

Strategic Planning and Hospitality Business Performance in Ogoja Urban, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study examined the relationship between strategic planning and hospitality business performance in Ogoja Urban, Cross River State, Nigeria. The study was motivated by the need for hospitality businesses to enhance their performance and competitiveness in an increasingly dynamic business environment through effective strategic planning practices. The objectives were to determine the extent to which strategic planning dimensions such as specialisation, formalisation, and hierarchy of authority influence hospitality business performance. The study adopted a cross-sectional descriptive survey design. Data were collected from employees and management staff of selected hospitality establishments in Ogoja using structured questionnaires. The collected data were analysed using descriptive and statistical packages for social sciences (SPSS) to determine the relationship between strategic planning and hotel business performance in Ogoja. The study showed that hotels that engage in effective strategic planning experience improved operational efficiency, increased employee productivity and commitment, greater customer satisfaction, and better overall business performance. The findings further indicated that proper implementation and continuous evaluation of strategic plans contribute significantly to the achievement of organisational goals and sustainable growth. The study concluded that strategic planning is a critical determinant of business performance in the hospitality industry. It therefore recommended that hotel businesses in Ogoja should strengthen their strategic planning processes, involve employees in strategy implementation, and regularly review their strategic objectives to adapt to changing environmental conditions. This will enhance business performance, competitiveness, and long-term sustainability within the hospitality sector.

Keywords: strategic planning, hotel industry, business performance, specialisation, formalisation, and hierarchy of authority

Introduction

Strategic planning is acknowledged as a vital tool for influencing an organisation's survival in a competitive global landscape. (Hasan et al., 2020) also noted that both for-profit and non-profit organisations benefit from strategic planning, resulting in enhanced organisational effectiveness. According to Dyer (2020), a strategy can be viewed as a game plan, a consistent pattern of decisions and actions, and a position aimed at establishing a competitive edge within an organisation. Effective planning plays a crucial role in managerial success and, consequently, in the overall success of the corporation. Strategic planning involves assessing both the external and internal environments of an organisation, defining its vision and mission, setting overarching goals, formulating and selecting strategies to be implemented, and allocating resources to meet the

organisation's objectives. The goal is to synchronise an organisation's operations with its surroundings, ensuring its ongoing survival and effectiveness. Baron & Markman (2023) highlight four fundamental reasons for clearly articulating an organisation's purpose. In the absence of a strategic plan, a company may struggle to achieve its mission due to ambiguity regarding the mission's specifics. An unclear purpose complicates decision-making, as leaders must rely on their best judgment to determine what constitutes appropriate organisational decisions. This approach to making judgments that are not directly linked to the mission often results in companies misallocating their resources, which typically leads to failure.

According to Katare et al. (2021), strategic planning represents a multifaceted landscape, as it entails a defined systematic approach aimed at securing the engagement and commitment of stakeholders who are most impacted by the plan. This process of strategic planning is about informing all stakeholders regarding the rationale behind the firm or corporate entity's decision to pursue a specific direction at a particular time. Barney & Hesterly (2022), stated that strategic planning delineates the processes involved in consistently and responsively addressing diverse interests while ensuring optimal performance for the organisation. It enables the firm to anticipate environmental changes and respond proactively. Adebayo & Ogunlana (2019) emphasises that a company with a robust strategic plan can consistently enhance shareholders' earnings. In this context, shareholders' earnings serve as a key metric for assessing effectiveness. Additional metrics include earnings per share, net profit criteria, and market value per share (MVPS), among others. In the case of hospitality industry, Ugwu (2021) noted that most hospitality businesses encounter numerous challenges in formulating and executing effective strategic plans. Oluyinka et al. (2021) reported that the challenges of executing effective strategic plans in some hotels may arise from a variety of factors, such as regulatory demands, environmental issues, technological progress, and financial limitations. Recognising and tackling these challenges through structural dimensions underpinning the strategic planning process is essential for hospitality sector to ensure sustainable resource management and the provision of high-quality services to customers. Many hotels struggle with outdated infrastructure that necessitates maintenance, rehabilitation, or replacement.

The hospitality industry plays an important role in employment generation, income creation, tourism development and the provision of accommodation, food, beverages and other services to residents and visitors. The performance of hospitality businesses, however, depends not only on the availability of physical facilities and financial resources but also on the ability of managers to plan strategically and respond effectively to changes in the business environment (Thomas et al., 2022). Strategic planning provides hospitality businesses with a systematic approach to defining organisational goals, allocating resources, coordinating activities and responding to competitive pressures. Despite its potential importance, many hospitality businesses, particularly those operating in developing urban areas, appear to experience challenges that may be associated with inadequate or ineffective strategic planning.

In Ogoja Urban, the hospitality sector comprises hotels, guest houses, restaurants, bars and other related businesses that provide services to residents, travellers and visitors. However, the performance of some of these businesses appears to be constrained by challenges such as intense competition, changing customer expectations, inadequate managerial practices, fluctuating operating costs, poor resource allocation and difficulties in maintaining consistent service quality. Some hospitality establishments may operate without clearly defined long-term objectives,

systematic planning procedures or well-established organisational structures. Such conditions may make it difficult for managers to anticipate changes in the business environment, coordinate employees effectively and make timely decisions that enhance organisational performance. A major concern is that some hospitality businesses may place greater emphasis on day-to-day operational activities than on deliberate strategic planning. Where organisational activities are not sufficiently formalised, employees may have unclear responsibilities and managers may encounter difficulties in coordinating organisational activities (Oluyinka et al., 2021). Similarly, Grant (2022) argued that inadequate specialisation may result in poor allocation of duties and underutilisation of employees' skills, while an unclear hierarchy of authority may create difficulties in communication, supervision and decision-making. Lack of strategic planning deficiencies may ultimately affect important indicators of hospitality business performance, including profitability, customer satisfaction, employee productivity, service quality, customer retention and overall business sustainability.

