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David Linus Lenaiyarra, Dr. Jane Bitok & Dr. Duncan Shirandula

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*¹David Linus Lenaiyarra, ²Dr. Jane Bitok & ³Dr. Duncan Shirandula

¹Master's Student, School of Business, Economics and Tourism, Kenyatta University

²School of Business, Economics and Tourism, Kenyatta University

³School of Business, Economics and Tourism, Kenyatta University

*E-mail of corresponding author: david.lenaiyarra@kpc.co.ke

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Abstract

Hospitality related jobs are prone to biasness and inequities especially in reward and compensation structures vis-à-vis job grades and responsibilities. One of the major contributory factors of such biasness and inequities is lack of a systematic basis of evaluating jobs. Such biasness and inequities if not checked, may generate dissatisfaction and grievances among employees which may eventually lead to low employee morale and poor performance. The purpose of the research was to ascertain how front-line employees' performance is impacted by job evaluation factors in 4 and 5 star rated lodges, resorts, hotels and camps located in Nakuru County. Specifically, the study tested the influence of interpersonal skills, job responsibility, decision making and job expertise on employee performance. Besides, the moderating role of gender was tested. The study was underpinned by the Equity Theory of Motivation. It utilized both descriptive and co-relational research designs. This study's population consisted of all 4 to 5 star rated hospitality establishments located in Nakuru County. The sample size comprised 403 front-line employees and 8 supervisors. Besides, 8 HRMs were included in the study, therefore, a total of 419 respondents were sampled. Questionnaires were administered to the frontline employees and interviews were conducted with the HRMs and supervisors. The study revealed that interpersonal skills ($B=.227, p=.000$); job responsibility ($B=.234, p=.000$); decision making ($B=.290, P=.000$); and job expertise ($B=.238, P=.000$) significantly influence the performance of employees. However, employees' gender ($\Delta R^2=.001, P=.382$) does not influence the relationship between job evaluation factors and employee performance. The content analysis results supported these findings. This study concluded that job evaluation factors enhance employee's performance, gender does not. The study recommends that the HR departments should observe fairness and equity in all HR processes especially recruitment and selection, training, promotion and compensation. All

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these functions should be driven by skills, job responsibility, and expertise of the employee and not subjective elements such as gender.

Keywords: *Job Evaluation, Employee Performance, Hospitality Industry, 4 and 5-Star Hotels, Nakuru County, Kenya*

1.0 Introduction

The purpose of job evaluation is to enhance organizational performance by comparing and assessing various work processes (Bhukya & Sreeramulu 2021; Masanja & Kusekwa 2020). An evaluation of employee's performance is critical in decision making on aspects such as remuneration, recruitment, promotion among others (Ghebrejorgis, 2018). Adoption of inefficient analytical job evaluation procedures may result in poor employee performance. Analytical job evaluation is a method for dissecting finished tasks into several specified elements, such as the expertise (knowledge and aptitude) required, responsibility, and decision-making, is the foundation of analytical job evaluation. The job evaluation factors are assumed to be present in all the jobs to be evaluated (Armstrong, 2009). The cost of poor employee performance can have far reaching implications on the hospitality industry. Any organization's focus is thought to be on performance in order to guarantee that resources have been used effectively to meet objectives (Wekesa 2020). This is especially critical in the current turbulent economic situation.

According to the Kenya Annual Tourism Sector Performance Report of 2022, the harsh economic climate, which includes growing interest rates and inflation, rising food and oil prices, and worries about a potential global recession, is the primary barrier to the tourism industry's recovery. The report forecasts that COVID-19-related health problems, workforce shortages, and prolonged uncertainty brought on by the Russian incursion against Ukraine and other rising geopolitical tensions would have a detrimental impact on tourism (Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage, 2023). To survive in such an environment characterized with such external shocks calls for an adoption of waterproof human resource practices such as performance management.

Globally, recent research has evidenced a relationship between job evaluation and employee performance. A study done in India by Bhukya and Sreeramulu, (2021) found that the effectiveness of employees was considerably impacted by job assessment procedures. Additionally, research has demonstrated a significant associated between employee motivation, job assessment analysis and performance. Given the disparities in the contextual contexts between Kenya and India, the study's results cannot, however, be generalized. Research in the tourism and hospitality sectors has attempted to look into how job evaluation affects employee performance in the African environment. Ghebrejorgis (2018) looked into the key variables influencing workers' performance in Eritrea's hotel sector. In the city of Asmara, a poll was taken among 150 employees from 4 hotels, both privately and publicly owned. Five aspects that may affect performance were examined: leadership, training, the relationship between the individual and the employer, and the working environment. The findings demonstrated a favorable and significant link between employee performance, training, and working conditions.

From a regional and local perspective, Masanja and Kusekwa (2020) evaluated the impacts of job evaluation on the performance of employees in Tanzanian tourism events sector. The study discovered that employee performance, particularly task, adaptive, and contextual performance, is influenced by job assessment. Additionally, a study by Wekesa (2020) at Kibabii University looked into the impact of performance reviews on staff productivity.

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According to the research, increasing employee evaluations from supervisors, peers, oneself, subordinates, customers, and trainers has a considerable positive impact on employee performance. In addition, gender plays a vital role in the performance of employees at a workplace. This is common in a situation where there are perceived biasness at a workplace. Studies (Masanja & Kusekwa, 2020; Rynes, Weber & Milkovich's 1988) have found a relationship between gender, job evaluation and employee performance. Rynes, et al., (1988) assert that there is a direct gender bias in job evaluation. If the perceived biasness is not checked, it has the potential of stifle performance and satisfaction at a workplace (Busienei, 2017).

