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Guest house supervisors' job satisfaction and how it is influenced by the tenet of impact of psychological empowerment in Mombasa county, Kenya

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Abstract

'Impact' is of utmost importance to guest house supervisors. In comparison with the big star rated hotels, guest houses have a substantial ratio of untrained personnel. Employees who might have some hospitality training are usually the supervisors. However, senior managers of these guest houses tend to dictate all the operations, in turn leading to low 'impact' empowerment. Therefore, this research sought to establish the influence of the 'impact' cognition of psychological empowerment on job satisfaction among guest house supervisors in the Mombasa County in Kenya. The research adopted descriptive survey study design. Census sampling was used. Research findings revealed that there existed a positive and significant influence ($P < 0.05$) of 'impact' on job satisfaction ($r = 0.868$). This research would be of great help to guest house owners, managers and organizations in the hospitality sector who would be able to formulate 'impact' empowerment strategies for their staff.

Keywords: impact, psychological empowerment, job satisfaction, guest houses, supervisors

Introduction

'Impact' is the degree to which an employee can influence activities and work outcome in his/her department or the larger organization (Spreitzer, 2008) ^[10]. Buitenbach & Hlalele (2005) ^[11] stated that the triumph an employee feels when they achieve this is known as 'impact'. Employees will only feel a sense of impact if they perceive they are influencing decisions in their departments and organizations (Thomas & Velthouse, 1990) ^[12]. The employees who believe that they are influencing outcomes in the hotel institution would expect to be able to utilize the information about customer needs and wants, to influence departmental operations and perceived quality of service (Spreitzer, 2008) ^[10].

Sut & Chad (2011) ^[11] in their research in the Chinese hotel industry argued that managers should be able to encourage divergent opinions and ideas so that all the employees feel committed, that someone is listening to their voices and that their contributions have some impact on the organization's performance. In their research, they established that this had a direct influence on the feeling of employees' satisfaction in their jobs. Moreover, when employees have influence on decisions, they can alter activity implementation and may attempt to give helpful solutions to problems. Thus, employees given power and impact to organizational decisions are conducive to displaying a higher degree of job satisfaction (Hsiang-Fei, Sheng-Hsiung & Ya-Yun, 2014) ^[6].

Elbeyi, Yüksel, & Yalçın (2011) ^[3] in their study on the effects of employee empowerment on their job satisfaction in the Turkish hospitality industry found that there is often an emotional outcome of job satisfaction to having 'impact' psychological empowerment. Many of the interviewees in their study identified that when they influence a work activity, they feel a great sense of satisfaction. In addition, these Turkish hospitality employees indicated that this emotional response is prompted as they felt that they were valuable members of the whole team and that their contribution indeed counted. Without the impact tenet of empowerment, employees could easily feel that they are treated like robots, particularly if the work that they are doing is repetitive and monotonous (Elbeyi, *et al.* 2011) ^[3]. Hence, 'impact' was identified as having a positive relationship with the intrinsic satisfaction derived from an employee's job activities. Haiyan, Ning & Qi, (2016) ^[5] carried out a study on new generations' psychological empowerment and their relationship with career competencies and job satisfaction in China. They found out that the dimension of impact of psychological empowerment contributed positively to job satisfaction of hospitality employees.

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Buitendach & Hlalele (2005) [1] in their study of South African petrochemical engineers found a positive correlation of large effect between the tenet of impact of psychological empowerment and job satisfaction. This finding implied that the two variables were related, that is, those engineers who perceived that they had influence on decisions made at their organizations had a correspondingly high level of job satisfaction. Similarly, Gachunga, Maina & Kabare (2016) [4] in their study on the influence of psychological empowerment on organizational commitment in Kenyan civil service surveyed 384 respondents from four public organizations. Their study posited that the impact cognition of psychological empowerment had a positive correlation with job satisfaction, which subsequently lead to organizational commitment.

These studies demonstrated the relationship between the impact cognition of psychological empowerment and job satisfaction in the larger hospitality industry and other sectors of the economy. However, none captured the situation in the small hospitality establishments, such as guest houses; which are of great importance to local economies (Kivuva, Kihima & Nzioka, 2014; Ramukumba and Ferreira, 2016) [7, 8]. Hence, the current study sought to determine whether there existed a relationship between the two variables among guest house supervisors in the county of Mombasa in Kenya.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was utilised in carrying out this study. This design seeks to look at individuals in order to describe, compare, contrast, classify, analyse and interpret the entities and the events that constitute their various fields of inquiry (Cohen, Manion & Morrison, 2011) [2]. The research was done in Mombasa County, found at the coastal strip of Kenya. The County lies on the shores of the Indian Ocean located on the South Eastern part of Kenya (4°03’S 39°40’E / 4.050°S 39.667°E). Weather in this coastal County averages temperatures of 84°F (29°C) and 79% humidity. The study targeted supervisors in all the guest houses in the county. Seventy-six (76) guest houses

had been registered with the Mombasa County Government at the period of the study. A total of 233 supervisors were in-charge of various operations in their respective establishments. Census sampling was utilised. Data collection was done through a self-administered semi-structured questionnaire. The study adopted the Spreitzer’s Psychological Empowerment (PE) and Herzberg’s Job Satisfaction (JS) Scales. These scales have been tested in the past and found to be reliable. Pearson correlation analysis was done to establish the influence of the independent variable, that is, the impact tenet of psychological empowerment on job satisfaction (dependent variable). In addition, a linear regression model was done to ascertain the level of significance the independent variable had on the dependent variable. Further, ANOVA was done to establish whether the regression model was significantly predicting the outcome.

