

OUTSOURCING HUMAN RESOURCE FUNCTIONS ON PERFORMANCE OF SELECTED FOOD AND BEVERAGE FIRMS IN NIGERIA

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Abstract

The study evaluated the Effects of Outsourcing Human Resource Functions on Performance of Selected Food and Beverage Firms in Nigeria. The objectives are to examine the influence of recruitment outsourcing and training outsourcing on performance of food and beverage firms in Nigeria; The study adopted a descriptive research design. The sample consist of 400 respondents gotten from Taro Yamane model, using stratified sampling technique drawn from the staff of Cadbury, Nestle and Promasidor Nigeria Plc. Simple linear regression analysis was employed to test the effect of outsourcing human resource functions on performance, additionally, multiple regression analysis was utilized to examine the collective impact of the sub-variables of human resources. The results revealed that outsourcing recruitment and training have positive effects on performance. The study concluded that recruitment and training outsourcing are relevant for evaluating and enhancing performance.

Keywords: *Outsourcing human resource functions, organizational performance, recruitment outsourcing, training outsourcing*

Introduction

The corporate environment of today is extremely unstable and constantly changing. Organisational structures as well as the ways in which company is conducted are changing significantly as a result of increasingly complex business issues. In the face of technological innovation, the sophistication of business processes, the explosion of knowledge, and the need for constant expansion, an organisation looks for solutions to increase performance (Agburu, Anza, & Iyortsuun, 2017). As a result, it takes into account the skills of its employees, as well as technological advancements, organisational procedures, and other factors, to assess if it can achieve its objectives with what it already has or if it has to seek for ways to augment its resources for effectiveness and efficiency.

Regardless of size, every organisation tries to increase its organisational performance. Organisations need to grow at least a little bit each year to cover the extra costs that develop over time. Obiageli, Onyeizugbe and Agbomma (2015) claim that organisational growth has the potential to provide businesses with a wide range of advantages, including improved ability to withstand market fluctuations, enhanced survival rate, higher earnings, and organisational prestige for organisational members.

Organisations have traditionally looked for ways to get an edge over potential rivals, but the fiercely competitive environment in which today's businesses operate provides significant

motivation for them to outsource their human resource management. Increasing the role of outsourcing in their operations has proven to give these organisations a competitive edge, which has been one technique utilised by organisations to boost their competitive position in this new business environment (Suraju & Hamed, 2013).

In recent years, the business sector has significantly increased its use of the practise of outsourcing human resource functions. An increase in the use of human resource outsourcing is the most common trend among members and their organisations, according to a 2009 survey study by the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development (CIPD). The research claims that almost every aspect of the human resource function is currently being outsourced or is being considered for outsourcing. Matolo and Iravo (2018) contend that a greater understanding of how to use this tactic effectively is urgently needed given the increasing popularity of outsourcing arrangements and their complex nature. The rise of new and creative organisations has generated a compelling need for businesses to improve their performance in order to gain a competitive edge in today's fiercely competitive business environment.

In order to achieve organizational sustainability and enhance performance, it is imperative for organizations to operate in a responsible and stable manner that enables them to consistently deliver high levels of performance (Porter, 2011). In order to maintain a competitive position in the market, organizations often resort to outsourcing certain functions. This is a strategic approach aimed at achieving a competitive advantage over their rivals.

1.2 Statement of the Problem

The practice of outsourcing human resource functions as a means of enhancing organizational performance has resulted in a plethora of challenges that have impeded the progress of several organizations. There exists a significant level of uncertainty regarding the impact of outsourcing human resource functions on organizational outcomes.

Several studies have indicated that outsourcing companies are inefficient in executing their duties, resulting in the disruption and postponement of organizational operations. Hiring an unsuitable candidate may lead to decreased employee morale, potentially causing internal strife within an organization. Outsourcing recruitment functions to a third-party entity carries the potential hazard of failing to secure a suitable match for a given job or organization, thereby resulting in a significant expenditure of both financial and temporal resources (Shaw, 2014).

