

# Assessing the relationship between pre-service training, work experience and job performance among hotel employees in four- and five- star hotels in Nairobi, Kenya

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**Abstract:** The purpose of the study was to assess the relationship between formal pre-service training, work experience and job performance among hotel employees in selected four- and five- star hotels in Nairobi. The study was guided by the following objectives: to analyze the core competencies influencing job performance among employees in the hotel industry; establish if there was any relationship between hotel employees' pre-service training and job performance appraisal ratings by supervisors; and to determine if there was any relationship between hotel employees' work experience and job performance appraisal ratings by supervisors. A survey of 180 operatives randomly selected from 4- and 5- star hotels in Nairobi was conducted. Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires. The findings indicated the important role played by education and formal hospitality training of employees in respect to job performance. Chi-square results showed that there was a significant relationship between the level of hospitality training and job performance ( $\chi^2=48.345$ ;  $df=12$ ;  $p=0.00001$ ). The higher the level of education and training were the better the job performance appraisal ratings. This was demonstrated by the superior performance appraisal ratings of university degree and higher national diploma holders compared to their ordinary diploma and certificate level counterparts. The results also showed that there was a significant relationship between duration of work experience in the hotel industry and job performance ( $\chi^2=17.472$ ;  $df=9$ ;  $p=0.042$ ). Respondents who had a longer work experience performed better than those who had a short time experience in the hotel industry.

**Keywords:** Hospitality Training; Job performance; Appraisal Ratings; Hotel Employees; Hotel Industry.

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

The development of a country's human resource is crucial in achieving comparative advantage in the highly volatile and competitive global hospitality industry. The government and private sector recognize that a professional and well-trained workforce is essential in the provision of quality service and enhancing overall service delivery (WTO, 1997). Training and Development system play a crucial role in the assimilation of new employees as well as providing opportunities for current employees to grow and develop within the organization (Sinclair, 1990). Achieving quality and service excellence in a competitive international environment is increasingly important. It is widely acknowledged that destinations, which will be best, placed to develop high quality products such as a competitive strategy usually source well trained personnel for high performance (Thompson, 2004).

Boella (2001) noted that training is a very important component, if employees are to be highly productive in their workplace. It enables them to acquire interpersonal skills, the ability to function within teams, problem solving, decision

making, job management, performance analysis and improvement, business economics and technical skills. During early skills formation, hospitality students are trained so that they can become effective employees. The quality of the skills obtained from the training and education system is critical to a destination’s competitiveness. Thus in order to continuously improve employee performance, training is essential in achieving customer driven standards within the industry (Aquilano, 1999).

In defining what constitutes training, the study adopted Haywood and Maki (1991) training model. The model identifies the importance of four primary stakeholders in training and employment provision namely educators, employers, employees and students. The main purpose of this model was to depict the interdependence between the primary stakeholders in training and employment. The current study considered only the views of employers and employees (former trainees) and excluded other stakeholders namely educators and students (current trainees) in the appraisal processes for the employees. This is because the approach adopted in generating data from the employers was to assess job performance for the formally trained employees (training beneficiaries).

According to W.T.O, (1997) quality exists when expectations match perceptions. However, when expectations do not match perceptions, then quality gaps exists. Employees are well placed to comment on quality gaps in their capacity as end-users of the skills acquired either at college or through on-the-job training. The interface between training, education and performance is illustrated in Figure 1.

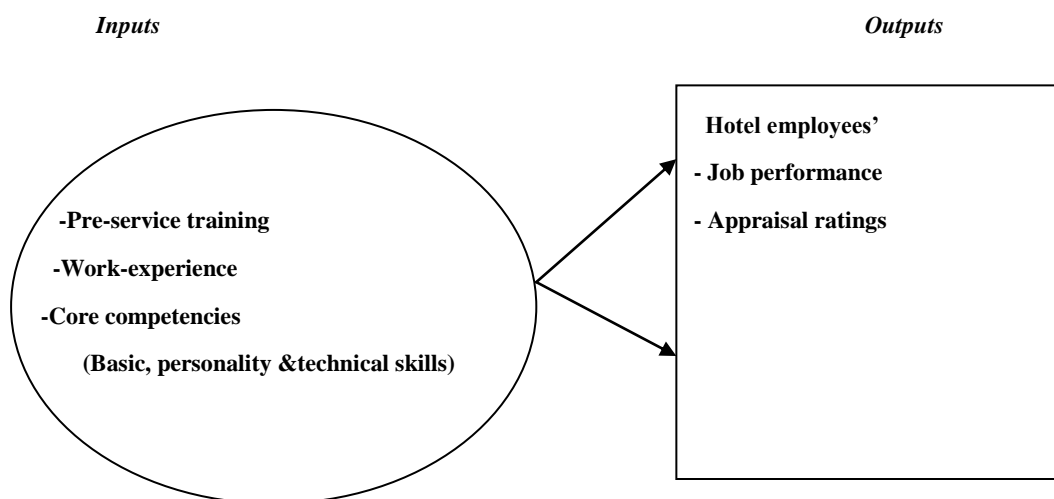


Fig. 1: Relationship between training, experience and job performance. Source: Wang’ombe (2015).