Previous research by Masanja and Kusekwa (2020); Shirandula (2022) have asserted that hospitality related jobs are prone to gender biasness. Shirandula (2022) notes that some of the biasness can be attributed to the perceived African gender roles. As such, certain types of occupations that are generally thought to be only for men and others for women. If this assumption is not properly checked, it may lead to biasness in reward and compensation of such jobs. This may eventually exert a decline in performance of employees in certain jobs, especially those regarded as low value jobs. For this reason, Masanja and Kusekwa (2020) recommends job evaluation as a surefire way to close the gender pay gap and foster an equitable work environment. There doesn't seem to be much research on the connection between job evaluation and employee performance in the Kenyan hospitality sector, despite the fact that there have been numerous studies done on the subject. Even though studies by Masanja and Kusekwa (2020); Wekesa (2020) were locally conducted, they focused on the events and education sectors respectively.

According to the Kenya Annual Tourism Sector Performance Report of 2022, the industry generates 4.2% of new investments, 5.5% of Kenya's formal employment, and 10.4% of the nation's GDP. Additionally, the research notes that the sector plays a crucial role in the citizens' social and economic well-being, with a multiplier effect on trade, agriculture, construction, manufacturing, and transportation among other areas (Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Heritage, 2023). Job evaluation is a typical practice in the public hospitality business. Numerous big operators employ firms like Hay-MSL, a specialized HR consultant, to calculate employee salary rates and scales. Jobs are analyzed using one or more job evaluation techniques. Otherwise, job evaluation is not very common in private hospitality sector (which forms the majority of players in the industry), owing to small number of employees. Instead, rather than using a scientific approach, compensation levels are typically decided by expediency. Such unscientific approach to determination of wages and salaries can be a great impediment to a high employee performance.

1.1 Statement of the Problem

A consistent and systematic basis for job evaluation is required due to the increasing complexity of organizations and the rapidly proliferating use of technology in the hospitality sector. Without such systematic basis, inequities may be created in workplaces and thus generate dissatisfaction and grievances among employees. Issues such as low morale, higher absenteeism, and increased employee turnover may be signs of demotivated staff. Such issues are expensive for businesses because they interfere with operations and force them to invest in hiring new personnel and providing them with training (Luthans, 2002). It is common for organizations to have well established systems of job evaluation, yet implementation of this system results to undesired effects among employees such as strikes, sit-in, and lack of motivation among employees, which may lead to poor performance.

With growing competition of business in the hospitality industry, many organizations have to find ways through which they will achieve external and internal equity as far as jobs are

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concerned. This study aims to determine how job assessment affects employee performance in the hospitality sector in order to determine the role that job evaluation plays in managing employee performance. The concept of job evaluation and employee performance has relatively lagged behind in East African countries, because of the reason that such HR practices are not regarded with great concern. This can be attributed to the scanty information on the link between of job evaluation and employee performance. While there are many benefits associated with job evaluation, in most cases, human resource practioners only conduct job evaluation to formulate policies on salaries and wages (Busienei, 2017).

1.2 Specific Objectives

- i. To investigate the extent to which employee interpersonal skills influences employee performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- ii. To examine the extent to which job responsibility factor influences employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- iii. To establish the influence of decision making factor on employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- iv. To explore the influence of job expertise factor on employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- v. To establish the moderating effect of employee gender on the relationship between job evaluation factors and employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.

1.3 Study Hypotheses

- H₀₁:** Employee interpersonal skills do not significantly influence employee performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- H₀₂:** Job responsibility factor does not significantly influence employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- H₀₃:** Decision making factor does not significantly influence employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- H₀₄:** Job expertise factor does not significantly influence employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.
- H₀₅:** Employee gender does not significantly moderate the relationship between job evaluation factors and employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.

1.4 Theoretical Framework

The Equity Theory of Motivation, first put forth by Adams in 1965, can be used to explain the nexus between job appraisal and employee performance. The theory asserts that motivation can be influenced by equitable distribution of resources. In the context of this study, the assertion can imply that employees may purposefully put in less effort at work if they believe that the relationship between their effort and what they are paid is unjust. The reverse is true, that is, a fair balance between the effort of employees at work and compensation can stimulate increased effort which leads to high performance.

This theory can be used to explain the perceived effect of a fair balance between employee's responsibilities and tasks. For instance, in an event where employees feel their job is more demanding than counterparts', and the reward is not commensurate to the effort, they may psychologically be distressed and thus their performance may decline. The concepts of "effort-reward bargain" and "felt fair principle" are also supported by this theory. Due to changes in

employment legislation in many developed nations, enterprise-level bargaining has replaced centralized wage fixing, making pay equity and transparency important (Mitchell et al., 1997).

1.5 Conceptual Framework

Figure 1 presents a modified framework for measuring analytical job evaluation and employee performance.