The outsourcing of support functions, such as training, can result in a loss of control for companies. The training services provider exercises discretion in determining the structure and substance of its training programs, which generally incorporate rudimentary illustrations and instances for instructional purposes. According to Basu (2018), it is common practice for training companies to maintain ownership of their training materials, thereby limiting the ability of organizations to modify manuals or presentation slides for internal training purposes in the future. The limitations imposed on companies necessitate their reliance on external entities for the development of a proficient workforce, which is a fundamental determinant of achievement for all establishments (Bertolini & Bevilacqua, 2011).

Objectives of the Study

The study generally evaluated the effect of outsourcing human resource functions on the organisational performance of selected food and beverage firms.

The specific objectives are to:

- i. examine the influence of recruitment outsourcing on performance of food and beverage firms in Nigeria;
- ii. examine how training outsourcing affects performance of food and beverage firms in Nigeria;

Literature Review

Human Resource Outsourcing

Human resource outsourcing means the practice of replacing operations that are now supplied internally by contracting them out to outside parties (Irefin *et al.*, 2012). It is a mechanism whereby businesses delegate part of their services to independent contractors to manage on their behalf. The practice of outsourcing human resources has advanced over time and has become increasingly accepted in Nigeria and other developing countries worldwide (Adegbami, Makinde & Shiyabade, 2014). Human resource outsourcing, according to Reynolds (2010), is when an organization request a third party to oversee some or all of its human resources tasks in order to reduce costs or because it lacks the necessary expertise in certain areas, such as background checks, employee assistance programs, and others.

Outsourcing human resources is increasingly being used by 21st-century businesses to cut costs while improving services (Rosenthal, 2010). In a dynamic environment characterised by a fluid economy, intensifying globalisation, unconventional work arrangements, and intense competition, outsourcing human resource responsibilities is not only sensible but also essential (Kock, Wallo, Nilsson & Hoglund, 2012). A significant amount of authority is being transferred from within to without through the outsourcing of human resource activities, a trend that will not only continue for decades to come but will also grow rapidly and forcefully (Hauser, 2011).

The widespread application and rapid growth of outsourcing are supported by a wide range of fundamental arguments. Using competitive advantages, emphasising more core competencies, cost savings, expanding into new markets, reducing liabilities and risks, and utilising more highly skilled expertise not present within a particular organisation are just a few of them (Ee, Abdul Halim & Ramayah, 2013). These initiatives support the organization's overall strategy.

Recruitment Outsourcing

The process of recruitment outsourcing involves the transfer of recruitment-related operations to an external supplier. Recruitment outsourcing operations encompass a range of activities, such as advertising, job fairs, application monitoring, and diverse selection processes. These selection processes may involve in-depth talent assessments, organisational assessments, and background checks (Seth & Sethi, 2011). Outsourcing human resource recruiting offers a notable advantage in terms of introducing a novel approach to personnel acquisition. The majority of academic studies operate under the assumption that the outsourcing of recruitment services can contribute to the

modernization of businesses' recruiting processes, resulting in enhanced integration and effectiveness.

The practise of outsourcing the recruitment process has a well-established historical background and is currently experiencing rapid growth. The recruitment process refers to the systematic and structured approach employed by organisations to attract, select, and hire qualified individuals. The expansion of outsourcing can be attributed to the increased magnitude, breadth, and duration of contracts, which can be seen as a direct consequence of the consolidated procurement of recruitment services. The practise of recruitment outsourcing is based on two main rationales: the acquisition of essential knowledge and the reduction of costs (Norman, 2009).

Training Outsourcing

The outsourcing of training operations entails the complete delegation of responsibilities related to the management of the training function as well as the design, delivery, and reporting aspects. The act of outsourcing training involves transferring authority over one or more ongoing and comprehensive processes related to learning and development, or the entire training function, to a service provider that is not directly affiliated with the organisation (Francis, 2014).

