

MOTIVATION AND SUPERVISION IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY WITH FOCUS TO HOTELS AND LODGES IN MZUZU CITY

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CITATION: Chilembwe, J. M. & Baluti, J. (2014). Motivation and supervision in hospitality industry with focus to hotels and lodges in Mzuzu city. *International Journal of Social Sciences and Entrepreneurship*, 1 (10), 1-13.

ABSTRACT

This study was to assess supervision and motivation among staff in hotels and lodges in Mzuzu City. Motivation and supervision are very imperative in the hospitality Industry. Motivation creates employees' job satisfaction and good interaction between staff and customers. Motivation and supervision reduce high absenteeism rate of employees and high rate of staff turnovers. Besides, motivation and good supervision reduce employees' complaints in a department. This is a qualitative and quantitative study. The sample was drawn from three hospitality institutions in Mzuzu City. Data was collected through questionnaires from 20 participants and was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The findings of the study showed that many participants were motivated to their work. Training, job security and promotions were the major motivational factors for staff members. Conversely, scarcity of jobs, having a friend or a relative working at the workplace or workplace being close to home were identified as non motivational factors. In regards to supervision, participants had no major concerns except that they could not notice any change after the appraisal if they had performed well. In conclusion, managers are encouraged to ensure that staff members are well motivated. They have to find means of supporting their staff in trainings in order to improve their knowledge and skills as well as for their professional development. It is also recommended that promotions in the hospitality industry should be based on performance if there are such developments.

Key Words: *Motivation, Supervision, Leadership Styles and Training*

Introduction

Motivation and supervision are very important in any organization inclusive the hospitality Industry. Motivation creates employees' job satisfaction and good interaction between employees customers that eventually attract a repeat business (Condly & De Pietro, 2001). Kavanaugh and Ninemeier (1995) observed that motivation and supervision reduce high absenteeism rate of employees and high rate of staff turnovers. Besides, motivation and good supervision reduce employees' complaints in a department. Generally, if either leadership is not effective or employee's needs and wants are not being addressed, employees raise many

complaints. Every employee has unique needs and wants that must be addressed by the employer and the employer too has goals to be achieved at the end of the day by the employee.

Employee turnover in the Hospitality Industry costs restaurants and hotels billions of dollars each year, with worker turnover rates as high as 95% for some properties (Samuels, 2013). In the United States of America it was observed that employees' turnover cost the industry a loss of 150 billion dollars per year. Research showed that if level of motivation is improved, the turnover rate reduces by 53% (Barrows & Bosselman, 1999). A study of motivation and performance among fast food employees by Candy and De Pietro (2001) found out that turnover is less when employees feel good about their jobs; are supported by their organizations and have value for their work. Those who feel that work conditions are below standard and do not play fair are less motivated.

Motivating hotel staff not only improves job performance, but also reduces costs associated with finding and training or recruitment of new workers (Samuels, 2013). In this case, supervisors in hospitality industry have to provide a work environment in which employees can fulfill their personal needs, interests and goals while achieving objectives of the department. On the other hand, the organization supervisors should have the ability to accomplish their objectives by working with and through people (Kavanaugh & Ninemeier, 1995). Hotel employees play a key role in delivering the service product to its customers. Excellent service provided by employees can create lasting positive experiences for customers. The individual motivational constructs of hospitality employees play an important and a significant role in achieving high satisfaction among hotel customers. Happy employees will work harder to improve the hotel and also promote their hotel among their family, friends and acquaintances (Barrows & Bosselman, 1999)

Contrary to a belief that supervisors must motivate employees, Kavanaugh and Ninemeier (1995) argue that employees must motivate themselves. The role of supervisors is to create a climate in which employees' needs will be met while departmental or organizations goals and objectives are also achieved. What motivates one employee might have little effect on another because needs vary from employee to employee. Supervision in hospitality management includes varied roles such as lodging operations, the nature of leadership and motivation. Supervising is not that easy job when it comes to hospitality management. One has to first identify fundamental supervisory responsibilities and possess excellent communication skill. Cultural realism has to be clearly understood by the person involved in supervisory. Management and human resources in hospitality lies on the shoulders of supervisors. They join hands to recruit new people with certain noble qualities (Jerris, 1999). One of the human resource managers' functions is related to ensuring employees workplace motivation. It assists the general managers in keeping the employees satisfied with their jobs. If employees are not satisfied, they often do not perform to expected norms. Workplace dissatisfaction and poor performance usually lead to high employee turnover in the hospitality industry, particularly in developed countries. Human resource managers need to understand the motivational processes and human needs in different cultures. The Hong Kong

