct impact on workers' productivity and overall job satisfaction. Communication is also crucial, not only for managers but also for senior leadership. Employees who are kept up to date with the organization's performance and provided with individual feedback are more likely to feel valued and engaged in their roles (Keyton, 2008). This study is anchored on Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 8, which is about decent work and economic growth. The aim is to ensure that the economic sector of every country provides the necessary needs for its citizens to have a good life irrespective of their background, race or culture (UN, 2017, UNWTO and UNDP, 2018). SDG target 5 is to achieve full

productive employment and decent work for all women and men, including young people and people with disabilities, by 2030, as well as equal pay for work of equal value.

A study on the influence of training and development on employee performance in the garments sector in Bangladesh was conducted by Mamy, Shabbir, and Hasan in 2020. The study evaluated the effects of skill development on employee performance. A descriptive design method was adopted and the data was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected using both quantitative and qualitative methods by a structured questionnaire administered to 170 respondents from two garment industries. The quantitative data was presented in the form of tables and charts, while the qualitative data was presented in themes. The findings showed that employee skill development has a positive relationship with performance. It concludes that no business organisation can gain a competitive advantage without prioritising employee training and development. Moreover, Mohanty, Mishra & Mohanty (2020) in a study on training and development and employee performance in the tourism industry examined the importance of training and development and the extent to which it affects the performance of employees in the tourism industry in Odisha. Structured questionnaires were distributed to respondents of five-star hotel categories in Odisha to collect data.

Descriptive and inferential statistics were analysed with the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 20.0. Statistical tools such as correlation analysis, ANOVA, and multiple regression analysis were performed to examine the objectives and hypotheses. The findings from the study and the related studies reviewed in the literature reveal that the overall performance of employees is influenced by training and development in the organization. Hence, the respondents agreed on the importance and benefits of effective training and development practices carried out in their organizations. It also revealed that all the dimensions of training and development have a strong positive relationship with employee performance in the tourism industry. Thus, the study stresses the need for training and development of employees at all levels to attain organizational goals and objectives. Hence, the tourism industry needs to understand that in this cut-throat competitive business environment, it is the human resources that matter the most when it comes to the management and success of tourism businesses.

Besides, Chhy (2019) analyzed the impact of training and development on employee performance in selected private secondary schools in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. The study used a sample size of 90 respondents from a population of 220 employees, comprising principals, coordinators, and teachers, of six reputable private secondary schools in Phnom Penh, Cambodia. 74 responses were collected, representing an 82% response rate. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) and ANOVA methods were used for the data analysis. The results of the study revealed that there are benefits of training and development on employee performance, job

satisfaction, and reduced employee turnover. The study concludes that training and development provide new employees with prerequisite skills and enhance the competence they need to perform their jobs to contribute to higher productivity. Hence, the paper was motivated by the challenges of inadequate employee training and development in the hotel industry, as reported by extant literature, which further affect productivity and efficiency in the workplace.

Hotel employee technical skills such as culinary skills, banqueting skills, gueridon service skills, mixology skills, bed making and cleaning skills that are needed and interpersonal skills such as communication skills, multitasking skills, attention to details and so on while on the job are not usually given by most hotel managers. Similarly, off-the-job training is also usually not permitted for staff to go out and develop themselves. This further leads to poor productivity or output as a result of a lack of employee training and development. Therefore, this study examines whether there is a relationship between employee development and productivity in the hotel industry in Plateau and Nasarawa states, North Central Nigeria, and ascertains the impact of employee development on productivity in the hotel industry in Plateau and Nasarawa states in North Central Nigeria.

Hypothesis Statement

The hypothesis of this study is stated in the null form as follows:

Hi: There is no significant relationship between employee development and employee productivity in the hotel industry in North Central Nigeria.

Research Objectives

The objectives of the study are to:

1. Examine whether there is a relationship between employee performance and employee productivity in the hotel sector in Plateau and Nasarawa states, North Central, Nigeria.
2. Ascertain the impact of employee development on employee productivity in the hotel sector in Plateau and Nasarawa states, North Central Nigeria.

