

**MANPOWER PLANNING PRACTICES AND
ORGANISATIONAL GROWTH: EVIDENCE FROM MTN
NIGERIA, OWERRI**

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ABSTRACT: This study examined the influence of manpower planning practices on organisational growth using MTN Nigeria, Owerri, as a case study. The research focused on four dimensions of manpower planning: manpower forecasting, recruitment planning, development planning, and succession planning. The study was anchored on Human Capital Theory. A correlational survey design was adopted, and data were collected from 122 employees using two structured questionnaires—the Manpower Planning Practices Questionnaire (MPPQ) and the Organisational Growth Questionnaire (OGQ). Pearson correlation and simple linear regression were used for analysis at a 0.05 significance level. The findings revealed that manpower forecasting and development planning had strong positive relationships with organisational growth, while recruitment planning and succession planning showed moderate positive effects. The study concludes that effective workforce planning enhances organisational productivity and sustainability. It recommends that organisations strengthen workforce forecasting, structured recruitment, employee development, and leadership succession strategies.

Keywords: Manpower Planning, Organisational Growth, Workforce Forecasting, Employee Development, Telecommunications Sector

INTRODUCTION

Organisations operate in increasingly complex and competitive environments where the ability to attract, develop, and retain capable employees has become a central determinant of organisational success. While physical resources and technological capabilities remain important, contemporary management literature consistently emphasises that human resources constitute the most valuable strategic asset of modern organisations. Firms that manage their workforce effectively tend to achieve stronger productivity, adaptability, and long-term sustainability. Within this context, manpower planning has emerged as a critical managerial function that enables organisations to align their workforce capacity with strategic objectives and environmental demands (Chakraborty & Biswas, 2020).

Manpower planning, often described as human resource planning, involves the systematic process of forecasting an organisation's future human resource needs and developing strategies to ensure that the right number of employees with the appropriate skills are available when required. The process generally includes workforce forecasting, recruitment planning, employee development, and succession planning. Through these practices, organisations attempt to maintain an optimal

balance between labour demand and supply while ensuring that employees possess the competencies needed to achieve organisational goals (Mansaray, 2019). Effective manpower planning, therefore, enables organisations to anticipate workforce shortages, minimise skill gaps, and support long-term organisational growth.

Scholarly discussions on human resource planning frequently emphasise its strategic importance for organisational performance. Strategic workforce planning allows organisations to integrate human capital considerations into broader organisational strategy, thereby improving operational efficiency and competitive positioning. Research suggests that organisations that engage in structured workforce forecasting and recruitment planning are better able to respond to market changes, technological transformation, and evolving customer demands (Rahaman & Bari, 2024). Similarly, systematic employee development programmes enhance employee capabilities and strengthen organisational performance by building a skilled and adaptable workforce.

Another important dimension of manpower planning involves succession planning. Succession planning focuses on identifying and preparing employees to assume key leadership positions when vacancies arise. In many organisations, leadership transitions occur without adequate preparation, which can disrupt operations and weaken organisational performance. Studies have shown that well-structured succession planning programmes contribute to organisational continuity by ensuring that leadership roles are filled by competent and prepared individuals (Ali, Mahmood, & Mehreen, 2019). As organisations expand and become more complex, the importance of succession planning becomes increasingly evident.

The telecommunications sector provides a particularly relevant context for examining manpower planning practices. Telecommunications organisations operate in highly dynamic environments characterised by rapid technological advancement, intense competition, and continuous innovation. These conditions require organisations to maintain a workforce capable of adapting to new technologies, evolving service demands, and shifting market conditions. Consequently, workforce planning has become a strategic priority for telecommunications firms seeking to maintain operational efficiency and sustain organisational growth (Eketu & Edeh, 2017).

Despite the recognised importance of manpower planning, many organisations in developing economies continue to face significant workforce management challenges. Inadequate forecasting of workforce requirements, ineffective recruitment practices, limited employee development opportunities, and weak succession planning structures often result in skill shortages, low employee productivity, and organisational inefficiency. Empirical studies in several developing contexts have shown that the absence of systematic human resource planning can undermine organisational performance and limit long-term growth (Nondoh, 2021). These challenges are particularly evident in sectors where technological change and workforce capability are closely interconnected.

In Nigeria, the telecommunications industry has experienced substantial growth over the past two decades. The expansion of mobile communication services has increased the demand for skilled personnel capable of managing complex technological infrastructure and delivering high-quality services. As the sector continues to expand, effective workforce planning becomes essential for sustaining organisational competitiveness. However, anecdotal evidence suggests that some

organisations still struggle to implement comprehensive manpower planning practices capable of supporting long-term organisational growth.