The act of transferring the management and implementation of one or more ongoing training responsibilities to an external service provider is commonly referred to as outsourcing training activities. To establish a competitive advantage and achieve a leading market position, organisations can enhance their employees' knowledge and skills, thereby distinguishing themselves from competitors (Olannye & Okoro, 2017).

Given that numerous businesses may lack the necessary internal resources to carry out training, outsourcing training can bring about added value due to the superior quality offered by specialised training providers. Consequently, this can result in enhanced performance. According to Olannye and Okoro (2017), organisations can enhance staff productivity and performance by outsourcing training to external, reputable entities. This approach has the potential to enhance customer and vendor satisfaction as well as financial success.

Organisations have historically engaged in the practise of outsourcing their training initiatives, and recent evidence suggests that this phenomenon is gaining momentum. The growth in training initiatives and the nature of these programmes have been the primary catalysts behind the expansion of outsourced training activities (Mwangi, 2017).

Organizational Performance

The concepts of effectiveness and efficiency contribute to the development of the concept of organisational performance. In order to achieve favourable organisational performance, it is imperative for a company's structure to effectively develop appropriate products and services while optimising resource utilisation (Kliem, 2015). According to Constance (2017), the evaluation of an organisation's success in achieving its corporate goals and objectives can be measured through three primary outcomes: financial performance, market performance, and shareholder value performance.

In essence, businesses endeavour to achieve optimal performance in all areas. One of the primary objectives they strive for is to attain robust financial performance, characterised by surpassing profitability targets and achieving favourable returns on investment. In order to maximise their market share, companies must develop a product that aligns with consumer demand and establish a competitive pricing strategy. In order to ensure a sustainable level of growth and maximise

shareholder return, organisations must effectively enhance shareholder value (Heywood, 2014). Various performance indicators can be employed to assess the performance of an organisation, encompassing conventional accounting indicators such as sales growth, market share, and profitability. Furthermore, in the evaluation of success, particularly within privately owned enterprises, factors such as client satisfaction and the non-monetary objectives of the owners play a pivotal role (Kliem, 2015).

Recruitment Outsourcing and Organisational Performance

The process of recruitment outsourcing involves the transfer of recruitment-related operations to an external supplier. Recruitment outsourcing operations encompass a range of activities, such as advertising, job fairs, application monitoring, and various selection procedures. These procedures may include in-depth talent assessments, organisational assessments, and background checks. Previous research has provided evidence to support the notion that the practise of outsourcing recruitment processes has resulted in a significant reduction in costs (Seth & Sethi, 2011). An additional advantage of outsourcing the recruitment process is the adoption of a novel approach to personnel hiring, which has the potential to improve overall organisational performance (Sumittra, 2015).

Recruitment outsourcing refers to the situation in which an external recruitment service provider assumes operational authority over an organisation's hiring procedures. According to Olannye and Okoro (2017), the implementation of this approach results in several benefits for the organisation, such as reducing the duration of the hiring process, enhancing the quality of the candidate pool, providing measurable metrics, and reducing costs. The reduction of overhead expenses and the enhancement of the company's competitive standing in both regulated and unregulated labour markets are observed outcomes. Recruitment outsourcing enables organisations to effectively navigate through a more extensive pool of candidates during periods of economic downturns or heightened unemployment rates (Okorie, 2010).

According to Braun and Pull (2011), it is expected that the outsourcing of recruiting will facilitate the modernization, integration, and enhancement of businesses' recruitment endeavours. The practise of outsourcing recruitment is a vital element that significantly influences the efficiency and excellence of organisations. According to Elsaid (2013), an additional contention was put forth regarding the potential advantages of outsourcing the hiring process, suggesting that it could potentially confer a competitive advantage on businesses.