According to Figure 1, the model demonstrates that there is a hypothesized interdependence between formal training, work experience and job performance. This study defined hospitality training and work experience as the input variables, while job performance comprised the output variable.

## 2. PROBLEM STATEMENT

Tourism is a fast growing global economy and this has led to increased rivalry among its players. Kenya as a tourist destination continues facing stiff competition from its main and potential competitors. In order to survive and maintain a competitive edge, reformulation of the best strategy for survival and growth is necessary. This largely depends on the competitive capabilities of the human capital during service provision which emanate from formal training. In this regard a destination’s competitiveness is usually grounded on skills and capabilities to perform crucial activities along the value chain that are better than its rivals (Wang’ombe, 2012). Training is significant for effective job performance which subsequently has an impact on customer satisfaction.

This study sought to determine the relevance of formal training and its implication on job performance. The purpose of the study was to assess the relationship between formal pre-service training, work experience and job performance among hotel employees in selected four- and five- star hotels in Nairobi. The study was guided by the following objectives:

1. To establish the core competencies influencing job performance among employees in the hotel industry.
2. To establish if there was any relationship between hotel employees’ pre-service training and job performance appraisal ratings by supervisors.
3. To determine if there was any relationship between hotel employees’ work experience and job performance appraisal ratings by supervisors.

The following hypotheses were tested:

**Hypothesis (1):** There is no significant relationship between pre-service training and job performance appraisal ratings among hotel employees.

**Hypothesis (2):** There is no significant relationship between work experience and job performance appraisal ratings among hotel employees.

### 3. METHODOLOGY

A survey of 180 hotel employees was conducted in selected 4- and 5- star hotels in Nairobi. Respondents with a minimum duration of one year work experience participated in the study. Data were collected using self-administered questionnaires by both employees and immediate supervisors. One part covered demographic information, hospitality training and duration of experience of employees, while the other part covered job performance appraisals by immediate supervisors. Job appraisals were rated on a four-point scale ranging from; excellent (4), good (3), average (2) to below average (1). Higher ratings represented better job performance appraisals.

### 4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

#### Demographic characteristics of the respondents:

The distribution of respondents by gender was 59 percent males while 41 percent were females. Respondents aged 31 to 40 years had the highest percentage of 37 percent, followed by 18-30 years comprising 29 percent, 41-50 years were 22 percent and 50 years and above were 11 percent. Distribution by marital status showed that majority of the respondents were married comprising 65.5 percent, single were 26 percent and 7.5 percent were either divorced or widowed.

#### Distribution of hotel departments:

The hotel employees were categorized into the following key hotel departments: restaurant, food production (kitchen), house-keeping, front office and administration (management).

■ Restaurant ■ Food production ■ House keeping ■ Front office ■ Management

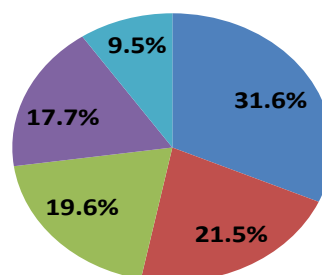
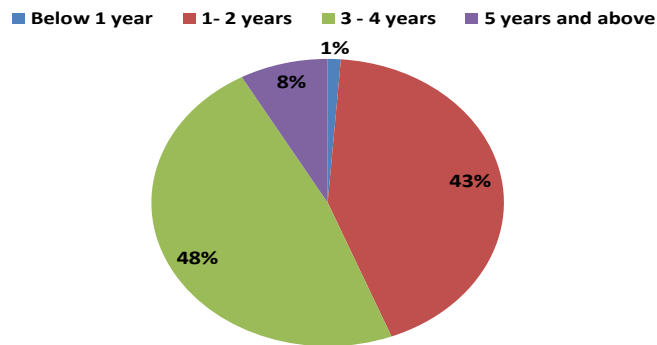


Fig.2: The Key Hotel Departments

The results in (Figure 2) indicated that 31.6 percent of the total respondents were from the restaurant department, 21.5 percent from food production, 19.6 percent from house-keeping and laundry, 17.7 percent front office and 9.5 percent management. The restaurant recorded the highest percentage, followed by food production, house-keeping, front office and management with the lowest representation. The aspect of considering management staff basically featured and encompassed secretaries, accountants and information technology personnel.

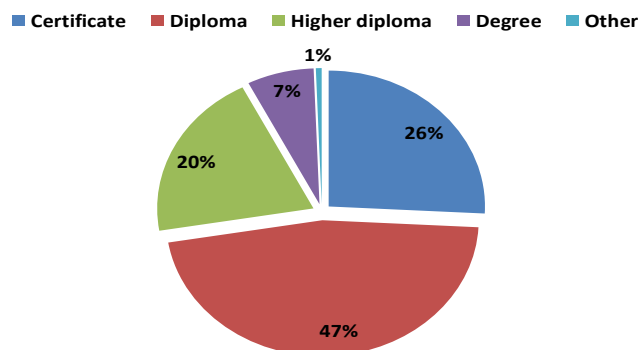
**Duration of work experience among hotel employees:**



**Fig. 3: Duration of work experience among the respondents**

The results in (Figure 3) showed that 48 percent had worked in the current hotels for a period of 3 to 4 years, 43 percent for one to two years, 8 percent for 5 years and above, and 1 percent for a period of below 1 year. The aspect of considering employees who were formally trained in hotel management and had worked in these departments for the last one year were selected since they had been appraised at least once or more in regard to their performance.