A Literature Review

The Concept of Employee Development

Development is a practical exercise of studying and development by which managerial staff acquires and employ knowledge, skills, attitudes, and insights to handle their work effectively and efficiently (Amir, 2019). This is essential for the managerial staff to cope with the complexity of the organization and technological changes; it also helps them to recognise their social and public responsibilities. Similarly, development is said to increase employees' self-fulfillment; their capability at work is rejuvenated and they can absorb and prepare better for more tasks (Saini, 2015).

Accordingly, Ogbu and Osanaiye (2017) explain that while training focuses on present jobs, development prepares employees for possible future jobs. Development can encompass a wide range of activities, including coaching and more formal educational commitments and experiences. It covers a wider scope than learning or training, which in some instances are included in the concept of development (Saini, 2015). Also, Noe, Clarke, and Klein (2014) observed that development activities consist of formal education, job experience, professional relationships, and assessment of personal skills and abilities that help employees excel professionally. They opine that formal development programmes include classroom instruction, online courses, college degree programmes, and mentorship programmes, systematically designed with specific goals, learning objectives, assessment instruments, and expectations. Employee development involves the development of an individual's capability to function effectively in his or her present or future job and work organization (Dachner, Ellingson, Noe & Saxton, 2019).

The Concept of Employee Productivity

Traditionally, productivity is defined as a measure of output over time, which originated in the nineteenth century. Productivity was used to describe what types of soil, plots of land, or varieties of plants produced the greatest yield (Sink, 1985). Productivity in the hotel industry is very significant. Being a labour-intensive industry, its profitability depends to a larger extent on the success it achieves in making good and productive use of its employees (McMahon, 1994). In business, productivity is used to account for the amount of work completed, the quality of that work, and its worth in terms of organizational objectives (Samson and Gungul, 2014). Nevertheless, productivity is related to the number of hours worked or the amount of money invested. In this way, productivity is almost always quantitative. This concept of productivity is useful in gaining an understanding of a company's accomplishments; however, it does not examine the process by which productivity is achieved and the foundations in which the values are embedded (Hanif, Rakhman & Nurkholis, 2018). In spite of that, companies are usually looking for the highest possible outcome (productivity) for the minimum amount of input.

Similarly, Joppe & Li (2014) define productivity as the out-put-in-put ratio within a period with due consideration to equality. It measures how efficiently a person or machine transforms inputs into outputs. Productivity is a measure of the efficiency of production; that is, of production capacity to create income, which is measured by real output value minus real input value. It can also be expressed as a relationship of outputs compared to inputs in the economic process. The connection between the hotel industry's competitiveness and productivity is obvious. Invariably, four basic factors for increasing the productivity of the employees are education, nutrition, the availability of the labour force, the extent of staff training, and the development of the employees' skills (Pupavac, 2020). Hence, the best way to

improve productivity in the hotel industry is through human resource issues. Consequently, Storey (2018) opines that in the labour-intensive hotel industry, the employee plays an important role in providing quality services to guests, and the employees' knowledge of keeping a high level of guest satisfaction would thus be a key issue to help generate high productivity.

The Role of Productivity in Organizational Performance

According to Singh and Mohanty (2012), productivity is a measure of the quantity and quality of work done, considering the cost of the resources used. Productivity is the quality or state of yielding or furnishing results, benefits, or profits. In operational terms, it involves a relationship between the input of resources and the output of resulting goods and services (Pupavac, 2020). Resource input encompasses time, money, and materials and can be reduced by cutting down on the time taken to produce something, the cost of producing it, or the amount of material used (Singh & Mohanty, 2012). Output can be measured in terms of such things as meals served, customers served, and rooms cleaned. The role of management is to develop and organise a system that increases the value of the output faster than the cost of the input. The hospitality industry can no longer rely on its previous years of growth to increase profits.