Training Outsourcing and Organisational Performance

According to Sumittra (2015), training outsourcing refers to the practise of procuring or delegating the acquisition of knowledge, skills, and abilities required to perform specific and essential competencies with the aim of enhancing one's potential and performance. The current focus of the company's training programme is on the acquisition of knowledge and skills by both customers and employees. The interest for outsource training services has experienced a substantial rise due to the expansion of the training industry. The cultivation of intellectual capital, a crucial factor in ensuring an organisation's long-term competitiveness, is often regarded as a highly valuable investment (Bulut & Culha, 2010). The benefits of training extend beyond enhanced performance, encompassing empowerment, self-efficacy, effectiveness, and financial success (Aguinis & Kraiger, 2009). The practise of outsourcing is frequently observed within the training function of the human resources domain (Chiang, Chow & Birtch, 2010).

The implementation of outsourcing training has been regarded as a viable and effective strategic approach, especially for organisations operating in highly competitive industries. Despite the empirical evidence suggesting a potential increase in the practise of outsourcing training (Shih & Chiang, 2011), there exists considerable heterogeneity in the utilisation of this human resource strategy by businesses. While certain organisations have reported favourable outcomes from outsourcing their training activities, others have experienced significant setbacks (Sang, 2010).

One additional benefit of outsourcing training lies in the availability of diverse methods for delivering up-to-date information and advanced technological resources. According to Gilley, Greer, and Rasheed (2014), organisations have the potential to enhance innovation and stakeholder performance by outsourcing their training needs to external expert groups. This strategic decision can ultimately contribute to the overall improvement of the organisation's performance.

Empirical Review

Matolo and Iravo (2018) conducted a study at Kenyan public universities to investigate the relationship between the outsourcing of human resources and organisational effectiveness. A study indicated that the habit of outsourcing human resources increases productivity. Cost savings, technology accessibility, the capacity of HR staff to concentrate on strategic duties, and the ability to concentrate on core skills are some of the independent considerations. The conclusions were reached using primary data gathered through a thorough analysis of the body of literature on human resource outsourcing, along with secondary data gathered from online databases and websites, observations, and academic publications on the topic. According to the study's findings, businesses which outsource their human resources have a clear edge in terms of their overall organisational success.

Olannye and Okoro (2017) looked at the possible effects of outsourcing human resources on organisational performance in the Nigerian deposit money bank industry. This study's main goal is to examine how outsourcing human resources affects deposit money banks' performance. The research used a sample size of 260 personnel drawn from 10 financial institutions in Asaba, the capital of the Nigerian Delta State, that specialise in money deposits. The main research tool for the study was a validated questionnaire with 25 structured Likert scale items. Principal component factor analysis, correlation analysis, and multiple regression analysis were the statistical methods used in this study. Cross-sectional survey design was the methodology used in the study.

The results showed a strong positive relationship between the variables of outsourcing human resources and organisational success. This suggests that the practise of outsourcing activities has a measurable impact on an organization's overall performance, particularly in terms of cost containment and productivity growth. As a result, the current study comes to the conclusion that outsourcing the hiring process has a major impact on an organization's overall success. Managers can devote more of their time to strategic planning and decision-making by outsourcing the hiring process to a recruiting firm. According to the report, deposit money institutions should think about using human resource (HR) outsourcing techniques as a way to gain access to specialised services, make use of outside suppliers' knowledge, and concentrate on their core capabilities.

The impact of outsourcing techniques on the operational effectiveness of small and medium-sized businesses in the Benue region was explored in the study done by Agburu, Anza, and Iyortsuun (2017). The study's goal was to determine how outsourcing tactics affected the operational

efficiency of small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) in the Benue region. In the current study, a survey research design was used. A well-crafted, self-administered questionnaire was used to gather primary source data, and respondents were chosen using a stratified random sample technique. Additionally, ten (10) carefully chosen small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) were used as the main source of secondary data for their financial records. Multiple regression was the statistical method used for the variable analysis. The results of this study therefore indicate that small and medium-sized businesses (SMEs) would profit from increasing their use of outsourcing tactics. By doing this, businesses may save costs and restructure their organisation, which will ultimately lead to better customer service and financial gains.