Although previous studies have examined the relationship between human resource management practices and organisational performance, relatively little empirical research has examined how different components of manpower planning influence organisational growth in the Nigerian telecommunications sector. Moreover, existing studies often examine human resource management practices in aggregate rather than analysing the distinct contributions of specific planning activities such as forecasting, recruitment planning, development planning, and succession planning.

Against this background, the present study examines the relationship between manpower planning practices and organisational growth, using MTN Nigeria's Owerri operations as a case study. By focusing on four key dimensions of manpower planning, manpower forecasting, recruitment planning, development planning, and succession planning, the study seeks to provide empirical evidence on how structured workforce planning contributes to organisational growth. In doing so, the research contributes to ongoing scholarly discussions on the strategic role of human resource planning in organisational performance while offering insights that may assist managers in improving workforce planning practices.

Statement of the Problem

Organisational growth remains a major concern for many organisations in Nigeria, particularly in environments where competition, economic instability, and rapid technological change demand the efficient use of resources. Despite the availability of human resources in many organisations, there is increasing evidence of low productivity, poor service delivery, and slow organisational growth. These challenges raise important questions about the effectiveness of manpower planning practices in ensuring that organisations have the right number of employees with the right skills to achieve their goals. In many cases, organisations fail to properly forecast their manpower needs, recruit suitable employees, or provide adequate training and development opportunities, resulting in underutilization of human resources and limited organisational performance.

Beyond staffing issues, ineffective manpower planning also affects the quality of organisational performance and long-term sustainability. Organisations that lack structured workforce planning often experience skill gaps, high labour turnover, low employee motivation, and poor task coordination, all of which hinder productivity and growth. In addition, weak alignment between employee capabilities and organisational goals reduces efficiency and limits organisations' ability to innovate and expand. In the Owerri Zone, where many organisations operate under resource constraints and competitive pressures, ineffective manpower planning practices can lead to reduced performance, limited expansion, and an inability to meet customer and societal expectations.

Although several studies in Nigeria have examined organisational performance and human resource management practices, empirical attention to the specific role of manpower planning in driving organisational growth has been limited, particularly within organisations in the Owerri Zone. Existing studies often examine human resource practices or organisational performance separately without clearly linking manpower planning activities such as recruitment, training, workforce

forecasting, and staff development to measurable growth outcomes. This gap creates the need for a focused investigation into how manpower planning influences organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone. Therefore, this study sought to examine the extent to which manpower planning practices contribute to improved productivity, efficiency, and overall organisational growth within the study area.

Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to examine the influence of manpower planning practices on organisational growth in MTN Nigeria, Owerri. Specifically, the study sought to:

1. determine the extent to which manpower forecasting influences organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone,
2. ascertain the extent to which recruitment planning influences organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone,
3. find out the extent to which development planning contributes to organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone, and
4. explore the extent to which succession planning contributes to organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone.

Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

1. Manpower forecasting does not significantly influence organisational growth in selected organisations in the Owerri Zone.
2. Recruitment planning does not significantly influence organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone.
3. Development planning does not significantly contribute to organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone.
4. Succession planning does not significantly contribute to organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Concept of Manpower Planning

Manpower planning is widely recognised as a critical function of human resource management that ensures organisations have the right quantity and quality of personnel at the right time to achieve their objectives. Absar (2021) defines manpower planning as a systematic process of forecasting, recruiting, training, and deploying personnel to meet organisational needs effectively. In a similar vein, Armstrong (2019) emphasises that manpower planning involves anticipating future workforce requirements in line with organisational goals, evaluating the current human resource capabilities, and bridging any gaps through strategic interventions such as recruitment, training, or succession planning. Nweke (2019) further explains that manpower planning is not merely an administrative

exercise but a strategic tool that directly influences organisational growth and sustainability by ensuring workforce alignment with business objectives. This concept is particularly relevant in dynamic environments where changes in technology, market demand, and regulatory frameworks require organisations to maintain a flexible and competent workforce.

Several empirical studies have demonstrated a positive relationship between human resource planning and organisational performance. For instance, Mansaray (2019) found that effective human resource planning practices improve workforce utilisation and organisational productivity. Similarly, Chakraborty and Biswas (2020) showed that strategic HR planning contributes to sustained organisational competitiveness by aligning workforce capabilities with organisational objectives. Empirical evidence from Nigeria also supports this relationship. Ubah and Ibrahim (2021) reported that structured human resource planning significantly enhances performance in public sector organisations by ensuring the availability of skilled employees.