Hotels Association found in its 1994 to 1995 annual survey that 41.26% of employees in 63 hotels changed jobs or resigned (Lucas, 1995).

To understand employees' needs, managers should understand key theories that help them learn the basic needs of people. Maslow's theory is one of many theories that pointed out the basic sorts of needs. They are physiological needs, security needs, belongingness needs, esteem needs and self actualization needs. When people satisfy the first level, they will go the next level and the next. Maslow said higher-level needs like those for self-esteem or self-actualization would not become salient (even when unfulfilled) until lower needs were satisfied. Another theory is Herzberg's which is based on two distinct sets of factors that influence behaviour namely hygienic factors and motivators. Hygienic factors influencing job dissatisfaction may include pay, organization policies, working environment and the satisfaction with supervision. Whereas, motivating factors influencing job satisfaction may include recognition, promotion, achievement, and the intrinsic nature of the work.

Employees will be more likely to excel in their positions and stay with the company if they feel that there is a chance to move up the ladder. Therefore, it is the contention of this research to explore how employees in hotels and lodges in Mzuzu City are being motivated to stay or leave the hospitality industry.

Statement of the Problem

Staff turnovers can be stopped or minimized only if management is fully aware of how to overcome this challenge. Effective supervision and staff motivation is what is required for the growth of hospitality industry. Many people have left their jobs and/or changed their career in hospitality industries due to lack of good supervision and motivation. From the researcher's observations and experience the Malawi Institute of Tourism has been training more students every year in hospitality courses but more have changed this career. This research found very little empirical literature addressing this issue. Therefore, is the purpose of this research to investigate employees' motivation and supervision in the hotels and lodges in Mzuzu City?

Specific Objectives of the Study

1. To find out how people are motivated in hospitality industry especially hotels and lodges in Mzuzu City?
2. To identify what motivates employees in hotels and lodges in Mzuzu City
3. To evaluate how effective is supervision in hotels and lodges?

Literature Review

Motivation

Hundreds of definitions probably exist for the term motivation. Motivation is the process by which an individual is stimulated act or respond in given situation (Zabka , 1971). This Response can be self motivated or caused by external forces. Daschler and Ninemeter (1989: 210) said that " motivation is a state or force within an individual that makes the employee act in away designed to achieve some goal". Taking this

broad definition to the context of supervision in the hospitality operation, motivation is what the supervisor does to encourage and influence other people to take necessary action. Intrinsic motivation is an internally generated force or drive within the individual which provides an incentive for the employee to act. Kappa, Nitschke and Schappert (1997) argued that motivation can be described as the art of stimulating a person's interest in a particular job, project or subject to the extent that individual is challenged to be continually attentive, observant, concerned and committed. Motivation is the end result of meeting and satisfying those human needs associated with feeling a sense of worth, Value and belonging to an organization nor Department. Furthermore, DuBrin (2009:373) noted that motivation does contribute substantially to performance, but not as directly as many people think. This is agreeable with Maslow (1954: 375) who indicated that staff is willing to expend effort towards achieving a goal because it satisfies one of their important needs whereas Cole, (1994:112) stressed that the whole issue of staff motivation is crucial to high performance and success.

