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## Exploring the Link between Management Talent and Perceived Performance in Multinational Corporation in Nigeria

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### **Abstract:**

*This study carefully searched secondary data sources on the link between management talent variables and perceived organizational performance in Multinational Corporation in Nigeria. It explored data based on the review of relevant studies. Talent management Variables have positive links with Perceived organizational Performance. Talent Management Practices should be adopted to improve the overall performance of Multinational Corporations.*

**Keywords:** Management talent, perceive performance, talent attraction, talent retention, talent development

### **1. Introduction**

In the era of globalization, managerial talent is very important. Multinational Companies seems to be struggling on how to boost the performance of their organization. Therefore, to source for, and to manage talent may be seen as one of the strategies, viable organizations used to enhance the performance (Mary and Mary 2017). Saloni (2017) asserts that increasingly, and globally, many organizations are faced with critical decisions and major challenges involved in recruiting talented workers, to develop talented workers as well as retaining talented workers. Consequently, talent management seems to be an important aspect of human resource for many companies, particularly multinational organizations who seek to develop and maintain a healthy advantage in competition over others. Yvonne and Joyce (2018) assert that talent management is an approach that involves attracting, retaining and developing workers with the behaviour to achieve the organizations future needs.

The empirical evidence suggests that the competition involved in talent management of workers is indeed very high. This was as a result of the shortage in labour market across the world (Mashovic, 2018; Yvonne and Joy, 2018; Chron, 2020, Oluwatobi and Gabriel, 2021).

Talent management can be traced back to the year 1997. In that year, some of the Mckinsey Consultants reportedly had some public discussions concerning 'The War on Talent' (Lewis and Heckman, 2006, cited by Yona, Raphael and Eunice 2015) At this point; talent management became a popular phenomenon among organization. Talent Management became a part of Human Resources Management and was popular through empirical research conducted by Lewis and Heckman (2006) cited by Yona et al. (2015). The research was to ascertain if talent management is a part of Human Resources Management and also its popularity. The results revealed that talent management was part of Human Resource Management and was also a popular phenomenon in Human Resource Management Yona et al (2015).

Consequently, talent management has evolved globally and it is gradually proceeding to the forefront, forcing many organizations have begun to look for talent management practitioners (Human Resource 2018).

Globally, successful multinational Organizations usually develop adequate strategies for talent management. Simultaneously, these successful multinational organizations, in working towards best practices, provide ways for attracting the transfer of talent workers globally (Oluwatobi and Gabriel 2021). In Africa, talent management picked up in 2006 as can be seen in the works of Raphael and Eunice (2015). They also argued that since Africa has lost critical talented workers to developed economies, consequently, Africa is a serious need for talent management. A lot of talented workers have been lost by Africa, to developed countries like USA, UK, France, Canada, Australia etc. (Raphael and Eunice 2015). The empirical evidence in recent research studies particularly from Mary and Mary (2017) who studied on talent management influence on employee performance in multinational corporations in Africa revealed that 75% of African CEOs reported that they lacked talented workforce in other to achieve their organizational objectives. Again their report found that African countries were unable to retain, as well as develop talented workers because of numerous facts which

include; poor working environment, lack of proper compensation and motivation, harsh government policy, unhealthy competitive environments and lack of growth opportunities resulting from inadequate cost from decayed infrastructure and insecurity among others.

Nigeria, like other African country also faced challenges with talent management. Jacob, Salami and Etim (2020) opined that organizations in Nigeria have severe challenges with talent management. The empirical evidence from Olusoji, Ogunkoya and Elumah (2013) revealed that majority of multinational organizations in Nigeria were unable to manage their talented workers due to number of factors that were uniquely experienced. Olusoji et al. (2013) also found out that lack of adequate talented human resources has endangered the effectiveness and efficiency of workers in multinational organizations in Nigeria. He recommended that multinational Companies in Nigeria will thrive to high performance through talent management.

