

FOSTERING EMPLOYEES' INTENTION TO STAY IN THE HOTEL INDUSTRY IN NIGERIA: THE IMPACT OF WORK MOTIVATION, ORGANIZATIONAL SUPPORT, AND HAPPINESS AT WORK

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Abstract

The hotel industry in Nigeria is experiencing a low employee retention rate, which may be exacerbated by rising competition from both established and new entrants to the industry, resulting in a struggle for available talent. The study examined how employees' intention to stay (ITS) in hotel employment is fostered, focusing on the direct effect of work motivation and the indirect effects of organizational support and happiness at work. The study obtained cross-sectional data through a structured questionnaire administered to 178 customer-contact staff in hotels located in Asaba, Delta State, Nigeria. The partial least squares method was used for data analysis. The study found that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation positively influenced ITS, with extrinsic motivation having a more pronounced effect on the outcome variable. Furthermore, organizational support and happiness at work partially mediated these positive influences, acting both separately and in sequence. The study concluded that while enhancing both work motivation dimensions directly improves ITS in Nigerian hotels, fostering a supportive and happy workplace can provide a reinforcing context to complement this improvement. The study discussed the practical implications for promoting ITS within the hotel industry.

Keywords: Extrinsic motivation, happiness at work, intrinsic motivation, organizational support, work motivation, hotels.

Introduction

Available evidence suggests that employee turnover is a significant concern in the hotel industry in Nigeria, with the resulting employee shortages negatively impacting various performance parameters of hotels (Bello & Bello, 2021). According to Codling, Pinnock, Barrett, Gayle, Stephenson, Sibbles, and Sinclair-Maragh (2022), the hotel industry's global turnover rate typically averages 20 to 300 percent annually. Several factors contribute to its occurrence, including job insecurity, poor remuneration, high workload, uncertain working conditions, and limited career growth and development (Ononye, Ndudi, & Memeh, 2022). The manifestation of these factors has put enormous pressure on employees, amplifying stress and reducing their psychological well-being. The service-oriented nature and high reliance on employees in hotels necessitate maintaining an optimal workforce for operational effectiveness (Codling et al., 2022). The hotel industry in Nigeria is projected to grow by 11.75 percent from 2025 to 2029 (Statista, 2025). With this surge in industry growth comes an increased demand for top talent to manage the pressures of a fast-growing and highly competitive environment. As hotels try to meet their workforce demands due to new entrants and the expansion of existing players, understanding what factors

foster employees' intention to stay is critical to maintaining a minimal turnover risk and cost, including productivity losses, loss of valuable experiential, tacit knowledge, and loss of social capital, among other considerations. Intention to stay (ITS) is a mental process that orients employees to remain in the employment of an organization willfully. The decision not to stay increases the risk of employees having turnover intentions.

Ononye (2023) states that the attitudinal and behavioral problems of employees appear to be primarily motivational in nature. An employee who is not well motivated is less likely to stay where they feel unsupported, undervalued, and unappreciated. Given the low talent retention rate in the hotel industry, it is reasonable to infer that the industry is also facing the challenge of low work motivation. Based on this, we examine whether enhancing work motivation influences hotel employees' intention to remain by focusing on both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Understanding how this relationship is reinforced is crucial for the proper development and support of ITS. Atan, Ozgit, and Silman (2021) suggest that hospitality employees who decide to leave often feel unsupported and dissatisfied in their roles. This challenge underscores the significance of organizational support and employee happiness in

hotel retention strategies. Organizational support is the perceived organizational concern for employees' well-being and the value organizations place on employees' contributions at work. Happiness at work (HAW) is a desirable psychological state arising from a positive evaluation of and contentment with one's work life and environment. Employees who demonstrate a willingness to stay longer in an organization tend to be both engaged and fulfilled at work (Bellamkonda & Pattusamy, 2022). The study contends that hotels can develop organizational support and HAW through strategic motivational interventions (Eisenberger, Shanock, & Wen, 2019). Based on the social exchange theory, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation are essential exchanges for talent retention as they consistently enhance and maintain organizational support and HAW. This result is crucial for hotels aiming to maintain stability and competitiveness over time.

This study is relevant because work motivation, organizational support, and HAW are factors that contribute to employee permanence in an organization (see Li, Zhang, Yan, Wen, & Zhang, 2020; Mardanov, 2020; Bellamkonda & Pattusamy, 2022). However, studies of this nature have yet to fully determine how these factors interact and influence the outcome variable. Furthermore, hotel employees are in constant interaction with customers whose unique stay experience and satisfaction require them to be highly motivated and happy. The quality of customers' experiences reflects the effort that employees put into their jobs. The goal of meeting the changing service demands and quality expectations cannot be achieved when these variables are not adequately developed and sustained amid heightened staff mobility within and across the industry (Ghani, Zada, Memon, Ullah, Khattak, Han, Ariza-Montes, & Araya-Castillo, 2022). Organizations are well aware that, despite accelerating the integration of digital technologies, they still require highly competent employees. Not all organizational activities can be performed without a human element driving the process. Hence, organizational leadership needs to develop an effective human resource strategy to support their retention efforts (Azmy & Mauludi, 2024).