Results and Discussions

The ‘impact’ psychological empowerment statements were computed using descriptive statistics as summarized in Table 1. Majority of the respondents (n=182, 86.7%) opined that they had some influence on what happened in their sections, with 6.7% being neutral and 6.7% disagreeing. A mean of 3.9 and standard deviation of 0.652 was in support of this. Another 70% of the respondents (n=147) indicated that they had a great deal of control over what happened in their departments as supported by a mean score of 3.77 and standard deviation of 0.669, with 26.7% recording neutral and 3.3% indicating that they had no control. A further 73.3% of the respondents (n=154) said that they had significant influence over what happened in their organizations with 23.3% being neutral and 3.3% disagreeing. A mean score of 3.77 and standard deviation of 0.763 was in support of this. The overall ‘impact’ psychological empowerment had a high mean score of 3.81. The implication of these results was that majority of the respondents felt that their ideas and opinions were put into consideration by the management of the guest houses.

Table 1: Descriptive statistics of ‘Impact’ cognition of psychological empowerment

	Strongly disagree	Disagree		Neutral		Agree		Strongly agree		Mean	SD
		Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%	Freq	%		
I have large impact on what is happening in my section		14	6.7	14	6.7	161	76.7	21	10.0	3.90	.652
My control is big over what happens in my department		7	3.3	56	26.7	126	60.0	21	10.0	3.77	.669
My influence is significant over what happens in my organization	7	3.3		49	23.3	133	63.3	21	10.0	3.77	.763
Overall mean										3.81	.620

The ‘impact’ cognition involves the feeling that employees have control over their job activities to some extent and that they got some impact over the departmental and company’s decisions. This consists of staff influence on what happens in their departments, their extent of control on their departments and their participation in making of decisions. The findings of this study indicated that most of the respondents were positive on their responses. The mean value of 3.81 generally showed that the influence of guest house supervisors in Mombasa County on their jobs and responsibilities, departmental and organizational matters was moderately above average.

To establish job satisfaction, descriptive statistics were used

to analyze the MSQ questionnaire items. The mean value for job satisfaction was found to be 3.52 within a scale of 1 to 5; with a standard deviation of 0.479. The implication of this was that guest house supervisors’ job satisfaction was just above average; hence, a lot of efforts were needed to achieve total job satisfaction. Further, the influence of ‘impact’ psychological empowerment on job satisfaction was investigated using Pearson product-moment correlation coefficient as shown on Table 2. There was found to be a positive influence of ‘impact’ psychological empowerment on job satisfaction (r=.868, P<0.05). This indicated that there was a strong linear relationship between ‘impact’ psychological empowerment and job satisfaction of guest

house supervisors. This implied that the more ‘impact’ psychological empowerment was adopted the more job satisfaction of supervisors of guest houses improved.

Table 2: Correlations of ‘Impact’ psychological empowerment and job satisfaction

		Job satisfaction	Impact
Job satisfaction	Pearson Correlation	1	
	Sig. (2-tailed)		
Impact	Pearson Correlation	.868**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	

**Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed). b. Listwise N=210

These findings indicated that the dimension of ‘impact’ of psychological empowerment positively influenced guest house supervisors’ job satisfaction. These results concurred with the findings by Sut & Chad (2011) [11] in their research in the Chinese hotel industry. They argued that managers should encourage employees to contribute their ideas and opinions as this enhanced job satisfaction. Employees also felt that their seniors were listening to their voices; and their ideas impacted on their organization’s performance. They established that this had a direct influence on the employees’ commitment in their jobs. The current study further agreed with the Hsiang-Fei, *et al.* (2014) [6] who indicated that power and impact are conducive to displaying a higher degree of job satisfaction among hospitality employees. Moreover, the results of this study were in line with the Turkish hospitality industry study done by Elbeyi, *et al.* (2011) [3] concerning empowerment and job

satisfaction of hotel employees. Majority of the respondents in the Turkish study indicated that when they influenced decisions in their organizations they felt a great sense of satisfaction; and felt that they were valuable members of the whole team. This made employees feel that their contribution indeed counted.

In addition, the findings of the current study were in concurrence with studies done in other sectors of the economy. The results were in agreement with Buitendach & Hlalele (2005) [1] who found a correlation of a large effect between the dimension of ‘impact’ and job satisfaction among engineers in a petrochemical industry in South Africa. It further agreed with Gachunga, *et al.* (2016) [4] who posited a positive correlation between ‘impact’ and job satisfaction among civil servants in four public organizations in the education sector in Kenya.