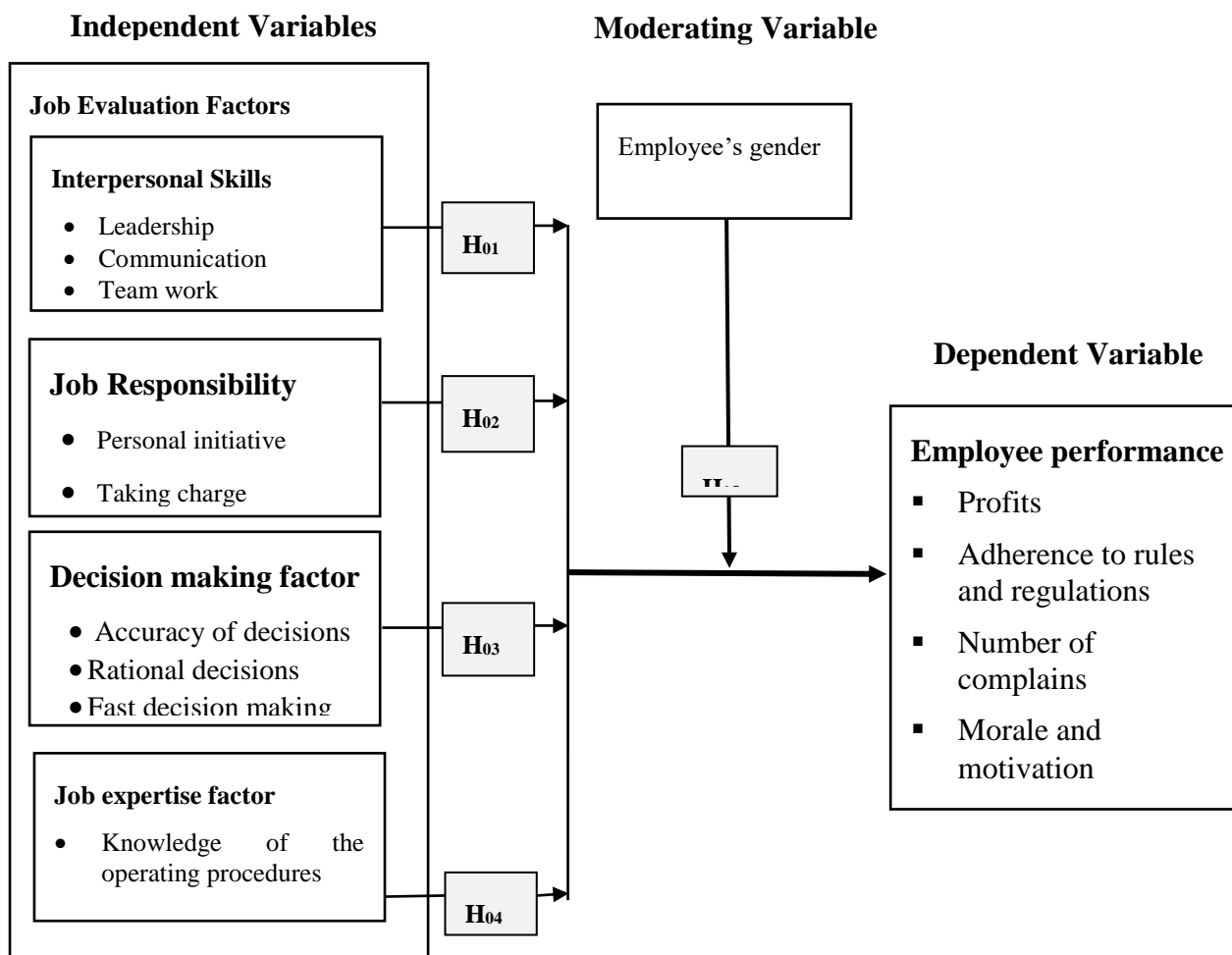


Figure 1: Conceptual framework for measuring analytical job evaluation and employee performance

Source: Adapted from Armstrong, (2009) and -reward employee satisfaction survey (2007)

2.1 Review of Literature

2.1.1 The Concept of Employee Performance in Hospitality Industry

Performance of employees is a critical human resource process that seeks to establish whether specific objectives at a workplace are being realized or not, by monitoring the efficiency and effectiveness of employees at a workplace (Wekesa, 2020). According to Masanja and Kusekwa, (2020), employee evaluation from the job evaluation perspective is the assessment of how employees carry out their jobs in comparison with the standards of that specific job as predetermined by the organization. Performance can be classified using a three dimensional approach and posited that performance can be broken down into task performance, adaptive performance and contextual performance. The scholars argue that task performance refers to

the employee actions necessary to complete a certain task. Task performance is characterized by requisite technical and managerial knowledge such as carrying out a task e.g. handling reservations, leading and supervising others, planning, organizing etc on the other hand, adaptive performance is the ability of an employee to adapt quickly to new changes such as new procedures of working. It involves developing a positive attitude towards change.

Lastly, contextual performance involves going an extra mile in carrying out tasks which the organization may not reward in terms of pay. Contextual performance is a type of pro-social conduct displayed by an individual in a work environment through voluntary job behavior (Masanja & Kusekwa, 2020). In relation to hospitality industry, employee performance is a critical function as the hotel sector is naturally manpower oriented. In the hospitality business, employee performance is important since staff interact directly with consumers (Ghebregiorgis, 2018). This implies that the performance of the hotel is directly reflected on the performance of the employees. Ghebregiorgis, (2018) underscores that employee performance in the hotel industry can be assessed through the quality of direct interaction between employees and the customers. The quality of such interactions determine the guest satisfaction and thus, employee performance can be examined in the perspective of the complains/compliments arising from such interactions between the guests and customers.

2.1.2 Effect of Job Evaluation on Employee Performance

Employers frequently base judgments on pay scale and job structure, particularly in the hospitality sector, on analyses of the market for pay and job assessments. The former is based on an evaluation of the standard wage for comparable positions in other businesses. Studies have found varying reasons why organizations carry out job evaluation. The first reason is to determine a rationale for employee compensation policy and salary structure (Butron, 2018). According to Armstrong and Brown (2000), employees will be motivated if they compare the pay they get from their jobs with similar job positions in the industry and conclude that their pay is fair. This will enhance employees feeling of worthiness in their organization of work and hence boost his /her morale to perform better. A legitimate hierarchy of job-worth in the organization can be provided by well-designed job evaluation plans.