Cho et al. (2008) studied the antecedents of intention to leave and stay. The study found that organizational support and organizational commitment reduced employees' intent to leave, while only organizational support had a positive effect on ITS. The study concluded that while there may be an overlap between the concepts, the factors that reduce intention to leave do not necessarily increase ITS. The works of Nancarrow, Bradbury, Pit, and Ariss (2014) and Qian and Balwi (2024) reiterated this conclusion. Since the goal of

HRM is to retain talented and high-performing employees, studies should also investigate factors that enhance ITS (Qian & Balwi, 2024). Research on ITS in the hotel industry in Nigeria is limited (Ohunakin, Adeniji, Ogunlusi, Igbadumhe, Salau, & Sodeinde, 2020; Bello & Bello, 2021; Ghani et al., 2022), and what does exist diverges in focus and context compared to this study. This aligns with Cho et al.'s (2008) observation that there are limited studies on why employees decide to remain with an organization. Škerháčková et al. (2022) recently confirmed this observation. This is surprising because the rise in competition in the hotel industry in Nigeria has intensified the war for talent (Ohunakin et al., 2020). This study is the first to integrate and analyze the structural relationships between work motivation, organizational support, HAW, and ITS in the same model. By illuminating the linkages among the variables, hotels and their management can understand how to influence employees' decisions to stay, ensuring business competitiveness and sustainability in Nigeria.

Work Motivation

Work motivation refers to the energetic factors that modulate the form, direction, intensity, and persistence of work-related behaviors in employees (Pinder, 2014). It is often based on the premise that employees have specific needs, and the goal is to find effective ways to satisfy those needs. The extent to which needs are satisfied determines the quality and content of employee behavioral outcomes. Intrinsic or extrinsic factors drive work motivation. Delaney and Royal (2017) assert that work experiences that align with self-concept and personal drives foster intrinsic motivation. Interesting, pleasurable, and enjoyable work experiences trigger positive feelings, such as excitement, satisfaction, accomplishment, and competence, from performing one's job and attaining valued results. This type of motivation arises when one's work is both meaningful and congruent with their personal attitudes, values, and orientations. On the other hand, extrinsic motivation is separable from the employee and is stimulated by the organization along with its working conditions or environment. The focus is on the utility of the work, not the work itself. As such, the control of this motivation rests on other individuals. According to the two-factor theory, extrinsic motivational factors are important because their absence can lead to work dissatisfaction. Singh (2016) suggests that intrinsically motivated employees are more likely to experience better work satisfaction, organizational commitment, and performance than those who are extrinsically motivated. Although

intrinsic and extrinsic motivation may be considered opposing constructs, both dimensions can be used together, to varying degrees, to create an effective and efficient workplace.

Intention to Stay (ITS)

Intention to stay refers to the willingness to stay and develop one's career within an organization. This evaluative outcome reflects employees' connection to various aspects of the job and the organization, influenced by individual factors (e.g., job satisfaction and organizational commitment), organizational factors (e.g., compensation and rewards, leadership, culture, and working environment), and external market conditions (Qian & Balwi, 2024). Han (2020) argues that while individual factors are important determinants of ITS, they are not the primary causes, as organizational factors also play a significant role in influencing these individual-level factors. Based on this, firms should develop and implement comprehensive strategies that address the intricate nature of ITS and meet the diverse needs of employees. Behavioral intentions, such as those related to ITS, are significant determinants of employee turnover (Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018).

Organizational Support

According to Eisenberger et al. (2019:102), "organizational support refers to employees' perceptions that the organization values their contributions and cares about their well-being." This general perception serves as a reference point within which employees form meaningful explanations of organizational actions and, consequently, modulate their in-role and extra-role work behaviors (Ononye, 2023). Furthermore, it is shaped in the social exchange relationship according to the relational quality formed over time. When an organization and its employees engage in supportive dyadic exchanges, reciprocity norms obligate them to reciprocate with each other, resulting in positive outcomes for both. Organizational support is more affected when organizational actions are seen as voluntary, as opposed to external factors such as a tight job market, union negotiations, and government regulations. Supported employees are more effective than those who are not, and demonstrate desirable behaviors, such as enhanced commitment, job satisfaction, work engagement, organizational citizenship behavior, and learning (Margareth & Nurdyadi, 2024).