Manpower Forecasting

Manpower forecasting is a critical dimension of human resource management that focuses on predicting an organisation's future human resource needs to achieve its strategic objectives. It is a systematic process through which organisations estimate the number and types of employees required over a specified period, considering internal factors such as retirements, promotions, transfers, and resignations, as well as external factors including labour market trends, economic conditions, and technological advancements (Absar, 2021). Manpower forecasting ensures that organisations have the right people in the right positions at the right time, thereby minimising skill shortages, reducing recruitment costs, and improving overall organisational efficiency. Armstrong (2019) asserts that forecasting involves both qualitative and quantitative approaches, ranging from expert judgment and managerial estimation to sophisticated statistical and modelling techniques that project future workforce demands based on historical data and organisational plans. In essence, manpower forecasting is a proactive measure that enables organisations to anticipate challenges and make informed decisions regarding recruitment, training, and development to sustain productivity and growth.

Recruitment Planning

Recruitment planning is a fundamental aspect of human resource management that involves anticipating and preparing for an organisation's staffing needs to ensure that the right number and type of employees are available to achieve organisational objectives. It is a deliberate and systematic process in which management identifies current and future human resource requirements, analyses job roles, defines selection criteria, and designs strategies to attract suitable candidates (Absar, 2021). Recruitment planning is not merely about filling vacant positions; it is a strategic tool that aligns workforce acquisition with long-term organisational goals, minimises skill gaps, and enhances overall performance. Armstrong (2019) explains that recruitment planning is integral to workforce management because it ensures that organisations are proactive rather than reactive in their hiring, thereby reducing the risks of understaffing, overstaffing, and high turnover.

Development Planning

Development planning is an essential component of human resource management that focuses on the growth, enhancement, and continuous improvement of employees' knowledge, skills, and competencies to meet both current and future organisational needs. It is a strategic process that seeks to ensure that employees are equipped with the capabilities necessary to perform their roles effectively, adapt to changing job requirements, and contribute meaningfully to organisational objectives. Scholars define development planning in various ways, emphasising its forward-looking and structured nature. Armstrong (2019) describes development planning as a systematic approach aimed at identifying employee learning needs, designing appropriate development interventions, and aligning these interventions with the organisation's strategic goals. Development planning is therefore not limited to formal training but encompasses mentoring, coaching, job rotation, career planning, and continuous professional growth initiatives (Absar, 2021). It is a proactive process that prepares employees for enhanced responsibilities while fostering organisational effectiveness, competitiveness, and sustainability.

Organizational Growth

Organisational growth refers to the process through which an organisation increases its capacity, capabilities, market presence, and overall performance over time. It encompasses the expansion of resources, the enhancement of operational efficiency, and the improvement of profitability, while also including qualitative aspects such as workforce development, innovation, and strategic positioning in the industry. Organisational growth is both an outcome and a driver of effective management practices, including manpower planning, strategic planning, and human resource development (Armstrong, 2019). It signifies not only the increase in size, revenue, or market share but also the ability of an organisation to adapt, innovate, and sustain long-term competitive advantage in a dynamic business environment (Absar, 2021). Scholars have defined organisational growth in different ways. Ahmad and Shahzad (2021) describe it as the continuous process by which an organisation enhances its capabilities, improves efficiency, and expands its influence in the marketplace through the effective deployment and development of human, financial, and technological resources. Similarly, Adetowube-King (2018) highlights that organisational growth involves not only quantitative expansion, such as increased production and market share, but also qualitative improvements, including enhanced employee performance, innovation, and the creation of sustainable value.

Human Resource Management

Human Resource Management (HRM) refers to a strategic, coherent approach to managing an organisation's most valuable asset: its people. It involves the policies, practices, and systems that influence employees' behaviour, attitudes, and performance, with the aim of achieving organisational objectives while promoting employee development and satisfaction (Armstrong, 2019). HRM is concerned not only with administrative functions such as hiring, payroll, and compliance but also with strategic aspects, including workforce planning, talent development, employee engagement, and performance management (Dessler, 2021). Scholars have described HRM in varied contexts. Ahmad and Shahzad (2021) define it as the deliberate management of

people to maximise their potential and align their efforts with organisational goals, emphasising that human resources are both a source of competitive advantage and a driver of organisational growth. Similarly, Absar (2021) highlights that HRM encompasses all activities that attract, develop, motivate, and retain employees, ensuring that the organisation operates efficiently and innovatively.