The study from Jacob et al (2020) consented that in Nigeria, adequate talent management strategy is required, so as to boost performance in organizations which in turn would assist in the maintenance of core competencies, retention of workers, workers commitment increased productivity and also reduce the cost in recruitment.

An empirical evidence in recent research study in support of talent management from Agbaeze, Monyei and Agu (2017) revealed that talent management practices like proper and adequate identification, assessing and developing workers lead to a boost in organizational performance, where workers, as a result of the talent management practices would be developed to such that they can assume or succeed key roles since it could lead to an organizations survival, success and performance.

Major empirical research evidence on talent management in multinational firms from Alex, Kwasi and Kwesi (2019) revealed that talent management enhances multinational company's global mobility outcomes, employer attractiveness, its competitiveness and performance.

Nevertheless, some other scholars have openly criticized talent management, hence, the explosion of academic debate, on the topic of talent management.

Recent empirical evidence on the negative effects of managerial talent for organizational results by Ulas (2020) showed that managerial talent has a negative effect the outcomes of the organization. The study also showed that organization structure and hierarchy pose a problem to talent management, as high performance from an employee at the bottom can only be rewarded to the boss at the top. Again the idea of talent management is biased in favour of the employees at the top.

Those employees who are at the top hierarchy are normally considered to have more talent than those at the bottom, and as a result, receive higher pay package than those at the bottom. Moreover, more revelation came up from the industrial point of view against talent management from the same study, revealing that talent management practices are harmful to organizational ethics and justice, in order words; it destroys perceived justice and fairness in the organization. Revealing further, the study has it those organizational variables like organizational commitment, organizational cohesion, team work etc are under threat.

Furthermore, Wiblen (2016), in another recent empirical evidence on the criticisms of talent management on organizational performance revealed that talent management, many often than not, does not promote organizational change. In order words, the study further revealed that those at the top are considered as the most talented and for such notion, instead of bringing change in the organization, it may block change. The study further revealed that some workers seem to be non-talented just because such workers were not assigned to the best suitable positions in the organizations.

Organizational performance especially in multinational organizations in Nigeria such as the united African Company (UAC) has been observed to be a key issue in recent times. Foreign subsidiaries, being a unit in a multinational Corporation are involved in the creation of value and its processes for the company. The performance System of Multinational Corporation is an important issue for globally-active companies, not only in the creation of value and its processes for the company but also to encourage international expansion, and enhance resource allocation (Mashovic 2018). It is important therefore, that each foreign subsidiary of a multinational company need to organize and implement a performance system which will in turn, provide a way to combine and put a cognitive system for the operations of business in the host country (Chron 2020). Such established performance system ought to judge the performance of the foreign subsidiary in that particular local surrounding it finds itself in, and also within the multinational Company as a whole. An effective performance system involves financial, as well as non-financial methods (Mashovic 2018). Key operational variables for performance evaluations for multinational organizations as reported by Chron (2020) are sales and profitability. Other non-financial performance systems are: overall market performance, performance in customer service and customer satisfaction, product quality and returns, employee job satisfaction and training among others.

Most scholars believe that there is an existing link between talent management and perceived performance in multinational organizations. Unfortunately most scholars as well believe that some of the talent management system has not been translated towards organizational performance due to some observed ways organizations design and manage their organizational structure. Yona, Raphael and Eunice (2015) argue that the way organization attracts, develops, retains, motivates, manages and reward its workers determine the durations such workers will stay on the job.

In addition Kehinde (2012) also argued that the failure of talent management system, particularly in most multinational organizations, was due to lack of some perceived advantageous planning and implementation of management policies, programs and processes which have positive impact on the process of acquiring, developing and retaining talented workers to sustain organizational performance and competitiveness. In view of the above, it seems to be that the level of performance in multinational corporations has a relationship with the level of managerial talents inherent in such multinational corporations. Exploring the link between management talent and perceived performance in multinational Companies cannot be over emphasized. Multinational corporations operating internationally such as the

United African Company (UAC) find it very important to identify, utilize, as well as source talented workers from a vast business environment. Yvonne and Joyce (2018), arguably, asserted that talent management has a great importance, therefore, presents a way to develop and engage talented workers, who have the capabilities to contribute positively towards the achievement of organizational success, domestically or internationally.