Leadership Styles and Motivation

The leadership style is the manner and approach of providing directions, Implementing plans and motivating people (Kavanaugh and Ninemier,1995). Each leadership style creates conditions that can affect employees motivation levels. Supervisors, need to develop these styles of leadership and turn them into strategies. Seen as strategies, leadership style becomes the tools with which you can create the conditions in which employees become motivated to achieve department goals. Kavanaugh and Ninemier (1995) examined four leadership styles which are used by supervisors, there are:

1. Autocratic or Authoritarian: in this style the leader retains as much power and decision making authority as possible. It is like a dictator and is used most to new employees to learn work quickly.
2. Bureaucratic or Paternalistic: this is one of the styles which focuses on rules regulation, policies and procedures. This is more a police officer than a leader. The style can be adopted when other leadership styles are inappropriate.
3. Democratic or Participative: The Supervisor keeps employees informed on all matters that directly affect their work and shares decision making and problem solving responsibilities. This can be used with highly experienced employees.
4. Laissez - Faire or Free Rein: This leadership style refers to a hands off approach in which the supervisor actually does very little leading or no direction is given to freedom as possible and all the authority is given to employees. This can be applied to highly skilled or experienced employees who have been trained in decision making and problem solving techniques.

The styles above are a continuous range between two extremes from the authoritarian with strict controls to Laissez – Faire with no control. There is no style that is recommended universally since each is useful in different circumstances.

The Role of Managers in Motivating Employees

In the hospitality and tourism industry today, managers face challenges on how to effectively motivate their employees in order to provide excellent and efficient service to the customers and to improve productivity (Cheng, 1995). The major problem is that many employees are not motivated to achieve goals and interests of the organization and instead they are interested to satisfy their own needs. A balance is when these employees satisfy their private needs through satisfaction of organization interests. Thus, managers should have knowledge and skills to effectively use and coordinate their employees. Managers have to know what their employees expect from work. This may assist managers to manipulate work environment and promote excellent service by accommodating employees' needs and desires (Cheng, 1995).

Managers cannot force their employees to be motivated, but if they know what their employees want from work, they can create a coordinated work environment which may include coaching skills development and rewards that help employees to get motivated. Condly and De Pietro (2001) argued that motivation makes an organization more effective. Generally, motivated employees are enthusiastic about task accomplishments. They often do their jobs best. Besides, they are more quality-oriented and are more productive. Therefore, it is important for management to understand how organizations influence the motivation of their individual employees.

Another role for the service manager is to increase employees' morale. Employee morale can be defined as the feelings an employee has about all aspects of the job (Cheng, 1995). There are many benefits to be gained from building good morale. Besides, there are proven relationships between morale levels, turnover, and absenteeism (Syptak, Marsland and Ulmer, 2001). However, research indicates that high employee morale levels alone without proper supervision do not always yield high productivity levels (Cheng, 1995).

Principal Theories of Motivation

Motivation is a complex process (Chiang and Jang, 2007). Each employee has some need, some desire, or some emotion that will make him or her wash more dishes or vacuum more square feet of carpet. The key is finding that motivating force, which varies from individual to individual and from time to time within the same individual. Therefore, to better understand how to motivate employees one must understand the basic theories of motivation. Motivation is a central factor in the management function of directing. Since the early 1900s various theories of motivation have gained recognition. This study will only review theories of motivation that have received considerable attention and are frequently offered as explanations of, or approach to, motivation. These theories are Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs and Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs Theory

Maslow theorized that people have five types of needs and that these are activated in a hierarchical manner. This means that the needs are aroused in a specific order from the lowest to highest, and that the lowest order need must be fulfilled before the next highest order need is triggered, and so on (Chiang and Jang 2007). Maslow identified a hierarchy of five basic needs that he argues are shared by all human beings: these are;-

- a) Physiological needs: the basic physical needs that all animals need to satisfy: hunger, thirst and sleep.
- b) Safety needs: to live in a secure and predictable world. To be protected from danger and accident. To have a safe home and a secure income.
- c) Social and love needs: to have family and friends. To feel that they have a place in a group and that they are liked and valued by others.
- d) Esteem needs: to be respected by the others and to have a high evaluation of themselves.
- e) Self-actualization: to fulfil one's potential whatever that may be and to do what one is fitted for.

According to Maslow's theory, basic physical necessities must be satisfied before higher growth needs can be expressed. Stronger needs (such as hunger and thirst) must be satisfied before one can move on to the higher needs, such as self-esteem. Maslow believed that once freed from the "lower" needs, humans are drawn to satisfy needs that will help them grow and develop. However, people often move up and down in these five basic needs throughout their lives.

