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# Employee Retention Management and Brand Performance in the Hotel Industry of Rwanda

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## Abstract

Employee retention challenges continue to grow, prompting the need to attract and retain employees, as they play a significant role in hotel brand performance. The study's purpose was to determine the relationship between employee retention management and brand performance in the hotel industry in Rwanda. The study was guided by three specific objectives including; evaluating the relationship between recruitment and brand performance, determining the relationship between training and brand performance and establishing the relationship between succession planning and brand performance in the hotel industry of Rwanda. The study was based on three theories: expectancy theory, goal-setting theory, and resource-based theory. A descriptive research design was used in the study. The study employed a mixed method of qualitative and quantitative data collection. The study's target population consisted of 980 employees. To obtain a sample size of 244 respondents, the study used simple random sampling and census techniques. Questionnaires and interview guides were used to collect primary data. The quantitative data were analyzed with SPSS, and the qualitative data were analyzed with thematic analysis. According to the study findings,  $p=0.00005$  with a Pearson correlation coefficient of 0.844. The findings revealed that there was a moderately significant relationship between employee retention management and brand performance. According to the findings, there was a significant moderating relationship between employee retention management and brand performance in Rwanda's hotel industry. The study also concluded that effective employee retention management practices, such as recruitment, training, and succession planning, were critical for improving hotel brand performance. The study recommended that to improve their brand performance, hotels in Rwanda and similar settings should prioritize effective employee retention management practices, according to the study.

**Keywords:** Employee retention, Management, Brand performance, Hotel industry, Rwanda

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## **1.0 Introduction**

Globally, since 2010, the unemployment rate in countries such as the United States has consistently decreased (9.6%), reaching as low as 3.7% in 2018. (Ferreira, 2019). A low national unemployment rate demonstrates a solid showcase with plenty of job openings for job seekers, but it creates a difficult environment for managers looking to fill open positions. In 2017, the hotel industry specifically contributed to 5.29 million jobs in the US financial job market, and it initiated or indirectly contributed to another 8.38 million jobs across the country ("Travel and Tourism: Effect on Work in the United States, 2013-2017," 2018). With millions of available neighborliness positions and a limited pool of available job seekers, it is critical to plan for the retention of the best talent. Hotel workers have a one-of-a-kind and significant impact on the transportation and administration of hospitality merchandise and administrations. Front-line partners who are specifically connected with clients, as well as the intuitive themselves, contribute to the overall improvement of the beneficial experience. Partners act as an organization's agents in the field.

To serve their clients, they "collect data and benefit clients at the same time," sharing data with the administration (Nguyen, 2016). Customers frequently lay the groundwork for their loyalty, belief, and client identifiable proof with a company through the purchasing handle (Leaniz & Rodriguez, 2014). As a result of demonstrated employee competency and unwavering quality, it is most strongly felt that such elements are generated between clients and benefit agents (Nguyen, 2016). It is in a company's best interest financially to concentrate its efforts on keeping current employees and improving their skill sets to reduce the costly effects of turnover as well as to increase the positive potential impact on customer loyalty and relationship-building (Leaniz & Rodriguez, 2014). When workers, especially those that are exceedingly gifted, cannot be retained inside an organization, the company is cleared out, prevented and incapable to stay competitive.

Despite endless inquiries about demonstrating the esteem of upgrading a competitive edge and expanding client devotion through the improvement and maintenance of the best talent, employee retention management remains an overwhelmingly understudied subject. The chronicled investigation has pointed its center on employee turnover and the forecast of employee turnover inside the hospitality industry instead of the development of retention. The Rwandan government is working to change its grateful benefit under its common advancement programme, specifically the Local Government Capacity Program (LGCP) 2012-2016, within the parameters of its approach to reducing destitution. This move is consistent with the need for excellent administration because it involves a consistent human administration strategy designed to increase the effectiveness of public ministries and specialized organizations almost immediately. The Gracious Benefit Change should assist the government in having a gracious benefit that can meet the essential needs of individuals and contribute to understanding issues affecting various communities.