Recently, United African Company lost some of its employees. To worsen matters, its sales and profitability has begun to decline and thus negatively affecting the overall market performance of the company globally. The company has of recent, started to experience challenges of employee performance, which in turn is affecting the organizational performance. In order to mitigate these challenges, some companies have started to introduce some measures in order to checkmate these problems. These include; applying some tactical and operational strategies as well as capacity building etc. It is therefore very necessary that this study seek to examine the extent to which talent management has a link with performance in Multinational Corporation.

The major objective of the study is to carefully examine the link between management talent and perceived performance in Multinational Corporation. Other specific objectives include;

- To examine the extent to which attraction of managerial talent of workers could improve performance of the company.
- To examine the extent to which retention of managerial talent of workers could improve the performance of the company.
- To examine the extent to which development of managerial talent of workers could improve the performance of the company.

## 2. Literature Review

Yona et al (2015) citing Lewis and Heckman (2006), argued that the concept of management talent can be traced in the course of the second world war. Currently, Talent management seems to become a quick growing strategy, which is put into operation by virtually every organization (Yvonne et al 2018). As put by Yvonne et al (2018), the central reason for talent management is to improve the process of selection, recruitment and development of employees in order to meet the present challenges facing organizations, as well as to improve the performance of the organization.

### 2.1. Talent Attraction

Talent attraction has the following components as selection, as well as recruitment of workers, employer branding and employee value propositions (Egerova 2013). In talent attraction, recruitment and selection requires that organization use various methods or techniques to select the right talent that reflects the culture and value of that particular organization (Saloni 2017). The recruitment of members of a talent pool is the first task of talent Management strategy in most organizations. Talent pool is a group of employees or workers with special traits and is source of future senior executives of the organization. Sources of talented employee can either be internal or external. Talent pool can be created using internal sources where the employees involved already have good knowledge of how the organization's processes operate and can also be incorporated directly into the new position, which will lift the morale of the workforce (Mary and Mary 2017).

However, in the event that the organization wants to introduce radical changes or to renew their culture, external sources are preferred (Schuler et al 2011). Employer branding involves the developing the image of an organization that will attract more employees. Attracting best employees, perhaps involves the use of organizational branding as a very powerful strategy to employ. Organizations that effectively handle and control its corporate brands, stands a chance to have a competitive advantage over other organizations. Without public organization's image, it may be difficult to attract the right talents to the organization (Mary and Mary 2017). One of the characteristic of top noted companies particularly the multinational corporations is that they give clear, sound and consistent messages about themselves and such picture translates into a strong pull of talents (Mary and Mary 2017). Employee value proposition is the perceived employee's belief of the value of an organization that seeks to employ him. The measure of the value proposition by an employee is a function of the difficulty of the job, the environment of the job, perceived training opportunities, flexibility, and the reputable stance of the perceived organization (Yona et al 2015).

### 2.2. Talent Retention

Identification of knowledge, experience, and adequate attitude which could cause a success in a particular office positions, helps one to hire and recruit suitable workers for open positions and ranks (Yona et al 2015). A good program involves having a training session on the tasks and tools involved in the work process. Also a good program should cover the corporate culture and value; networking opportunities initial goal setting, information on talent management programmes and strategies and interim and periodic reviews. Parameters set upfront also helps workers to be better equipped and prepare them for their new responsibility, roles and positions and eventually enhance them to become more productive (Yona et al 2015, Mary and Mary 2017, and Saloni 2017). It is very pertinent that one need establishing clear performance standards for all employees, starting from the onset of their job. Assessment and reassessment of Job description is indeed, one of the major ways to achieve talent retention by communicating a new job responsibility, to the concerned employees. If your culture and organizational values are captured in the employees job description, it can help you not just to attract the kind of employees you want, but also to retain such employees when hired (Yona et al 2015, Mary and Mary 2017, and Saloni 2017). No doubt, job description helps to reinforce the organizational culture ensuring the likelihood of having the right people in your organization (Yona et al 2015).

