



THE ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT IN THE NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT OF NIGERIA

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Abstract: Human resource management plays a critical role in enhancing organizational performance and supporting national development, particularly in developing economies such as Nigeria. This study examined the role of human resource management in the national development of Nigeria, with specific focus on the hospitality sector. The study investigated how key human resource management practices, training and development, talent management, and service quality improvement contribute to national development measured through employment generation. A quantitative research design was adopted for the study, and data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to employees of selected hospitality firms. A total of 291 valid responses were obtained and analyzed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis with the aid of SPSS version 30. The descriptive results indicated that organizations actively implement training and development programs and talent management strategies aimed at improving employee performance and service delivery. The regression analysis further revealed that training and development and talent management have positive and statistically significant effects on national development through employment generation. Talent management was found to have the strongest influence on employment generation among the variables examined. However, service quality improvement showed a significant but negative relationship with employment generation, suggesting that improvements in service delivery may sometimes be achieved through efficiency measures rather than workforce expansion. The findings highlight the importance of strategic human resource management practices in enhancing workforce productivity, improving service delivery, and supporting employment creation. The study concludes that effective human resource management practices are essential for promoting sustainable national development in Nigeria. It recommends that organizations and policymakers strengthen investments in human capital development, talent retention strategies, and workforce training programs to enhance national economic growth.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, National Development, Training and Development, Talent Management, Employment Generation.

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1. Background to the Study

Human resources constitute one of the most valuable assets of any nation because they represent the knowledge, skills, creativity, and productive capabilities required to drive economic growth and social transformation. In contemporary development discourse, countries that effectively manage their human capital tend to experience higher levels of productivity, innovation, and sustainable development. This has made Human Resource Management (HRM) an essential component of national development strategies across both developed and developing economies. In Nigeria, the strategic management of human resources is particularly important given the country's large population, expanding labour market, and the need to diversify the economy beyond oil dependence.

Scholars have extensively defined human resource management from different perspectives. According to Armstrong (2020), human resource management refers to a strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets, that is, its employees who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of organizational objectives. Similarly, Dessler (2017) defines HRM as the process of acquiring, training, appraising, and compensating employees, as well as attending to their labour relations, health, safety, and fairness concerns. Storey (1995) earlier conceptualized HRM as a distinctive approach to employment management that seeks to achieve competitive advantage through the strategic deployment of a highly committed and capable workforce. In the same vein, Boxall and Purcell (2016) describe HRM as the management of work and people toward desired organizational outcomes, emphasizing those effective HR policies enhance employee performance and productivity. These scholarly definitions collectively underscore the strategic importance of managing people as a central resource in achieving both organizational and national development goals.

The concept of human resources itself refers to the totality of individuals who contribute labour, knowledge, and skills to productive activities within an organization or society. Becker (1964), through the Human Capital Theory, emphasized that investments in human resources such as education, training, and skill acquisition enhance productivity and economic growth. Human resources therefore represent the foundation upon which human resource management operates. While human resources represent the people, human resource management represents the strategies, systems, and practices used to harness the potential of those people for productive outcomes. The effective integration of human resources and HRM practices consequently produces broader socio-economic benefits that contribute to national development.

National development is generally understood as the process through which a nation improves the economic, social, political, and institutional wellbeing of its citizens. Todaro and Smith (2015) define national development as a multidimensional process involving structural transformation of the economy, reduction of poverty, improvement of living standards, and expansion of employment opportunities. Similarly, Seers (1969) argued that development should be evaluated based on reductions in poverty, unemployment, and inequality. Within this framework, human resource management becomes a critical tool because it enhances

workforce productivity, institutional performance, and innovation capacity, all of which contribute directly to national development.

The relationship between human resources, human resource management, and national development is therefore mutually reinforcing. Human resources provide the labour and intellectual capacity required for production and service delivery, while human resource management provides the organizational framework for maximizing these capacities. When HRM practices such as recruitment, training, performance management, and employee motivation are effectively implemented, they lead to higher productivity, improved service delivery, and stronger institutional performance. These outcomes ultimately translate into improved national economic growth and development. Scholars such as Guest (2011) and Wright and McMahan (2011) have argued that strategic HRM practices significantly influence organizational performance, which in turn contributes to broader economic growth at the national level.

In Nigeria, the importance of human resource management extends beyond corporate organizations to sectors such as manufacturing, oil and gas, education, healthcare, and hospitality. The hospitality industry, particularly hotel firms, represents a critical sector where effective HRM practices directly influence service delivery and customer satisfaction. According to Baum (2015), the hospitality industry is fundamentally people-driven because service quality depends largely on the skills, attitudes, and commitment of employees. Similarly, Nickson (2013) notes that effective human resource management in hospitality organizations improves employee engagement, service efficiency, and customer loyalty. In hotel firms, HRM practices such as staff training, customer service orientation, performance appraisal, and reward systems play significant roles in enhancing service delivery to customers.

In practical terms, hospitality firms that invest in human resource development tend to achieve higher levels of service excellence and competitiveness. For instance, Kuslivan et al. (2010) observed that training and employee development significantly improve service quality in hotel establishments. Through HRM practices such as employee empowerment, service culture development, and performance-based incentives, hotel management can improve customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. These improvements contribute not only to organizational profitability but also to the broader economy through tourism development, job creation, and foreign exchange generation.

In Nigeria, particularly in major cities such as Abuja, hospitality firms play an increasingly important role in economic development due to the growth of tourism, international conferences, and government activities. Abuja-based hotels serve diplomats, international organizations, business travelers, and tourists, thereby contributing significantly to the service economy. Effective human resource management within these hospitality firms can therefore enhance national development by improving service standards, increasing employment opportunities, and strengthening Nigeria's global competitiveness in tourism and hospitality services.