One of the challenges for the hospitality industry is that its nature makes productivity difficult to measure, much less improve on (Tzeremes, 2019). Hence, the hotel industry offers a blend of products and services, for example, a hamburger and quick service; a hotel room and a cheerful smile; etc. While we can measure the number of burgers sold, rooms cleaned and drinks served, how do we calculate the intangible services? Although employees are critical to increased productivity, we have traditionally placed little emphasis on employee development and training. Managers can understand the necessity of investing in a machine and the value of a preventive maintenance programme for that machine. They do not, however, regard money spent on an employee as an investment, but rather it is seen as purely a cost. The problem is not considered important enough for managers to do something about it (Singh & Mohanty, 2012).

We have to realise that ROI means Return on Individual as well as Return on Investment. The best measures of productivity are those that are inflation-proof and measure the performance of output. It increases when more output results from the same or less input. For example, productivity could be measured as the number of customers, rooms occupied, or meals produced divided by the number of employee hours required. Alternatively, the number of employees per one hundred rooms could be used (Dobre, 2013). Likewise, Mafini and Pooe (2013) opined that organisational performance is the achievement of organisational objectives and targets as measured by the organisation's profitability, customer satisfaction, market performance, and shareholders' returns.

Dobrie (2013) defines performance as the achievement of results, ensuring the delivery of desirable outcomes for a firm's stakeholders. For an organisation to be successful, it has to record high returns and identify performance drivers from the top to the bottom (Khan, Khan & Khan, 2011). Also, Mose, Njihia, & Magutu (2013) argued that performance measurement is one of the tools firms can use to monitor performance, which identifies the areas that require consideration, enhanced motivation, improvement in communication, and strengthened accountability.

Employee Efficiency

Efficiency refers to a peak level of performance that uses the least quantity of inputs to achieve the highest amount of output. It requires reducing the amount of excessive resources used to produce a given output, including personal time and energy (Sickles & Zelenyuk, 2019). Efficiency is an assessable notion which can be calculated using the proportion of useful output to total input. It minimises the waste of resources, such as physical materials, energy, and time, while accomplishing the desired output (Jorge & Suarer, 2014) Operational efficiency ascertains how well profits are made against the operating costs.

Greater operational efficiency is an indication of a firm's or investment profitability. The reason is that the business can engender bigger income or profits for the same or lower cost than an alternative. Efficiency is an important attribute because all inputs are scarce (Pekury, Haapasalo & Herrela, 2011). In the context of productivity, Sickles & Zelenyuk(2019) define efficiency as the act of doing things right or utilising resources to accomplish desired results. He maintains that, while efficiency focuses on the process or means involved to do something, effectiveness on the other hand highlights the importance of reaching the desired objective. Engender

The Concept of Training and Development for Effective Productivity

Training is the acquisition of skills, concepts, or attitudes that result in improved performance in an on-the-job environment, which comprises a massive enterprise and a powerful instrument for change. It is generally believed that training improves employee attitudes, job satisfaction, productivity, and work quality, as well as improves the overall perception of an organisation by the customer and increases profit margin by reducing labour turnover and associated costs. According to Yang (2012), training is an initial exposure for workers related to the delivery of services performed by the organisation to the employee. Employee training refers to a planned effort by an organisation to enhance employees' learning of job-related competencies. These competencies include knowledge, skills, or behaviours that are critical for successful job performance. The goal of training is for employees to master the knowledge, skills, and behaviours emphasised in training programs and to apply them to their day-to-day activities.

Training and Development's Roles in Organizational Performance

Training is one of the human resources functions of the organisation. When employees are recruited into an organization; they may not possess the required skill set to fully discharge their roles in the organization (Daniel, 2018). Hence, the need arises for them to be equipped with new and relevant skills sets for the good performance of the organisation. Also, the business world is very dynamic and ever-changing. Organisations keep innovating, and it makes it imperative for them to keep training and learning (Lilly, 2011). The rate of technological advancement has made it virtually impossible for any forward-looking organisation not to move with the competitive trend.