Happiness at Work (HAW)

Happiness at work (also known as employee happiness and workplace happiness) refers to positive experiences, feelings, or emotions that arise from contentment with one's quality of life and well-being in a specific position or organization. It is a "state of well-being

that includes leading a decent life with a sense of purpose and profound contentment," as indicated in Pandey and Sharma (2025). HAW is important for employees to enjoy what they are doing (engagement), to feel satisfied about various aspects of their job (job satisfaction), and to feel emotionally connected to and identify with the work and organization (affective organizational commitment) (Atan et al., 2021). These attitudinal variables—engagement, job satisfaction, and affective organizational commitment—are purposefully integrated to improve one's subjective well-being, a state marked by high levels of life satisfaction and positive emotions at work. Transient and ongoing experiences within a job and organization influence this dispositional state. The evaluation of these experiences influences their potential for reciprocal exchanges and the activities that result from them, thereby improving employee effectiveness and productivity. Factors contributing to elevated levels of HAW include positive relationships, quality of work life, organizational shared values, work meaningfulness, and leadership (Chaiprasit & Santidhirakul, 2011). According to Singh and Aggarwal (2017:2), "Happy employees are twice as productive, six times more energized, take only 1/10th of sick leave, and intend to stay twice as long in the organizations as compared to an unhappy employee."

Hypotheses Development

The hotel industry is characterized by low employee retention rates, suggesting that hotels struggle to retain staff, and many employees do not resonate with the idea of long-term employment in this industry. Work motivation enhances ITS in different organizational domains. Using the motivation-hygiene theory, Chang, Yeh, Lai, and Yang (2021) demonstrated that extrinsic job satisfaction and intrinsic job satisfaction positively affected ITS among nursing assistants at nursing and elderly homes in Taiwan. Mardanov (2020) found that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation positively contributed to employee contentment, thereby strongly increasing ITS and performance. Utilizing a sample of social enterprise workers in the Philippines, Caringal-Go and Hechanova (2018) found that both intrinsic and extrinsic needs positively influence ITS, regardless of job level, among staff-level employees and managers. Although intrinsic motivation precedes extrinsic motivation in significance, employees are satisfied with their job when extrinsic motivation is bolstered by tangible incentives and rewards that align with their personal needs, values, and performance (Singh, 2016; Delaney & Royal, 2017). Research also suggests that extrinsic factors may have a greater influence on contextual constructs, such as job satisfaction, as employees can exert more control over intrinsic elements than extrinsic ones (Ahmad, 2018). Darolia et al.

(2010) also noted that extrinsic sources of motivation are highly valued by low-paid workers, even though they still prioritize intrinsic sources of motivation. However, the significance of both dimensions of motivation indicates that employees have different needs, and the degree to which these needs are met influences their decision to remain in an organization. Consequently, two hypotheses were formulated.

H₁: Intrinsic motivation positively influences employees' intention to stay.

H₂: Extrinsic motivation positively influences employees' intention to stay.

The influence of organizational support on attitudinal outcomes (e.g., commitment, trust, and engagement), behavioral outcomes (e.g., performance, withdrawal behavior, and citizenship behaviors), and employee well-being could be induced by work motivation dimensions. Studies have shown that organizational support contextualizes the influence of work motivation dimensions on attitudinal outcomes. For instance, Ajmal, Bashir, Abrar, Khan, and Saqib (2015) found that organizational support mediated the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic rewards on job satisfaction and organizational commitment levels of bankers in Faisalabad, Pakistan. Shah and Asad's (2018) study demonstrated that the effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on the retention of bankers in Lahore, Pakistan, were significantly and positively mediated by perceived organizational support. Therefore, two hypotheses were proposed.

H₃: Organizational support mediates the positive influence of intrinsic motivation on employees' intention to stay.

H₄: Organizational support mediates the positive influence of extrinsic motivation on employees' intention to stay.

Highly motivated employees tend to have a more enjoyable and pleasurable work experience. In fact, work motivation fosters better engagement, job satisfaction, and organizational commitment—essential components of a happy employee (Atan et al., 2021). Research also indicates that these components promote positive attitudinal outcomes in different work and organizational contexts by channeling the influences of motivating factors. For instance, Kamselem, Nuhu, Lawal, Liman, and Abdullahi (2022) contend that the effects of the reward system and work conditions on employee retention were partially mediated by employee engagement. De Sousa Sabbagha, Ledimo, and Martins (2018) found that a bidirectional relationship exists between work motivation and job satisfaction, and this relationship influences ITS. However, the context provided by job satisfaction explained a more significant proportion of the variance in employee ITS

than work motivation. Ahmad (2018) demonstrated that both intrinsic and extrinsic factors of a job contribute to improving job satisfaction and organizational commitment, thereby reducing employees' intentions to leave the organization. Regarding the mediation of HAW, Mardanov (2020) found that intrinsic and extrinsic motivation significantly contribute to employee contention, thereby increasing the likelihood of employees continuing their employment with an organization. Fisher (2002) demonstrated that changes in work environment and work events trigger affective reactions at work, which in turn predict work attitudes and behavioral intentions. Given the above, the study put forward two hypotheses.