The Nigerian government has historically recognized the importance of human resources in national development and has implemented several policies and programs aimed at strengthening human capital. Early efforts can be traced to the National Development Plans of the 1960s and 1970s, which emphasized manpower development and education expansion. According to Yesufu (2000), these development plans focused on building a

skilled workforce capable of supporting industrialization and economic growth. Subsequently, policies such as the National Policy on Education (Federal Government of Nigeria, 2013) emphasized technical and vocational education as a means of enhancing human capital development.

More recent initiatives have also focused on human resource development. Programs such as the National Directorate of Employment (NDE) established in 1986 aimed to address unemployment through vocational training and skills acquisition. Similarly, the Industrial Training Fund (ITF) was created to promote workforce training and capacity development across industries. In addition, government initiatives such as Vision 20:2020, the Economic Recovery and Growth Plan (ERGP), and the National Human Capital Development Programme have emphasized the importance of investing in human resources as a pathway to sustainable national development. Scholars such as Akinyemi and Abiddin (2013) have argued that these initiatives reflect the recognition that human resource development is essential for economic transformation in Nigeria.

Empirical studies have also examined the relationship between human resource management and national development. Adebayo (2020) found that strategic HR practices significantly influence organizational productivity and economic growth in Nigeria. Similarly, Okoye and Ezejiofor (2018) reported that employee training and development positively affect productivity in Nigerian manufacturing firms. Nwachukwu (2019) also observed that talent management practices improve innovation and competitiveness in developing economies. In the hospitality sector, Baum (2015) and Nickson (2013) demonstrated that effective HRM practices enhance service quality, employee performance, and customer satisfaction.

Despite these contributions, challenges remain in the effective implementation of HRM practices in Nigeria. Issues such as inadequate workforce training, poor employee motivation, weak institutional frameworks, and limited investment in human capital continue to hinder the full realization of HRM's potential in national development. These challenges are particularly evident in the hospitality sector, where inconsistent service quality and limited staff development programs affect industry competitiveness.

Within Abuja-based hospitality firms, however, there are emerging opportunities for HRM to shape national development outcomes. By implementing modern HR practices such as competency-based recruitment, continuous professional training, digital workforce management systems, and performance-based incentives, hotel firms can significantly enhance service delivery and operational efficiency. These improvements can attract international tourism, increase employment opportunities, and generate economic growth, thereby contributing to Nigeria's national development.

While previous studies have largely focused on HRM at the organizational level, there remains a need to examine how HRM practices within strategic sectors such as hospitality can influence broader national development outcomes. This study therefore takes the position that human resource management represents a critical yet underutilized mechanism for achieving sustainable national development in Nigeria, particularly within service industries such as hospitality. By strengthening HRM practices in Abuja-based hotel firms and other service organizations, Nigeria can enhance

workforce productivity, improve service quality, and accelerate economic development.

1.2. Statement of the Problem

National development remains one of the most critical objectives of modern states, particularly in developing economies such as Nigeria. Despite the country's vast natural resources and large population, Nigeria continues to face significant developmental challenges including high unemployment, low industrial productivity, weak institutional capacity, poverty, poor service delivery, and inadequate infrastructure. These challenges have persisted for decades and have raised concerns among scholars and policymakers regarding the factors hindering sustainable national development. Several studies have argued that one of the major underlying causes of these developmental setbacks is the ineffective management and utilization of human resources within both public and private institutions.

Nigeria is endowed with a large and youthful population estimated at over 200 million people, which theoretically represents a significant human capital advantage for economic development. However, the country continues to experience widespread unemployment and underemployment. According to the National Bureau of Statistics, unemployment and underemployment rates in Nigeria have remained persistently high, particularly among young people. Scholars such as Akinyemi and Abiddin (2013) argue that although Nigeria possesses a large labour force, inadequate human capital development and weak human resource management systems have limited the country's ability to transform this workforce into a productive asset for national development. This suggests that the problem is not necessarily the absence of human resources, but rather the inability to effectively manage and develop these resources for productive purposes.

Furthermore, poor human resource planning and development have contributed to skill mismatches within the Nigerian labour market. Many graduates produced by the educational system lack the practical and technical skills required by modern industries. Okoye and Ezejiofor (2018) observed that the absence of structured training and workforce development programs in many Nigerian organizations has resulted in low employee productivity and reduced organizational performance. Similarly, Adebayo (2020) found that weak human resource management practices such as inadequate employee training, poor performance management systems, and lack of strategic workforce planning continue to undermine organizational productivity in Nigeria. These weaknesses ultimately affect national productivity and economic development.

Another major challenge confronting national development in Nigeria is the weak institutional capacity of public sector organizations. Public institutions play a central role in implementing development policies, providing public services, and managing national resources. However, many Nigerian public institutions suffer from inefficiencies arising from poor human resource management practices, including political interference in recruitment, lack of merit-based promotion systems, inadequate training opportunities, and weak accountability mechanisms. According to Yesufu (2000), ineffective human resource management in public institutions has significantly reduced the efficiency of government programs and policies aimed at promoting national development.

Corruption and poor work ethics also represent serious human resource challenges affecting national development in Nigeria. Weak HR systems often fail to promote transparency, accountability, and employee motivation. Scholars such as Wright and McMahan (2011) argue that ineffective human resource management structures can create environments where employee commitment and productivity are undermined. In Nigeria, these weaknesses manifest in the form of absenteeism, low employee engagement, and limited innovation within both public and private organizations.

In addition, the hospitality and service sectors, which have the potential to significantly contribute to economic diversification and employment generation, are also affected by human resource management challenges. The hospitality industry, including hotel firms, depends heavily on the quality of human resources for effective service delivery. However, many hospitality establishments in Nigeria struggle with challenges such as inadequate staff training, high employee turnover, poor motivation, and lack of professional human resource management practices. Baum (2015) notes that service industries such as hospitality rely heavily on employee competence, attitudes, and customer service skills, and therefore require effective HRM systems to maintain service quality and competitiveness. Where such systems are weak, service delivery becomes inconsistent, which ultimately reduces the sector's contribution to national economic growth.