Customers' expectations keep rising, and every organisation that wants to remain in business will necessarily have to meet them. Customer-facing employees, especially those in the hospitality and tourism business, will need the right skills, knowledge and attitude to manage the customers with their high expectations, which can be acquired through training (Ubeda-Garcia, Marco-Lajara, Sabater-Sempere & Garcia-Lillo, 2013). The training addresses gaps or discrepancies between an ideal and an optimal stage of development. Training programmes not only develop employees but also help an organisation to make the best use of its human resources in the interest of gaining a competitive advantage (Daniel, 2018). The organisation must design training in a very careful manner and according to the needs of the employees (Khan, Khan & Khan, 2011).

Furthermore, Stoner, Freeman, and Gilbert (2007) assert that managers and management researchers have long believed that organisational goals are unachievable without the persistent commitment of members of the organisation. There can hardly be any improvement in employees' performance without employees being motivated to perform (Daniel, 2018). Hence, training is a motivational tool that an organisation can use to enhance its performance. It is of great essence that training should be evaluated. Evaluation is the systematic process of determining the significance or worth of a subject, using criteria governed by a set of standards. It can assist an organisation to ascertain the degree of achievement or value regarding the aim and objectives of an undertaking project (Khan, Khan & Khan, 2011). According to Page, Jagger, Tamkin & Henwood (2006), an analysis of the impact of investing in people could, for example, employee training and development, help to justify the costs incurred, corroborate the intervention as a business tool, and support the design and assortment of prospective investment methods.

Staff Development's Roles in Organizational Performance

Most organizations have realized that employees are their most valued assets, and that development is required to sustain their loyalty and motivate them, thereby increasing productivity to achieve their vision (Shonubi, 2020). Development is a practical exercise of studying and development by which managerial staffs acquire and employ knowledge, skills, attitudes, and

insights to handle their work effectively and efficiently, which enables them to cope with the complexity of the organisation and technological changes (Amir, 2019). According to Saini (2015), staff development is a process of employee improvement through approaches that emphasize self-realization, self-growth, and growth of abilities, skills, and knowledge in an organization. Obisi (2012) submits that training and development are aimed at developing competencies such as technical, human conceptual, and managerial for the furtherance of individual and organizational growth. Show (2013) sees training and development as an avenue to acquire more new knowledge and develop further skills and techniques to function effectively. Staff development is focused on future tasks and responsibilities (Afsheen & Majeed, 2017).

A well-trained staff will have a progressive impact on organisational performance as it will add more effectiveness and efficiency to their output, which will in turn improve the organizational performance. Also, Nebo, Iloanya, and Egole (2015) observed that staff development should be encouraged as a part of employees' career advancement and for increased loyalty, which in turn increases their job performance. It should not be a one-off exercise but a regular necessity to help fill the skills gap and keep the organisation moving forward successfully. Champion and Kolawole (2017) observe that the low quality of employee education is one of the reasons for the reduced performance of the employees and poor productivity of the organisation. They further state that unstable or poor curriculum design, lack of good teacher welfare, inadequate teaching aids, indiscipline, and corruption have brought about drawbacks in the educational sector. Even though an organisation recognises the importance of developing an employee through training (on-the-job training or classroom training), the presence of an ineffective training programme for new employees will result in poor orientation, motivation, and productivity, thus limiting the operation of the organisation (Dixon, Reed, Belisle & Jackson 2015).

Empirical Studies on Employees' Development, Performance, and Productivity

The impact of training and development on non-managerial employees' performance in star-rated hotels in the Matale District of Sri Lanka was examined by Disanayaka & Sujeewa in 2020. A quantitative technique was used for the data collection and analysis. There were 311 non-managerial employees in the three hotels selected as the study population. A sample size of 154 employees was selected using the proportionate stratified random sampling method and used as the respondents and the questionnaire was administered to them. Descriptive statistics, correlation analysis, and regression analysis were used for the data analysis. The findings showed that there exists a positive relationship between the training of non-managerial employees of the selected hotels and their performance. However, the study concludes that apart from training, other variables such as competency,

individual characteristics, trainers, and work environment can influence or impact employee performance.