Employers who use a well-designed evaluation plan are better able to compare the remuneration for important positions to that of positions in related industries. They enhance the ability to prevent underpaying workers, which has some sound financial implications. Additionally, it influences how employees view pay equity (Beardwell & Claydon, 2004). Additionally, Masanja and Kusekwa (2020) observe that job evaluation assists in developing a recruitment and selection policy. It improves the chances of selecting the best suited employees for the job. Bhukya and Sreeramulu (2021) underscore the importance of constantly carrying out job evaluation exercises for it allows for monitoring, coaching, counselling, feedback, and record-keeping regularly. Consequently, employee performance problems are identified and resolved quickly before they cause delays and inefficiencies.

According to Lucas (2004), people frequently evaluate their value to their company in relation to their compensation, including how much they are paid in comparison to both their own coworkers and the general market. The relationship with their employer may suffer if they believe their level of compensation and other conditions to be lower than those of their peers and similarly situated workers elsewhere. This could manifest in a variety of ways, such as theft, vandalism, theft, and absenteeism.

3.0 Research Methodology

Cooper and Schindler (2006) assert that research design involves collection and analysis of data with the aim of achieving the study purposes as economically as possible. This study will

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adopt a correlational and descriptive research designs. The correlation design will support the investigation of the effects of the job evaluation factors on the employee performance. The descriptive design will allow for the description of the various variables of the sample. This research was carried out in Nakuru County. The county is envisaging to be a premiere tourism hub in the South Rift Region. It boasts of as a frontier to several types of tourism including MICE, medical tourism, sports tourism, agritourism, ecotourism and cultural tourism (homestays) (County Government of Nakuru , 2021). With these vast forms of tourism, the county hosts an array of hospitality facilities including resorts, lodges and hotels. According to TRA (2023) star rating data, the county has a total of 19 establishments, accounting for 1,792 bed capacity. This growing number of facilities makes it a suitable place for conducting the study.

This study's population consisted of all 4 to 5 star rated hospitality establishments located in Nakuru County. The County boasts of 2 five-star rated facilities, 6 four-star rated facilities, 5 three-star rated facilities and 5 two-star facilities totalling to 18 establishments. Human Resource managers of the 4 and 5 star-rated lodges, resorts, hotels and camps in the County were targeted. Besides, all front-line employees from the target establishments were considered as the sampling units. From a reconnaissance study, there were approximately a total of 2,108 supervisors and front-line employees from the 8 target establishments. The study also targeted one human resource manager from each establishment. Sekaran (2003) defines a sample as a subset of the population which is representative of the total objects in the population. The sample size will be calculated using the Yamane (1967) sample size formula as follows:

$$n = \frac{N}{1+N(e)^2} \quad n = \frac{2108}{1+2108(0.05)^2} = 336$$

Where:

N = Target population

n = sample size

e = margin of error (5%)

Besides, a 20% of the respondents were added for non-response as recommended by Bryman and Bell (2015) making the sample size to be a total of 403. In conclusion, 403 front-line employees and supervisors were sampled from 8 four and five-star rated facilities in Nakuru County. Finally one human resource manager from each of the nine establishments were interviewed, giving a total of 411 respondents. Stratified sampling technique was applied on the sample size based on the selection of the departments that the employees work as well as employee tenure of service in the company. Besides, purposive and census sampling techniques was used for supervisors and HR managers. Employee information, including length of employment, was retrieved from the hotels' human resources database to assure the study's validity and dependability.

Closed ended questionnaires were used in this research because of their ease of analysis and coding. Kumar (2005) states that questionnaires are required to be clear and easy to understand since the researcher may not be available to explain the meaning of the questions. Questionnaires are a useful and powerful tool commonly used for data collection given that they are less expensive as compared to other data collection techniques (Copper & Schindler, 2007). Since they are the heart of a survey operation, they require to be carefully constructed and thus they undergo pilot studies in order to test them (Kothari, 2012).

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For this study, Likert scale questionnaires were self-administered to respondents to collect data. According to Kothari, (2012) Likert scale surveys are created using questions based on the scale, for simpler and quicker data collecting, processing, and analysis. Lastly, structured interview schedules were also be adopted. They schedules were used to interview hr managers of the 4 and 5 star rated facilities. The schedules collected more in-depth data on job evaluation and employee performance from the management's perspective, in order to triangulate the findings from the questionnaires.

Descriptive statistics was employed to summarize the descriptive data of the respondents into means, standard deviations, frequencies, and percentages. To test the null hypotheses, this study will employ the use of multiple regression. Using the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 20.0 software version. The moderating effect of employee gender on the relationship between the predictors and the outcome variables was tested using hierarchical multiple regression. Choice of this approach was informed by its capability to show conditional effect of job analysis techniques on employee performance at different scales of gender. Lastly, the interviews with HR managers will be analyzed using content analysis. Content analysis was deemed suitable for this study since it enabled the analysis of data to be presented in words and themes which made it possible to draw interpretations (Bengtsson 2016).

4.0 Findings and Discussion

From the total of 429 questionnaires distributed, 367 were dully filled in and returned. This translated to 85.55% response rate. According to Fosnacht (2013), the response rates as low as 5% and as high as 75% can give credible survey estimates. Going by these results, the response rate of 85.55% is capable of yielding credible results. Demographic results revealed that male employees (51%) seem to have slightly dominated the departments of interest as compared to their counterparts (49%). Majority of the respondents were between 18-30 years (35.4%) followed closely by those between the age of 31-40 years (33.8%). Few respondents were above 50 years. More than half of the employees had worked for a period of 5-10 years (51%). in addition, 27.7% had worked for a period between 1-4 years. Few employees had worked for less than 1 year (10.3%) and more than 10 years (11%) respectively.