Another problem is the limited investment in human capital development by both government and private organizations. Although the Nigerian government has introduced several policies aimed at promoting human resource development, the implementation of these policies has often been inconsistent. Programs such as vocational training initiatives, youth empowerment schemes, and skills acquisition programs have not always produced the desired outcomes due to poor management structures and insufficient institutional capacity. Todaro and Smith (2015) emphasize that sustainable national development requires continuous investment in human capital through education, training, and skills development. Without such investments, countries may struggle to achieve long-term economic growth and competitiveness.

Moreover, globalization and technological advancement have increased the demand for highly skilled labour in modern economies. Nigeria's inability to adequately develop and manage its human resources has limited its ability to compete effectively in the global knowledge economy. Guest (2011) argues that strategic human resource management plays a crucial role in enhancing organizational adaptability, innovation, and competitiveness. However, in Nigeria, many organizations still rely on outdated human resource practices that do not adequately support employee development or organizational transformation.

The persistence of these challenges indicates that while national development remains a major policy objective in Nigeria, the realization of this objective is constrained by significant human resource management deficiencies. In other words, the potential of Nigeria's human resources has not been fully harnessed due to systemic weaknesses in human resource planning, development, and management. The absence of strategic HRM frameworks in many organizations and institutions continues to limit productivity, innovation, and effective service delivery.

Consequently, there is a growing recognition among scholars and policymakers that addressing Nigeria's development challenges requires a stronger focus on human resource management practices. Effective HRM systems can enhance workforce productivity, improve institutional performance, and strengthen service delivery across key sectors of the economy. In particular, sectors such as hospitality, which rely heavily on human interaction and service quality, present significant opportunities for demonstrating how effective HRM practices can contribute to national development.

Despite the acknowledged importance of human resource management in national development, there remains limited empirical focus on how HRM practices within specific sectors and organizations contribute to broader development outcomes in Nigeria. This gap highlights the need for further research examining the role of human resource management in promoting national development. Therefore, the central problem addressed by this study is the persistent disconnect between Nigeria's abundant human resource potential and the country's slow pace of national development, largely attributable to weaknesses in human resource management practices across institutions and industries.

2. Literature Review

2.1 Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework provides the conceptual foundation upon which a study is anchored. It explains the underlying theories that support the relationships between the variables under investigation. In examining the role of human resource management in national development in Nigeria, this study is anchored on three key theories: Human Capital Theory, Resource-Based View Theory, and Institutional Theory. These theories collectively explain how effective management of human resources contributes to organizational performance and ultimately to national development.

Human Capital Theory – Becker (1964)

Human Capital Theory was popularized by Gary Becker in 1964, although earlier contributions were made by scholars such as Schultz (1961). The theory emphasizes the economic value of human beings in terms of their knowledge, skills, education, experience, and competencies. According to Becker (1964), investments in human capital through education, training, and health improvements enhance the productivity and efficiency of individuals, which ultimately contributes to economic growth and national development.

The central tenet of Human Capital Theory is that human beings are not merely labour inputs but valuable assets whose capabilities can be developed through deliberate investment. The theory argues that organizations and governments that invest in the development of their workforce through education, training, and skill acquisition will achieve higher productivity and economic performance. In the context of human resource management, this implies that HR practices such as employee training, professional development, talent management, and performance management are essential mechanisms for enhancing workforce productivity.

Human Capital Theory assumes that individuals and organizations make rational decisions to invest in education and training because such investments yield future economic benefits. It also assumes that human skills and knowledge can be measured and developed

in a similar manner to physical capital. Furthermore, the theory assumes that improved workforce competence leads to increased productivity, innovation, and organizational performance.

Despite its wide acceptance, Human Capital Theory has faced several criticisms. Some scholars argue that the theory places excessive emphasis on economic returns while ignoring social and institutional factors that influence workforce productivity. Bowles and Gintis (1975) criticized the theory for assuming that education automatically leads to productivity, whereas in reality labour market structures and institutional conditions also play significant roles. Similarly, Marginson (2019) argues that human capital theory tends to oversimplify the complex relationship between education, skills, and economic outcomes.

Another limitation of the theory is that it assumes equal access to opportunities for education and skill development, which is often not the case in developing countries such as Nigeria. Structural challenges such as poverty, inequality, and inadequate educational infrastructure may limit individuals' ability to invest in their own human capital. Nevertheless, many scholars maintain that the theory remains highly relevant for explaining the relationship between human resource development and economic growth. For instance, Todaro and Smith (2015) emphasize that investment in human capital remains one of the most effective strategies for promoting sustainable national development in developing economies.

Within the Nigerian context, Human Capital Theory provides a strong foundation for understanding how effective human resource management practices can enhance workforce productivity and contribute to national development. Through investments in education, training, and professional development, organizations and governments can build a skilled workforce capable of supporting economic growth and technological advancement.

Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory – Barney (1991)

The Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory was developed by Jay Barney in 1991, although earlier conceptual foundations were laid by Wernerfelt (1984). The theory posits that the competitive advantage and long-term success of organizations depend on their ability to acquire, develop, and effectively utilize valuable resources that are rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable.

According to Barney (1991), resources that meet the criteria of being valuable, rare, inimitable, and non-substitutable commonly referred to as the VRIN framework can provide organizations with sustainable competitive advantages. Human resources are considered one of the most critical strategic resources within organizations because they possess knowledge, creativity, and innovative capabilities that cannot easily be replicated by competitors.

The Resource-Based View suggests that human resource management practices play a crucial role in developing and leveraging these strategic human resources. HR practices such as recruitment, training, leadership development, employee engagement, and knowledge management help organizations build unique capabilities that enhance performance and competitiveness. In this sense, human resources are viewed not merely as operational inputs but as strategic assets that drive organizational success.