A study by Jepkoei and Kiprotich in 2016 looked at how employee engagement at the Kenyan Rural Electrification Authority was affected by outsourcing human resource services. The study's main goal was to determine how outsourcing human resource functions affected employee engagement. Training and recruitment outsourcing were the study's independent factors. The Rural Electrification Authority's five departments at its Nairobi headquarters participated in the study. The socio-technical systems theory, Andrew Brown's engagement pyramid model, and Kolb's theory of experiential learning served as the study's guiding concepts. The study used descriptive survey methods and quantitative methodologies. 114 people who worked in a variety of occupations made up the study's sample. Nassiuma's approach was used to determine the study's sample which was 54.

A standardised questionnaire was used to gather the data for this investigation. A preliminary pilot test of the research tool was conducted to evaluate its reliability and validity. The statistical package for social sciences, version 23, was used, which made it easier to process and analyse data. Descriptive and inferential statistics were used in the analysis. The habit of outsourcing training and recruitment services has a negative impact on employee engagement, according to the research's findings. The results showed that employee engagement levels were significantly impacted by the practise of outsourcing both the hiring and training processes. The report suggested that the Rural Electrification Authority lessen the degree of outsourcing for both recruitment and training services in order to increase employee engagement within the organisation.

Research Methodology

This study utilized a descriptive research design; this study is centered on the primary location of the food and beverage firm's administrative offices within Lagos State. The primary operations of the companies are divided into two distinct categories, namely confectionery and food drinks. the study cohort encompasses the entirety of the chosen three food and beverage corporations, namely Cadbury, Nestle, and Promasidor. The organizational capacity comprises a workforce of 1,287 individuals who are employed across various departments within the organization.

The sample size for the study was determined using the Taro Yamane (1967) formula. The estimated sample for this research is 400 respondents, stratified random sampling followed by the proportional random selection of respondents from the various strata

Table 1: Reliability of the Research Instrument

Variables	No of items	Cronbach's Alpha
Human Resource Functions	6	0.920
Recruitment Outsourcing	6	0.888
Training Outsourcing	6	0.886
Organisational Performance	5	0.939

Source: Field Survey (2023)

The results of the pilot study showed a Cronbach's alpha estimate of 0.920, 0.888, 0.886 and 0.939 of Human Resource Functions, Recruitment Outsourcing, Training Outsourcing and Organisational Performance respectively of the variance in the scores which is a reliable variance as suggested by most values greater than 70% which indicates a degree of internal consistency.

The data was analysed using SPSS Package and the data analysis methodology relied on the computation of basic percentages, which will subsequently be transformed and exhibited in tabular form. The research employed simple linear regression analysis to evaluate hypotheses one and two.

Discussions of Results and Findings

Recruitment Outsourcing and Performance

Recruitment outsourcing has no significant effect on organisational performance

Table 2: Recruitment Outsourcing and Performance

Variables	Coeff.	Std. Error	t-value	Sig.
Constant	1.105	0.261	3.404	0.000
Recruitment Outsourcing	0.642	0.060	14.139	0.000
R	0.842			
R Square	0.709			
Adj. R Square	0.706			
F Stat.	199.924 (0.000)			

Source: Data Output (2023)

This hypothesis was tested by calculating and then analysing using simple linear regression analysis the participant's ratings on two different variables, namely recruitment outsourcing and the performance of chosen food and beverage companies in Nigeria. The data in Table 7 show that the regression coefficient (R) has a strikingly significant value of 0.842, indicating a strong and positive association between performance and recruitment outsourcing. The amount of overall variability in the dependent variable that can be attributed to the variability in the independent variables is indicated by the coefficient of determination (R²). The R² value of 0.709 indicates

that recruiting outsourcing significantly affects performance, which is extrapolated from the results. The model's goodness of fit is high, as shown by the adjusted R² value of 0.706, and recruitment outsourcing accounts for 70.6% of the variance in performance after taking into account errors and corrections. According to Table 7, the model's error term is responsible for the remaining 29.4%.