Although strategic planning has received considerable attention in management and organisational studies, there remains a need for context-specific empirical evidence on how its dimensions influence the performance of hospitality businesses in smaller urban centres such as Ogoja. Findings from studies conducted in other locations or industries may not adequately reflect the organisational, economic and competitive realities confronting hospitality businesses in Ogoja Urban. Consequently, it remains unclear to what extent practices such as formalisation, specialisation and hierarchy of authority contribute to improved performance among hospitality businesses in the area. Therefore, this study seeks to examine the relationship between strategic planning and hospitality business performance in Ogoja Urban, Nigeria, with particular emphasis on formalisation, specialisation and hierarchy of authority.

Literature review and conceptual clarification

Strategic planning

The term strategy has become increasingly significant in both public and corporate governance. It can be described as a consistent approach within a series of decisions. It represents humanity's effort to achieve desired outcomes using available resources (Katare et al., 2021). Strategy pertains to the achievement and preservation of a competitive edge over opponents in military contexts, rivals in business, and challenges in public organisations, through the ongoing utilisation of known or emerging opportunities rather than adhering to a predetermined fixed plan established from the beginning.

Baron & Markman (2023) characterise strategy as specific actions taken with clearly articulated values for the policy variables. A solid strategy outlines methods and alternative approaches to address potential long-term changes. Various definitions of strategic planning have been proposed by management experts in the literature of management science. One of the earliest definitions provided by Smith et al. (2023), describes strategic planning as management through plans, an analytical process aimed at making optimal strategic decisions. Chen et al. (2023) views strategic planning as the endeavour to achieve a better alignment between a company's products or technology and its increasingly volatile markets. This perspective emphasises the transition from a familiar environment to an unfamiliar landscape characterised by new technologies, unfamiliar competitors, shifting consumer attitudes, evolving social controls, and a reevaluation of the firm's societal role. In agreement with this perspective, Robbins (2020) defines strategic planning as a progression of managerial responses to environmental changes, shifting focus from internal

structure and production efficiency to the integration of strategy with structure, production innovation, multinational expansion, and diversification.

Hitt et al. (2020) described strategic planning as the method of creating and sustaining alignment between an organisation's goals and resources alongside its evolving opportunities. He further argued that the purpose of strategic planning is to outline and record a business approach that will result in satisfactory profits and growth. According to Barney & Hesterly (2022), strategic planning is characterised as a systematic and somewhat formalised endeavour by a company to define its fundamental purposes, objectives, policies, and strategies. This process includes the formulation of comprehensive plans to execute policies and strategies aimed at achieving the company's objectives and core purposes. Strategic planning represents an organisation's method of determining its strategy or direction and making decisions regarding the allocation of its resources, including capital and personnel, to pursue this strategy (Engnick-Hall et al., 2019).

Structural dimensions of strategic planning

Formalisation

Formalisation refers to the extent to which strategic planning activities, organisational procedures, responsibilities, policies and decisions are explicitly documented and governed by established rules and procedures (Hitt et al., 2020). In the context of strategic planning, formalisation involves having written strategic plans, clearly documented objectives, established procedures for implementing strategies, defined responsibilities, planning schedules and formal mechanisms for monitoring strategic decisions Ogunyemi & Akinwale (2023). A highly formalised strategic planning process provides a structured framework through which organisational members understand what should be done, how it should be done, who is responsible and how performance will be assessed.

Formalisation represents the extent to which organisational activities are guided by written policies, procedures, plans, rules and standardised processes. Boateng et al. (2015) examined strategic planning process formality and institutional performance among 26 accredited private universities in Ghana. Using a descriptive survey design, linear regression and one-way ANOVA, the study investigated whether different degrees of strategic planning process formality were associated with organisational performance. The findings emphasised the importance of formalisation in the strategic planning process and suggested that organisations need an appropriate level of formality to support effective strategy formulation. Miller's (2017) empirical investigation of 97 small and medium-sized firms further demonstrated that structural formalisation was associated with important dimensions of rational strategic decision-making, including planning, environmental scanning, decision analysis and explicitness of strategies. The study therefore suggests that formal organisational structures can encourage managers to adopt systematic approaches to strategic decision-making rather than relying exclusively on informal or intuitive processes. Similarly, Korin et al. (2021), through a longitudinal case study, identified formalisation, coordination, integration and participation as evolving practices within strategic planning. Their findings suggest that formalisation is an important component of strategic planning practice and changes as organisations and their planning processes develop. This is supported by Waribugo & Akpan (2016).

Formalisation is a key concept that significantly influences the effectiveness and efficiency of an organisation's strategic planning process. It reflects the degree to which an organisation's rules,

procedures, and the standardisation of tasks and roles are clearly articulated and enforced (Arend et al., 2017). Adebayo & Ajayi (2025) delved deeper into the connection between formalisation and various organisational factors, including decision-making and control. They posited that formalisation acts as a symbolic representation of an organisation's values and objectives, rather than simply serving as a tool for managing and controlling the organisation. To explore the link between formalisation and strategic planning at both the individual and organisational scales, Nwankwo et al. (2022), indicated that a moderate level of formalisation is linked to more effective strategic planning and enhanced organisational productivity. By recognising the critical role of formalisation and weaving it into the strategic planning process, organisations can boost their productivity and effectiveness.