The theory assumes that organizations possess heterogeneous resources and capabilities, meaning that different organizations

have different levels of access to strategic resources. It also assumes that these differences in resource capabilities explain variations in organizational performance. Furthermore, the theory assumes that effective management of internal resources is more important than external market conditions in determining organizational success.

However, the Resource-Based View has also faced criticisms. Some scholars argue that the theory lacks clear guidelines on how organizations can identify and develop strategic resources. Priem and Butler (2001) criticize RBV for being overly descriptive rather than predictive, suggesting that it explains competitive advantage after it occurs rather than providing clear strategies for achieving it. Another criticism is that the theory places excessive emphasis on internal organizational resources while neglecting external environmental factors such as government policies, technological change, and market competition.

Despite these criticisms, the Resource-Based View remains widely recognized as one of the most influential theories in strategic management and human resource management. Boxall and Purcell (2016) argue that human resources represent one of the most important sources of sustainable competitive advantage because the skills, experience, and knowledge of employees are difficult for competitors to replicate.

In the context of national development, the Resource-Based View suggests that countries that effectively manage and develop their human resources can build strong economic institutions and competitive industries. For Nigeria, the strategic management of human resources within sectors such as hospitality, manufacturing, and technology can enhance service delivery, improve productivity, and contribute to national economic growth.

Institutional Theory – Meyer and Rowan (1977)

Institutional Theory was developed by Meyer and Rowan in 1977, and later expanded by scholars such as DiMaggio and Powell (1983). The theory explains how organizational structures, practices, and policies are influenced by institutional pressures arising from social norms, cultural expectations, government regulations, and professional standards.

The central argument of Institutional Theory is that organizations adopt certain practices not only for efficiency but also to gain legitimacy and acceptance within their institutional environment. According to Meyer and Rowan (1977), organizations often conform to socially accepted rules and norms in order to maintain legitimacy and access to resources.

Within the context of human resource management, Institutional Theory suggests that HR practices are shaped by regulatory frameworks, labour laws, professional standards, and societal expectations. Governments and regulatory institutions therefore play significant roles in shaping HRM practices across organizations and industries.

The theory identifies three major forms of institutional pressures that influence organizational behavior: coercive pressures, normative pressures, and mimetic pressures. Coercive pressures arise from government regulations and legal requirements. Normative pressures arise from professional standards and educational institutions. Mimetic pressures occur when organizations imitate the practices of successful organizations in order to remain competitive.

Institutional Theory assumes that organizations operate within broader social and regulatory systems that influence their structures and practices. It also assumes that organizations seek legitimacy and survival within their institutional environments. Consequently, HR practices often evolve in response to societal expectations and regulatory requirements.

One limitation of Institutional Theory is that it sometimes overemphasizes conformity and institutional pressures while underestimating the role of strategic decision-making by organizational leaders. Scott (2008) argues that organizations are not merely passive recipients of institutional pressures but can also actively shape their institutional environments.

Another critique is that the theory may not fully explain organizational innovation because it tends to focus on stability and conformity rather than change. Nevertheless, Institutional Theory remains highly relevant for understanding how government policies, labour regulations, and professional standards influence HRM practices.

In Nigeria, Institutional Theory helps explain how government policies, labour regulations, and national development strategies shape human resource management practices across industries. Policies such as labour laws, educational reforms, and workforce development programs influence how organizations recruit, train, and manage employees.

Within sectors such as hospitality, institutional regulations related to labour standards, service quality, and professional certification influence HR practices in hotel firms. Abuja-based hospitality organizations, for example, must comply with regulatory standards while adopting HR practices that enhance service delivery and customer satisfaction.

4. Results and Discussion

In this study, a comprehensive demographic analysis of the Hotel workers in the selected hospitality firms in FCT, Abuja. Demographic characteristics such as age, gender, educational qualifications, years of work experience were considered.

Table 4.1: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	140	48.1
	Female	151	51.9
Age Group	20–29 years	65	22.4
	30–39 years	109	37.5
	40–49 years	85	29.2
	50+ years	32	11.0
Educational Qualification	Secondary School	29	10.0
	Tertiary (Bachelor’s Degree)	157	54.0
	Postgraduate (Master’s Degree/Ph.D.)	105	36.0
Years of Work Experience	0–5 years	54	18.6
	6–10 years	97	33.3
	11–15 years	76	26.1
	16+ years	64	22.0

Source: Authors Computation (2026) using SPSS version 30.

Table 4.1 presents the demographic characteristics of the respondents, including gender, age distribution, educational qualification, and years of work experience. These characteristics provide insight into the composition of the sample used in the study and help in understanding the background of participants whose responses informed the findings of the research.

With respect to gender distribution, the table shows that out of the total respondents, 140 respondents representing 48.1% were male, while 151 respondents representing 51.9% were female. This indicates that female respondents slightly outnumbered male respondents in the study. The near balance in gender representation suggests that the responses obtained reflect perspectives from both male and female employees in the organizations studied, thereby reducing gender bias and enhancing the reliability of the data collected.

Regarding the age distribution, the results indicate that the majority of the respondents fall within the 30–39 years age group,

accounting for 109 respondents (37.5%). This is followed by respondents aged 40–49 years, who represent 85 respondents (29.2%). Respondents within the 20–29 years age group constitute 65 respondents (22.4%), while those aged 50 years and above account for 32 respondents (11.0%). This distribution suggests that most of the respondents are within the economically active and productive age bracket of 30–49 years. Individuals within this age range are typically experienced professionals who are actively engaged in organizational operations and decision-making processes, making their responses particularly valuable for examining human resource management practices and their implications for national development.