Herzberg's Two-Factor Theory

Frederick Herzberg constructed the motivation-hygiene theory, or two sets of factors that affect employee performance. The first set is hygiene factors or dissatisfiers, which include; company and administrative policies, supervision, working conditions, interpersonal relations, salary, status, job security and personal life. If these are inadequate, they will result in dissatisfaction and then lack of motivation. If they are adequate, employees will be satisfied but still not motivated to work harder.

The second set is motivators or satisfiers. To motivate employees to improve performance, motivators must be offered. Examples of motivators can be described as following; achievements, recognition, work itself, responsibility, advancement and growth. These factors are what truly motivate employees because they give employees a sense of personal accomplishment through the challenge of the job itself (Balmer and Baum, 1993). However, Chiang and Jang (2007) argue that employees can be motivated by these factors only if the hygiene components such as fair pay and good supervision are present

The principal difference between the two sets of factors that affect employee performance is that hygiene factors relate to job content and motivator factors relate to job environment. Hygiene cannot motivate employees but can minimize dissatisfaction, if handled properly. Motivators create satisfaction by fulfilling individual's needs for meaning and personal

growth. Once the hygiene factors present, the motivators will promote job satisfaction and encourage production (Syptak, Marsland and Ulmer, 2001).

Balmer and Baum (1993) argue that Herzberg's two-factor theory has contributed the broader knowledge of motivation and that factors motivating people at work can usually be divided into intrinsic and extrinsic factors. Intrinsic factors are the characteristics of the work itself - how interesting the work is and how challenging is whereas extrinsic factors relate to the context of the work—the physical environment, whether one likes one's colleagues and supervisor, salary and benefits.

Techniques to motivate employees

There are many motivational factors that can be used to encourage employees to work. The following are "Standards" in many workplaces:

Communication

Within a hospitality organization, communication is important for passing along information from one individual or a group. Communication can be in several ways such as verbal, nonverbal, upward, or downward. Lack of good communication causes low productivity, poor service, and increased costs (Kovach, 1987). The success of managers is determined by the job their employees do. Since motivated employees are more productive, managers must have a clear interest in knowing what motivates their staff. Good communication is one of many factors that motivate employees (Jerris, 1999).

Training

Kovach (1987) noted how training becomes an important activity for any hospitality organization. Training provides on-the-job experiences and information that help employees become more proficient or qualified at a task at their current jobs. A well trained group of employees often result in a reduction of costs, stress, turnover, and absenteeism and a corresponding increase in efficiency and customer satisfaction (Lockwood and Medlik 2001). Training is probably the most important aspect of reduced turnover because it minimizes mistakes and that minimizes a lot of reasons for turnover (Barrows and Bosselman, 1999; Drummond, 1990).

Training is important because of changing technology and markets. Managers and employees need to update their skills through training. Training programs can be addressed in many ways such as classroom lectures, problem-solving case analysis and interactive role-plays (Bohlander, Snell and Sherman, 2001). Kovach (1987) asked participating employees about the influence of training on their performance. Ninety three percent indicated that training programs improved their skills, knowledge, and behaviour. Besides, training encouraged them to stay at a company. On the other hand, Kovach (1987) noted that training does cost a lot but no training means poor service and low turn up of customers. So the lost revenue from poor services far exceeds the cost of training employees.

Wages and Salaries

An extensive review of the literature indicates that important work-related variables leading to job satisfaction include challenging work, interesting job assignments, equitable rewards, competent supervision, and rewarding careers (Condly and De-Pietro, 2001). It is doubtful, however, whether many employees would continue working were it not for the money they earn. Employees desire compensation systems that they perceive as being fair and commensurate with their skills and expectations. Pay, therefore, is a major consideration in human resource management because it provides employees with a tangible reward for their services (Bohlander, Snell, and Sherman, 2001).