**Distribution by level of education and pre-service training of respondents:**



**Fig. 4: Level of education and pre-service training**

The level of education and training of the respondents ranged from university degree holders to college certificate holders. Diploma holders had the highest representation of 47 percent while the least qualifications were represented as ‘others’ (on-the-job training) had 1 percent, this was followed by university degree holders who represented 7 percent. The certificate level was 26 percent while higher national diploma was 20 percent (Figure 4). This information was generated

**International Journal of Novel Research in Marketing Management and Economics**

 Vol. 2, Issue 3, pp: (68-80), Month: September-December 2015, Available at: [www.noveltyjournals.com](http://www.noveltyjournals.com)

from operatives' working in hotels under study and it was evident that many of the employees had formal training in hotel management courses. The relevance of testing different levels was to assess the job performance based on skills obtained and its effect on customer satisfaction.

The core competencies under consideration in the study were: basic training, technical skills and personal skills against job performance rating (Table 1, 2 and 3). Likert scale was used to analyze these competencies against job performance rating based on line managers' appraisals of employees.

**Table 1: Appraisal ratings of core competencies in basic skills training**

Basic Training	Rating			
	Below Average	Average	Good	Excellent
Communication Skills	0.6%	21.7%	59.6%	18.0%
Business Knowledge	1.2%	19.3%	55.3%	24.2%
Marketing Ability	0.6%	21.1%	55.9%	22.4%
Administrative Procedures	1.2%	24.2%	58.4%	16.1%
Marketing Forecasting	0.0%	26.1%	51.6%	22.4%
Knowledge & Trends	0.6%	22.4%	59.0%	18.0%
Strategic Planning	2.5%	21.1%	57.8%	18.6%
Communication & Promotion	0.6%	18.0%	62.7%	18.6%
Legal Knowledge	0.6%	30.4%	52.2%	16.8%

In basic skills training, the core competencies tested were business knowledge, marketing forecasting, marketing ability, communication skills, administrative procedures, marketing ability, knowledge and trends, legal knowledge and communication and promotion and strategic planning (Table 1). Business knowledge, market ability and forecasting were rated highest. Basic training deals with the art of knowing. It equipped employees with the right knowledge on various issues relating to job performance and are essential elements during service encounter.

**Table 2: Appraisal ratings of technical skills among hotel employees**

Technical skills	Below Average	Average	Good	Excellent
Technical Competency	0.0%	23.6%	55.9%	20.5%
Foreign Languages	0.6%	23.0%	58.4%	18.0%

Technical skills which encompassed technical competency and foreign languages (Table 2) The highest ranking on technical competency was rated good at 55.9 per cent, while foreign language was rated good at 58.4 per cent. These skills were considered vital because it deals with the art of knowing how to do a task. It equipped employees with the right skills on how to carry out various issues relating to job performance and are essential elements during service encounter. In the hotel business beside the service provision a customer also consume the expertise being displayed by the service provider and it forms part of their experience (Armstrong, 2006).

**Table 3: Appraisal ratings of personal skills among hotel employees**

Personal skills	Below Average	Average	Good	Excellent
Work in Multicultural Environment	0.6%	23.6%	56.5%	19.3%
Motivation & Initiative	1.9%	19.9%	59.0%	19.3%
Supervision	2.5%	18.6%	64.0%	14.9%
Training other Employees	0.0%	23.6%	60.2%	16.1%
Teamwork	0.6%	23.6%	61.5%	14.3%
Company Loyalty	0.0%	25.5%	64.6%	9.9%
Courteous & Friendly	0.0%	19.3%	68.3%	12.4%
Resolving Conflicts	0.6%	22.4%	65.8%	11.2%
Ability to Solve Problems	0.0%	23.0%	63.4%	13.7%
Effectively Dealing with People	0.0%	20.5%	62.1%	17.4%
Personal Ethics	1.2%	24.8%	57.1%	16.8%
Efficient Use of Time	0.0%	22.4%	64.0%	13.7%
Work Systematically	0.6%	22.4%	66.5%	10.6%
Decision making Capacity	0.0%	19.9%	66.5%	13.7%

Supervisors' Overall appraisal ratings of employee job performance

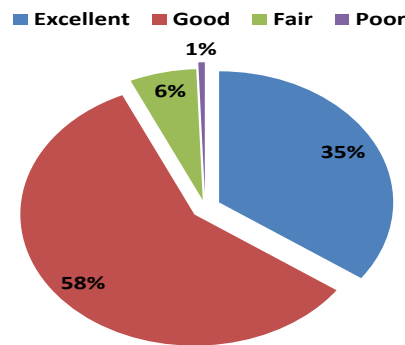


Fig. 5: Supervisors' Overall appraisal ratings of employee job performance

In summary (see figure 5) 58 percent of the respondents were rated good, 35 percent excellent, 6 percent fair and 1 percent poor. All these rating were based on line manager's responses which indicated performance and training. In this regard the questionnaires were rated in a scale of 4 to 1, where; 4= excellent, 3=good, 2=average and 1=below average. In support of all these findings, Stevenson (2002) asserts that well-trained and motivated workers are an asset toward an organization growth and development. This is mainly pegged on early skills formation for potential employees during formal training. The quality of the skills obtained from the training and education system is critical to an effective job performance. For employees to be highly productive it is important to enable them acquire skills and the ability to function within teams. During early skills formation hotel trainees are trained so that they can become effective employees. The quality of the skills obtained from the training and education system is critical to a destination's competitiveness (Cole, 2002).