## **1.1 Problem Statement**

Employee retention challenges continue to grow, prompting the need to attract and retain employees, as they play a significant role in hotel brand performance. With the annual decrease in hotel brand performance, many hotel managers are concerned about how to retain these best employees over the long term, and hotels are struggling to keep up with the brand performance, which causes most hotel owners to question themselves on how to retain the workforce who have different talents for a long period to implement the hotel's brand performance. Hotel owners also face the general issue of talented employees leaving the hotel, which eventually

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leads to a decrease in the hotel's brand performance, and employers tend to spend more money recruiting employees than they do on employee retention management strategies.

The specific issue is that brand performance in the hotel industry is decreasing due to a shortage of the best employees, and hotel leaders have failed to understand the strategies to recruit and retain the best employees, so hotels continue to struggle in retaining excellent employees, which costs them a lot of money and causes brand performance to decline, all of which could be solved if they created a more grounded corporate employee retention management. Through this research, the researcher identified the best employee retention management insights to retain and recruit the best employees, which when implemented will improve brand performance in Rwanda's hotel industry. According to the Rwandan government (2013), the number of formal segments citing insufficient skills as a major limitation has increased since 2006, indicating that this is frequently a growing issue. The need for skills may be a particular issue for large companies with more than 100 employees, with 45% citing an insufficiently educated workforce as an imperative in 2011. Rwanda has a normal 61.5% aptitudes shortage and extreme skill gaps, according to the 2009 National Abilities Review.

The turnover rate is high, and the human resource administration is constantly engaged in enrolment and preparation rather than establishing human resource advancement plans. As a result of this hurting brand performance, the company cannot prosper because its brand performance is dependent on the performance of its employees. Akimpaye (2013) researched employee retention management strategies and performance in Rwandan public institutions. The majority of studies failed to explain the unique impact of employee retention management on brand success and dedication in the hospitality sector as a whole. This study determines the relationship between brand performance and employee retention. Umwizerwa and Emuron (2020) conducted a study on retention strategies for performance in Rwandan public institutions; however, the researchers did not investigate the impact of employee retention management tactics on brand performance in Rwanda's hotel industry. According to Akimpaye (2013), and Umwizerwa and Emuron (2020), no single study was conducted to evaluate employee retention management and brand success in Rwanda's hotel industry. Because of this knowledge gap, the researcher decided to conduct this study to explore the relationship between employee retention management and brand performance in Rwanda's hotel industry.

## **1.2 Research objectives**

- i. To evaluate the relationship between recruiting and brand performance in the hotel industry of Rwanda.
- ii. To evaluate the relationship between training and brand performance in the hotel industry of Rwanda.
- iii. To investigate the relationship between succession planning and brand in the hotel industry of Rwanda.

## **1.3 Research questions**

The research questions that guided this study were the following:

- i. What is the relationship between recruitment and brand performance in the hotel industry of Rwanda?
- ii. What is the relationship between employee training and brand performance in the hotel industry of Rwanda?
- iii. What relationship exists between succession planning and brand performance in the hotel industry of Rwanda?



**2.1 Empirical review**

Synder (2015) conducted a study on the effect of recruitment on brand performance and found that employee recruitment ensures the availability of individuals to support the organization's ongoing ability to run smoothly. According to the study's findings, the correlation between recruitment and brand performance was 0.319, with 86% of respondents indicating that hiring new employees is regarded as a means of ensuring future labour availability. It determines the amount and type of labour that will be required in the long run. Foroudi (2019) worked on a study paper "to examine the impact of brand recognition, brand attitude, brand reputation, and brand awareness on the hotel industry's brand performance in the UK for offering services of a higher calibre and gaining a competitive edge. According to the study's findings, the hotel industry should provide staff training. Due to fierce competition, employees modify their skills to match their job descriptions. Nassazi (2013) evaluated "how training affects a worker's performance. The objective was to assess how training affected employee performance utilizing the Ugandan media transmission business as a case study". The correlation between training and work performance was 0.988, and four goals were established: identifying existing training programs in the industry, the destinations of advertised training, the approach used, and the effects of training and improvement on worker performance. The findings revealed that training has a significant impact on worker performance.