Stone (2002) indicated that people are motivated by money for many different reasons. The need to provide the basic necessities of life motivates most people. Some people think of money as instrumental to satisfying noneconomic needs such as power, status and affiliations with desired groups. Money is often viewed as a symbol of personal success and achievement. Many factors affect how wages and salaries are set. The factors depend on area of living, the labour market, minimum wages and other governmental regulations, the cost of living, the ability of the employer to pay, the worth of the job and the presence of a collective bargaining agreement (Bohlander, Snell, and Sherman, 2001). Pay rates can be adjusted to help employees cope with their living situations

Good Working Environment

Condly and De Pietro (2001) noted that the working environment can often be a cause of low productivity. Employees need adequate equipment, space, heating, lighting and ventilation. Colour also has a significant impact on the work environment. Cheng (1995) noted that a good working environment is where employees enjoy working conditions close to their supervisors. To have a good working environment, managers have to trust their employees and value their contributions to the company. Besides, managers need to listen to their employees and accept their workplace ideas.

Research Methodology

This research used quantitative research design. This design was chosen in order to solicit large representative information from members of staff working in the hospitality industry. The study was conducted at Mzuzu Hotels, Mzuzu Lodge and Ilala Crest Lodge. These institutions are located within Mzuzu City. These sites were purposively chosen because they offer high standards of services and have a good number of staff. The study population comprised of all staff members working at Mzuzu Hotel, Mzuzu Lodge and Ilala Crest Lodge; thus, from labourers to supervisors/managers. This study used simple random sampling method. The researcher asked for a list of staff members from the managers in research sites. Each staff member was given a number starting from one. Every third number (staff member) was included in the study sample. Staff members who were on holiday were excluded from the list since it was difficult to meet them considering that the time to complete the study was short. The sample size for this study was 30 participants. However, only 20 were interviewed due to a high refusal rate. Data was collected using a modified questionnaire which was used in the study

of Kovach (1987) which assessed factors that motivates employees. The instrument was first pre-tested in order to assess its reliability and its validity.

Research Results

Description of Analysis and Sample Size

The collected data from the participants was analyzed descriptively. Data from questionnaires were entered into SPSS for easy analysis and interpretation. Data was collected from Mzuzu Hotel, Ilala Crest Lodge and Mzuzu Lodge. A total of 20 employees participated in the study. There were 8 males and 12 females.

Majority of the participants (65%) were aged between 18 – 30 years. There were 6 (30%) participants aged 31 – 40 years. Only 1 (5%) participant was aged above 50 years. In terms of education qualifications, 15 (75%) participants had Diplomas while 5 (25%) had Malawi Schools Certificate of Education (MSCE). Majority of the participants (n=12) were working in food production while 4 participants were from others areas such as administration and security. Three participants were working in the rooms.

The study results showed that 55% of the participants had worked in the hospitality industry for a period between 1 – 3 years while 30% of the participants had worked between 7 – 9 years. Only 5% (n=1) had worked for less than a year. The analysis further revealed that 55% of the participants (n=11) had worked at the research sites between 1 - 3 years and 15% of the participants (n=3) had worked between 7 – 9 years.

Motivational Factors that Influence Employees to Perform a Good Job

The researcher sought participants' views on different motivation factors that influenced them to perform a good job. Data analysis showed that job security, wages, interesting job, empowerment and to be allowed to be part of the team were the major motivation factors. However, the other factors, such as, work environment, loyalty to the employer, fringe benefits, and flexible hours were also equally important motivational factors.

Furthermore, participants were asked to rate if different motivation techniques were effective in improving their personal motivation. The result showed that training programs and promotion were highly supported by the participants as major motivation techniques. Surprisingly, participation in decision making and citation for good work done as motivation techniques were less supported by the participants.

Finally, participants were asked to identify factors that motivate them to choose a career in the hospitality industry. The results showed that fringe benefit; interesting jobs; flexible hours; salary and could become a manager one day were major factors that motivated participants to join hospitality industry. Conversely, close to a home, friends work here; somebody in the family works here and could not find a job were not the major factors that influenced participants to choose a career in hospitality industry.

Supervision

Assessing effectiveness of supervision in the hospitality institutions revealed that 80% of the participants expressed that their work get supervised. Manager/supervisors give them feedbacks; managers/supervisors ask for their opinions; they are made to feel that their job is important and the company provide with appraisal interviews. However, close to a half of the participants (47%; n=9) stated that they do not notice any changes after the appraisal.