H₅: Happiness at work mediates the positive influence of intrinsic motivation on employees' intention to stay.

H₆: Happiness at work mediates the positive influence of extrinsic motivation on employees' intention to stay.

Research indicates that organizational support and HAW are positively related (Akgunduz, Bardakoglu, & Kizilcalioglu, 2022). The receipt of favorable support in the form of work motivation influences this relationship (Eisenberger et al., 2019). O'Driscoll and Randall (1999) suggested that perceived organizational support enhances employees' satisfaction with rewards, increasing their involvement and commitment to work. Their positive feelings and intentions shape the formation of employees' reciprocal perspective on organizational support, leading to a longer tenure with the organization. Discretionary HR practices designed to encourage and empower employees reinforce their perceived organizational support, which in turn enhances their level of engagement with meaningful work and increases their happiness (Hamid & Kundi, 2024). In view of the above, the serial mediation argument posits that organizational support and HAW will form the context in which the work motivation dimensions influence ITS. The following hypotheses were formed.

H₇: Organizational support and happiness at work mediates the positive influence of intrinsic motivation on employees' intention to stay.

H₈: Organizational support and happiness at work mediates the positive influence of extrinsic motivation on employees' intention to stay.

Theoretical Foundation

The social exchange theory posits that employees' attitudes and behaviors are outcomes of the exchange relationships with their organizations. By applying this theory, we can view ITS as the consequence

of a favorable social exchange driven by intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. Employees' perceptions of organizational support evolve through consistent, supportive exchanges with management, which subsequently promote other desirable states and outcomes. Employees who perceive high organizational support tend to experience a heightened sense of happiness. The experience of happiness encourages employees to reciprocate by maintaining positive connections and long-term organizational commitment. This logic aligns with the norms of reciprocity.

Positive psychological states, such as HAW, are likely to emerge when valued resources are successfully and consistently exchanged. HAW serves as a positive reinforcement that encourages employees to maintain their involvement in the exchange process. In this way, employees may willingly want to commit to an enduring and productive relationship with the organization. Employees who choose to maintain positive connections with an organization rationally assess the activities they perform, considering the associated benefits and costs. Employee commitment to a given role or organization is evident when the benefits outweigh the costs in the dyadic relationship. Summarily, although ITS depends on management's use of work motivation, the interplay between organizational support and HAW is also crucial for improving the quality of the relationship over time.

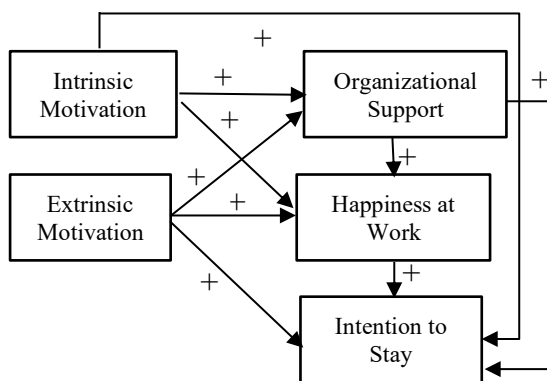


Figure 1. The hypothesized research framework

Research Methods

This study obtained cross-sectional data with a well-structured, paper-based questionnaire. The participants were customer-contact employees working in hotels in Asaba, Delta State. The customer contact employees include marketing managers, front desk officers, waiters and waitresses, porters, bar attendants, room attendants, gym instructors, housekeepers, parking attendants, and other staff members. The Delta State Ministry of Culture and Tourism provided a list

of registered hotels that operate in Asaba. The researcher used this list to send letters of invitation to participate in a survey. After receiving formal approval to conduct the research in 14 hotels, the researcher proceeded to randomly sample the target employees from the list generated by the human resource departments of the participating hotels. The study selected a sample of 179 from a population of 323 using the Yamane formula for sample determination, with a 0.05 margin of error. The use of this sample size determination technique is justified because it provides a sample size that is adequate to achieve stable and reliable estimations. A sample size exceeding 200 is acceptable to detect statistical relationships among hypothesized paths in complex models when using structural equation modeling (Hair, Hult, Ringle, & Sarstedt, 2022). The participants were required to have a minimum of three years' tenure in the hotel to ensure unbiased and accurate insights regarding the variables under examination.