In terms of educational qualifications, the results reveal that the majority of the respondents possess tertiary education, with 157 respondents representing 54.0% holding Bachelor’s degrees. Additionally, 105 respondents representing 36.0% possess postgraduate qualifications (Master’s or Ph.D. degrees).

Meanwhile, 29 respondents representing 10.0% have secondary school qualifications. This distribution indicates that a significant proportion of the respondents are well educated and possess the academic qualifications necessary to understand organizational processes and human resource management practices. The high level of education among respondents enhances the credibility of the responses provided and suggests that participants have the intellectual capacity to provide informed opinions on issues relating to human resource management and national development.

Concerning years of work experience, the findings show that 97 respondents representing 33.3% have between 6 and 10 years of work experience, making this the largest group in the sample. This is followed by 76 respondents (26.1%) with 11–15 years of experience, while 64 respondents (22.0%) have more than 16 years of work experience. Respondents with 0–5 years of experience account for 54 respondents (18.6%). The distribution indicates that a large proportion of respondents possess moderate to extensive

work experience. This suggests that the participants are sufficiently experienced in organizational practices and are therefore capable of providing meaningful insights into the role of human resource management in enhancing organizational performance and contributing to national development.

Response Statistics

In this section, we present the response statistics for all items related to each variable, as answered by the respondents in the study. These items were part of the questionnaire designed to measure the Role of Human Resource Management in National Development

Each table presents the frequency and percentage distribution of responses for each of the four items per training and development. A Likert scale ranging from **Strongly Disagree (1)** to **Strongly Agree (5)** was used for the responses.

4.1. Measuring Human Resource management construct

Table 4.2: Training and Development

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
My organization regularly organizes training programs to improve employees’ professional skills.	15 (5.2%)	30 (10.3%)	40 (13.8%)	95 (32.6%)	111 (38.1%)	291
Training and development programs in this organization improve employees’ job performance and productivity.	13 (4.5%)	28 (9.6%)	45 (15.5%)	90 (30.9%)	115 (39.5%)	291
Employees are encouraged to participate in workshops, seminars, and professional development programs.	14 (4.8%)	20 (6.9%)	50 (17.2%)	95 (32.6%)	112 (38.4%)	291
Continuous training of employees enhances the quality of service delivery in this organization.	12 (4.1%)	25 (8.6%)	45 (15.5%)	102 (35.0%)	107 (36.7%)	291

Source: Authors Computation (2026) using SPSS version 30.

Table 4.2 presents the responses of participants regarding training and development practices within their organizations. The responses are measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The table illustrates respondents’ perceptions of the role of training and development in enhancing employee skills, performance, and service delivery.

The first item examined whether the organization regularly organizes training programs to improve employees’ professional skills. The results show that 111 respondents (38.1%) strongly agreed and 95 respondents (32.6%) agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 40 respondents (13.8%) were neutral, while 30 respondents (10.3%) disagreed and 15 respondents (5.2%) strongly disagreed. The findings indicate that the majority of respondents believe that their organizations frequently organize training programs aimed at improving employees’ professional competencies. This suggests that training is recognized as an important human resource management practice within the organizations studied.

The second item assessed whether training and development programs improve employees’ job performance and productivity. The results reveal that 115 respondents (39.5%) strongly agreed and 90 respondents (30.9%) agreed with the statement. In contrast, 45 respondents (15.5%) remained neutral, while 28 respondents (9.6%) disagreed and 13 respondents (4.5%) strongly disagreed. The large proportion of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed

indicates that employees perceive training and development programs as effective tools for improving their job performance and productivity. This reinforces the importance of continuous learning and skill development within organizations.

The third item examined whether employees are encouraged to participate in workshops, seminars, and professional development programs. The responses show that 112 respondents (38.4%) strongly agreed and 95 respondents (32.6%) agreed that such opportunities are encouraged within their organizations. However, 50 respondents (17.2%) indicated neutrality, while 20 respondents (6.9%) disagreed and 14 respondents (4.8%) strongly disagreed. The findings suggest that most organizations encourage employee participation in professional development activities, which is a positive indicator of effective human resource management practices.

The fourth item evaluated whether continuous training enhances the quality of service delivery in the organization. The results show that 107 respondents (36.7%) strongly agreed and 102 respondents (35.0%) agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 45 respondents (15.5%) were neutral, while 25 respondents (8.6%) disagreed and 12 respondents (4.1%) strongly disagreed. The high level of agreement among respondents suggests that continuous training plays a significant role in improving service quality within the organizations studied.

Table 4.3: Talent Management

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
My organization has effective systems for identifying and developing talented employees.	8 (2.8%)	18 (6.2%)	35 (12.0%)	112 (38.4%)	118 (40.6%)	291
Talented employees are given opportunities for career growth and advancement.	7 (2.4%)	16 (5.5%)	40 (13.8%)	118 (40.6%)	110 (37.8%)	291
The organization retains high-performing employees through effective motivation and reward systems.	9 (3.1%)	14 (4.8%)	48 (16.5%)	106 (36.4%)	114 (39.2%)	291
Talent management practices in this organization improve overall organizational performance and service quality.	5 (1.7%)	19 (6.5%)	42 (14.4%)	109 (37.5%)	116 (39.9%)	291

Source: Authors Computation (2026) using SPSS version 30.

Table 4.3 presents the responses of the respondents on issues relating to talent management practices within their organizations. Talent management is an important component of human resource management that focuses on identifying, developing, motivating, and retaining employees with high potential and valuable skills. The responses were measured using a five-point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree.

The first item examined whether the organization has effective systems for identifying and developing talented employees. The results show that 118 respondents (40.6%) strongly agreed and 112 respondents (38.4%) agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 35 respondents (12.0%) indicated neutrality, while 18 respondents (6.2%) disagreed and 8 respondents (2.8%) strongly disagreed. These results indicate that the majority of respondents believe that their organizations have structured mechanisms for identifying and nurturing talented employees. This suggests that organizations recognize the importance of developing employee potential as part of their strategic human resource management practices.