Boella (2001) noted that there are numerous criteria for assessing performance such as; achievements in relation to objectives, level of knowledge and skills possessed and applied (competencies), behaviour in the job as it affects performance (competencies), university degree to which behaviour upholds the core values of the organization and day to day effectiveness in carrying out various duties, task and responsibilities. From this study the main benefits of training were noted; increased sales, enhanced labour productivity, improved customer retention and satisfaction, professionalism, reduced accidents and risk, improved work quality and conditions, improved job satisfaction and performance, low labour turnover, team spirit, low industrial unrest, improved interpersonal relations, openness, mentorship and enhanced succession planning, repeat business and referrals.

Respondents' perceptions of the linkage between training and job performance

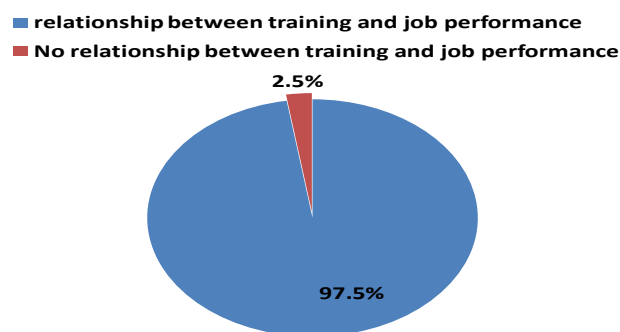
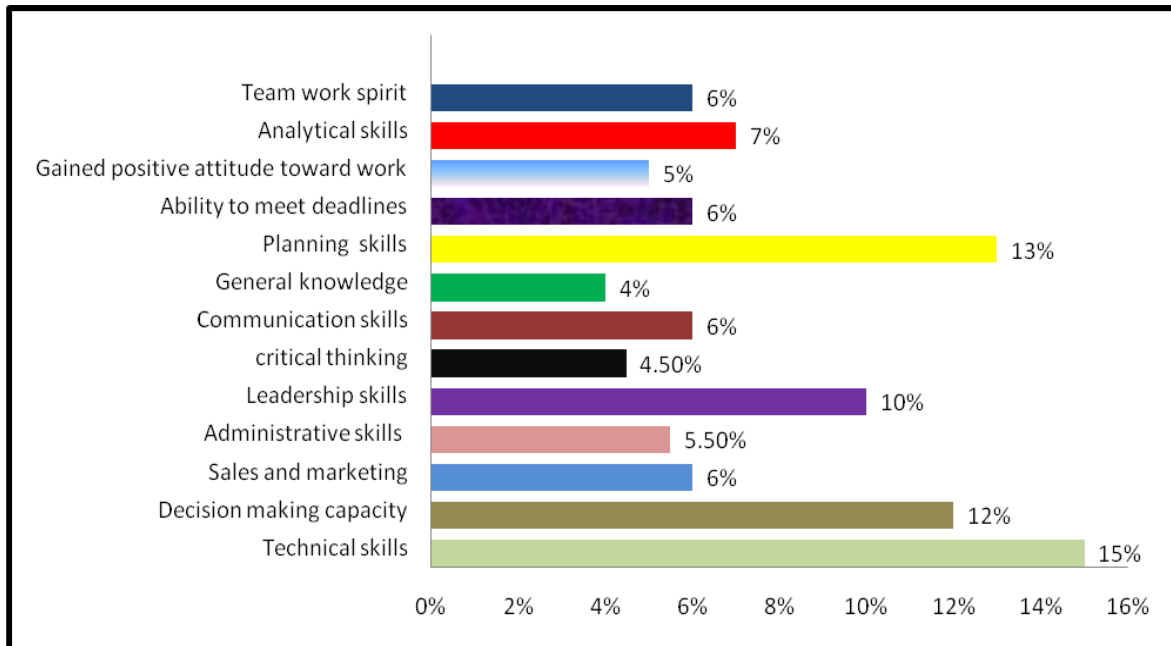


Fig. 6: Respondents perceptions of the linkage between training and job performance

According to the study 97.5 percent of the respondents perceived that there was a linkage between formal training and job performance while 2.5 percent did not (figure 6). Based on these findings it is worth noting that in order to perpetually improve employees’ performance, training is essential in achieving customer driven standards within the industry. The industry should therefore understand the entire components associated with performance and customer satisfaction. This is because when expectations and perceptions diverge, quality gaps exist which eventually makes a destination less competitive. This explains the need for training, which to a large extent influences job performance due to the fact that there was a strong relationship between these two variables (Figure 6).