Specialisation

Specialisation refers to the degree to which organisational tasks and strategic planning responsibilities are divided among individuals or units according to their expertise, skills and areas of competence. Within strategic planning, specialisation ensures that people with appropriate knowledge and skills participate in the development and implementation of strategies. It is particularly relevant to strategic planning because strategic decisions often require contributions from individuals with different areas of competence. Waribugo & Akpan (2016) empirically examined organisational structure and strategy implementation among telecommunication firms in Nigeria. Their results showed that specialisation had positive and significant relationships with budgetary programme implementation and resource-control implementation, with correlation coefficients of .733 and .764 respectively. The authors concluded that specialisation enhances effective and efficient strategy implementation. This finding suggests that assigning organisational responsibilities according to areas of expertise can improve the translation of strategic decisions into organisational actions. Dobrajska et al. (2015) further demonstrated the importance of specialised knowledge in organisational decision-making. Using regression analysis of 761 decision tasks in a global Fortune 50 firm, they found that the specialisation of decision-relevant knowledge and the matching of knowledge requirements with managerial expertise influenced delegation and the level at which decision authority was allocated. More recently, an empirical study of 142 automobile-sector SMEs in India found that organisational structure, incorporating formalisation, centralisation and specialisation, had a statistically significant positive effect on strategy implementation. The study concluded that an appropriate structural configuration contributes to successful execution of strategic plans (Sharma et al., 2025). Specialisation can result in increased job opportunities and satisfaction.

As professionals attain expertise in their fields, they become more appealing to potential employers and are frequently rewarded with higher compensation, while also experiencing a sense of personal achievement and fulfilment, as they are able to make significant contributions to their chosen profession (Burnes, 2014). Barrozo (2020) characterised specialisation as the division of labour, where individuals concentrate on particular tasks in the production process to enhance overall efficiency and productivity. Several sources consistently emphasise the critical importance of specialisation in various professional fields (Auka & Langat, 2016; Waribugo & Akpan, 2016; Barrozo, 2020; Sharma et al., 2025). This focus on specialisation allows individuals to hone their skills and knowledge in a particular area, which in turn enables them to achieve a significant competitive edge over their peers. By becoming experts in their chosen domains, these professionals can enhance their productivity, as they are more adept at navigating the complexities and nuances of their work. Auka & Langat (2016) argued that, specialisation facilitates continuous

learning and development, allowing individuals to stay updated on the latest advancements, trends, and technologies that are shaping their industries. This ongoing education not only enriches their expertise but also positions them as valuable assets within their organisations, ultimately contributing to their long-term career success.

Hierarchy of Authority

Hierarchy of authority refers to the extent to which authority, decision-making responsibilities and reporting relationships are clearly arranged across different levels of the organisation. Strategic planning requires decisions to move between top management, middle management and operational employees. A clear hierarchy establishes who has the authority to make particular decisions and who is accountable for implementing them. Hierarchy and authority are essential for the success and efficiency of an organisation. According to Dongil & Kelly (2017) traditional authority is rooted in customs and traditions, rational-legal authority is founded on established rules and laws, while charismatic authority derives from the personal attributes of a leader. Abodunde (2020) highlighted the significance of cooperation and communication within organisations, noting that hierarchy and authority play a vital role in facilitating these processes. They argued that authority arises from an individual's capacity to influence others, and organisations depend on this influence to accomplish their objectives.

Ibegbulem & Okorie (2023). argued that hierarchy and authority provide the mechanism through which strategic decisions are authorised, communicated and coordinated in an organisation. Evidence indicates, however, that the effect of hierarchy is not necessarily linear. In a multimethod study conducted by Aktan & Castellucci (2017), they found that hierarchy of authority negatively affected idea generation but positively influenced idea screening and selection. This suggests that hierarchy may constrain participation and creativity during some stages of strategic decision-making while providing useful control and coordination during others. Recent evidence also demonstrates that organisational hierarchies continue to evolve in response to strategic and environmental conditions. Aktan & Castellucci (2025) study examining 260 Standard & Poor's firms found that top management teams became less hierarchical over time and that changes in hierarchical structures were associated with strategic leadership, corporate governance, firm characteristics and environmental conditions.

In the Nigerian context, Alaneme et al. (2026) examined organisational structure, including hierarchy of authority and specialisation, in relation to managerial decision-making quality in the manufacturing sector. The study underscores the relevance of structural arrangements to strategic and managerial decision-making within Nigerian organisations. The Managerial Grid, as introduced by Umar et al. (2020), emphasises the connection between leadership styles and organisational productivity. It categorises five distinct leadership styles, from impoverished to team-oriented, and posits that the effectiveness of each style is contingent upon the unique requirements of an organisation. The hierarchy of authority remains a vital element in strategic planning and enhancing organisational productivity. As business enterprises work towards their objectives and strive for efficiency, it is imperative to comprehend the significance of hierarchy and authority. By identifying the various types of authority and the different structural options available, managers and leaders can tailor their strategies to meet their specific business needs (Ibegbulem & Okorie, 2023).

Strategic planning and business performance

The connection between strategic planning and hospitality business performance remains a significant topic in hospitality business environment, acting as a link between theoretical aspirations and practical implementation. Strategic planning is the structured process through which an enterprise articulates its vision, establishes long-term objectives, and outlines the specific actions necessary to achieve them (Madume, 2024). On the other hand, business performance refers to the extent to which an organisation fulfils its mission by efficiently allocating resources and achieving its goals (Tanui et al., 2022). In hospitality business landscape, marked by service uncertainty and swift technological advancements, the alignment of these two concepts is not just advantageous but crucial for survival. Miller & Cardinal (2017) provided cumulative empirical evidence on the strategic planning–performance relationship through a meta-analysis of 26 previously published studies. Their findings revealed a positive relationship between strategic planning and firm performance, suggesting that strategic planning can contribute meaningfully to organisational outcomes. Similarly, Makinde & Asikhia (2018) examined strategic planning and performance among Nigerian SMEs and provided evidence of a relationship between strategic planning practices and SME performance. Their study is particularly relevant because it demonstrates the importance of strategic planning within the Nigerian business environment.