The recruitment outsourcing variable has an unstandardized beta coefficient of 0.642, which, as shown by a t-value of 14.139, is statistically significant at a threshold of $p < 0.05$. The results show a positive relationship between recruitment outsourcing and the operational effectiveness of selected food and beverage firms in Nigeria. This shows that certain food and beverage firms engage in the practise of contracting out their hiring procedures to outside businesses. Using the F-Stat and Table 7 from Objective 1 as a basis, The results do not support the null hypothesis, which holds that recruitment outsourcing has no discernible effect on performance, according to the obtained p-value of less than .05. The null hypothesis is thus disproved. Based on the evidence at hand, it was decided that the alternative hypothesis, according to which recruiting outsourcing affects performance, was acceptable.

Training Outsourcing and Performance

Training outsourcing has no significant effect on organisational performance

Table 3: Training Outsourcing and Performance

Variables	Coeff.	Std. Error	t-value	Sig.
Constant	2.071	0.315	6.575	0.000
Training Outsourcing	0.500	0.076	6.572	0.000
R	0.587			
R Square	0.345			
Adj. R Square	0.337			
F Stat.	43.185 (0.000)			

Source: Data Output (2023)

This hypothesis was tested by calculating and then analysing using simple linear regression analysis the participant's ratings on two different variables, namely training outsourcing and the performance of chosen food and beverage companies in Nigeria. The statistics shown in Table 8 indicate that the regression coefficient (R) has a positive value of 0.587. This implies a strong and positive relationship between performance and training outsourcing. R² is a measure of how much of the overall variability in the dependent variable's observed values can be attributed to the independent variables' variability. On the basis of the outcomes, it is evident that the R² value is 0.345. This shows that a performance variance of 34.5% has been caused by the introduction of training outsourcing. The corrected R² value of 0.337, which denotes the model's quality of fit, lends further support to this conclusion. This result specifically indicates that the model can only explain 33.7% of the variance from training outsourcing after correcting for all mistakes and other relevant factors. As seen in Table 8, the error term in the model is responsible for the remaining 66.3%.

Training outsourcing has been found to have an unstandardized beta coefficient of 0.500, a corresponding t-value of 6.572, and a p-value of 0.000, which is less than the alpha threshold of 0.05. The results show a statistically significant relationship between training outsourcing and improved performance. This suggests that Cadbury uses training outsourcing as a last choice because the corporation needs highly specialised technical knowledge. Considering the F-statistic and the description of objective 2 in Table 8, The data do not support the null hypothesis, which holds that training outsourcing has no discernible effect on performance, according to the obtained p-value of less than .05. As a result, the null hypothesis is disproved. Based on the data, it was decided that the alternative hypothesis, according to which training outsourcing affects performance, was plausible.

Findings

The first hypothesis asserts that there is a connection between organisational performance and recruitment outsourcing. The results show a statistically significant and favourable effect on the organization's performance. It was determined that outsourcing recruiting had a significant impact on organisational performance because the alternative hypothesis was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected.

The second hypothesis focused on how outsourcing training will affect the organization's performance. The results show a statistically significant and favourable effect on the organization's performance. It was determined that outsourcing training significantly affects organisational performance because the alternative hypothesis was accepted and the null hypothesis was rejected.

Conclusion

The findings of the study suggest that the different aspects of human resources outsourcing, such as recruitment outsourcing and training outsourcing are relevant for evaluating and enhancing organisational performance. Research has indicated that the adoption of human resources outsourcing strategies has been associated with notable and favourable effects on the overall performance of organisations. The research findings indicated that the practice of outsourcing recruitment and training had a significant and positive influence on the overall performance of the organisations.

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