Similarly, Nassary (2020) assessed the effect of training on employees' performance in the Arusha Municipality of Austria. Purposive, probability, and the simple random sampling procedure were used to select 80 respondents. This was out of a total of 189 total employees in the study area. The questionnaire was used to solicit data from the respondents. The study observed that training has a strong effect on employee performance. It also revealed that employees prefer short-course training and seminars to forums and workshops for building their capabilities. The study recommends that authorities allocate adequate financial resources for employees' short-course training and seminars to equip them with high capabilities.

Additionally, Shonubi (2020) investigated the effect of staff development on organisational performance in selected banks in Lagos State, Nigeria. The study adopted a descriptive research design through the use of a structured questionnaire. A total of 380 respondents were selected from a study population of 7,616 staff members of First Bank Nigeria PLC, using the Taro Yamane proportional sampling techniques. The data was analyzed using the statistical tool of regression analysis with the aid of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 23.0 at a 5% level of significance. The findings, amongst others, revealed that staff development has a significant effect on organisation performance. It concludes that well-trained staffs have a positive impact on organisational performance, improving effectiveness and efficiency, as well as job satisfaction and employee retention.

According to the study by Regen, Johannes, Edward, and Yacob (2020) on the effect of employee development on work behaviour and work motivation and its impact on employee performance of supervisors and administrators in government offices in Jambi Province, Indonesia, employee development is a determinant of employee performance. Also, work behaviour and work motivation affect employee performance. Similarly, employee development influences employee performance through behaviour and motivation. The study recommends that the regional, provincial, and central governments be supported by budget allocations and the compilation of education and training guidelines; job competency standards, career patterns, study permits/assignments, strengthening the employee supervision team; and the need to synergise and develop a comprehensive staffing development system.

Research Methodology

A descriptive research design and a survey approach were adopted for the study. The study population was managers of hotels registered with the Plateau and Nasarawa states tourism boards, The purposive sampling technique was used to determine the sampled hotels and the sample size. The quantitative data was collected through a standardised questionnaire administered to 57 respondents (managers). Descriptive statistics (frequency

count and percentage) were used to analyse the quantitative data, while inferential statistic (Chi-squared) was employed to test the hypothesis.

Results and Discussion

The results and discussion of this study are based on objective two and the hypothesis.

Socio-Demographic Information

Figures 1, 2 and 3 shows the Socio - Demographic Information of Managers in the Selected Hotels in Plateau and Nasarawa States.

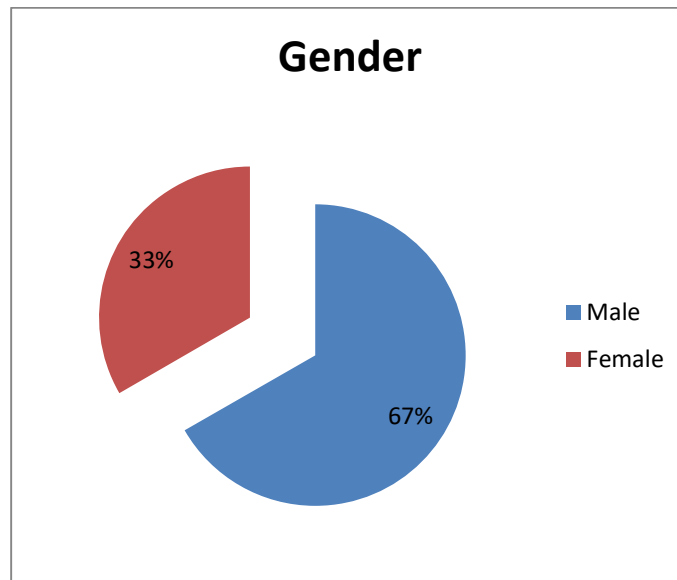


Figure 1: Pie Chart Showing Hotel Managers' Gender

depicts the gender distribution of the managers. The majority of the managers, 38 (67%), are male, while just one-third, 19 (33%), are female.