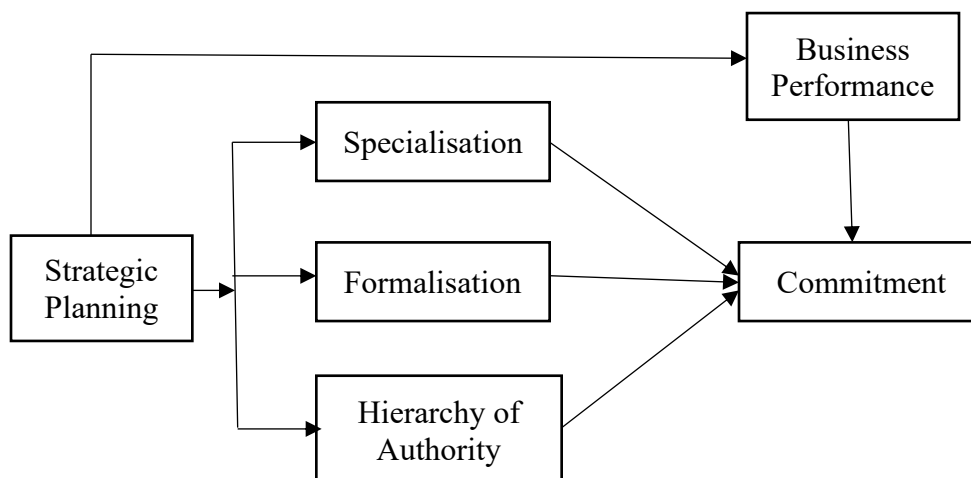
In a recent study by John et al. (2021) involving 384 micro and small businesses in Kenya revealed that strategic planning had significant positive effects on both responsive and financial performance. The study further revealed that the financial benefits associated with strategic planning were stronger among firms with higher marketing capability, indicating that organisational capabilities can influence the extent to which strategic planning translates into improved performance. George et al. (2019) provided stronger cumulative evidence through a meta-analysis of 87 correlations from 31 empirical studies. Their random-effects analysis showed that strategic planning had a positive, moderate and significant effect on organisational performance. Their analysis further revealed that the relationship was particularly strong when organisational performance was measured in terms of effectiveness and when strategic planning was measured as formal strategic planning. Importantly, the positive relationship was observed across both public and private organisations and across different national contexts. Evidence from Nigeria further supports the strategic planning–performance relationship. Abodunde (2020), using data from 470 SMEs in Lagos State, found that effective strategic planning could contribute to business performance through improved decision-making, customer satisfaction, organisational capacity, problem identification, competitive advantage and market recognition. However, the study also identified inadequate resources, shortage of expertise and difficulties in aligning organisational culture with strategic plans as major challenges to effective strategic planning. More recent evidence continues to confirm the relevance of strategic planning to organisational performance.

Hamann et al. (2023) conducted a meta-analysis involving 183 independent study samples and found that corporate planning was positively associated with organisational performance. Their findings further indicated that the effect remained stable across time and different types of planning, although contextual factors such as task interdependence and uncertainty avoidance moderated the relationship. In Nigeria, Madume et al (2024) examined strategic planning and organisational performance among manufacturing firms in Rivers State, focusing on environmental scanning, strategy formulation, strategy implementation, and evaluation and control as components of strategic planning and using market share and innovation as indicators of

performance. The study provides recent empirical evidence from the Nigerian organisational environment concerning the relationship between strategic planning and organisational performance.

The empirical literature demonstrates that strategic planning is generally associated with improved organisational and business performance. The benefits appear to arise from the ability of strategic planning to improve decision-making, align organisational resources with objectives, identify environmental opportunities and threats, strengthen competitive positioning and provide mechanisms for monitoring organisational performance. Nevertheless, the evidence also indicates that strategic planning does not automatically guarantee superior performance. Its effectiveness depends on factors such as the degree of formalisation, organisational capabilities, resource availability, environmental conditions and the ability of managers to translate strategic plans into action. Therefore, the relationship between strategic planning and business performance remains worthy of empirical investigation, particularly within specific organisational and sectoral contexts such as the hospitality industry.

Conceptual framework of strategic planning and business performance



Source: Adapted and modified from Cooper & Schindler (2003)

Theoretical underpinning

The Dynamic Capabilities Theory (DCT) was introduced by David Teece, Gary Pisano, and Amy Shuen in their influential 1997 article, "Dynamic Capabilities and Strategic Management," which appeared in the Strategic Management Journal. DCT signifies a crucial advancement in strategic management, aimed at elucidating how companies attain and maintain competitive advantage in rapidly changing technological landscapes and uncertain environments. In contrast to the Resource-Based View (RBV), which focused on the ownership of VRIN (Valuable, Rare, Inimitable, Non-substitutable) resources and faced criticism for its static nature, DCT overcomes this drawback by emphasising the organisational processes necessary for integrating, developing, and reconfiguring these assets over time. Central to the dynamic capabilities' framework is the definition of these capabilities as the firm's ability to intentionally create, expand, or alter its resource base. Unlike "ordinary" or operational capabilities, which focus on the efficiency of existing activities (doing things right), dynamic capabilities are oriented towards strategic

transformation (doing the right things at the right time). The theory is heavily influenced by the evolutionary economics tradition, particularly the contributions of Nelson and Winter, who posited those organisational routines—the "genes" of the firm—serve as the fundamental drivers of behaviour and change.