This study conducted questionnaire administration and collection over a period of two months, from October to November 2024. Before applying the research instrument fully, the researchers asked the respondents to read the cover letter carefully and elicited informed consent after they understood the study's purpose and their rights as participants. The researcher was available to provide clarification on any issues participants encountered while completing the questionnaire. Out of the 179 questionnaires collected, 178 were deemed usable for data analysis; 1 had a missing value and was excluded. The demographic profile of the respondents showed that 70 (39.3%) were males and 108 (60.7%) were females, with a mean age and tenure of 32.8 and 4.9 years, respectively. The minimum academic qualification was the Senior School Certificate (SSC).

The study used a multi-item scale with acceptable levels of internal consistency to examine the study variables. The items were rated on a 5-point Likert scale, with responses ranging from completely disagree (1) to completely agree (5). Khan and Iqbal (2013) provided the 6-item scale for intrinsic motivation and the 8-item scale for extrinsic motivation. This is a popular scale developed in line with the two-factor theory. Cronbach's alpha scores for intrinsic motivation and extrinsic motivation are 0.738 and 0.811, respectively. The 4-item scale used by Alfes, Shantz, Bailey, Conway, Monks, and Fu (2019) was adopted to measure organizational support. A sample item is, "My organization cares about my well-being." Cronbach's alpha for this scale is 0.811. The 3-item scale of Nancarrow et al. (2014) was employed to assess ITS. A sample item is, "I am likely to be working for the same hotel in one year." Cronbach's alpha for this scale is 0.759. The 9-item

scale developed by Salas-Vallina and Alegre (2018) was adopted to measure HAW. A sample item is, "At work, I feel strong and energetic." Cronbach's alpha for this scale is 0.766.

The study utilized the partial least squares method (PLSM) facilitated by SmartPLS 4 for data analysis. The use of PLSM has become increasingly popular in management research for assessing complex relationships among latent variables, especially when the research model has multiple mediating variables. Furthermore, the study employed the two-step PLSM procedure, which estimates the measurement and structural models sequentially (Hair et al., 2022). The measurement model was evaluated to determine its validity and reliability. The significance of the structural model was also assessed for hypothesis testing. The PLSM guidelines, as outlined in Hair et al. (2022), were applied for data interpretation.

Results and Discussion

Preliminary analyses were conducted before performing the two-step PLSM procedure on the data. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) measure of sampling adequacy and Bartlett's test of sphericity (BTS) were used to determine whether confirmatory factor analysis can be applied to the data. The SPSS 20.0 software facilitated this preliminary data assessment. The KMO values for intrinsic motivation (0.755), extrinsic motivation (0.748), organizational support (0.790), HAW (0.691), and ITS (0.812) were all above the acceptable level of 0.60, indicating that the sample is good enough for factor analysis. The BTS values for all constructs were significant at $p < 0.05$, suggesting that the relationships among the items are significant for factor analysis. The mean scores of the constructs were low, suggesting that employees experience low levels of intrinsic motivation ($M = 2.388$; $SD = 0.892$), extrinsic motivation ($M = 2.242$; $SD = 0.970$), organizational support ($M = 2.307$; $SD = 1.053$), HAW ($M = 2.356$; $SD = 0.967$), and ITS ($M = 2.229$; $SD = 0.904$).

The data were obtained from a single source, which may lead to the problem of common method bias (CMB). Although the confidentiality of responses helped reduce the incidence of bias, it is essential to determine whether CMB poses a statistical issue in the dataset. The Harman's single-factor test was used to detect such a problem. The result showed that the total variance when all variables are grouped under a single factor was 33.380%, which is within the maximum permissible limit of 50%, as recommended by Podsakoff, MacKenzie, Lee, and Podsakoff (2003). This result indicates that there are no significant concerns regarding CMB.

The validity and reliability of the measurement model were assessed. The study employed several tests, including standardized factor loadings (FL), composite reliability (CR), average variance extracted (AVE), variance inflation factor (VIF), and the Fornell-Larcker criterion (FLC), to assess discriminant validity. The FLs, which measure the item reliability, were above the recommended cut-off point of 0.707. This result suggests that the constructs had good item reliability, as their indicators correlated significantly with their respective constructs. CR values, which assess construct reliability, for all the constructs were higher than the permissible limit of 0.70. This result demonstrates that the construct reliability was adequate.