However, linking the employee's goal to the organizational corporate goals would assist to adequately understand his roles and how his daily work processes contributes to the achievement of organization's successes. This would assist individual employees to better understand their values in the organization, and keep them motivated to their work, which in turn would also have a positive effect on employee engagement and retention (Yona et al 2015). By investing in the growth of employee on a continuous basis, employees become linked the more and would stay with the organization (Solani 2017).

### 2.3. Talent Development

Saloni (2017) asserts that talent development involves developing high and potential individual worker and growing them for future senior managers. Nevertheless Mary and Mary (2017) contend that if firms or organizations fail to have a well definite plan of what the organization wants and desires from its future leaders, such organization cannot develop its workforce in the future and would not assess the capabilities of its workforce. Again Saloni 2017, Yona et al 2015, Mary and Mary, and Yvonne and Joyce, 2018 assert that an organization should more carefully, and accurately, define the characteristics of their future leaders.

### 2.4. Organizational Performance

Successful organizations are key ingredient for developing countries, and such, play important role in our daily living. Performance and its continuity is a major centre of organizations towards achieving its success. Therefore organizations grow and progress through performance. In Management research, organizational performance is one of a critical variable. Managers have come to realize that an organization is successful if it achieves its goals with a minimum required resource (Mashovic 2018). One of the indicators of organizational performance is profit. Performance constitutes both financial and non-financial indicators which invariably offer information on the level of achievement of organizational objectives and results (Boslie et al 2010, Jacob et al 2020 and Oluwatobi et al 2021). Other key operational variables for performance evaluation for firms and organizations are its sales and profitability. Other non-financial performance system for organization involves overall market performance, performance in customer service and satisfaction, employee job satisfaction, training and product quality to mention but a few. (Chron 2020), Saloni (2017) asserts that performance is dynamic and requires judgment and interpretation. The basic aim of high performance system is to enable employee and organizations to take decision, and thereby leading to flexibility, innovation, improvement and skill sharing. Organizations ensure continuous improvement in its way of life by facilitating the development of high performance system in such organization (Ulas 2020).

### 2.5. Arguments in Support of Talent Management on Organizational Performance

Much scholarly evidences have been put in support of management of talent on the performance of organization, particularly in multinational corporations.

A related study from Rihan and Tarik (2020) revealed that leaning, as well as development, and career management, which are undoubtedly, talent management variables, were noticed to have significant positive impacts. It further revealed that learning, as well as employee career and development ought to be encouraged by management and concentrating on the training and coaching programs, as well as job rotation of workers, for the organization to achieve sustainable organizational performance in the united Arab Emirate (UAE) Multinational Companies.

Another argument in supporting talent management on the performance of an organization is acknowledged in the empirical works of Pusha and Uttamkumar (2020). Their study revealed that there is a positive relationship between talent management and organizational performance. Revealing further by the study talent management strategies were effective and thus, helps to improve organization's performance.

Another argument from Agbaeze et al (2017) in support of talent management on organizational performance was anchored on their empirical study which revealed that talent management practices like proper and adequate identification, assessing and developing workers, lead to a boost in organizational performance. As a result of talent management practices, workers can assume or succeed key roles, thereby leading to organizational survival, success and performance.

### 2.6. Criticisms against Talent Management on Organizational Performance

Some scholarly research evidence in critique against talent management on organizational performance has been put through:

In the works of Ulas (2020) on conceptual problems, and Negative effects of Talent Management for organizational outcomes; the study came up with its revelations that talent management under estimates and weaken the contributions of team work for organizational outcomes. It also further revealed that talent management is in opposition to organizational ethics, justice, components, as well as advancements in an organization. Organizational structure and hierarchy pose a problem to talent management. Ulas (2020) further left an Unanswered question thus: *Is the emergence of talent management a companion or is it a by-product of some certain reality shows where participants were always asked to show their talents (for example in the all-star talent reality show, Britain's got Talent reality show, Americans got talents reality show etc.)?* One would also ask whether the Cultural Industry is actually boosting talent management practices or not? In related development, (Rudhumbu and Maphosa 2015 and Thunnissen 2016) in the application of talent management in their various number of studies argued that talent management ought not to be only about talented people. That it ought to incorporate strategic positions. They advised that focus should be on strategic positions in organizations instead of talented people in talent management practice.