To find out whether there was significant influence of the ‘impact’ dimension of psychological empowerment on job satisfaction of guest house supervisors in Mombasa County, a linear regression model was used. ‘Impact’ psychological empowerment was used to predict job satisfaction of guest house supervisors as summarized in Table 3. From the model, ($R^2 = .753$) showed that the predictor accounted for 75.3% variation in job satisfaction of guest house supervisors. The predictor used in the model captured the variation in the job satisfaction of guest house supervisors. The change statistics was used to test whether the change in adjusted R^2 was significant using the F-ratio. The model caused adjusted R^2 to change from zero to .753 and this change gave rise to an F- ratio of 634.233, which was significant at a probability of .05.

Table 3: Model summary of ‘Impact’ psychological empowerment

Model	R	R square	Adjusted-R square	Std. error-of the estimate	Change statistics				
					R-square change	F change	df1	df2	Sig. F change
1	.868 ^a	.753	.752	.21176	.753	634.233	1	208	.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Impact

Additionally, ANOVA was used to test whether the regression model was significantly fitting in predicting the outcome as shown in Table 4. The regression model significantly improved the ability to predict the job satisfaction of guest house supervisors. The F- ratio was 634.23 ($P < .05$) and thus the model was significant. As such, the null hypothesis that there was no significant relationship

between the ‘impact’ cognition of psychological empowerment and job satisfaction of guest house supervisors in Mombasa County was rejected; and the alternative that there was a significant relationship between the ‘impact’ cognition of psychological empowerment and job satisfaction was adopted.

Table 4: ANOVA of ‘Impact’ psychological empowerment

Model		Sum of squares	Df	Mean square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	28.442	1	28.442	634.233	.000 ^b
	Residual	9.328	208	.045		
	Total	37.769	209			

a. Dependent variable: Satisfaction, b. Predictors: (Constant), Impact

Further, the β coefficient for independent variable ‘impact’ psychological empowerment was generated from the model and subjected to a *t*-test, in order to test the hypothesis under study. The *t*-test was used to measure whether the predictor

was making a significant contribution to the model. Table 5 shows the estimates of β -value and the contribution of ‘impact’ psychological empowerment predictor to the model.

Table 5: Coefficients of ‘Impact’ psychological empowerment

Model	Unstandardized coefficients		Standardized coefficients	<i>t</i>	Sig.	Correlations		
	B	Std. error	Beta			Zero-order	Partial	Part
1	(Constant)	1.370	.091	15.121	.000			
	Impact	.595	.024	.868	.000	.868	.868	.868

a. Dependent variable: Satisfaction

The β -value for 'impact' psychological empowerment had positive coefficient, depicting a positive relationship with job satisfaction of guest house supervisors as summarized in the model as:

$$Y = 1.370 + .595X + \varepsilon$$

Where: Y = job satisfaction, X = 'impact' psychological empowerment, ε = error term

From these results, the *t*-test associated with β -values was significant and 'impact' psychological empowerment predictor made a significant contribution to the model. The coefficients results showed that the predicted parameter in relation to the independent factor was significant ($\beta_1 = 0.595$, $P < 0.05$). Therefore, this implied that the study rejected the null hypothesis; which stated that there was no significant relationship between the 'impact' dimension of psychological empowerment and job satisfaction of guest house supervisors. The results indicated that for each unit increase in the 'impact' psychological empowerment, there was 0.595 units increase in job satisfaction of guest house supervisors. The findings showed that the more guest house supervisors felt that they had influence on departmental and organizational matters, the higher their job satisfaction was. This finding of the study agreed with Gachunga, *et al.*, (2016) ^[4] in the Kenyan civil service that impact was a significant predictor of job satisfaction. They argued that through organizations taking into consideration employee opinions in making organizational decisions this was high correlated with the feeling of job satisfaction. Consequently, the current research was in support that it was critical for management of guest houses to listen to their employee views and put them into consideration when making work related decisions. This would in turn not only improve their job satisfaction but also enhance customer service delivery, organizational performance and decrease intentions of leaving. However, this study's results differed with Spreitzer (2008) ^[10] who indicated that no relationship existed between the two variables. This difference could be associated with contextual differences as the current study was done in Kenya while the former study was done in a Western country.

Conclusion

The findings for this study revealed that 'impact' had a positive influence on guest house supervisors' job satisfaction. The two variables had a strong linear relationship. The implication was that the more guest houses supervisors' opinions were considered in decision making, the more job satisfaction was enhanced. In light of these findings, this research recommends that supervisors in guest houses ought to be involved and participate in decisions concerning their organization and departments. This would enhance their perception of influencing the decision-making process concerning their work activities. This would boost the 'impact' tenet of psychological empowerment and ultimately job satisfaction. This would assist in enhancing the feeling of being valued by the organization and self-esteem among supervisors. The study further recommends that the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, through the various organizations under it; for example, Kenya Tourism Board (KTB), Kenya Association of Hotelkeepers and Caterers (KAHC) and Pubs, Entertainment and Restaurants Association of Kenya (PERAK) should sensitize their

memberships on creation of strategies of ensuring employee participation in the decision-making process. Future studies should seek to utilize alternative data collection methods, such as interviews, in order to ascertain more deep rooted information in this area of study.

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