A majority of respondents had attained a diploma (66%) as the highest level of education, followed at a distance by the bachelor's degree holders (16%). Few employees had secondary (12%) and master's degree education (6%). This may be partly attributed to the technical nature of the work in front-line departments of the hotels that seem to attract more diploma holders. A great part of the respondents were drawn from the front office (FO) department (27.5%), restaurant (24.4%) and housekeeping department (21.7%) respectively. The ease of access to FO and restaurant departments might have been contributed by their first hand interactions with clients on a daily basis as compared to the rest of the departments. The human resource department (12.2%) and administration department (9.2%) featured fewer employees. Similarly, the least were from the other departments (4.9%) such as sales and marketing and accounts and engineering.

Employee Interpersonal Skills and Employee Performance

The first objective was to investigate the influence of employee interpersonal skills on employee performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Descriptive Statistics

This section presents descriptive results for the for the extent to which employee interpersonal skills influences employee performance. Table 1 shows descriptive statistics on Interpersonal Skills.

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Table 1 Descriptive Statistics on Employee Interpersonal Skills

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
I get along well with my coworkers within my job grade	3.77	.474
I am able to freely share ideas with my peers within my job grade	3.60	.518
My communication skills match effectively with my job grade	3.57	.495
My leadership abilities match with my job grade	3.56	.497
I am able to resolve conflicts amicably with my peers within my job grade	3.52	.500
My abilities to work in a team are influenced by my job grade	3.11	.937

Notes: N (listwise) = 367; overall mean = 3.5; Range of interpretation: [3.25-4] strongly agree, [2.5-3.25] Agree, [1.75-2.5] Disagree, [1-1.75] strongly disagree

The descriptive results on the interpersonal skills were corroborated by the interview findings. One of the managers quoted verbatim alleged that:

“In our hotel, we are very keen on the skill set of an employee than their academic qualifications. Especially for jobs which involve interactions with guests, we heavily emphasis on customer care, communication skills, problem solving skills among others” (Manager_01, 2024).

Correlation analysis

Analyses of correlation were performed to evaluate the degree of influence of employee interpersonal skills on their performance. As shown in Table 2. Employee interpersonal skills is positively and fairly related to employee performance ($r = 0.454$, $p = 0.000$).

Table 2: Correlation on Employee Interpersonal Skills and Employee Performance

Predictor (X)	Correlations	Employee Performance (Y)
Interpersonal Skills	Pearson Correlation	.454**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

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

In order to determine the influence of the influence of employee interpersonal skills on performance, a multiple regression analysis of all the job evaluation factors against employee performance was carried out. The regression analysis of employee interpersonal skills as a predictor of performance against performance produced significant results with a positive predictive power ($B = .227$, $p = .000$). This means that an increase in one-unit percentage of interpersonal skills is likely to improve employee performance by approximately 22.7%. As a result, the following null hypothesis was rejected:

H₀₁: Employee interpersonal skills do not significantly influence employee performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.

The alternative hypothesis that adopted is that; employee interpersonal skills significantly influence employee performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya. The results of this study coincide with Shirandula (2022) findings that alleged that the level of skills acquired by hospitality graduates plays an important role in determining the job description of for any given position. The study by Shirandula (2022) found that hard skills, technical skills, and soft skills are critical for the success of hospitality firms. The study outlined skills in management of staff, employee scheduling, inventory management, and recipe formulation as the major hard skills required of a hospitality employees. Furthermore,

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the ability to use technology such as point-of-sale (POS) systems, customer service savvy, flexibility, teamwork, dispute resolution, empathy, team leadership, coaching, problem-solving, and influence are identified as critical soft skills. The results presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Coefficients for employee interpersonal skills against employee performance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	
1	(Constant)	.046	.031	.131
	Interpersonal skills	.227	.011	.000

Notes: a. Dependent Variable: Job evaluation factors

Job Responsibility Factor and Employee’s Performance

The section presents the findings on the extent to which job responsibility factor influences employee performance in hotels in Nakuru County, Kenya. The section presents results of the descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, regression analysis and hypothesis testing.

Descriptive Statistics on Job Responsibility Factor

Respondents strongly agreed on all the statements that measured job responsibility apart from the last factor which was disagreed, that read “*I am intimidated by the level of importance the organization attaches to my job grade.*” The three most strongly agreed factors were; the match between my job grade and competencies has helped me to take initiative at my workplace, my organization has well defined responsibilities and tasks for my job grade and the match between my job grade and competencies has helped me to discover new ideas at my work place. Table 5 shows descriptive statistics.

Table 5: Descriptive Statistics on Job Responsibility Factors

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
The match between my job grade and competencies has helped me to take initiative at my workplace	3.59	.492
My organization has well defined responsibilities and tasks for my job grade	3.49	.522
The match between my job grade and competencies has helped me to discover new ideas at my work place	3.47	.505
The recruitment procedure followed clearly defines what is expected of me in my job grade	3.46	.612
There is a standard way of recruiting employees within my job grade	3.34	.637
There are enough resource allocations to execute the expected responsibilities in my job grade	3.32	.505
I am intimidated by the level of importance the organization attaches to my job grade	2.40	.972

Notes: N (listwise) = 367; overall mean = 3.20; Range of interpretation: [3.25-4] Strongly agree, [2.5-3.25] Agree, [1.75-2.5] Disagree, [1-1.75] Strongly disagree

The descriptive results were supported by the interview findings. The managers alleged that:

“Our recruitment process has clear job descriptions which detail the roles and responsibilities of an employee, their reporting authority, and the qualifications for the job” (Manager_05, 2024).

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However, in some cases, the job descriptions were available but were not strictly adhered to. One manager observed that:

“In as much as the job descriptions are available, sometimes these formalities are not well communicated to the employee. It is sometimes assumed that the employee knows what is expected of them. This challenge is left to the supervisors to continuously train the employee. This risks the consistency and standards of work especially when there is change in management” (Manager_07, 2024).