Manpower Planning and Organisational Growth

Manpower planning is widely regarded as a deliberate and systematic process through which organisations determine their current and future human resource requirements to achieve organisational objectives efficiently. Scholars in human resource management emphasise that manpower planning ensures that the right number of employees with the appropriate skills and competencies are available at the right time to carry out organisational tasks effectively. Armstrong (2019) explains that manpower planning integrates recruitment, selection, training, and development into a coordinated framework that aligns human resources with organisational strategy. In the same direction, Dessler (2021) views manpower planning as a continuous process of assessing workforce needs, identifying gaps, and implementing appropriate human resource actions to enhance organisational effectiveness. This conceptualisation indicates that manpower planning is not only about staffing but also about developing and managing human resources to support organisational growth.

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is anchored on Human Capital Theory, propounded by Gary Becker in 1964, which explains organisational growth as a product of deliberate investment in human resources through recruitment, training, development, and skill enhancement. Within this framework, manpower planning is viewed as a strategic mechanism for building the knowledge, competencies, and work attitudes required for improved organisational performance and growth. The theory assumes that organisations that invest in their employees through structured manpower planning practices such as workforce forecasting, training programmes, career development, and capacity building are better positioned to achieve high productivity and efficiency. In the context of organisations in Owerri Zone, where issues such as inadequate skills, poor workforce planning, and productivity challenges exist, the framework emphasises the critical role of manpower planning in equipping employees with relevant and market-driven skills that enhance performance and organisational effectiveness.

Furthermore, the framework conceptualises organisational growth not only as an increase in output or profit but also as improved service delivery, innovation, employee productivity, and long-term sustainability. Manpower planning serves as a link between employee capability and organisational performance by ensuring that human resources are properly aligned with organisational goals and operational needs. When organisations recruit competent staff, provide continuous training, and create supportive work environments, employees become more productive and committed, which leads to improved organisational outcomes. As organisations grow and perform better, they contribute to broader economic development, employment creation, and improved service delivery within the Owerri Zone. Therefore, Human Capital Theory provides a suitable lens for explaining

how manpower planning practices influence organisational growth and guides the selection of variables and the interpretation of the relationship between manpower planning and organisational growth in the present study.

METHODOLOGY

This study covers both conceptual and geographical aspects. Theoretically, it is confined to examining manpower planning and its impact on organisational growth, with particular attention to selected organisations in the Owerri Zone of Imo State. The focus is on practices such as manpower forecasting, recruitment planning, development planning, and succession planning—critical components of manpower management. The research investigates how these practices, including forecasting, recruitment, development, and succession planning, influence organisational performance, efficiency, and overall growth.

The study adopted a correlational survey research design, which was appropriate for examining the relationships between manpower planning practices and organisational growth among employees and human resource practitioners (Privitera, 2022). This design allowed the researcher to systematically examine the relationship between manpower planning practices and organisational growth among employees of MTN Nigeria, Owerri. The population of this study comprised all employees of MTN Nigeria, Owerri Office, Imo State, numbering 122 across management, human resources, administration, technical, marketing, and customer service departments.

The instruments for data collection in this study comprised two structured questionnaires developed by the researcher. The first instrument, titled “Manpower Planning Practices Questionnaire (MPPQ),” was designed to gather information on employees’ perceptions of manpower planning activities within their organisations. It was divided into two sections: Section A collected demographic data, including age, gender, educational qualification, position, and department, while Section B contained 30 items measuring specific manpower planning practices, such as training, manpower forecasting, recruitment planning, development planning, and succession planning. Respondents’ perceptions were measured using a 4-point Likert scale (4 = Very High Extent (VHE), 3 = High Extent (HE), 2 = Low Extent (LE), 1 = Very Low Extent (VLE)), allowing the researcher to determine the extent to which these practices were implemented in the selected organisations.

The data collected for this study were analysed using the Pearson correlation coefficient and the coefficient of determination to answer the research questions, and simple linear regression was used to test the hypotheses. The decision rule for hypothesis testing was as follows: if the calculated p-value is less than or equal to 0.05 ($p \leq 0.05$), the null hypothesis is rejected; if the p-value is greater than 0.05 ($p > 0.05$), the null hypothesis is accepted.