Applying Dynamic Capabilities Theory to this analysis provides a comprehensive perspective on how businesses uphold competitive advantages in unstable markets. Within the hospitality sector, where consumer preferences change rapidly and technological disruptions are commonplace, strategic planning is not just a static resource allocation task but a dynamic endeavour of recognising and seizing opportunities. The theory supports this study by asserting that a firm's performance depends on its ability to identify environmental changes such as shifts in tourism trends, seize those opportunities through strategic investments, and realign assets to meet market demands.

Method

This study was carried out in Ogoja Local Government Area (LGA) over a period of three months, from April to June 2026. Ogoja LGA is located between Lat. 6° 20"N and 6° 40"N and Long. 8° 30"E and 9° 0"E, primarily recognised as an agricultural zone situated approximately 300km north of Calabar. It is part of the derived savanna vegetation zone, with an average annual rainfall of around 165.77mm. Ogoja is rich in both human and economic resources. The urban center is characterised by heavy concentration of economic activities including a variety of standard hotels that provide quality services to customers. The research employs a correlational research design, which aims to identify relationships among various characteristics of individuals or other phenomena. This design seeks to determine the degree to which changes in one factor are related to changes in one or more other factors (Ibue & Diminyi, 2024). This design was chosen to identify and establish the connections among the observed variables. The target population for this study consisted of all hotel employees in Ogoja urban. A combination of purposive and convenience sampling techniques was used to select the study sample. The selection of sample hotels and participants was influenced by factors such as facilities, service quality, accessibility, high patronage levels, and the willingness of staff to engage in the research. Furthermore, the participants' capacity to respond, along with their familiarity with the organisation and work experience, were also criteria for inclusion in the study. The Taro Yamane (1967) formula was applied to determine the sample size for the research as follows:

$$N = \frac{N}{1 + N(e)^2}$$

Where n = sample size

N = Population size

1 = Constant

e = Margin of error

$$n = \frac{95}{1 + 95(0.05)^2}$$

$$N = \frac{95}{1 + 95(0.0025)}$$

$$n = \frac{95}{1 + 0.205}$$

$$n = \frac{95}{1.205}$$

$$n = 78.83$$

$$n = 79$$

Table 1: Sample Hotels and Employee for the Study

Sample hotels	Number of employees	Sample size	Percentage (%)
520 Akuma Lodge	11	9	11
Gomara Hotel and Suites	12	10	13
Jovonne Suites and Hotel	10	8	10
Ojays	11	9	11
All Stars Hotel	14	12	15
Gakuna Harbour Hotels	12	10	13
Lepe Suites	13	11	14
Don Eunice Suites and Hotels	12	10	13
Total	95	79	100%

Source: Author's computation

The research employed a systematic questionnaire approach to gather comprehensive data from participants, ensuring a structured method for collecting information. Surveys are recognised as an effective means of data collection in this context, as they facilitate the efficient accumulation of a significant amount of information within a relatively brief period (Diminyi & Ogoina, 2024). This method not only streamlines the process of data gathering but also enhances the reliability of the information collected by allowing for standardised responses across a diverse participant pool. To assess the various variables aimed at exploring the intricate connection between strategic planning and organisational performance, a 5-point Likert scale was utilised. This scale ranged from 1, indicating 'not agree at all,' to 5, indicating 'totally agree,' providing a nuanced understanding of participant attitudes and perceptions. Out of 79 questionnaires distributed among participants, only 65 were correctly filled and returned while the remaining 9 were either not returned or were wrongly filled. In addition to examining the independent and dependent variables, descriptive analyses were conducted to identify and characterise the sample and the responses to the questionnaires. This step was crucial in understanding the demographics and backgrounds of the participants, which could influence the study's outcomes. Furthermore, the study's hypotheses were rigorously evaluated using Pearson Correlation analysis, a statistical method that assesses the strength and direction of the relationship between the variables. This comprehensive approach not only enhances the validity of the findings but also contributes to a deeper understanding of how strategic planning impacts organisational performance.

Decision Rule

A mean score of 3.00 or above indicates agreement with the statement and, therefore, the item is accepted. Conversely, a mean score below 3.00 indicates disagreement with the statement and, therefore, the item is rejected.

Result

The results presented in table 2 provide a comprehensive overview of the demographic composition of the study's participants, revealing that the sample was exclusively comprised of female individuals, which accounts for a remarkable 100% of the total participants involved in the research. This singular focus on female participants allows for a more nuanced understanding of the specific experiences and perspectives of women within the context of the study. Among the various age groups represented, the cohort aged 36-40 years emerged as the most prominent, constituting 40% of the sample. This significant representation suggests that this age group may have unique insights or experiences that are particularly relevant to the study's objectives. Following closely behind, the 41-45 years age group accounted for 23.1% of the participants, indicating a noteworthy presence of individuals in this slightly older demographic. Meanwhile, the 26-30 years and 31-35 years age groups each represented 12.3% of the sample, highlighting a balanced distribution among younger women in their late twenties and early thirties.