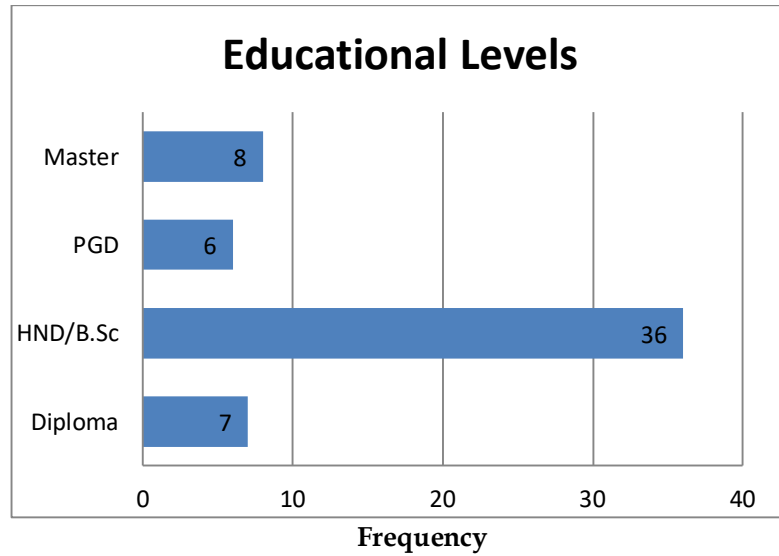


Figure 2: Bar Chart Showing Hotel Managers' Educational Levels

Figure 2 presents the educational qualifications of managers. Only 7(12.3%) and 8(14.0%) had Master's degrees and a Diploma. The majority of the managers (36, or 63.2%) were either HND or B.Sc. holders, while only 6(10.5%) attested that they had a Postgraduate Diploma (PGD).

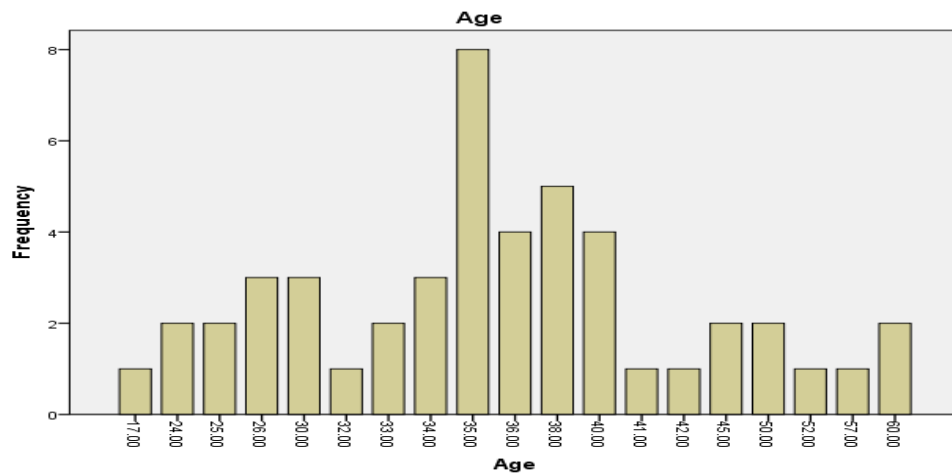


Figure 3: Depicts the Manager's Age Distribution.

The age distribution as shown in Figure 3 is fairly normal with the modal age been 35years. Next to it is age 38years with frequency of 5. Both

ages 36years and 40years had the same frequency of 4. The ages 26, 30 and 34 all had frequency of 3 each. While ages 24, 25, 45, 50 and 60 recorded frequency of 2 each. The ages 17, 32, 41, 42, 52 and 57 had one frequency each. About 50% of the respondents are within the age bracket of 35-40 years.

Table 1: The Impact of Employee Development on Productivity in the Hotel Industry in Plateau and Nasarawa States, North Central Nigeria.