Table 1
Descriptive and measurement model results

Constructs	Mean	SD	FLs Range > 0.707
1. IM	2.388	0.892	0.743 – 0.806
2. EM	2.242	0.970	0.798 – 0.849
3. OS	2.307	1.053	0.760 – 0.813
4. HAW	2.356	0.967	0.738 – 0.782
5. ITS	2.229	0.904	0.802 – 0.835

Note: IM = intrinsic motivation, EM = extrinsic motivation, OS = organizational support, HAW = happiness at work, ITS = intention to stay

Table 2
Measurement model results cont'd

Constructs	CR > 0.70	AVE > 0.50	VIF < 5
1. IM	0.752	0.680	1.837
2. EM	0.781	0.564	1.355
3. OS	0.733	0.633	1.423
4. HAW	0.829	0.597	1.119
5. ITS	0.807	0.623	

Note: IM = intrinsic motivation, EM = extrinsic motivation, OS = organizational support, HAW = happiness at work, ITS = intention to stay

Table 3
Discriminant Validity (FLC)

Constructs	1	2	3	4	5
1. IM	0.825				
2. EM	0.144	0.751			
3. OS	0.193	0.207	0.796		
4. HAW	0.126	0.197	0.320	0.773	
5. ITS	0.207	0.254	0.242	0.378	0.789

Note: IM = intrinsic motivation, EM = extrinsic motivation, OS = organizational support, HAW = happiness at work, ITS = intention to stay

The AVE values were above the minimum score of 0.50 for acceptable convergence among the constructs. The multicollinearity test was performed using the VIF, and the resulting values were below 5, indicating less significant multicollinearity problems. The

Fornell-Larcker criterion results indicate that each construct's AVE was greater than its interconstruct coefficients, indicating good discriminant validity.

The study proceeded to the structural model assessment after attaining satisfactory scores for the quality criteria used to evaluate the measurement model. The bootstrap method, using 5,000 subsamples, was employed to test the significance of the direct and indirect effects. Before proceeding to the structural model estimation for hypothesis testing, the model fit was confirmed.

Table 4
Model fit

Test	Score	Remark
SRMR	0.067	Satisfactory
NFI	0.844	Acceptable

Following the guidelines in Hair et al. (2022), the SRMR (standardized root mean square residual) value was above 0.080, suggesting a good fit between the observed data and hypothesized model. The NFI (normed fit index) was close to 1 and above 0.80 for an acceptable fit. There, the hypothesized research model fitted the observed data.

The study found that intrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.139$, $p < 0.05$) and extrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.227$, $p < 0.05$) had a positive influence on employees' ITS. The PLSM results provided statistical support for H_1 and H_2 . Therefore, hotels that provide intrinsic and extrinsic motivational elements can bolster the willingness of employees to remain with them. This statement aligns with previous studies (Chang et al., 2021; Mardanov, 2020; Caringal-Go & Hechanova, 2018) that documented a positive relationship between these factors in different professional and organizational contexts. The study also found that extrinsic motivation had a more pronounced effect on ITS compared to intrinsic motivation, contradicting the position of Singh (2016) and Delaney and Royal (2017). Possibly, extrinsic motivation could have a greater impact on outcomes that are highly contextual and variable because they lie outside their control (Ahmad, 2018). The deteriorating socio-economic situation of the country may also amplify the relevance of extrinsic motivation to hotel employees. Similarly, Darolia, Kumari, and Darolia (2010) suggest that low-level employees may prioritize extrinsic rewards over intrinsic ones.

The PLSM results indicate that the inclusion of organizational support and HAW did not alter the impact of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation on ITS. However, the effects of organizational support ($\beta = 0.439$; $p < 0.05$) and HAW ($\beta = 0.305$; $p < 0.05$) on ITS were greater than those of the motivation dimensions. The

results also demonstrated that intrinsic motivation provided to employees enhanced their perception of organizational support ($\beta = 0.274$; $p < 0.05$) and HAW ($\beta = 0.119$; $p < 0.05$). Extrinsic motivation demonstrated a comparable yet more substantial effect on organizational support ($\beta = 0.345$; $p < 0.05$) and HAW ($\beta = 0.178$; $p < 0.05$). The relationship between the mediating constructs, organizational support and HAW, was also positive and significant ($\beta = 0.471$; $p < 0.05$). The interplay among the motivation dimensions, organizational support, and HAW suggests that these factors may influence each other and impact ITS.

Table 5
Structural model results - direct

Paths	β (p-value) Model 1	β (p-value) Model 2
1. IM \rightarrow ITS	0.139 (0.003)	0.137 (0.000)
2. EM \rightarrow ITS	0.227 (0.000)	0.226 (0.000)
3. OS \rightarrow ITS		0.439 (0.000)
4. HAW \rightarrow ITS		0.305 (0.000)
5. IM \rightarrow OS		0.274 (0.000)
6. EM \rightarrow OS		0.345 (0.000)
7. IM \rightarrow HAW		0.119 (0.000)
8. EM \rightarrow HAW		0.178 (0.000)
9. OS \rightarrow HAW		0.471 (0.000)
R ²	0.276	0.583