In contrast, participants aged 46 years and older made up a smaller segment of the sample, representing 9.2%, while those under the age of 25 constituted the least represented group at 3.1%. This distribution of age among the participants provides valuable insights into the varying life stages and experiences of women involved in the study. Furthermore, when examining the educational qualifications of the respondents, the findings reveal that a modest 12.3% had attended college, which indicates a level of educational engagement among the participants. However, a substantial majority, amounting to 87.7%, possessed a university B.Sc. degree, underscoring a high level of academic achievement within the sample. This significant proportion of university-educated participants may influence the perspectives and insights shared in the study, as their educational background likely shapes their experiences and viewpoints.

Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Demographic variable	Frequency	Percentage
<i>Gender</i>		
Male	0	0
Female	65	100
total	65	100
<i>Age</i>		
20-25	2	3.1
26-30	8	12.3
31-35	8	12.3
36-40	26	40.0
41-45	15	23.1
46 and above	6	9.2
total	65	100
<i>Level of education</i>		
Primary education	0	0

Secondary education	0	0
College	8	12.3
University	57	87.7
Total	65	100

Source: Researcher's Computation

Table 3 presents respondents' perceptions of the influence of strategic planning through formalised organisational procedures on hospitality business performance in Ogoja. The results indicate a high level of agreement across all four items, suggesting that respondents perceived formalised rules, policies, and operational procedures as important contributors to effective job performance. Specifically, Item 4 recorded the highest level of agreement, with 57% of respondents strongly agreeing and 35% agreeing that clearly formalised rules make it easier to perform their daily tasks effectively. Only 8% expressed disagreement, while the item produced a mean score of 4.4, indicating a strong positive perception. Item 1 recorded a mean score of 4.3, with 54% of respondents strongly agreeing and 38% agreeing that their hotels maintain clearly written rules, policies, and procedures for every job function. This finding suggests that formalised operational guidelines are widely recognised within the surveyed hotels.

Furthermore, Item 2 produced a mean score of 4.1, indicating that employees generally adhere to established organisational guidelines during the discharge of their duties. A combined 82% of respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with this statement, whereas only 15% expressed disagreement and 3% remained neutral. Likewise, Item 3 yielded a mean score of 4.0, with 80% of respondents agreeing that violations of hotel rules attract formal disciplinary measures. The overall grand mean of 4.2 further indicates that formalised strategic planning practices are widely perceived as supporting effective employee performance and contributing positively to hospitality businesses the study area. This implies that hospitality establishments in Ogoja maintain clearly defined operational procedures and enforcement mechanisms, which respondents perceive as facilitating employee effectiveness and organisational performance.

Table 3: Relationship between strategic planning and hospitality business performance through formalisation

Sn	Variables	Responses					Total Response	Mean
	FORMALISATION	Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Not agree	Not agree at all		
1	Our organisation has clearly written rules, policies, and procedures for every job role	35(54%) (175)	25(38%) (100)	0 (0)	3(5%) (6)	2(3%) (2)	65 (283)	4.3
2	Employees are strictly required to follow standardised operational guidelines at all times.	33(51%) (165)	20(31%) (80)	2(3%) (6)	6(9%) (12)	4(6%) (4)	65 (267)	4.1
3	Breaking or ignoring organisational rules leads	30(46%) (150)	22(34%) (88)	1(1%) (3)	7(11%) (14)	5(8%) (5)	65 (260)	4.0

	to formal disciplinary actions.							
4	Clear formalisation of rules makes it easier for me to perform my daily tasks effectively.	37(57%) (185)	23(35%) (92)	0 (0)	3(5%) (6)	2(3%) (2)	65 (285)	4.4
Overall Mean								4.2

Source: Author's computation

Table 4 presents respondents' perceptions of the relationship between strategic planning and hospitality business performance in Ogoja Urban, particularly through the dimension of specialisation. The results indicate a generally positive perception of specialisation as an aspect of strategic planning. For Item 1, 54% of the respondents strongly agreed and 38% agreed that their job responsibilities are highly specific and clearly defined, while 5% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed. This suggests that a large majority of respondents perceive job roles within their establishments as clearly specified. Item 2 shows that 51% of respondents strongly agreed and 31% agreed that employees are assigned responsibilities based on their skills and qualifications. Meanwhile, 3% were undecided, 9% disagreed, and 6% strongly disagreed. The result indicates that most respondents perceive the assignment of duties to be aligned with employees' skills and qualifications. For Item 3, 46% of respondents strongly agreed and 34% agreed that responsibilities are logically assigned to staff based on their areas of specialisation. Only 1% were undecided, while 11% disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed. This finding further suggests that specialisation plays an important role in determining how responsibilities are allocated within hospitality businesses.

Similarly, Item 4 reveals that 57% of respondents strongly agreed and 35% agreed that working with specialised responsibilities helps to build staff expertise and mastery of their daily duties. In contrast, 5% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed. This indicates strong support for the view that specialisation enhances employees' expertise and competence in performing their assigned duties. The mean score of 4.2 indicates a high level of agreement among respondents that strategic planning through specialisation contributes positively to the performance of hospitality businesses in Ogoja Urban. The table suggest that clearly defined roles, appropriate assignment of responsibilities based on skills and qualifications, logical allocation of duties according to specialisation, and opportunities to develop expertise may collectively support more effective and efficient business operations.