Muhammad et al., (2020) explored "employee brand trust, internal brand communications, and training effects on employee brand performance in the banking business". Their findings show that employees who have a strong emotional connection to the company and its brand are more likely to engage in brand-supportive actions, which improve brand performance. Avanesh (2011) did research on "succession planning and its impact on organizational performance within the IT sector". The correlation between succession planning and worker performance was 0.988, and the goal of the research study was to assess how succession planning is used in Bengaluru (Bangalore)-based IT companies and how it affects execution. An analyst was given a survey strategy for the data collection handle. According to a study, the painful rate of progression planning and organizational execution in IT consultant businesses is higher than that of IT items, and the relationship between progression planning and organizational execution is favorable. Odengo and Bett (2019) investigated the effect of succession planning techniques on Kenya Power Limited's performance. As a result, succession planning appeared to play a critical role in the Organization's improvement. Their findings demonstrated a link between career advancement, training, performance evaluation, organizational structure, and KPLC performance. According to their findings, large corporations should invest more in research and development, training, organizational development, and innovation.

**2.2 Theoretical Framework**

**2.2.1 The Theory of Expectancy**

Victor Vroom established the expectation hypothesis in 1964. The central premise of the theory is that behaviour can change in response to success expectations. Employees will change their behaviour to encourage the achievement of organisational goals if they anticipate receiving something of value as a reward for achieving such goals. As a result, their execution will improve. This theory underpins the concept of worker execution because it is widely accepted that execution is influenced by desires. Filipova (2016). (2016). Vroom's anticipation theory states that behaviour is the result of conscious choices between options to maximize delight

and minimise torment. Variables such as identity, aptitudes, involvement, and capacities influence worker performance. The three factors in the theory are specific expectancy, instrumentality, and valence. For my study, I concentrated on one variable, Expectancy. Expectancy is frequently characterized by the conviction that increased effort will result in increased execution. This variable is influenced by factors such as having the necessary assets on hand, having the necessary skills to complete the work, and having the necessary backup to complete the work. All of this is related to organizational planning because issues like asset aptitudes and support will be identified, executed, and monitored through planning.

### **2.2.2 The Theory of Goal Setting**

Edwin Locke established the goal-setting theory in 1968. It asserts that setting goals and carrying them out are inextricably linked. Specific and challenging objectives, combined with appropriate feedback, contribute to higher and better worker execution. The objectives must be specific, practical, and challenging to persuade workers to execute. Aarts (2019) investigated two aspects of objectives about execution: substance and escalated. Centre specificity and difficulty were two factors in terms of substance. There are issues with the task-person relationship. People adjust their level of effort to the difficulty of the task at hand, and as a result, they work harder for difficult goals than for simple ones. Individual objectives include one's potential, or how closely one is related to an objective. The action taken to achieve it indicates the consideration or need that led to it and the decision to act as a result of that consideration, which Gkizani and Galanakis describe as the extreme verification of objective commitment (2022). Objective commitment can serve these functions by acting as both a causal figure and a mediator in terms of execution. This theory serves as the foundation for the concepts of organizational planning and worker execution. This means that organizations should ensure, through training planning, that the goals set are reasonable, achievable, and challenging, as doing so will encourage employees to go above and beyond to meet them.