Note: IM = intrinsic motivation, EM = extrinsic motivation, OS = organizational support, HAW = happiness at work, ITS = intention to stay, $p < 0.05$

Table 6
Structural model results – specific indirect

Paths	β (p-value)
1. IM \rightarrow OS \rightarrow ITS	0.117 (0.000)
2. EM \rightarrow OS \rightarrow ITS	0.130 (0.000)
3. IM \rightarrow HAW \rightarrow ITS	0.105 (0.001)
4. EM \rightarrow HAW \rightarrow ITS	0.109 (0.000)
5. IM \rightarrow OS \rightarrow HAW \rightarrow ITS	0.098 (0.039)
6. EM \rightarrow OS \rightarrow HAW \rightarrow ITS	0.101 (0.007)

Note: IM = intrinsic motivation, EM = extrinsic motivation, OS = organizational support, HAW = happiness at work, ITS = intention to stay; $p < 0.05$

The results showed that organizational support played a role in enhancing the positive effects of intrinsic ($\beta = 0.117$; $p < 0.05$) and extrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.130$; $p < 0.05$) on ITS. This finding led to the acceptance of H_3 and H_4 . Using intrinsic and extrinsic motivation to improve employees' perception of organizational support is critical if they are to reciprocate by committing to a long-term employment relationship in hotels. Employees are more likely to commit to an organization when they feel that management cares for them and values their contributions to the work. This finding is consistent with Ajmal et al. (2015) and Shah

and Asad (2018), who found organizational support mediated the influences of work motivation on other attitudinal and behavioral outcomes. Furthermore, the result showed that HAW mediated the positive effects of intrinsic ($\beta = 0.105$; $p < 0.05$) and extrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.109$; $p < 0.05$) on ITS. These findings confirmed that the propositions in H_5 and H_6 hold. Having a strong sense of contentment is critical if work motivation is to foster ITS among employees. If employees are satisfied (contented) with the environment provided by hotels to support them, they tend to engage in productive activities and demonstrate a strong desire to remain with them. This finding agrees with Mardanov (2020) and Fisher (2002).

Additionally, the study proposed that the mediating constructs interact closely to create a sequential context that fosters work motivation to enhance ITS. The specific indirect results demonstrated that intrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.098$; $p < 0.05$) and extrinsic motivation ($\beta = 0.101$; $p < 0.05$) had a positive effect on ITS through organizational support and HAW. Therefore, H_7 and H_8 were accepted. Although existing research has examined the organizational support and HAW nexus (Akgunduz et al., 2022), studies have not investigated whether these two factors interact as mediators. However, the findings align with the arguments from social exchange theory, which states that ITS is an important exchange driven by intrinsic and extrinsic motivational elements and that consistent support can improve how employees perceive or view the organization. The recurring support functions as a job resource that contributes to workplace happiness and well-being. It is common to find that happy employees are more enthused, engaged, and committed to work (Singh & Aggarwal, 2017). The favorable perception they hold about the organization contributes to their related state. This finding shows that context (internal states of employees) creates an optimal link for work motivation elements to sustain commitment to a long-term relationship with an organization. Hotels should leverage the strong correlational value that exists between organizational support and HAW to reinforce their employees' ITS accordingly. Therefore, when hotels enhance work motivation, the reciprocal benefits increase, as high organizational support, HAW, and ITS are desired outcomes within the social exchange system. The results were summarized in Figure 2, with the bolded line representing a positive and significant path at $p < 0.05$.

The R^2 showed that the interplay among work motivation dimensions, organizational support, and HAW moderately explained 58.3% of the change in ITS. The inclusion of the mediating constructs in the framework significantly improves the explanation from 27.6% to

58.3%. Although the mediation type was considered complementary, the R^2 reinforces the importance of context in predicting and fostering ITS in hotels.

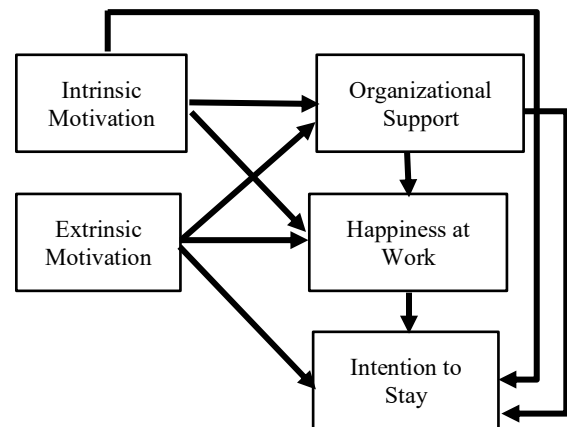


Figure 2. The research framework

Conclusions and Implications

The study investigated how strong intentions to stay in hotels are fostered, focusing on the direct effects of work motivation and the indirect effects of organizational support and happiness at work. The study found that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation directly and indirectly influence employees' intention to stay in hotels, with organizational support and happiness at work acting as mediators, independently and sequentially. Other findings include that the extrinsic motivation effect was more profound on the mediating and outcome variables than intrinsic motivation. Furthermore, the organizational support and happiness at work nexus had a higher correlational value, which can be used to maximize the effect of extrinsic and intrinsic motivation on employees' willingness to remain in hotels. The study concluded that the positive effects of work motivation dimensions on employees' intention to stay in hotel employment are partially explained by the interplay between organizational support and happiness at work.