Variables	Yes	Yes %	No	No %	Total (Frequency)	Total (%)
Does the incompetency of some staff have an impact on productivity?	37	64.9	20	35.1	57	100
Does failure of employee development lead to guests' dissatisfaction and complaints?	30	52.6	27	47.4	57	100
Does employee development lead to enhanced productivity?	40	70.2	17	29.8	57	100
Does failure of employee development result in a shortage of skills?	39	68.4	18	31.6	57	100
Does failure of employee development lead to the overworking of the few skilled staff?	26	45.6	31	54.4	57	100

N = 57, Source: Author's Fieldwork, (2022).

Table 1 shows the perceived impact of employee development on productivity in the hotel industry in Plateau and Nasarawa states. Five items were constructed to elicit this information from the managers, of which only the last item, namely "failure of employee development leads to overworking of the few skilled staff," with 54.4%, was found to have no impact on productivity. The items on "does the incompetence of some staff have an impact on employee productivity", "does failure of employee development lead to guest dissatisfaction and complaints" and "does employee development lead to enhanced productivity" with 64.9%, 52.6%, 70.2%, and 68.4%, respectively, were found to have a serious impact on productivity if employee development was jettisoned.

Research Hypothesis

Hi: There is no significant relationship between employee development and productivity in the hotel industry in North Central Nigeria.

Table 2: Chi-square Showing the Relationship Between Employee Development and Productivity

Employee Development	Productivity			Total	df	P
	Low	Moderate	High			
Yes	2	24	11	37	2	0.016
No	2	5	13	20		
Total	4	29	24	57		

Source: Author's Fieldwork, (2022)

Study findings summarized in Table 2 indicate there is a significant relationship between employee development and productivity since the alpha p value was 0.016 less than the 0.05 benchmark of a significant level with a degree of freedom 2. Therefore, the result is significant and this leads to the rejection of the hypothesis. The implication of this finding is that employee development will have an impact on productivity.

Discussion

The socio-demographic characteristics of the managers showed that 67% of them are male, while the remaining 33% are female. This falls in line with the study of Francis et al. (2019), which reported that 76% of the respondents (managers) were male and 26% were female. Also, the findings come close to the study by Rieu and Kamara (2016), which reported that 62.5% of the respondents were male, compared to 37.5% who were female. The reason for this may be traced to the religious, cultural, and social background of the people of the North Central Zone of Nigeria. However, the gender mix reported by Mara, Govender, and Makka (2019) indicated a 64% to 36% ratio of female to male respondents. The irony is that this study was conducted in Africa, specifically in South Africa and Namibia. One would have expected the usual African cultural beliefs and traditions to give men dominance in the hotel industry in these countries.

Similarly, their educational qualifications showed that the majority (63.2%) of them had either a BSc or HND while 14%, 12.3%, and 10.5% of them had diplomas, masters, and postgraduate diplomas, respectively. In their study, Makinde, Tayo, and Olaniyan (2018) revealed in their study that employee educational qualification significantly affects productivity. However, further investigation into the professions of the managers revealed that less than 10% of them were professionals in the hospitality and tourism professions. Their age bracket was normal, with the modal age being 35 years. This corroborates the study of Francis et al. (2019), which reported that a good number of the managers are in their active ages of 35–40 years, which is good for the hospitality and tourism industries due to the active nature of the operations.

To answer the research objective, five items were constructed to elicit information from the managers, of which only the last item, namely, "failure of employee development leads to overworking of the few skilled staff," with 54.4%, was found to have no significant impact on productivity. Does the incompetency of some staff have an impact on employee productivity? "Does failure of employee development lead to guest dissatisfaction and complaints?" and "Does employee development lead to enhanced productivity?" With 64.9%, 52.6%, 70.2%, and 68.4%, respectively, were found to have a serious impact on productivity if employee development was jettisoned.