### **2.2.3 The Resource-Based Theory**

The resource-based theory states that a company with critical assets has a significant competitive advantage over a company that does not. A key asset is valuable, rare, difficult to duplicate, and irreplaceable. According to Peteraf (2016), there would be no differences in profitability if every firm had the same number of assets because every company in the same industry could use any technique. According to the resource-based theory, competitive advantage and execution are the result of firm-specific assets and competencies that are too expensive for competitors to replicate. The firm's competitive advantage is determined by its ability to coordinate clear organizational capabilities with changing external conditions. A competitive advantage is a strategy that gives a company a favorable or dominant position in the market. HRP will provide a company with the kind of human resources that will accelerate the process of achieving the required level of competitive advantage and boost productivity through employee enrolment and shortlisting forms, as well as sporadic worker training. HRP may use succession planning in conjunction with staff retention strategies to maintain the Organization's competitiveness and capabilities that cannot be replicated by other Organizations. By indicating an organization's asset profile, the best product showcase activities can be identified. According to Miroshnychenko and Kryvko (2015), one of the organization's most profitable assets was its human resources. It has been argued that for the firm's assets to provide workable competitive preferences, they must be distinctive or uncommon among cogent potential commodities within the Organization. The resource-based approach demonstrates how techniques are not always feasible to implement, but rather rely on

a sufficient human resource base. Given that HRP anticipates organizational competitive advantage, this theory is relevant in this context. (Barney and colleagues, 2021).