The second item assessed whether talented employees are given opportunities for career growth and advancement within the organization. The findings reveal that 118 respondents (40.6%) agreed and 110 respondents (37.8%) strongly agreed with the statement. In contrast, 40 respondents (13.8%) remained neutral, while 16 respondents (5.5%) disagreed and 7 respondents (2.4%) strongly disagreed. The high level of agreement indicates that most

respondents perceive that talented employees are provided with opportunities for career progression and advancement within the organization. This demonstrates that organizations are making efforts to promote employee development and career mobility.

The third item examined whether the organization retains high-performing employees through effective motivation and reward systems. The results show that 114 respondents (39.2%) strongly agreed and 106 respondents (36.4%) agreed with the statement. However, 48 respondents (16.5%) were neutral, while 14 respondents (4.8%) disagreed and 9 respondents (3.1%) strongly disagreed. These findings suggest that most respondents believe that their organizations utilize motivation and reward systems to retain talented and high-performing employees. Effective reward systems are essential in reducing employee turnover and maintaining a skilled workforce within organizations.

The fourth item examined whether talent management practices improve overall organizational performance and service quality. The results indicate that 116 respondents (39.9%) strongly agreed and 109 respondents (37.5%) agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 42 respondents (14.4%) indicated neutrality, while 19 respondents (6.5%) disagreed and 5 respondents (1.7%) strongly disagreed. The strong level of agreement among respondents suggests that talent management practices play a significant role in enhancing organizational performance and service delivery.

4.2. Measuring National Development construct

Table 4.4: Employment Generation

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
The growth of hospitality firms contributes significantly to employment opportunities in Nigeria.	16 (5.5%)	28 (9.6%)	47 (16.2%)	112 (38.4%)	88 (30.3%)	291
Human resource management practices in my organization support job creation and workforce expansion.	18 (6.2%)	22 (7.6%)	50 (17.2%)	102 (35.0%)	99 (34.0%)	291
The hospitality industry plays an important role in reducing unemployment in Nigeria.	14 (4.8%)	30 (10.3%)	40 (13.8%)	112 (38.4%)	95 (32.6%)	291
Effective HR management practices encourage sustainable employment in the hospitality sector.	17 (5.8%)	34 (11.7%)	53 (18.2%)	98 (33.7%)	89 (30.6%)	291

Source: Authors Computation (2026) using SPSS version 30.

Table 4.4 presents the responses of respondents regarding employment generation as a key indicator of national development, particularly within the hospitality sector. The table highlights respondents' perceptions of how the growth of hospitality firms and effective human resource management practices contribute to job creation and reduction of unemployment in Nigeria.

The first item examined whether the growth of hospitality firms contributes significantly to employment opportunities in Nigeria. The results indicate that 88 respondents (30.3%) strongly agreed and 112 respondents (38.4%) agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 47 respondents (16.2%) remained neutral, while 28 respondents (9.6%) disagreed and 16 respondents (5.5%) strongly disagreed. These findings suggest that the majority of respondents believe that the expansion of hospitality firms plays an important role in creating employment opportunities in Nigeria. The hospitality sector is therefore perceived as a significant contributor to job creation and economic growth.

The second item assessed whether human resource management practices in the organization support job creation and workforce expansion. The results show that 99 respondents (34.0%) strongly agreed and 102 respondents (35.0%) agreed with the statement. In contrast, 50 respondents (17.2%) indicated neutrality, while 22 respondents (7.6%) disagreed and 18 respondents (6.2%) strongly disagreed. The large proportion of respondents who agreed or strongly agreed suggests that effective human resource

management practices contribute to workforce expansion within organizations. This implies that HRM policies such as recruitment, training, and employee development help create additional employment opportunities.

The third item examined whether the hospitality industry plays an important role in reducing unemployment in Nigeria. The findings show that 95 respondents (32.6%) strongly agreed and 112 respondents (38.4%) agreed with the statement. However, 40 respondents (13.8%) remained neutral, while 30 respondents (10.3%) disagreed and 14 respondents (4.8%) strongly disagreed. The results indicate that a large majority of respondents recognize the hospitality sector as an important driver of employment generation and a contributor to reducing unemployment in the country.

The fourth item evaluated whether effective human resource management practices encourage sustainable employment in the hospitality sector. The results reveal that 89 respondents (30.6%) strongly agreed and 98 respondents (33.7%) agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 53 respondents (18.2%) indicated neutrality, while 34 respondents (11.7%) disagreed and 17 respondents (5.8%) strongly disagreed. These findings suggest that effective HR management practices play a vital role in promoting stable and sustainable employment within hospitality organizations.

Table 4.5: Service Quality Improvement

Item	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly Agree	Total
Effective human resource management improves the quality of services delivered to customers.	7 (2.4%)	20 (6.9%)	38 (13.1%)	119 (40.9%)	107 (36.7%)	291
Employee training and talent management enhance customer satisfaction in this organization.	6 (2.1%)	21 (7.2%)	42 (14.4%)	115 (39.5%)	107 (36.7%)	291
High service standards in hospitality firms contribute to Nigeria's tourism and economic growth.	8 (2.8%)	22 (7.6%)	50 (17.2%)	109 (37.5%)	102 (35.0%)	291
Improved service delivery in the hospitality sector strengthens national development efforts.	9 (3.1%)	19 (6.5%)	46 (15.8%)	112 (38.4%)	105 (36.1%)	291

Source: Authors Computation (2026) using SPSS version 30.

Table 4.5 presents the responses of the respondents regarding service quality improvement as an important indicator of national development within the hospitality sector. The table assesses respondents' perceptions of how effective human resource management practices contribute to improved service delivery, customer satisfaction, and broader economic development.