Discussions

Demographic Details

Findings of the study reviewed that majority of participants were females aged between 18 – 30 years with Diplomas and had worked in the hospitality industry between 1 -3 years. This was expected in this study since from experience, the hospitality industry is dominated by young employees. What was surprising was that no participant had a degree. This is a wakeup call for those working in the hospitality industry to improve their qualification if the hospitality industry is to develop in Mzuzu City. The study findings further reviewed that majority of the participants had few years of experience in the hospitality industry. This is not a good outcome as people with experience are essential for the development of business in the hospitality industry. The possible explanation for the finding could be that employee salaries in many hotels and lodges are usually not attractive and inadequate for individuals with a standard size of a family. Therefore, many people with vast experience start their own business leaving the industry with young and inexperienced staff.

What motivates staff?

The study findings reveal that staff members perform better if there are opportunities for further education or studies; salary is better; there is job security and if they are empowered. These findings collaborate with what Herzbergs theory describes as hygienic factors. Therefore, managers must always be aware of what their employees want and thrive to meet their needs. Eventually, company's production is likely to increase. There are different techniques that manager may use in order to increase staff morale. Evidence form this study shows that issue of training, good pay, promotions and good working conditions are essential when it comes to staff motivation. The changing world is influencing people to advance in education as well as taking challenging positions. This may possibly be the reasons why training and promotions were rated highly as the best motivation techniques good manager can implement. Staffs often get motivation whenever they see themselves moving up the ladder of Maslow hierarchy of needs. On the other hand, the evidence from this study suggests that appraising for good work done as well as participation in decision making are not better motivation techniques. This contradicts what Herzberg describes as satisfiers. The possible explanation for this contradicting finding with earlier findings could be that in the present study the sample size is relatively small and majority of the participants would be described as juniors.

The study further reveals that one of the reasons why participants joined the hospitality industry was that they could become a manager in the field one day. This is typical of young men and women in every profession who often are pessimistic about the future. This kind of thinking may either influence staff members to either work hard so that their dream may materialise or they are likely to become frustrated if they may see themselves not advancing in their profession. It also appears that staffs were really motivated to join the hospitality industry. This is evident from the study findings. Majority of the participants denied the fact that they joined the industry because jobs were scarce; were influenced by friends or relatives and that they work in the industry because the hotel or lodge in which they were working were located close to their homes. These findings are supporting the two major theories in this study where none of these were identified as motivational factors. Work is likely to be compromised if employees had joined the hospitality industry because of these reasons.

Supervision

It was evident from this study that staff members in the research sites were supervised, appraised, allowed to contribute ideas and recognise the importance of their job. This is essential at any work place since where there is no supervision standards are often compromise. It is not surprising to note that service standards in the research sites were high. However, it was disappointing to note that almost half of the participants felt that though they are appraised they could hardly see any changes. This finding is important as it informs managers to come up with strategies for high performers so that they get rewards after performing to the expectation of the company.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The purpose of this current research was to assess supervision and motivation in hotels and lodges in Mzuzu City. Understanding the factors that motivated employees work to their optimal level is the heart of good management. Motivated staff brings in good results as absenteeism are minimised. Evidence from this study suggests that employees are mainly motivated when the workplace offers opportunities for training, promotion and if there is job security. The other important factors that participants highlighted are; better pay, empowerment and making the job interesting. These findings collaborate with major theorists of motivation. Therefore, supervisors/managers ought to ensure that their staff members are well motivated in order to increase productivity.

In regards to supervision, the evidence suggests that staff members have no major issues on how they are supervised. Staff lamented that they are given feedback and often asked for their opinions on issues pertaining to their job. This is a positive results considering that bad supervision threatens staff and is often associated with high turn-over. However, Supervisors/managers need to focus more on how to reward performers after performance appraisal meetings since almost half of the participants stated that they see no change after the appraisal meetings.

The research findings reveal that over a half participant stated that citation for good work and participation in the management are not better motivational techniques. Therefore, this study

recommends that vigorous research need to be carried out to investigate these variables thoroughly in order to make a sound conclusion.

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