Theoretically, research has shown that these antecedent factors contribute to employee retention in organizations; however, it is unclear how they interact to create a more holistic effect on employees' willingness to continue working in hotels. Although the study demonstrated the contextual significance of organizational support and happiness at work in the work-motivation-intention-to-stay relationship, it also acknowledges that the interplay between these intermediate factors is important in amplifying the benefits of work motivation on intention to stay. Research (e.g., Akgunduz et al., 2022) has shown that organizational support and happiness at work are closely related concepts; however, no single study has examined whether this interconnection contextualizes the effect of work motivation on intention to stay. Thus, the study contributed a

research model, grounded in social exchange theory, which provided insights in this regard. Cho et al. (2008) and Škerháčková et al. (2022) noted that research on intention to stay is limited, and that not all factors influencing intention to leave have an impact on this outcome variable (Qian & Balwi, 2024). This study illuminated the antecedent factors and the roles played to enhance employees' intention to stay in a hotel. This study has also addressed the underexplored area of research on employee retention in the hotel industry in Nigeria, as indicated in previous research (Ohunakin et al., 2020; Bello & Bello, 2021; Ghani et al., 2022).

Practically, hotels should develop a human resource strategy that enhances both intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. However, they should pay close attention to extrinsic motivation, given its importance in retaining customer-contact employees. This extrinsic motivation includes increasing salaries, providing work benefits and incentives, improving working conditions, implementing employee-friendly policies, fostering job security, and creating a supportive and constructive environment for relationship-building. Furthermore, formulate the motivational strategies to elicit positive internal states, characterized by positive perceptions, moods, and feelings. The centrality of organizational support and happiness at work is crucial in attaining optimal outcomes or results. To ensure that motivation strategies and interventions align with employees' needs and demands, organizations can conduct a psychometric evaluation to determine employees' perceptions of organizational support and their overall workplace happiness.

The study had limitations. First, the geographical coverage was not exhaustive, as the study focused on a specific state in Nigeria. The resource constraint precluded an elaborate investigation on the subject matter. Future research should extend this study to improve the generality of the findings. The use of cross-sectional data, which provides a snapshot at a given point in time, constrained this study. Future research should utilize longitudinal or mixed-methods data to enhance our understanding of the causal relationships among these constructs. The study focused on the distinct direct and indirect effects of intrinsic and extrinsic motivation; future research should pay attention to the complementarity of both motivation dimensions on intention to stay.

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- Appendix (Measurement Items) Intrinsic Motivation**
1. Working for my organization gives me a sense of satisfaction.
 2. The tasks that I do at work are interesting.
 3. I often receive appreciation for good work.
 4. Feedback on my job performance from the organization motivates me to work harder.
 5. The work I do in my organization is beneficial for my personal growth.
 6. My organization involves me in designing job duties for me.
- Extrinsic Motivation**
1. My salary is satisfactory in relation to what I do.
 2. I often get incentives and bonuses for good work.
 3. There are promotional opportunities available to me within my organization.
 4. The work I do makes me feel safe from being fired or laid off.
 5. My organization provides me with training that enables me to learn new things.
 6. The company policies in my organization empower me to put in my best.
 7. I have a good relationship with my superiors.
 8. My relationship with others is respectful and friendly.
- Organizational Support**
1. My organization cares about my opinions.
 2. My organization cares about my well-being.
 3. My organization strongly considers my goals and values.
 4. My organization shows much concern for me.
- Happiness at Work**
1. At my job, I feel strong and energetic.
 2. I am enthusiastic about my job.
 3. I get carried away when I am working.
 4. I am satisfied with the nature of the work I perform.
 5. I am satisfied with the opportunities that exist in this organization for advancement [promotion].
 6. I am satisfied with the pay I receive for my job.
 7. I would be delighted to spend the remainder of my career with this organization.
 8. I feel emotionally attached to this organization.
 9. I feel a strong sense of belonging to my organization.
- Intention to Stay**
1. I am likely to be working for the same hotel in one year.
 2. I would still like to work for the same hotel in 5 years.
 3. I can see a future for me with this hotel.