RESULTS

Table 1: Extent to which manpower forecasting influences organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone.

Variables	N	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
Manpower forecasting	122	0.746	0.557	0.553	0.438

The result in Table 1 indicates that manpower forecasting has a strong positive influence on organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone, as shown by a correlation coefficient of 0.746. The coefficient of determination (R²) of 0.557 means that manpower forecasting explains 55.7% of the variation in organisational growth, while the adjusted R² of 0.553 confirms the stability of this contribution for the sample of 122 respondents. The standard error of 0.438 indicates a relatively low level of prediction error. Thus, this shows that manpower forecasting influences organisational growth to a great extent in the selected organisations in Owerri Zone.

Table 2: Extent to which recruitment planning influences organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone.

Variables	N	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
Recruitment planning	122	0.693	0.480	0.476	0.471

The result in Table 2 indicates that recruitment planning has a positive and meaningful influence on organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone, as shown by a correlation coefficient of 0.693. The coefficient of determination (R²) of 0.480 shows that recruitment planning explains 48.0% of the variation in organisational growth, while the adjusted R² of 0.476 confirms the consistency of this contribution for the sample of 122 respondents. The standard error of 0.471 indicates a moderate level of prediction error. Thus, this shows that recruitment planning influences organisational growth to a moderate extent in the selected organisations in Owerri Zone.

Table 3: Extent to which development planning influences organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone.

Variables	N	R	R ²	Adjusted R ²	Std. Error
Development planning	122	0.721	0.520	0.516	0.452

The result in Table 3 shows that development planning has a strong positive contribution to organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone, as indicated by a correlation coefficient of 0.721. The coefficient of determination (R²) of 0.520 reveals that development planning accounts for 52.0% of the variation in organisational growth, while the adjusted R² of 0.516 confirms the stability of this contribution for the sample of 122 respondents. The standard error of 0.452 indicates a relatively low level of prediction error. Thus, this implies that development planning contributes to organisational growth to a great extent in the selected organisations in Owerri Zone.

DISCUSSION OF RESEARCH FINDINGS

The extent to which manpower forecasting influences organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone.

The finding revealed that manpower forecasting has a strong and significant positive influence on organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone. This outcome was largely expected, as effective manpower forecasting enables organisations to anticipate future workforce needs, align employee skills with organisational goals, and minimise disruptions caused by under- or over-staffing. The strong relationship observed in this study aligns with previous research emphasising the critical role of workforce planning in enhancing organisational performance. For instance, Dialoke and Duru (2017) in their study of media houses in Imo State found that systematic workforce planning significantly improves organisational efficiency and output. Similarly, Edeh and Dialoke (2020) reported that human resource planning in the hospitality sector of Nigeria was a major determinant of organisational performance, highlighting that strategic forecasting ensures the right number of skilled employees are available to meet operational demands. These findings suggest that organisations that proactively plan their workforce are better positioned to optimise human capital and achieve consistent growth.

The result of this study also corroborates findings from Nweke (2019), who observed that manpower planning and development in the Imo State civil service positively influenced institutional productivity. By anticipating workforce requirements, organisations are better able to implement recruitment, training, and retention strategies that support their growth objectives. This suggests that the positive effect of manpower forecasting on organisational growth is not unique to private organisations but extends across various organisational settings in Nigeria.

The extent to which recruitment planning influences organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone.

The finding revealed that recruitment planning has a moderate but significant impact on organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone. This result was anticipated, given that recruitment planning ensures that organisations attract, select, and place the right individuals in the right positions, which directly affects organisational efficiency and effectiveness. By systematically aligning recruitment strategies with organisational needs, firms can reduce skill gaps, lower turnover, and improve productivity, all of which contribute to growth. This finding aligns with the work of Ikwesi (2019), who demonstrated that effective recruitment and selection procedures enhanced efficiency in the public service in Nigeria, emphasising that organisations that follow structured recruitment processes are better positioned to achieve their operational objectives. Similarly, Adetowube-King (2018) reported that recruitment planning in manufacturing organisations supported the attainment of organisational goals by ensuring that the workforce possessed the necessary skills and competencies to meet strategic targets.

The extent to which development planning influences organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone.