Thirdly, other critiques of talent management research argued that it is in a slow pace in offering organization's vision, as well as direction. It was further argued that talent management is planned and implemented as a rational and possible instrument that broke from its organizational context (Tarique and Schuler 2018, Thunnissen 2016 and Collins, Mellardo and Cascio 2019). In recent empirical research development on talent management on organizational performance put by (Thunnissen and Gallardo-Gallardo 2017, and Sparrow 2019) found out that even though research has been conducted in a wide variety of context in countries, as well as organization on talent management, the impact of contextual factors in a specific context and implementation of talent management has been neglected at large. Evidence suggested that in spite of the rising consensus on a 'best fit' approach to talent management and the consensual relevance of talent management, there has been very disappointing progress in talent management. Buttressing further (Sparrow 2019) asserted that the strong focus on talent management in large multinational corporations raised questions about whether current assumptions in talent management literature would assist us to understand and explain the subject of talent management in other contexts such as public sector organizations, small medium enterprises, organizations that are based in emerging market context and organizations that are were resided in underdeveloped or developing economy.

The issue here is whether there can be an overall performance in Multinational Organization without linking it to the Managerial Talent of the employees. However, most scholars (Rihan and Tarik 2020, Pushpa and Uttam Kumar 2020, Agbaeze et al 2017) going from their findings agreed and revealed that there is a link between Management Talent and Perceived Performance in Multinational Corporations.

### *2.7. Training and Development of Talented Employee*

Pushpa et al (2020) citing Boselie et al (2010) asserts that employee training is a management continuous and planned effort towards the improvement of employee competence levels and performance. In order words, training is a reliable valuable tool, as well as an investment in an organization which is designed to assist in improving profitability, reducing cost and also increase the commitment of employees, motivation and effectiveness. The nature of training is that it is short lived and hence, it is done to assist learners obtained skills, as well as knowledge for their current job.

Again, the nature of the development is that it is future oriented. It is targeted to assist and grow employees in order to handle future job assignment within an organization, so as to solve problems (Boselie et al 2010, Pushpal et al 2020). Training as well as development are two synonyms used together and are used to prepare and equip employees outside and within the requirements of their present job position, in order to take up challenging roles in the organization. Training includes in house courses, coaching, similar job rotations, as well as professional programmes. Training, as well as development seems to be very effective to enhance talent in many African countries, e.g., South Africa, Kenya Ghana, Egypt etc. These countries do not just have multinational corporations in them, but also local industries hold on to training, as well as development as a necessary and viable tool for workers as well as achieving organizational performance (Boselie et al 2010, Pushpal et al 2020).

### *2.8. Theoretical Framework*

The theoretical framework for this study is anchored on Human Capital theory. Pushpa et al (2020) citing Boselie et al (2010), assert that Human Capital is the experience, abilities, time, and knowledge of a person or group of persons which can be used in the production processes. The Human Theory also asserts that when effectively used, people's learning capabilities are compared to those of other natural resources, and therefore, the outcomes are gainful to the firm. In this case, Human Capital Theory assists to carefully determine how talent management could improve organizational performance. The relevance of the theory as it relates to management of talent is that human capitals are of several components thus: human skills, experience, knowledge, and time which are attached in individuals.

### *2.9. Empirical Review*

The works of various scholars were reviewed on talent management and perceived performance in multinational organizations.