The first item examined whether effective human resource management improves the quality of services delivered to customers. The results indicate that 107 respondents (36.7%) strongly agreed and 119 respondents (40.9%) agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 38 respondents (13.1%) were neutral, while 20 respondents (6.9%) disagreed and 7 respondents (2.4%) strongly disagreed. These findings demonstrate that a significant majority of respondents believe that effective HRM practices contribute positively to improving service quality within their organizations. This suggests that well-managed human resources play a critical role in ensuring high standards of service delivery in hospitality firms.

The second item assessed whether employee training and talent management enhance customer satisfaction in the organization. The findings reveal that 107 respondents (36.7%) strongly agreed and 115 respondents (39.5%) agreed with the statement. In contrast, 42 respondents (14.4%) remained neutral, while 21 respondents (7.2%) disagreed and 6 respondents (2.1%) strongly disagreed. The results suggest that the majority of respondents perceive employee training and talent management as important mechanisms for improving customer satisfaction. This highlights the importance of investing in employee development to achieve superior service outcomes in hospitality organizations.

The third item examined whether high service standards in hospitality firms contribute to Nigeria's tourism and economic growth. The responses show that 102 respondents (35.0%) strongly agreed and 109 respondents (37.5%) agreed with the statement. However, 50 respondents (17.2%) indicated neutrality, while 22 respondents (7.6%) disagreed and 8 respondents (2.8%) strongly disagreed. These results indicate that respondents widely recognize

the role of high-quality service delivery in promoting tourism development and economic growth in Nigeria.

The fourth item evaluated whether improved service delivery in the hospitality sector strengthens national development efforts. The findings reveal that 105 respondents (36.1%) strongly agreed and 112 respondents (38.4%) agreed with the statement. Meanwhile, 46

respondents (15.8%) were neutral, while 19 respondents (6.5%) disagreed and 9 respondents (3.1%) strongly disagreed. The high level of agreement among respondents suggests that improved service delivery within the hospitality industry contributes significantly to broader national development objectives.

4.3. Inferential Statistics

Table 4.5: Regression Analysis

Dependent variable: National development (measured through employment generation)

Variable	Unstandardized Coefficients	Standardized Coefficients (β)	t-Statistic	p-value
Constant	1.879		12.347	0.000
Training and Development	0.347	0.289	4.622	0.000
Talent Management	0.524	0.418	5.647	0.000
Service Quality Improvement	-0.302	-0.272	-4.543	0.000

Source: Authors Computation (2026) using SPSS version 30.

Table 4.5 presents the results of the multiple regression analysis conducted to examine the effect of human resource management practices on national development, measured through employment generation. The independent variables considered in the model include training and development, talent management, and service quality improvement. The regression results show the unstandardized coefficients, standardized coefficients (beta), t-statistics, and p-values for each predictor variable.

The regression model indicates that the constant value is 1.879, with a t-statistic of 12.347 and a p-value of 0.000. This suggests that when all the independent variables are held constant, national development measured through employment generation would increase by 1.879 units. The statistical significance of the constant indicates that the model provides a meaningful baseline level of national development even in the absence of the explanatory variables.

The results further show that training and development has a positive and statistically significant effect on national development. The unstandardized coefficient for training and development is 0.347, with a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.289, a t-statistic of 4.622, and a p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is less than the conventional significance level of 0.05, the relationship is statistically significant. This implies that improvements in training and development practices are associated with increases in employment generation. In other words, organizations that invest in employee training and skill development are more likely to enhance workforce productivity and create employment opportunities, thereby contributing to national development.

Similarly, talent management shows a positive and statistically significant relationship with national development. The regression coefficient for talent management is 0.524, with a standardized coefficient (β) of 0.418, a t-statistic of 5.647, and a p-value of 0.000. This indicates that talent management has the strongest positive influence on national development among the variables considered in the model. The findings suggest that organizations that effectively identify, develop, and retain talented employees are better positioned to expand their workforce and contribute to

employment generation. Talent management therefore plays a crucial role in strengthening organizational capacity and promoting economic development.

However, the results reveal that service quality improvement has a negative and statistically significant relationship with national development. The unstandardized coefficient is -0.302, with a standardized coefficient (β) of -0.272, a t-statistic of -4.543, and a p-value of 0.000. Although the relationship is statistically significant, the negative coefficient suggests that improvements in service quality within the sampled organizations may not directly translate into employment generation. One possible explanation is that organizations seeking to improve service quality may rely more on technological innovations, operational efficiency, or restructuring rather than expanding their workforce. Consequently, while service quality improvement enhances organizational performance and customer satisfaction, it may not always lead to immediate job creation.

4.4. Discussion of Findings

This study examined the role of human resource management in the national development of Nigeria, particularly within the hospitality sector. The findings of the study were discussed based on the key constructs investigated, namely training and development, talent management, service quality improvement, and employment generation as an indicator of national development. The results obtained from the descriptive and regression analyses provide useful insights into how human resource management practices influence national development outcomes.

The findings of the study revealed that training and development significantly contribute to national development through employment generation. The descriptive analysis indicated that a large proportion of respondents agreed that their organizations regularly organize training programs to improve employees' professional skills and enhance job performance. Furthermore, the regression results showed that training and development have a positive and statistically significant effect on employment generation. This suggests that organizations that invest in

continuous employee training and development are more likely to enhance workforce productivity and expand employment opportunities. These findings are consistent with the Human Capital Theory, which emphasizes that investment in human capital through education and training improves productivity and economic growth (Becker, 1964). The findings also support the study of Okoye and Ezeiofor (2018), who found that employee training significantly improves organizational productivity and contributes to economic growth. Similarly, Adebayo (2020) observed that organizations that prioritize training and development experience improved workforce competence and enhanced organizational performance.