The finding revealed that development planning strongly and significantly contributes to organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone. This outcome was anticipated, as development planning, which includes structured training, skill enhancement, and career progression strategies, equips employees with the competencies necessary to meet organisational goals. By systematically identifying skill gaps and providing targeted development opportunities, organisations ensure that their workforce is capable of handling current and future challenges, thereby driving growth. This finding aligns with the work of Chukwudi (2017), who demonstrated that staff training and development in Nigerian organisations, particularly in the banking sector, significantly improved employee performance and organisational output. Similarly, Devi and Shaik (2022) emphasised that continuous training and development serve as catalysts for organisational effectiveness, as employees acquire new knowledge and skills that enhance productivity and operational efficiency. The strong influence observed in this study confirms that development planning is not merely a supportive human resource activity but a critical mechanism for sustaining organisational performance and growth.

The result of this study is further supported by local empirical evidence highlighting the importance of employee development in Nigerian organisations. Iwuoha (2019) found that targeted training programs in selected organisations in Owerri significantly enhanced the productivity of secretaries, demonstrating the direct link between development planning and organisational efficiency.

The extent to which succession planning influences organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone

The finding revealed that succession planning has a moderate but significant effect on organisational growth in selected organisations in Owerri Zone. This outcome was expected, as succession planning ensures that organisations are prepared for future leadership transitions, thereby maintaining continuity in operations and strategic direction. By identifying and developing potential leaders within the organisation, succession planning reduces the risk of disruptions caused by unexpected vacancies and equips employees with the skills needed to assume critical roles. This finding aligns with the work of Nweke (2019), who observed that leadership development and succession planning in the Imo State civil service contributed to organisational efficiency and performance. Similarly, Vetter (2017) highlighted that organisations that proactively plan for high-potential personnel are better able to sustain operational stability and competitive advantage, demonstrating that preparing future leaders is critical for long-term organisational growth.

The moderate influence observed in this study reflects the fact that succession planning, while essential, often works alongside other human resource practices such as recruitment, development, and manpower forecasting to drive organisational performance. Ubabuike (2019) reported that organisations in Nigeria that lacked structured succession plans experienced operational inefficiencies and decreased productivity, emphasising that the absence of future leadership planning negatively affects organisational outcomes. In the context of Nigerian organisations, Ekechi (2018) also highlighted that human resource development, including succession planning,

ensures leadership continuity and the achievement of corporate objectives. The moderate effect observed suggests that succession planning contributes meaningfully to growth, but its full impact depends on its integration with other strategic human resource management practices that enhance employee capabilities and retention.

The finding is further supported by research emphasising the role of succession planning in maintaining employee motivation and organisational stability. Organisations that implement succession planning provide employees with clear career paths and development opportunities, which increases engagement and reduces turnover.

Moreover, this finding underscores the practical implications of succession planning for organisational resilience and long-term competitiveness. By preparing employees to assume critical roles, organisations reduce vulnerability to disruptions caused by leadership turnover or retirements. Nweke (2019) and Ubabuike (2019) both noted that organisations that neglect succession planning often face operational setbacks, decreased productivity, and strategic drift. In contrast, the current study demonstrates that organisations in the Owerri Zone that implement structured succession planning are better positioned to maintain operational continuity, develop internal talent, and sustain strategic initiatives despite leadership changes. This highlights that succession planning is a vital human resource practice for sustaining organisational growth, even if its effect is moderate relative to other interventions such as manpower forecasting or development planning.

Conclusion

Based on the findings, it can be concluded that effective manpower planning is a critical driver of organisational growth in the Owerri Zone, as organisations that strategically forecast, recruit, develop, and prepare their workforce are better positioned to achieve higher productivity, operational efficiency, and sustainability. Proper planning of human resources ensures that employees are equipped with the right skills, motivated to perform, and prepared to assume future leadership roles, which collectively strengthens organizational performance and competitiveness. This underscores the importance of viewing human capital as a strategic asset and integrating workforce planning into broader organisational strategies to support long-term growth and resilience.

This study is limited to employees of MTN Nigeria in Owerri. As such, the findings may not fully represent other organisations or sectors in Nigeria. Future studies could examine manpower planning practices across multiple organisations or industries to enhance generalisability.

Recommendations

Based on the findings, the following recommendations are made:

1. Organisations should implement effective manpower forecasting to ensure the right number of skilled employees are available to meet future organisational needs.

2. Organisations should adopt structured recruitment planning to attract and select qualified candidates who can contribute positively to growth.
3. Organisations should prioritise development planning by providing regular training and skill-building programs to enhance employee performance and productivity.
4. Organisations should establish succession planning strategies to prepare employees for future leadership roles, ensuring continuity and organisational stability.

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