**General skills enhanced by formal training:**

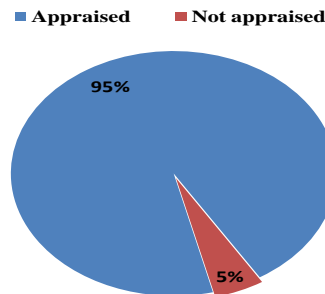


**Fig. 7: General skills enhanced by formal training**

An assessment on areas/skills enhanced by formal training was done. The operatives noted the following areas/skills which were highly enhanced by formal training. Technical skills had the highest rating of 15 percent followed by planning skills 13 percent, whereas general knowledge and trends in the hotel and tourism industry had the lowest rating 4 percent (Figure 7). Other areas competency enhanced through training were: sales and marketing, administrative skills, leadership skills, critical thinking, communication skills, planning skills, ability to meet deadlines, gained positive attitude toward work, analytical skills and teamwork. All these areas formed core element in service delivery and competencies and it was clear that formal training played a key role in equipping personnel with skills and knowledge hence affirming a relationship between training and performance. In support of this finding Sindiga (1996) noted that an appropriately skilled work force in hotel’s component sectors to a large extent assist a destination to maintain and develop its competitive advantage and bring about sustainable development. This necessitates the need to analyze how training being provided responds to human resources needs. In order to continuously improve employee performances, training is essential in achieving customer driven standards within the industry (Aquilano, 1999).

Robinson (2002) looks at the performer of the task for solutions to service problems. The solution to improve service is viewed as being dependent on improvements in the skills, training and attitudes of the performers of that service. This indicates that the service sector will be forever inefficient and unsatisfying if there is no perpetual training. It is imperative to check on training in order to limit the performance gaps in the industry. This emanates from the standards for training programmes, which should be designed to maximize customer satisfaction and subsequently enhancing the destination competitiveness. In order for employees to be highly productive, it is important to enable them to acquire skills during formal training. During early skills formation, hotel trainees should be trained so that they can become effective employees. The quality of the skills obtained from the training and formal education system is critical to both job performance and customer satisfaction.

**Appropriateness of performance appraisal criteria used by employer:**

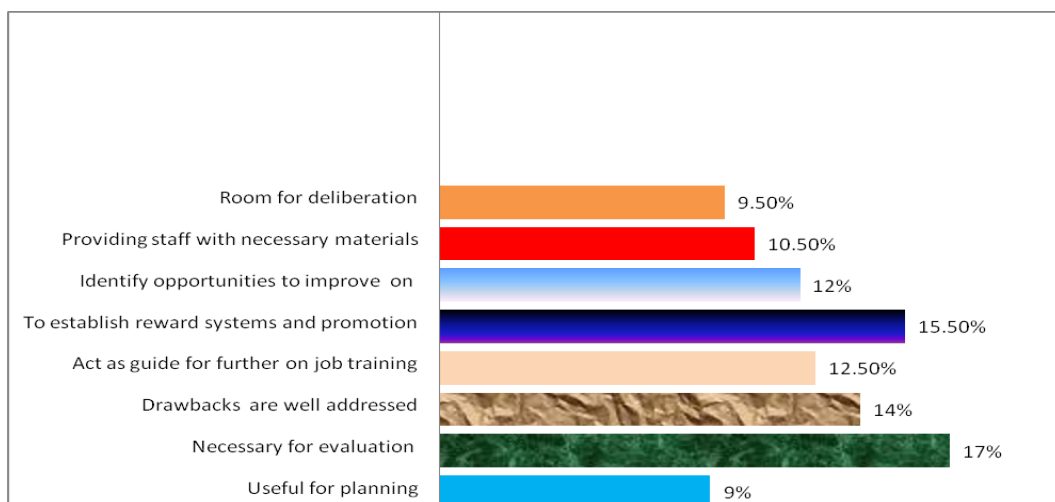


**Fig. 8: Appropriateness of performance appraisal criteria used by employer**

From the study 95 percent of the respondents admitted that the performance criterion used by the employer was appropriate and facilitated better job performance. However 5 percent indicated that the criteria used was ineffective (see figure 8). This was a significant indication on the importance of performance appraisal held by both the appraiser and appraisee. Performance appraisal was carried out by line managers and section heads on operatives. It entailed assessing key attributes based on training and performance which were deemed significant during service encounter. These findings were supported by Boella (2001) who noted that when an appraisal is conducted in a professional manner with openness and frankness, the result can be extremely beneficial to both the appraiser and appraisee. He further indicated that appraising employee performance using consistent and methodical approaches is key in ensuring employee contributions are recognized.

Sundaram (1997) further noted that management must show its support through measurement of results, communication and rewarding employees for superior service in order to maintain customer satisfaction and loyalty.

**Significance of performance criterion and approaches:**



**Fig. 9 Significance of performance criterion and approaches**

The usefulness of performance criterion and approaches was obtained and the following findings made (Figure 9). The highest response was 17 percent which indicated that performance criterion and approaches were necessary for evaluation or appraisal and this was followed by 15.5 percent who noted it was vital in establishing reward systems and promotion while the lowest 9 percent noted that it was useful for planning and this was followed by 9.5 percent who asserted that it was important in creating room for deliberation.