2.3 Conceptual Framework

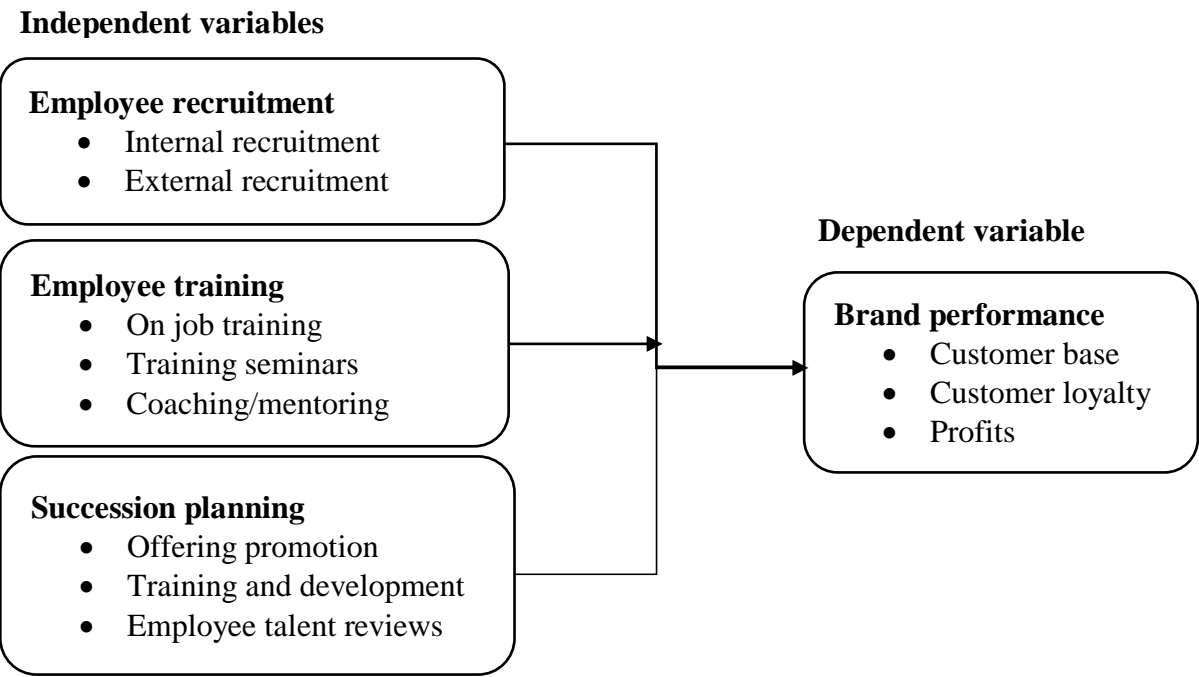


Figure 1: The Conceptual Framework

3.0 Research Methodology

The study employed a descriptive research design. The target population of the study was 980 staffs of different selected ten selected hotels in Kigali province. 284 workers and supervisors of the different ten selected hotels in Kigali province were determined using Yamane's 1967 equation as sample size, with a level of accuracy of 10%. The collected data was subjected to qualitative analysis to determine the fundamental thought processes that drive brand performance and whether or not they have any relationship with employee retention. Descriptive statistics were then used to assess the data that had been gathered. Analyses of data included data preparation, which included cleaning and organizing the data, characterizing the data, testing any underlying hypotheses, and drawing conclusions. The collected data were coded and examined with the use of Microsoft Excel 2016 and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). a descriptive research study, the mean and standard deviation were used to describe observations. As well multiple linear regression was used to model the relationship between the two variables. management Descriptive statistics were then used to assess the data that had been gathered. Analyses of data included data preparation, which included cleaning and organizing the data, characterizing the data, testing any underlying hypotheses, and drawing conclusions. The collected data were coded and examined with the use of Microsoft Excel 2016 and the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). a descriptive research study,

the mean and standard deviation were used to describe observations. As well multiple linear regression was used to model the relationship between the two variables.

4.0 Findings

The findings of the study are presented according to the study objectives.

4.1 Recruitment Strategies and Brand Performance

The first study objective was to evaluate the relationship between recruiting and brand performance in the hotel industry of Rwanda. As regards to the extent various recruitment strategies in the hotel industry of Rwanda has contributed to brand performance. The findings were presented in Table 1.

Table 1: Recruitment Strategies and Brand Performance

Statement	High	Very High	Low	Very Low	Negligible	Mean	SD
To what extent has internal recruitment contributed to brand performance?	70 (29%)	150 (63%)	10 (4%)	10 (4%)	0 (0%)	4.2	0.7
To what extent has external recruitment contributed to brand performance?	50 (21%)	140 (58%)	37 (16%)	3 (1%)	10 (4%)	3.5	0.6
To what extent has promotions contributed to brand performance?	47 (20%)	36 (15%)	104 (43%)	34 (14%)	19 (8%)	3.2	0.6
To what extent has referrals contributed to brand performance?	25 (10%)	200 (83%)	15 (7%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.0	0.7
To what extent has transfers contributed to brand performance?	51 (21%)	32 (13%)	111 (47%)	25 (10%)	21 (9%)	3.3	0.6

Table 1 revealed that the majority of respondents indicated that the extent was very high, with 83% identifying referral strategy as the overall contributor to brand performance, with a standard deviation of 0.7 from the weighted mean of 4.0. However, 63% believed that internal recruitment had a significant impact on brand performance, while 58% presumed that external recruitment had a significant impact. However, 15% stated that the extent to which various recruitment strategies contributed to brand performance was very high with promotions, and 13% stated that it was very high with transfers, with a standard deviation of 0.6 from the weighted mean of 3.3. Respondents who indicated that referrals played a very high extent of 83% on brand performance saw examples of this mostly in hotels, which they thought were



highly contributing to the absorption of excellent talents of various experts from both within the existing employees via promotions and externally which influence brand performance.

4.2 Training Strategies and Brand Performance

The second objective of the research was to assess the relationship between training and brand performance in Rwanda's hotel industry. Table 2 shows how the researcher evaluated the extent to which various training strategies contributed to brand performance.

Table 2: Training Strategies and Brand Performance

Statements	High	Very High	Low	Very Low	Negligible	Mean	SD
To what extent has on-job training of workers contributed to brand performance?	15 (6%)	220 (92%)	5 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.0	0.7
To what extent has training seminars/workshops contributed to brand performance?	32 (13%)	192 (80%)	10 (4%)	6 (3%)	0 (0%)	4.0	0.7
To what extent has coaching/mentoring contributed to brand performance?	80 (33%)	156 (65%)	4 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.3	0.8
To what extent has instructor-led training contributed to brand performance?	41 (17%)	194 (81%)	5 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.2	0.7
To what extent has films and tutorial videos trainings contributed to brand performance?	68 (28%)	160 (67%)	7 (3%)	5 (2%)	0 (0%)	4.2	0.7