Some of the studies that corroborate these findings are those by Hazra, Ghosh, and Sengupta (2017), which concluded that training and development have an impact on employees' effectiveness and development. Similarly, Samson and Gungul (2014) in their study opined that training and development are a panacea for enhanced productivity in the hospitality industry. In the same vein, Gambo (2015) aligned training and development to enhance employee performance, productivity, and technical knowledge to withstand the technological changes of the time. Corroborating this point of view, Salah (2016) agreed that training and development have a positively correlated relationship with employee performance and productivity. Show (2013) sees training and development as an avenue to acquire more knowledge and develop further skills and techniques to function effectively. According to Majeed & Shakeel (2017), staff development is focused on future tasks and responsibilities. A well-trained staff will have a progressive impact on organisational performance as it will add more effectiveness and efficiency to their output, which will in turn improve the organization's performance.

Most organisations have realised that employees are their most valuable assets, and development is required to sustain their loyalty and motivate them, thereby increasing productivity to achieve their vision (Shonubi, 2020). Similarly, Nebo, Iloanya, and Egole (2015) observed that staff development should be encouraged as a part of employees' career advancement and to increase loyalty, which in turn increases their job performance. He stated that there is no significant relationship between employee development and productivity in the hotel industry in north-central Nigeria. The result of the Chi-square test was analysed, and the summary indicated a significant relationship between employee development and productivity. In the field, the researcher engaged some managers, supervisors, and even the operative staff to obtain their views on the impact of employee development on productivity. The responses showed an overwhelmingly positive impact. Hence, the finding of this study reveals that there is a significant positive relationship between employee development and productivity. The finding is in line with the study of Regen, Johannes, Edward, and Yacob (2020), which reported that employee development is a determinant of employee performance, which contributes to high productivity. Bello and Bello (2022) came to the conclusion in their study that

managers and hotel owners should develop supportive policies that will encourage their staff, whether it be training and development policies or practical solutions to their problems, which will keep them satisfied and happy, thereby increasing productivity and lowering turn-over.

Similarly, Bello and Majebi (2018) research also supported the idea that customers are more satisfied when staff members are responsive, eager to assist clients, and willing to offer timely service. Productivity will also increase as a result of this influence. Other findings that buttress these findings include: Mamy, Shabbir, and Hasan (2020); Habon, Enriques, Dinglasan, Habon, Punzalan, and Pulhin (2019), Abdullahi, Gwadabe, and Ibrahim (2018); Salah (2016); Tahir, and Yousafai (2014); Samson, and Gungul (2014), Malaolu, and Ogbuabor (2013); and Laing (2009), amongst others all confirmed the impact of employee development on productivity. It is to be expected that findings like this should be brought to the knowledge of hotel operators and even governments so that training and development can be intensified in the hotel sector in Plateau and Nasarawa states in particular and the nation at large to improve productivity and revenue generation.

Conclusions

The study ascertained the significant relationship between employee development and productivity in the hotel industry in Plateau and Nasarawa states, North Central Nigeria. The biodata of the respondents showed that the majority, 67% of them, are male, while 33% are female. Most of the respondents (managers) have BSc or HND qualifications, and 10% have a postgraduate diploma. In the same vein, the modal age of the respondents is 35 years. Findings on the perceived impact of employee development on productivity in the hotel industry in Plateau and Nasarawa states showed that a lack of employee development results in guests' dissatisfaction and complaints, a low level of productivity, and incompetency of the staff. However, it does not lead to the hiring of a few skilled employees.

The results of the chi-square test indicated that there is a positive relationship between employee development and productivity in the hotel industry in Plateau and Nasarawa states, North Central Nigeria. Also, employee development impacts positively on productivity and organisational competitive advantage when adequately applied. Finally, the study concludes that employee training and development tend to ameliorate the skills gap and, invariably, enhance performance and productivity in the hotel industry. The study, therefore, recommends that the hotel owners and management in the study area should, as a matter of importance, make a concerted effort to train and develop their employees to maximise their potential, motivate the staff, and meet the organisations' objectives.

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