From the study the relevance of using the right performance criterion and approaches were noted: essential for planning, for the purpose of evaluation, improved performance, a guide for further on job training, establishment of reward systems and promotion, opportunities to improve on, providing staff with necessary resource materials and creating room for deliberation. It was noted that numerous criteria for assessing performance were used, such as: level of knowledge and skills possessed and applied (competencies), behaviour in the job (personality) and university degree to which behaviour upholds the core values of the organization and day to day effectiveness in carrying out various duties, task and responsibilities (performance criteria).

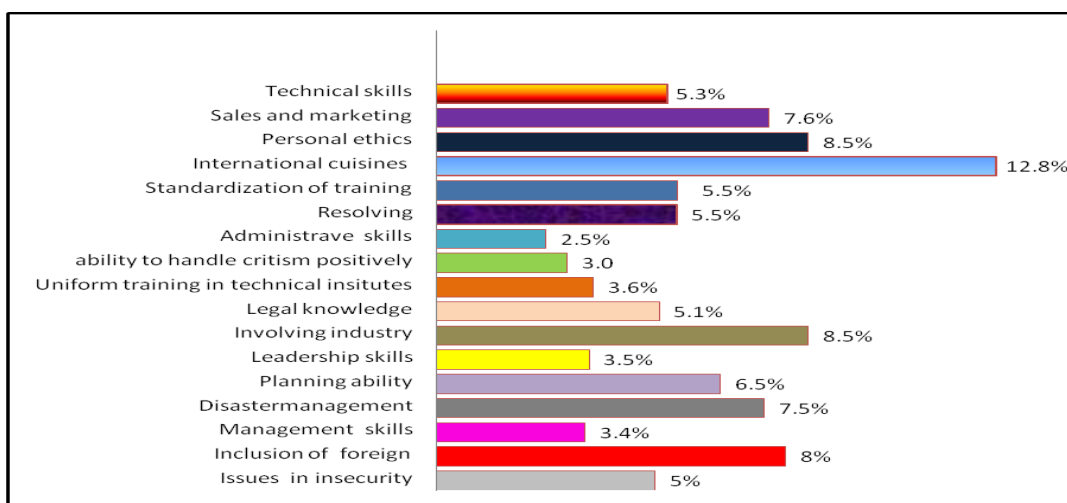
Thompson, (2004) asserted that the performance management component should be aligned with the selection and placement functions because it is integral for overall success of the organization. He further noted that when managers know what their customers want but are unable or unwilling to develop systems that will deliver it several issues would be observed such as; inadequate commitment to service quality, lack of perception of feasibility, inadequate task standardization and absence of goal setting. All these would eventually affect performance and could be minimized through relevant appraisal techniques where gaps are ascertained and bridged.

A 360-university degree feedback appraisal where opportunity is given frequently to both the managers and staff to rate themselves was quite limited and this contradicts Boella, (2001) who noted that appraisal of individual employee should use a reliable and objective measurement standard. Evaluating training is important in order to assess its effectiveness in producing the learning outcomes through appropriate appraisal. It is also an indicator for further training programs (Armstrong, 2006).

**The intervention programs adopted in bridging the training and performance gaps:**

Performance gap occurs when management understands what needs to be delivered and appropriate specifications has been developed but employees are unable or unwilling to deliver the service. He further noted that it occurs during moments of truth, when the employee and the customer interact. This gap can be minimized through internal marketing programs and embracing management of the human resources functions such as training, hiring, monitoring working conditions and developing reward systems. This gap may also be as result of customer-contact employees being overworked making them lose their enthusiasm for the job and become less willing to solve customer problems (Kotler, 2006). Lack of customer orientation and preparedness in terms of training for the industry by service providers widen this gap. 66 percent of the respondents (operatives) indicated that there were areas not fully covered during training while 34 percent were satisfied with their formal training. The following areas were identified as the training and performance gaps (figure 10).

**Areas not adequately covered during formal training:**



**Fig.10: Areas not adequately covered by formal training**

The study noted the following areas or disciplines were not adequately covered during training (see figure 10): standardization of training modules 12.8 percent, involving industry players in designing modules or curriculum 8.5 percent, personal ethics 8.5 percent, inclusion of foreign languages in training 8 percent, disaster management 7.5

percent, issues of insecurity for guests 5 percent, management skills 3.4 percent, planning ability 6.5 percent, leadership skills 3.5 percent, legal knowledge 5.1 percent, uniformity in training amongst institutions (curriculum), resolving conflicts 5.5 percent, international cuisines 5.5 percent, technical skills 5.3 percent, administrative skills (handling phone calls and filling) 2.5 percent and ability to handle criticism positively 3.0 percent. All these areas are critical for effective job performance and service provision for the hotel industry. Therefore, these areas are considered to be the training and performance gap. These gaps were mainly addressed by hotel managers through regular on job training programs that were consolidated to enhance performance.