Table 4: Relationship between strategic planning and hospitality business performance through specialisation

Sn	Variables	Responses					Total Response	Mean
		Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Not agree	Not agree at all		
1	My job responsibilities are highly specific and narrowly defined.	35(54%) (175)	25(38%) (100)	0 (0)	3(5%) (6)	2(3%) (2)	65 (283)	4.3
2	Employees in this establishment are	33(51%) (165)	20(31%) (80)	2(3%) (6)	6(9%) (12)	4(6%) (4)	65 (267)	4.1

	assigned to roles based strictly on their specific skills and qualifications.							
3	Tasks are divided logically among different departments or specialists in this hotel/establishment.	30(46%) (150)	22(34%) (88)	1(1%) (3)	7(11%) (14)	5(8%) (5)	65 (260)	4.0
4	Working in a specialised role helps me build expertise and master my daily duties	37(57%) (185)	23(35%) (92)	0 (0)	3(5%) (6)	2(3%) (2)	65 (285)	4.4
Overall Mean								4.2

Source: Author's computation

Table 5 presents respondents' perceptions of how strategic planning through hierarchy and authority influences the performance of hospitality businesses in Ogoja Urban. The findings reveal a generally positive perception of the role of clearly established authority structures and lines of command in supporting hospitality business operations. For Item 1, 29% of respondents strongly agreed and 38.5% agreed that a clear line of command helps them understand their responsibilities and remain committed to their duties. In contrast, 15% disagreed and 8% strongly disagreed, while 9% were undecided. The result indicates that most respondents recognise the importance of a clearly defined chain of command in providing employees with a better understanding of their roles and responsibilities and in promoting commitment to assigned duties.

Item 2 shows an even stronger level of agreement, with 52% of respondents strongly agreeing and 48% agreeing that the manner in which management implements decisions motivates staff to work harder. This represents 100% positive responses, suggesting that effective managerial authority and the implementation of decisions are perceived as important factors in motivating employees and encouraging greater effort in the workplace. For Item 3, 38% of respondents strongly agreed and 52% agreed that strict adherence to administrative hierarchy improves the rate of decision-making in daily hospitality operations. Only 5% disagreed and 3% strongly disagreed, while 2% remained undecided. This finding suggests that respondents generally perceive a well-defined administrative hierarchy as facilitating faster and more orderly decision-making, particularly where employees understand the appropriate channels through which operational decisions should be made.

Similarly, Item 4 indicates a high level of agreement regarding communication between employees and their immediate supervisors. 54% of respondents strongly agreed and 40% agreed that employees feel comfortable reporting operational challenges directly to their immediate supervisors. Only 6% were undecided, with no reported disagreement. This finding suggests that the existing hierarchical structure may provide employees with accessible channels for communicating operational problems and seeking guidance from those with direct supervisory authority. Furthermore, the mean score of 4.2 indicates a high level of agreement among respondents that strategic planning through hierarchy and authority contributes positively to the performance of hospitality businesses in Ogoja Urban.

Table 5: Relationship between strategic planning and hospitality business performance through hierarchy of authority

Sn	Variables	Responses					Total Response	Mean
		Totally Agree	Agree	Neutral	Not agree	Not agree at all		
1	The clear line of command helps me understand my responsibilities and stay committed	19(29%) (95)	25(38.5%) (100)	6(9%) (18)	10(15%) (20)	5(8%) (5)	65 (238)	3.5
2	The way decisions are passed down from upper management motivates me to work harder.	30(52%) (150)	35(48%) (140)	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	65 (290)	4.5
3	Strict adherence to administrative hierarchy improves decision-making speed during daily hospitality operations.	25(38%) (125)	34(52%) (136)	1(2%) (3)	3(5%) (6)	2(3%) (2)	65 (272)	4.2
4	Employees feel comfortable reporting operational challenges directly to their immediate supervisors.	35(54%) (175)	26(40%) (104)	4(6%) (12)	(0) (0)	(0) (0)	65 (291)	4.5
Overall Mean								4.2

Source: Author's computation

Test of Hypotheses

H₀₁: There is no significant relationship between formalisation and employee commitment in hospitality industry in Ogoja urban.

The findings presented in Table 5 indicate that formalisation has a strong positive correlation with employee commitment, with a correlation coefficient of 0.755 and a corresponding p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the observed correlation is statistically significant. The positive direction of the correlation indicates that higher levels of formalisation are associated with higher levels of employee commitment in the hospitality industry. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀₁) is rejected, and the study concludes that there is a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between formalisation and employee commitment in the hospitality industry in Ogoja Urban.

Table 6: Relationship between level of Formalisation and Employee Commitment

Formalisation		Formalisation	Employee Commitment
Employee Commitment	Pearson Correlation	1	.755**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	65	65
	Pearson Correlation	.755**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	65	65

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed)

H0₂: There is no significant relationship between specialisation and employee commitment in hospitality industry in Ogoja Urban.

The results presented in Table 6 indicate that specialisation has a strong positive correlation with employee commitment, with a correlation coefficient of 0.765 and a corresponding p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the observed relationship is statistically significant. The positive correlation indicates that higher levels of specialisation are associated with higher levels of employee commitment in the hospitality industry. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H₀₂) is rejected, and the study concludes that there is a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between specialisation and employee commitment in the hospitality industry in Ogoja Urban. This finding suggests that appropriately assigning employees to roles based on their areas of specialisation may contribute to stronger employee commitment within hospitality businesses in the study area.

Table 7: Relationship between Specialisation and Employee Commitment

Specialisation		Specialisation	Employee Commitment
Employee Commitment	Pearson Correlation	1	.765**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	65	65
	Pearson Correlation	.765**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	65	65

** . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed)

H0₃: There is no significant relationship between hierarchy of authority and employee commitment in hospitality industry in Ogoja Urban.