Correlation Analysis of Job Responsibility Factor and Employee Performance

Analyses of correlation were performed to evaluate the degree of influence of employee job responsibility factor on their performance. As shown in Table 6 employee job responsibility is positively and moderately related to employee performance ($r= 0.543$, $p=0.000$).

Table 6: Correlation Analysis of Job Responsibility Factor and Employee Performance

Predictor (X)	Correlations	Employee Performance (Y)
Job responsibility	Pearson Correlation	.543**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

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

In order to determine the influence of the influence of job responsibility factor on employee performance, a multiple regression analysis of all the job evaluation factors against employee performance was carried out. The regression analysis of employee job responsibility as a predictor of performance against performance produced significant results with a positive predictive power ($B=.234$, $p=.000$). This means that when one-unit percentage of job responsibility factor is improved, it is likely to improve employee performance by approximately 23.4%. As a result, the following null hypothesis was rejected:

H₀₂: Job responsibility factor does not significantly influence employee’s performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya

The alternative hypothesis that adopted is that; *job responsibility factor significantly influences employee performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.*

The results of this study coincide with AL Rawas et al. (2023) findings that demonstrated that job responsibility factors have a significant positive impact on employee performance. Similarly, Silalahi et al. (2023) and Daribi (2024) asserted that a well-structured job description can be used as a basic tool to improve employee performance.

Table 7: Coefficients for job responsibility factor against performance

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	
1	(Constant)	.046	.031	.131
	Job responsibility factor	.234	.009	.000

Notes: a. Dependent Variable: Job evaluation factors

The third objective sought to establish the influence of decision making factor on employee’s performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Descriptive Statistics on Decision Making Factor

This section presents descriptive results for the for the extent to which employee decision making factor influences employee performance. Respondents strongly agreed that they make better decisions because they feel they are placed in the right job grade (mean= 3.51; Std. dev. 0.517). Besides, the respondents agreed to the statements that sought to assess whether the level of decision-making at their job was synchronized with their job rank (mean= 3.23; Std. dev. 0.444); whether the accuracy of the decisions made at the workplace was influenced by their job grade (mean= 3.20; Std. dev. 0.833); and whether the speed at which they make decisions was influenced by the job grade (mean=3.02; Std. dev. 0.878) respectively. The last statement elicited dissenting reactions as respondents disagreed that the autonomy they possess was limited to their job grade (mean=2.26; Std. dev. 0.838). See table 8.

Table 8: Descriptive Statistics and Decision Making Factor

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
I make better decisions because I feel I am placed in the right job grade	3.51	.517
The level of decision-making at my job is synchronized with my job rank	3.23	.444
The accuracy of my decisions I make at my workplace is influenced by my job grade.	3.20	.833
The speed at which I make decision at my workplace is influenced by my job grade.	3.02	.878
The autonomy I possess at my workplace is limited to my job grade.	2.36	.838

Notes: N (listwise) = 367; Overall mean = 3.01; Range of interpretation: [3.25-4= Strongly agree], [2.5-3.25=Agree] , [1.75-2.5=Disagree] , [1-1.75=Strongly disagree

The interview findings corroborated these findings as one of the respondents alleged that:

“The decision making ability of the employees is critical. In my department i try as much as possible to empower my staff to make decisions because i believe they have the ability to do so. Of course it depends on the nature of the situation, because not all decisions can be made by front-line employees” (Manager_12, 2024).

Correlation analysis on decision making factor on employee performance

Analyses of correlation were performed to evaluate the degree of influence of employee decision making factor on their performance. As shown in Table 9 employee job responsibility is positively and moderately related to employee performance (r= 0.562, p=0.000).

Table 9: Correlation Analysis on Decision Making Factor and Employee Performance

Predictor (X)	Correlations	Employee Performance (Y)
Decision making factor	Pearson Correlation	.562**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

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

In order to determine the influence of the influence of decision making factor on employee performance, a multiple regression analysis of all the job evaluation factors against employee performance was carried out. The regression analysis of employee decision making as a predictor of performance against performance produced significant results with a positive predictive power (B=.29, p=.000). This means that an increase in one-unit percentage of decision making factor is likely to improve by approximately 29% of employee performance. As a result, the following null hypothesis was rejected:

H₀₃: Decision making factor does not significantly influence employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya

The alternative hypothesis that adopted is that; *decision making factor significantly influences employee performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.*

The results of this study coincide with Akuto (2016) that found decision making as a critical component of employee performance. The study asserted that the decision-making aspects of the job positions play a very important role in job evaluation with grade levels remaining a very fundamental indicator of who can make what decision in an organization. Generally, tougher decisions are expected to be made by those in higher grades.

Table 10: Coefficients for Decision Making Factor against Employee Performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	
1 (Constant)	.046	.031	.131
Decision making factor	.290	.010	.000

Notes: a. Dependent Variable: Job evaluation factors

The fourth objective of the study was to explore the influence of job expertise factor on employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.

Descriptive Statistics on Job Expertise Factor

This section presents descriptive results for the extent to which job expertise factor influences employee performance see table 11. Respondents strongly agreed that their knowledge of the work procedures had improved due to the evaluation of their job (mean= 3.50; Std. dev. 0.538), and that their organizations had adequate job training programmes depending on the demands and changes of each job (mean= 3.44; Std. dev. 0.535). Similarly, the respondents strongly agreed they had developed better skills in their job due to the evaluation (mean= 3.40; Std.dev. 0.628) and that their expertise had improved due to job evaluation exercise (mean= 3.30; Std.dev. 0.667). Lastly, a majority of the respondents agreed that the ranking of their job had ensured their full potential to be exploited (mean= 3.00; Std. dev. 0.730).