In supporting the above finding the following general comment from the section heads indicated that the following areas were key to job performance and required further on-job training in the next 6-12 months; banqueting services, menu planning procedures, strategic planning and budgeting, costing and planning, managerial task, knowledge on cross-cultural integration, customer care and public relations, knowledge on wine and bar services, disaster management, team work participation and involvement, market forecasting, succession and promotion preparedness and career development plan.

The areas which were not adequately enhanced by formal training in this study became the training-performance gap. The gap may have emanated right from formal training and possibly got widened during service encounter. The hotel executives therefore should understand what customers expectation are and also become aware of what features are needed to deliver high quality service. They should also understand that customers’ needs are dynamic and the right skills have to be embraced either through formal training or in the industry. A fundamental principle of TQM states that, mistakes may be made by people, but most of them are caused, or at least permitted, by faulty systems and processes. This means that the root cause of mistakes can be identified and eliminated, and repetition can be prevented by changing the process (Stevenson, 2002).

In support of these finding, Kotler (2006) noted that a customer might experience various university degrees of satisfaction. If a product’s performance falls short of expectations, customer is dissatisfied. If performance matches expectations, the customer is satisfied. If performance exceeds expectations, the customer is highly satisfied leading to loyalty. Murphy (2000) noted that the service encounter or performance which emanates from training should be developed and presented to match or even exceed the value of money paid by guests. The service offered in the four and five star hotels in Kenya should also match guest expectation. It costs between 5 and 6 times more to attract a new customer than to keep an existing one. Happy customers tell 4 to 5 others of their positive experience and dissatisfied customers tell 9 to 12 how bad it was. This is based on the fact that 67 percent of the customers do not feel valued by the service providers as asserted by Kotler, (2006).

When the current performance is equal to current competence and yet the performance gap exist a training intervention program is required. The performance gap must be measured against organizational objectives; analyzing the individuals, the operation and the organizing (Cole, 2002). Due to the identifiable gaps in this study the following intervention programs were suggested.

**Strategies that the hotel industry can assist training institutions:**

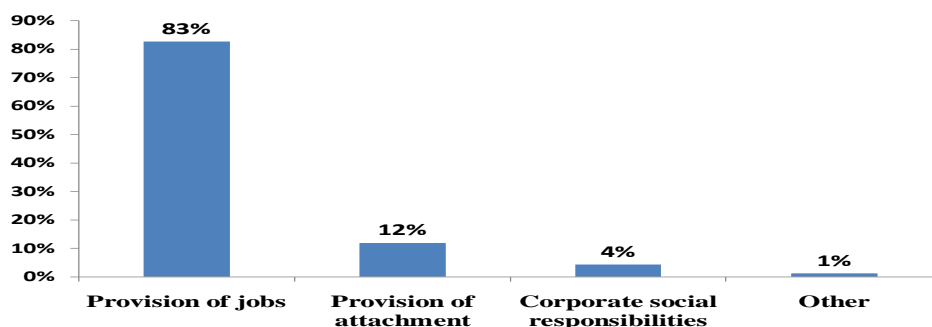


Fig.12: Strategies that the hotel industry can assist training institutions

It was noted that 83 percent of the respondents indicated that the industry should provide jobs, 12 percent suggested provision of attachment, 4 percent recommended corporate social responsibility. On the other hand 1 percent of the respondents were not certain on the contribution of the industry (Figure 12). The analysis also indicated similar results since provision of employment opportunities to graduates equipped them with the necessary skills and experience that was vital in the operation and consequently improved on performance. To win in today’s market place destinations must be customer centred, and deliver superior value to their target customer. For any destination to become competitive customer satisfaction, must be achieved by matching perception and expectation of performance. This implies that, customer satisfaction depends on the product’s performance suitability relative to expectations. Any discrepancy between the two is expressed through satisfaction gap (Kotler, 2006).

**Hypothesis (1): There is no significant relationship between pre-service training and job performance among hotel employees**

In determining association between variables, Chi-square tests were used to determine the relationship between educational level and job performance (Table 4 and 5).

**Table 4: Cross tabulation of highest level of education and job performance rating**

Highest level of education * Rating job performance Cross tabulation								
			Rating job performance				Total	
			Excellent	Good	Fair	Poor		
Highest level of education	Certificate	Count	7	30	4	0	41	
		Expected Count	14.2	24	2.6	0.3	41	
	Diploma	Count	15	52	6	1	74	
		Expected Count	25.6	43.3	4.7	0.5	74	
	Higher diploma	Count	25	7	0	0	32	
		Expected Count	11.1	18.7	2	0.2	32	
	University degree	Count	8	3	0	0	11	
		Expected Count	3.8	6.4	0.7	0.1	11	
	Other	Count	0	1	0	0	1	
		Expected Count	0.3	0.6	0.1	0	1	
	Total		Count	55	93	10	1	159
			Expected Count	55	93	10	1	159