The results presented in Table 9 indicate that hierarchy of authority has a strong positive correlation with employee commitment, with a correlation coefficient of 0.750 and a corresponding p-value of 0.000. Since the p-value is less than the 0.05 level of significance, the observed relationship is statistically significant. The positive correlation indicates that higher

levels of clearly defined hierarchy of authority are associated with higher levels of employee commitment in hospitality industry. Therefore, the null hypothesis (H_{03}) is rejected, and the study concludes that there is a strong, positive, and statistically significant relationship between hierarchy of authority and employee commitment in hospitality industry in Ogoja Urban. This finding suggests that a clearly established hierarchy of authority may strengthen employee commitment by providing clear lines of responsibility, supervision, communication, and decision-making within hospitality businesses.

Table 8: Relationship between Hierarchy of Authority and Employee Commitment

Hierarchy of Authority	Hierarchy of Authority	Employee Commitment
Hierarchy of Authority	Pearson Correlation	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.750**
	N	65
Employee Commitment	Pearson Correlation	.750**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000
	N	65

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 (2-tailed)

Discussion

The results obtained from the hypothesis test provided compelling evidence of a robust positive and statistically significant correlation between formalisation and employee commitment specifically within the hospitality sector in Ogoja, Cross River State. The Pearson Correlation coefficient, calculated at $r = 0.755$, indicates a strong association between these two critical variables. This suggests that as the level of formalisation within an organisation increases, there is a corresponding rise in employee commitment. Furthermore, the p-value recorded at 0.000, which is significantly lower than the conventional 0.05 significance threshold, serves to confirm that this observed relationship is statistically significant. This means that the correlation is unlikely to be a mere coincidence or a result of random chance, but rather a genuine reflection of the dynamics at play within the workplace. This outcome strongly reinforces the perspective held by organisational theorists, who argued that formalised structures within organisations enhance clarity, reduce uncertainty, and foster a stable work environment. Such an environment is crucial as it motivates employees to remain committed and loyal to the overarching objectives of the organisation. Additionally, this finding corroborates the results of Miller's (2017), Korin et al (2021), and Shama et al. (2025) that has consistently shown that organisations characterised by well-defined procedures and clear operational guidelines tend to achieve higher levels of employee commitment. This, in turn, leads to enhanced organisational effectiveness, demonstrating the importance of formalisation in cultivating a dedicated workforce.

The relationship between specialisation and employee commitment within the hospitality sector in Ogoja was found to be very strong, positive and statistically significant, thus supporting the view of Barrozo (2020) who characterised specialisation as the division of labour, where individuals concentrate on particular tasks in the production process to enhance overall efficiency and productivity. The analysis revealed a Pearson Correlation coefficient of $r = 0.765$, which indicates a high level of positive correlation between these two critical variables. This finding suggests that

as employees develop greater specialisation in their roles, their commitment to the organisation tends to increase correspondingly. This conclusion is consistent with the principles outlined in Hackman and Oldham's (1976) Job Characteristics Model, which posits that when job roles are well-defined and imbued with meaning, they serve to enhance employee motivation and commitment. As employees concentrate on specific functions within their roles, they not only acquire expertise but also cultivate a heightened sense of responsibility. This increased sense of ownership and accountability ultimately leads to a stronger commitment to the organisation and its goals.

The study also revealed a strong positive and statistically significant relationship between the hierarchy of authority and employee commitment. The Pearson correlation coefficient of $r = 0.750$ indicates a robust positive association, while the p-value of 0.000 confirms the statistical significance of this relationship at the 0.05 level. This finding is in consonant with the position of Alaneme et al. (2026) whose study underscores the relevance of structural arrangements to strategic and managerial decision-making within Nigerian organisations. The result also suggests that a clearly defined hierarchical structure, which includes established authority, delineated responsibilities, and well-defined reporting lines, plays a crucial role in fostering greater employee commitment within hospitality organisations thus corroborating the findings of Ibegbulem and Okorie (2023) and Abodunde (2020). Employees tend to exhibit higher levels of dedication and motivation when their roles are clearly outlined, and when leadership structures are in place to support effective decision-making and coordination. The significant positive relationship between hierarchy of authority and employee commitment is further substantiated by Max Weber's Bureaucratic Theory. This theory argues that organisations function more efficiently and effectively when there is a clear chain of command, well-defined responsibilities, and established authority frameworks. Such structures not only clarify expectations but also empower employees, thereby enhancing their overall commitment to the organisation. Employees are more likely to feel a sense of commitment to the organisational objectives, as they understand how their individual contributions fit into the larger framework of the organisation's goals. Furthermore, this clarity can lead to enhanced collaboration and teamwork, as employees are aware of their specific duties and how they relate to the tasks of their colleagues. Ultimately, a well-defined hierarchy serves as a foundation for a productive work environment, where employees are motivated to align their efforts with the overarching mission of the organisation.

Conclusion

This research aimed to evaluate the impact of strategic planning on the performance of hospitality businesses in Ogoja urban, located in Cross River State, Nigeria. The objective was to determine whether the three aspects of strategic planning- formalisation, specialisation, and hierarchy of authority, significantly affect the performance of hospitality enterprises in Ogoja. The results indicated a positive and significant correlation between formalisation and employee commitment within the hospitality sector in Ogoja urban. Additionally, the analysis of the second hypothesis revealed that specialisation is significantly related to employee commitment in the hospitality industry of Ogoja local government area. Moreover, the findings demonstrated a strong positive relationship between hierarchy of authority and employee commitment in this sector. Consequently, the study concludes that hierarchy of authority significantly influences employee commitment in the hospitality industry in Ogoja. It is therefore recommended that hospitality business managers in Ogoja Urban should strengthen formalisation, specialisation and hierarchy of authority by clearly defining organisational procedures, assigning responsibilities according to

employees' skills and expertise, and establishing clear lines of authority and communication. These practices should be regularly reviewed and aligned with changing business conditions to sustain employee commitment and improve overall hospitality business performance.

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