Table 11: Descriptive Statistics on Job Expertise Factor

Statement	Mean	Std. Dev
My knowledge of the work procedures have improved due to the evaluation of my job	3.50	.538
My organization has adequate job training programmes depending on the demands and changes of each job	3.44	.535
I have developed better skills in my job due to the evaluation of my job	3.40	.628
My expertise in my job has improved due to job evaluation exercise	3.30	.667
The ranking of job has ensured that my full potential at my workplace is exploited	3.00	.730

Notes: N (listwise) = 367; Overall mean = 3.33; Range of interpretation: [3.25-4= Strongly agree], [2.5-3.25=Agree] , [1.75-2.5=Disagree] , [1-1.75=Strongly disagree

The interview findings corroborated these findings as one of the respondents alleged that:

“We try as much as possible to improve the expertise on our staff. That is why on daily basis, we conduct morning briefs. Through this sessions we train our employees on new processes and procedures” (Manager_17, 2024).

However, there seemed to be a challenge with conducting structured training because of the nature of the hotel shifts and work. A manager observed that:

“ There are factors such as costs, time and shifts which limit us from carrying out structured training programs. we are only able to carry out such programs during low season, but at the same time, we use that opportunity to send our staff on leave. this means not all of them benefit from such programs. we are working on modalities to improve on this challenge” (manager_09, 2024).

Correlation Analysis of Job Expertise Factor on Employee Performance

Analyses of correlation were performed to evaluate the degree of influence of the job expertise factor on their performance. As shown in Table 11 job expertise is positively and moderately related to employee performance ($r= 0.579$, $p=0.000$).

Table 12: Correlation Analysis Matrix

Predictor (X)	Correlations	Employee Performance (Y)
Job expertise factor	Pearson Correlation	.579**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000

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

In order to determine the influence of the influence of job expertise factor on employee performance, a multiple regression analysis of all the job evaluation factors against employee performance was carried out. The regression analysis of job expertise as a predictor of performance against performance produced significant results with a positive predictive power ($B=.238$, $p=.000$). This means that an increase in one-unit percentage of job expertise factor is likely to improve by approximately 23.8% of employee performance. As a result, the following null hypothesis was rejected:

H₀₄: Job expertise factor does not significantly influence employee’s performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.

The alternative hypothesis that adopted is that; *Job expertise factor significantly influences employee performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya.*

The results of this study coincide with Cao and Hamori (2023) that found a positive relationship between developmental job experience (tasks that require novel expertise) and job performance mostly among early-career employees. The study found that job expertise leads to higher job performance among employees through advice, information, performance feedback, and social support from their co-workers. The study also found that employees with higher past job performance are more likely to have higher levels of expertise.

Table 13: Coefficients for decision making factor against employee performance

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
	B	Std. Error	
1 (Constant)	.046	.031	.131
Job expertise factor	.238	.008	.000

Notes: a. Dependent Variable: Job evaluation factors

Model Formulation of Job Evaluation Factors and Employee Performance

The following model was developed in accordance with the conceptualized relationships to test the four hypotheses on the association between job evaluation factors and employee performance;

$$EmPef = B_0 + B_1InS + B_2JoR + B_3DeM + B_4JEx + \varepsilon$$

$$EmPef = 0.046 + 0.227InS + 0.234JoR + 0.29DeM + 0.238JEx + \varepsilon$$

Where;

EmPef = Employee Performance

InS = Interpersonal skills

JoR = Job Responsibility

DeM = Decision making

JEx = Job Expertise

B₀ = Unstandardized coefficient

ε = Error term

From the multiple regression results, the best fitting model for predicting the performance of employees from the hospitality facilities in Nakuru County would be the linear combination of interpersonal skills, the job responsibilities, the ability of the employees to make accurate decisions and their overall expertise.

The fifth objective was to establish the moderating effect of employee gender on the relationship between job evaluation factors and employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya. A two-stage hierarchical multiple regression analysis at 95% confidence level was conducted to establish the moderating effect of employee gender on the relationship between job evaluation factors and employee's performance. This method allowed for the hierarchical isolation of the effects of each variable (gender and employee job evaluation factors).

Correlation analysis

Before the hierarchical multiple regression analysis was conducted, a correlation test between the job performance and the moderator (gender) was tested. Results presented in Table 14 demonstrate a weak correlation between gender and employee performance (r= 0.158, p=0.002).

Table 14: Correlation analysis of employee gender factor and employee performance

Moderator (M)	Correlations	Employee Performance (Y)
Employee gender	Pearson Correlation	.158**
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.002

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

Model Summary of the Hierarchical Multiple Regression

The moderation test done in two stages, in the first step, the moderator variable and the independent variable were tested, hence a resultant Model 1. Thereafter, an interaction term was introduced in the model, resulting into Model 2. Results on of each mediating variable are indicated in Table 15. In the first test of mediation, as shown in model 1, the test yielded an R² of 0.450, and a significant prediction of the moderator and the independent variable at $F(2, 364) = 149.073, p=0.00$. This implies, the model could account for 45% of the variance in employee performance.

In *model 2*, when an interaction term between gender and job evaluation factors was introduced into the model, the R² change was found to be 0.001. This infers that there was 0.1% increase in the variation of employee performance, explained by the addition of the interaction term. The change in R² was insignificant at $F(1, 363) = 0.766, p = 0.382$. These result demonstrate that that gender does not moderate the relationship between job evaluation factors and employee performance.