Table 2 shows that the majority of respondents (92%) indicated that on-the-job training of workers contributed to brand performance. This was very high, with a standard deviation of 0.7 from the weighted mean of 4.0, indicating that most of the respondents' responses were highly variable. Furthermore, 80% thought training seminars were very important, and 65% thought coaching/mentoring was very important. On the contrary, only 67% of respondents said that teaching new branding techniques contributed significantly to brand performance, and 81% said that increasing job opportunities through training contributed significantly to brand performance. The 4% of respondents who indicated that increasing job opportunities through training had a low impact on brand performance had a standard deviation of 0.7 from the weighted mean of 4.0, indicating that most of the respondents were highly varying in their responses, in which they gave examples of the high costs that are incurred in facilitating employee training at workplace sites that get filled with a lot of installations for seminars and it t Employers are finding it costly to provide training programs to their employees as a result

of this process. The general impression is that the extent to which Rwanda's hotel industry's on-the-job training strategy has contributed to brand performance is still very high.

3.3 Training Strategies and Brand Performance

The last objective of this study was to investigate the relationship between succession planning and brand in the hotel industry of Rwanda. The researcher evaluated the extent various succession planning strategies has contributed to brand performance as shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Training Strategies and Brand Performance

Statement	High	Very High	Low	Very Low	Negligible	Mean	SD
To what extent has on-job training of workers contributed to brand performance?	15 (6%)	220 (92%)	5 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.0	0.7
To what extent has training seminars/workshops contributed to brand performance?	32 (13%)	192 (80%)	10 (4%)	6 (3%)	0 (0%)	4.0	0.7
To what extent has coaching/mentoring contributed to brand performance?	80 (33%)	156 (65%)	4 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.3	0.8
To what extent has instructor-led training contributed to brand performance?	41 (17%)	194 (81%)	5 (2%)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	4.2	0.7
To what extent has films and tutorial videos trainings contributed to brand performance?	68 (28%)	160 (67%)	7 (3%)	5 (2%)	0 (0%)	4.2	0.7

Table 3 shows the extent to which various succession planning strategies in Rwanda's hotel industry have contributed to brand performance, with the majority of respondents (92% indicating that it was very high with the provision of technological advancements, as demonstrated by a standard deviation of high disparity of 0.7 from the weighted mean of 4.0, indicating that most of the respondents were highly varying on their responses, and the next big number 68% indicating that it was very high with the provision of technological advancements and 52% believed that the extent was very high with offering promotions.

5.0 Conclusion

In conclusion, the study aimed to evaluate the relationship between recruitment, training, succession planning and brand performance in the hotel industry of Rwanda. The findings suggest that referral strategy was the most significant contributor to brand performance in the recruitment process, followed by internal and external recruitment strategies. On-job training was identified as the most important training strategy that contributed to brand performance in

the hotel industry, followed by training seminars and coaching/mentoring. Teaching new branding techniques and increasing job opportunities through training were also seen as important contributors to brand performance. Regarding succession planning, the provision of technological advancements was identified as the most significant strategy that contributed to brand performance, followed by the provision of basic trainings and development and offering promotions. The study highlights the importance of recruiting the right talent, providing effective training programs and planning for succession in maintaining a strong brand performance in the hotel industry of Rwanda. The results also indicate that the use of referrals and on-job training should be prioritized by hotel managers in Rwanda in order to enhance brand performance.

**6.0 Recommendations**

The study's findings recommend that hotel managers in Rwanda should prioritize referral strategy in recruitment to attract talented employees and enhance brand performance. Referral strategy has been shown to be the most significant contributor to brand performance in recruitment. This approach can be especially useful in Rwanda where traditional recruitment methods may not be as effective due to limited resources and lack of job-seeking culture. In terms of training, on-job training should be provided to employees to equip them with the necessary skills and knowledge to enhance brand performance. The study found that on-job training was identified as the most important training strategy. This approach can be particularly useful in Rwanda where there is a shortage of skilled labor and a lack of training opportunities. Lastly, the study highlights the importance of succession planning in maintaining a strong brand performance in the hotel industry of Rwanda. Hotel managers should implement succession planning strategies that focus on the provision of technological advancements, basic trainings and development, and offering promotions. By doing so, hotels can ensure that they have a pipeline of skilled and competent employees who can contribute to brand performance.

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