The study also found that talent management has a strong and positive influence on national development. The descriptive analysis showed that most respondents agreed that their organizations have effective systems for identifying and developing talented employees, and that talented employees are provided with opportunities for career growth and advancement. The regression analysis further confirmed that talent management has the strongest positive effect on employment generation among the variables examined in the study. This finding implies that effective talent management practices such as employee motivation, career development, and retention strategies help organizations maintain a skilled workforce and expand employment opportunities. These findings align with the Resource-Based View (RBV) Theory, which argues that human resources represent valuable strategic assets that can provide organizations with competitive advantages (Barney, 1991). The results are also consistent with the findings of Nwachukwu (2019), who reported that talent management practices significantly enhance organizational performance and innovation in developing economies.

Another important finding of the study relates to service quality improvement within hospitality firms. The descriptive results indicated that most respondents agreed that effective human resource management practices improve the quality of services delivered to customers. Respondents also indicated that employee training and talent management enhance customer satisfaction and help maintain high service standards within hospitality organizations. This finding supports the argument of Baum (2015) and Nickson (2013), who emphasized that the hospitality industry is highly dependent on human resources because service delivery is largely determined by the competence and attitude of employees. Effective HRM practices such as training, employee motivation, and talent management therefore play crucial roles in improving service quality and customer satisfaction in hospitality organizations.

However, the regression results revealed a negative relationship between service quality improvement and employment generation, although the relationship was statistically significant. This suggests that while improvements in service quality enhance organizational performance and customer satisfaction, they may not necessarily lead to immediate job creation. One possible explanation is that organizations may adopt technological innovations, automation, or efficiency strategies to improve service quality without expanding their workforce. In some cases, organizations may prioritize operational efficiency over workforce expansion, which could limit employment growth even when service quality improves. Nevertheless, improved service delivery still contributes to national development indirectly by enhancing tourism, increasing customer

satisfaction, and improving the reputation of the hospitality industry.

The findings of this study also highlight the broader implications of human resource management for national development in Nigeria. The results suggest that effective HRM practices can contribute to national development by improving workforce productivity, enhancing service quality, and creating employment opportunities. In the context of the hospitality industry, HRM practices play an important role in developing skilled employees capable of delivering high-quality services that attract both domestic and international tourists. Increased tourism activities contribute to economic growth, foreign exchange earnings, and job creation, thereby supporting national development objectives.

Furthermore, the findings underscore the importance of strengthening human resource management systems within organizations and institutions in Nigeria. Despite the country's abundant human resources, weak HRM practices and inadequate human capital development have limited Nigeria's ability to fully harness its workforce potential for national development. As noted by Todaro and Smith (2015), investment in human capital development remains a key driver of economic growth and sustainable development in developing countries.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

5.1 Conclusion

This study examined the role of human resource management in the national development of Nigeria, with particular focus on the hospitality sector. The study specifically investigated the influence of training and development, talent management, and service quality improvement on national development, measured through employment generation. The findings of the study demonstrate that human resource management practices play a critical role in shaping organizational performance and contributing to broader national development outcomes.

The results revealed that training and development significantly enhance employment generation and workforce productivity. Organizations that invest in employee training and professional development are better positioned to improve employee competence, enhance service delivery, and expand their workforce. Training and development therefore serve as important tools for strengthening human capital and promoting sustainable economic growth.

The study also found that talent management has a strong and positive impact on national development. Effective identification, development, and retention of talented employees enable organizations to maintain a skilled workforce capable of driving innovation and organizational growth. Talent management practices therefore help organizations remain competitive while simultaneously contributing to employment creation and economic development.

In addition, the findings indicated that human resource management practices improve service quality within hospitality firms, thereby enhancing customer satisfaction and strengthening the tourism sector. Improved service delivery in the hospitality industry contributes to economic growth, increases tourism activities, and promotes Nigeria's international reputation as a destination for business and leisure. However, the regression analysis revealed a negative relationship between service quality

improvement and employment generation, suggesting that improvements in service delivery may sometimes be achieved through efficiency strategies or technological adoption rather than workforce expansion.

Overall, the study concludes that effective human resource management is a key driver of national development. By investing in workforce development, talent management, and service quality improvement, organizations can enhance productivity, create employment opportunities, and contribute to sustainable economic growth in Nigeria. The findings therefore highlight the importance of strengthening HRM practices across industries, particularly within the hospitality sector, to maximize the contribution of human resources to national development.

5.2. Recommendations

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

First, organizations in the hospitality sector should invest more in training and development programs for employees. Continuous professional training will improve employees' technical and interpersonal skills, enhance service delivery, and increase organizational productivity. Organizations should also establish structured training programs that focus on customer service, leadership development, and technological competencies.

Second, hospitality firms should strengthen their talent management practices by implementing effective systems for identifying, developing, and retaining talented employees. This can be achieved through career development programs, mentorship initiatives, and performance-based reward systems that motivate employees to perform at their best.

Third, management of hospitality organizations should prioritize employee motivation and engagement. Providing competitive compensation, recognition programs, and opportunities for career advancement will help reduce employee turnover and enhance workforce commitment. Motivated employees are more likely to deliver high-quality services and contribute positively to organizational growth.

Fourth, the Nigerian government should support human resource development initiatives within the hospitality industry. Government agencies responsible for tourism and labour should collaborate with private sector organizations to provide training programs, certification courses, and professional development opportunities for hospitality workers.

Fifth, policymakers should strengthen national human capital development policies by investing in education, vocational training, and skills acquisition programs that align with the needs of modern industries. Strengthening educational institutions and vocational training centers will help produce a skilled workforce capable of supporting national development goals.

Finally, organizations should integrate strategic human resource management into their overall business strategies. HRM should not be viewed merely as an administrative function but as a strategic tool for enhancing organizational performance and supporting national economic development. By aligning HR policies with organizational and national development objectives, firms can play a significant role in driving sustainable development in Nigeria.

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