Table 15: Model Summary of the Hierarchical Multiple Regression

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Change Statistics				
				R Square Change	F Change	df1	df2	Sig. F Change
1	.671 ^a	.450	.447	.450	149.073	2	364	.000
2	.672 ^b	.451	.447	.001	.766	1	363	.382

Notes: a. Predictors: (Constant), Gender; Job evaluation factors

b. Predictors: (Constant), Gender; Job evaluation factors; Interaction (Gender x Job evaluation factors)

c. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

The ANOVA result indicated the significance of each of the two models respectively. It is evident that all the two models were significant at $F(2, 364) = 149.073, p = 0.00$ and $F(3, 363) = 99.573, p = 0.00$ respectively. A significant “F Change” value means that there has been a significant improvement in model fit (i.e., more variance in the outcome variable has been explained by Model 2 than Model 1)

Results presented in Table 16 demonstrate that the regression coefficient’s results of *model 2* infer that the interaction between gender and employee evaluation factors is not a significant predictor of employee performance ($B = -.111, p=0.382$). This infers that the relationship between job evaluation factors and employee performance is not influenced by the gender differences of the employees. The B value ($B = -.111$) represents the change in the outcome variable, associated with a one-unit change in the predictor variable. This means that for every 1 unit of gender diversity in job evaluation exercise, there is approximately 11% change of employee performance. However, this change is insignificant. Therefore, the following null hypothesis was not rejected:

H₀₅: Employee gender does not significantly moderate the relationship between job evaluation factors and employee’s performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya

Nonetheless, the quantitative moderation results contradicted the interview findings. A few managers observed that:

“In the hotel industry, gender determines the suitability of a candidate for some jobs. for instance housekeeping jobs requires more male candidates than front office jobs because of the nature on manual tasks involved in housekeeping, favoring male employees than female” (Manager_08, 2024).

“From our experience, we have found certain gender of employees more productive in certain jobs than their counterparts. A particular gender seems to get better ratings than its counterpart on TripAdvisor. Definitely, this reality influences our recruitment process (Manager_12, 2024).

These findings corroborate the findings of Ozdemir (2021) that found that gender diversity in hospitality companies might influence performance of the establishments to some extent but the effect may vary based on performance indicators used. Another study by Nweke (2020) concluded that the level of gender diversity at a workplace with can significantly increase innovativeness by bringing about increment in training and development and introduction of new products and services. This is because no specific gender is naturally associated with performance. This implies that performance is a function of other factors apart from gender.

Table 16: Coefficients of the Hierarchical Multiple Regression

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Sig.
		B	Std. Error	
1	(Constant)	-.111	.189	.559
	Job evaluation factors	.948	.055	.000
	Gender	.001	.035	.987
2	(Constant)	-.570	.557	.308
	Job evaluation factors	1.087	.168	.000
	Gender	.368	.422	.383
	Interaction (Gender x Job evaluation factors)	-.111	.127	.382

a. Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

The four variables of job evaluation factors were combined into a composite variable to test for moderation. The following model was derived after the test of the moderation effect of gender on the relationship between and job evaluation factors and employee performance:

$$EmPef = B_0 + B_1JobEv + B_2Gen + (B_3JobEv * Gen) + \epsilon$$

$$EmPef = 0.570 + 1.087JobEv + 0.368Gen + (0.111JobEv * Gen) + \epsilon$$

Where;

$$EmPef = \text{Employee Performance}$$

JobEv = Job Evaluation factors

Gen = Gender

JobEv * Gen = Interaction between Gender and Job evaluation factors

B_0 = Unstandardized coefficient

ϵ = Error term

The best fitting model for predicting the performance of employees from the hospitality facilities in Nakuru County would be the linear combination of job evaluation factors as opposed to gender.

5.0 Conclusion

Based on the empirical evidence and literature review, this study concluded that job evaluation factors (interpersonal skills, job responsibility, decision making and job expertise) positively influence employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru county, Kenya. The interpersonal skills namely social skills, communication skills, leadership skills and conflict resolution skills are found to be crucial for performance. Job responsibility factors such as initiative taking, well defined job descriptions and proper recruitment procedures can enhance performance of employees at a work place.

Concerning decision making, it was found that employees make better decisions when they are placed in the right job grade. Key expertise factors that significantly influence employee performance are knowledge and skills of work procedures and job training programmes. Lastly, employee gender does not significantly moderate the relationship between job evaluation factors and employee's performance in four and five star-rated hospitality facilities in Nakuru County, Kenya. This result imply that no specific gender is naturally associated with performance, performance is a function of job evaluation factors but not gender.

6.0 Recommendations

Hotels should ensure frequent and fair training of employees to enhance their skills. The focus of such training programmes should not only be on the technical skills but also on interpersonal skills to enhance their leadership, decision making, social and communication skills as they are crucial for the success of the hotel. The human resource department should emphasize on carrying out fair recruitment and selection process for all job openings and avoid discriminating candidates on basis of gender. In some cases, the HR departments have been perceived to be discriminatory in certain jobs such as housekeeping. Sometimes, certain crucial activities of recruitment and selection such as advertisement because of the costs involved. This anomaly is discouraged as it can limit the pool of candidates to be considered for a job vacancy.

Hotel managers should consider developing clear job descriptions for all jobs including permanent, contract and temporary employment. The promotion criteria and compensation of employees in job grades should be strictly influenced by merit and suitability. Fairness and equity should be observed in implementation of these functions. This is because employees who are wrongly placed in the ranks are more likely to struggle with making decision making. The accuracy and speed of decision-making is greatly stifled. The tourism regulatory authority should enforce a framework that encourages hotels to offer jobs to both the male employees without discrimination. This is because, no specific gender is naturally associated with performance. In fact, gender diversity widens the pool of suitable candidates for a job, leading to innovation and creativity.

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