Oluwatobi and Gabriel (2021) study the Impact of Organizational Performance of Library Workers and the Relationship with Talent Management in Nigeria. The study was anchored on a survey design and the population of the study was 364. The instrument data collection was questionnaire while Cronbach's Alpha Test was employed to determine the reliability of the main constructs. Data were analyzed with the use of descriptive statistics and Pearson Product Moment Correlation. Findings showed that there was a positive significant relationship between talent management practices and organizational performance. The study hence recommended that the university management need to more on developing and managing the potential of workers in the University library so as to better increase their performance on the job, reduce brain drain and improve the university's overall performance.

In a related study, Agbaeze et al (2017) studied the impact of Talent Management Strategies on the Performance of an Organization in Nigeria. It adopted a survey design and the population was 3126 while the sample size was 359. Data were collected using questionnaire and the Cronbach Alpha was used to test the reliability of the instrument. Hypotheses were tested using the Pearson Product Moment Correlation Coefficient. The study showed that talent management practices lead to a boost in organizational performance and recommended that organizations should practice talent management so as to enhance the performance of such organization.

In a similar study, Saloni (2017) investigated the impact of Talent Management on Organization Performance of multinational firm in Nigeria. The study objective was to have an in-depth analysis of the relationship between talent management and organizational performance. A quantitative approach was adopted. Data were obtained through questionnaire. Participants were selected by convenient sampling method techniques and a total of 150 respondents were

involved. The results were got on the basis of review of literature and showed the existence positive relationship between talent management and organizational performance.

James (2012) in another related study on the Effect of Talent Management on Organizational Performances in Multinational Organizations in Nigeria. Its purpose was to examine the effect of talent management on organizational performance. Questionnaire was the instrument of the study and primary data was used for data collection. In analyzing the data, correlation coefficient, t-distribution and descriptive analyses were used as the methods employed. Findings showed that management of talent has a positive effect on the performance of the organization. It therefore recommended that management of talent should be used for all levels and groups of staff in the firm.

Another similar study can be seen in the work of Yvonne (2018) who studied on the Role of Talent Management Strategies on Organizational Performance in Kenya. A case of multinational telecommunication firms in Kenya. The study was a survey research employing descriptive and analytical techniques. The study population was 162 and questionnaire was used as the instrument for data collection. The study adopted both qualitative and quantitative data analysis techniques with open ended, as well as closed questions characteristics. Quantitative data was carefully analyzed using descriptive statistics. Frequencies, percentages, mean and standard deviation were used. However, qualitative data was analyzed using content analysis. A multiple regression model was used to ascertain the influence that the independent variable have on the dependent variable. The study found that talent attraction; talent retention and learning and development strategies influence performance in the organization. The study recommended that there is a need for the organization to practice talent management so as to harness on intangible assets in order to explore competitive advantages.

In a related study, Kaur (2013) studied on Talent Management Programme and its Impact on Workers' Retention and Performance in India, focusing on a multinational chain supermarket, Big Bazaar. The study population was 200 and the study explored the use of questionnaire as its instrument for data collection. It was a descriptive research survey, where data collected were presented in descriptive statistics. The hypotheses were tested using Pearson Product Correlation Coefficient. A reliability Coefficient of 0.75 was obtained. Results showed that 92% of workers performance resulted from succession planning strategies like mentoring and coaching. It also showed the presence of strong positive relationship between talent management and performance of workers. However, it was recommended that a holistic approach for succession planning is needed.

### 3. Findings and Conclusion

The findings of this study were got through the literature reviews, hence, the independent variables; attraction, retention and development of managerial talents all have a positive link with organizational performance. Therefore, it is concluded that the independent variables have a positive link with the dependent variable.

### 4. Recommendation

Sequel to the findings and conclusion made, it is recommended that; Talent management Practices need to be adopted to improve the overall performance of Multinational Corporation. Such Talent Management Practices include: adequate and proper attraction of talented workers through hiring and recruitment, high level retention of worker's programme that will cover the Corporate Culture and Values of the organization, and periodic trainings, seminars, development schemes and periodic research programmes, all geared towards achieving organizational performance and successes.

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