$\chi^2=48.345$ ;  $df=12$ ;  $p=0.00001$ \*; Significant at  $p<0.05$

The results showed that there was a significant relationship between level of education and job performance ( $\chi^2=48.345$ ;  $df=12$ ;  $p=0.00001$ ). The findings indicated the important role played by education and formal training of employees in respect to job performance. The higher the level of education and training were the better the job performance. This was demonstrated by the statistical significant level of university degree holders and higher national diploma as opposed to diploma and certificate counterparts. This could be attributed due to the fact that university degree graduates are steeped in management theories and little practical operational skills while the diploma graduate are steeped in practical operational skills and very little management theories. The results indicated a higher percentage of employees with highest qualification performed better than those with lower qualifications. In support of this finding, Jafari and Fayos-Sola, (1996) reported that achieving quality and service excellence in a competitive international environment is increasingly important. It is widely acknowledged that destinations, which will be best placed to develop high quality products as a competitive strategy, usually sources well trained personnel for high performance. These findings were further supported by Robinson, (2000) who emphasized at the performer of the task for solutions to service problems. The solution to improve service was viewed as a dependent on improvements in the skills, training and attitudes for the service provider. This indicated that the service sector would be inefficient and unsatisfying if there is no perpetual training, hence rejecting the null hypothesis stating that there was no relationship between educational level and job performance.

The results indicated the important role played by education and formal training of employees in respect to performance in the hotel industry. The higher the level of education and training were the better the job performance. This was demonstrated by the statistical significant level of degree holders and higher national diploma as opposed to diploma and certificate counterparts. This could be attributed due to the fact that degrees graduate are steeped in management theories and little practical operational skills while the diploma graduate are steeped in practical operational skills and very little management theories. In support of this finding Padhi (2007) noted that training was a very important component if employees were to be highly productive in their work place. Stevenson, (2002) also supported these finding as he asserted that well-trained and motivated workers are an asset toward an organizational growth and development. This is mainly pegged on early skills formation for potential employees during formal training. The quality of the skills obtained from the training and education system is critical to an effective job performance.

**Hypothesis (2): There is no significant relationship between work experience and job performance among hotel employees.**

Chi-square tests were used to determine the relationship between training, work experience and job performance. The results indicated that performance was mainly brought about by two factors: duration in the hotel industry (work experience) and highest level of education (training). To emphasize on this a cross tabulation of duration in hotel industry and performance rating was done (Table 5).

**Table 5: Cross tabulation of work experience in the hotel industry and job performance rating**

Work experience		Job performance rating				Total
		Exce-llent	Good	Fair	Poor	
Below 1 year	Count	0	1	1	0	2
	Expected Count	0.7	1.2	0.1	0	2
1- 2 years	Count	23	41	5	0	69
	Expected Count	24	40.3	4.3	0.4	69
3 - 4 years	Count	25	49	2	1	77
	Expected Count	26.8	45	4.8	0.5	77
5 years and above	Count	8	3	2	0	13
	Expected Count	4.5	7.6	0.8	0.1	13
Total	Count	56	94	10	1	161
	Expected Count	56	94	10	1	161

$\chi^2=17.472$ ;  $df=9$ ;  $p=0.042^*$ ; Significant at  $p<0.05$

The results showed that there was a significant relationship between duration of work experience in the hotel industry and job performance ( $\chi^2=17.472$ ;  $df=9$ ;  $p=0.042$ ). The results indicated a higher percentage of employees who had worked for a longer duration were inclined to better performance. These findings contradict Padhi, (2007) who noted that training is the most important component for high job performance in the work place. This implied that other factors such as work experience played a key role in job performance and productivity. Therefore the null hypothesis stating that there was no relationship between work experience and job performance was rejected (Table 5).The university degree holders performed better than certificate holders in terms of delivery of services. Therefore for the industry to have an edge on the basis of job performance, training is a key component for effective human resources development.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

### Conclusion:

The results indicated that formal training played a key role in equipping hospitality personnel with skills and knowledge. The findings indicated the important role played by education and formal training of employees in respect to job performance. The higher the level of education and training were the better the job performance. This was demonstrated by the superior performance appraisal ratings of university degree holders and higher national diploma as compared to their counterparts with ordinary diploma and certificate levels of training. About two-thirds of the respondents indicated

**International Journal of Novel Research in Marketing Management and Economics**

 Vol. 2, Issue 3, pp: (68-80), Month: September-December 2015, Available at: [www.noveltyjournals.com](http://www.noveltyjournals.com)

that there were areas not fully covered during formal training while one-third were satisfied with their formal training. The areas that were inadequately covered were considered to be the training and performance gaps which required improvement through on-the-job training in order to enhance job performance.

**Recommendations:**

Based on the findings of this study, the following recommendations were derived:

- a) There is need for liaison between the hospitality industry and the training institutions in all aspects of hospitality training and best practices. To boost commitment to service quality both formal and on job training programs should be promoted for improved job performance.
- b) Promote partnership between students and the hospitality industry for practical exposure through industrial training such as internship and attachment.
- c) Set regulations or standards for quality training by involving industry players such Ministry of Tourism, Training institutions, Hoteliers, Catering and Tourism Development Levy Trust (CTDLT) and Kenya Institute for Curriculum Development (KICD) while designing course modules for standardization and relevance of subject content.
- d) There is need to implement on the job training programs in the hospitality industry by hotels in order to bridge the training gap and enhance job performance.
- e) Further studies should be carried out to investigate the needs of trainers and trainees prior to entry into the work force.

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