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**Nyaoke, G. O.,<sup>1\*</sup> & Amuhaya, J.<sup>2</sup>**

<sup>1\*</sup>MBA Scholar, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology [JKUAT], Kakamega, Kenya

<sup>2</sup>Ph.D, Lecturer, Jomo Kenyatta University of Agriculture & Technology [JKUAT], Kakamega, Kenya

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**ABSTRACT**

*Social scientists have established that motivated employees help organizations to achieve their goals including improved employee performance and productivity. The hospitality industry is a labour intensive sector that relies on employees for quality service delivery to customers. However, motivation level among employees is questionable owing to high employee performance as well as closures of many ventures in the industry. In Kisumu County, five two star rated hotels closed down and a total of one hundred and fifty employees lost their positions in star rated hotels in the county thereby putting employee motivation in the area into question. The purpose of the study was to investigate the influence of motivation on employee performance among star rated hotels in Kisumu County. Specific objective was to establish the influence of employee recognition on employee performance. Hertzberg's two factor theory of motivation was used to guide the study. Quantitative research method was adopted by the study. Target population was one four-star hotel, 3 three star hotels and four two star hotels making a total of eight hotels with a population of three hundred and twenty employees. This comprised of employees in the management positions and non-management employees. Yamane's formula was used to calculate a sample size of respondents who were selected through simple random technique. Data was collected by means of questionnaire. Validity was achieved through content validity while reliability was computed from pilot test data, where Cronbach's alpha attained employee recognition and employee performance. Quantitative data was analysed by means of descriptive statistics and correlation. Linear and Multiple Regression was used to measure the relationship between motivation and employee performance. It was found that employee performance is influenced by recognition to a moderate extent. It was concluded that recognition contribute to significant changes in employee performance. It was recommended that motivation in terms of recognition should be provided to ensure that their benefits are achieved.*

**Key words:** Motivational Factors, Recognition, Employee Performance, Star-Rated Hotels

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## INTRODUCTION

Motivation is a critical human resource management in Hotel industry with labor intensive requirements for effective service delivery (Hazra, Sengupta & Ghosh, 2014). It is the human element that delivers services in this sector. Therefore, measuring employees' motivation and linking the same to their performance levels are very important, as customer dissatisfaction or satisfaction with the services provided may be influenced by employees' dissatisfaction or satisfaction (Rožman, Treven & Čančer, 2017). Importance of employee motivation in this sector cannot therefore be gainsaid.

The concept of motivation has been defined by diverse authors in different ways. Armstrong (2012) defined it as the processes that account for an individual's intensity, direction, and persistence of effort towards attaining a goal. Stoke (1999, cited in Alqusayer, 2016) mentioned that motivation is a human psychological distinctive that contributes to increase the person's level of promise. According to Hazra, et al (2015), motivation means to move push or persuade to act for satisfying a need. Accordingly, managers should analyze and be aware of those specific and unique needs of the employees.

Shahzadi, Javed, Pirzada, Nasreen and Khanam (2014) assert that the only way to get people to like working hard is to motivate them. Shahzadi et al (2014) stressed that people must understand why they're working hard. Concerning theoretical frameworks guiding motivation discourse, the motivator-hygiene theory espoused by Herzberg's (1966) remains influential (Ganta, 2014). Basically, the theory divides motivating factors into two categories: Motivator factors and Hygiene factors (Armstrong, 2009). Hygiene factors are needed to make sure that a worker does not become dissatisfied: thus lack of them can cause dissatisfaction. Although Shahzadi, et al (2014) pinpointed that working conditions, recognition, fringe benefits, and training are hygiene factors that influence performance, there appear to

be limited information linking the same to performance, particularly among star rated hotels.

Globally, studies have showed that employees get motivated through various factors, albeit with mixed results. Additionally, scanty information is available concerning the relationship between motivational factors such as recognition and employee performance in the hotel industry, particularly among star rated hotels. In Slovenia, Rožman, Treven, and Čančer (2017) analysed the differences between motivation and satisfaction of employees from various age groups in the workplace. It revealed that older employees get motivated by flexibility in the workplace, autonomy at work, good interpersonal relationships in the workplace, the possibility of working at their own pace, respect among employees as well as equal treatment regardless of their age. Another study by Yurtseven and Halici (2012) in Turkey revealed that behavioral approaches, unlike ignorance of job policy and working hours, are given more importance. It is clear that Urbancová and Šnýdrová (2017) as well as Yurtseven and Halici (2012) did not link motivational factors to employee performance.

According to Mussie, Kathryn and Abel (2013), through recognition, employees feel treasured hence they become more positive and confidence in confidence in their contribution towards set goals. Employee recognition can improve productivity and increase satisfaction (Abdullah, Shonubi, Hashim & Hamid, 2016). This assertion has however eluded attention of most researchers in the field of hospitality. It is emerging that the relationship between motivation and employee performance in star rated hotels has been overlooked. For instance, Hossain and Hossain (2012); Yoo, et al (2012); Şenol (2011), and Nawaz, et al (2014) all assessed motivation levels of employees but did not link the same with performance intentions. Additional, the studies have not compared the extent that both intrinsic and extrinsic motivational factors are

provided to employees. The drive of the current study was to establish the extent to which motivational factors (intrinsic and extrinsic) are provided at the Star rated Hotels in Kisumu County.

Hospitality sector contributes more than 10% of Kenya's GDP, making it the third largest contributor to the economy after agriculture and manufacturing, and the third largest foreign exchange earner after tea and horticulture. The tourism sector is a major source of employment for over 219,000 people, representing about 11% of the total workforce in the country (Okello & Novelli, 2014). According to the Ministry of Tourism Kenya, the country has a wide variety of hotels accommodation to suit a great variety of budgets and tastes. Currently, there are more than approximately 574 licensed hotels that offer different accommodation options based on the lodging or hotel category.

In the hospitality sector in Kenya, the employment is usually characterized by unfavorable work schedules, seasonal character of tourism, lack of favorable rewards systems, limited career opportunities, which is, in turn, explaining the commonly short-term staff membership (Mokaya, Musau, Wagoki, & Karanja, 2013). This suggests that despite the cost of labor and benefits incurred, the organization needs to provide a satisfactory service to their employees as well as their guest. In other words, employees who are satisfied at work would be able to convey these attributes to the guests and therefore they would provide a substantially better service experience. This approach would be crucial to maintain a long-term competitive advantage that leads to corporate success and retention of high quality people in the Kenyan hospitality industry (Kariru, Kambona, & Odhuno, 2017).

Some Kenyan organizations have made efforts in providing motivational factors compared to other African countries. However, the extent to which motivation influence employee performance has not

been studied widely. Besides, it is also common that most hotels in Kenya do not offer motivational programs as a means of enhancing employees satisfaction neither to retain skilled and highly performing employees. Based on this background the study therefore analyzed the influence of employee benefits on employee performance

### **Statement of the Problem**

Organizations are continuously trying to develop and motivate their employees to help achieve enhanced performance with various human resource applications and practices. Employee motivation is a key human resource practice which aids in ensuring that workers exert their efforts towards the attainment of organizational goals. However, management in some industries like the hospitality sector seems not to be applying adequate motivational practices upon their employees. Although the industry is a labour intensive sector that relies on quality service provision to customers, hotel industry in Kenya is experiencing numerous employee related challenges including high rate of absenteeism, low morale and high performance. Despite attaining very high licensing levels (574 licensed hotels) and with 11% of total employees in the country, the hotel industry, particularly star rated hotels, has continued to experience a decline in business resulting to closure of some organizations. Between 2014 and 2017, five two star rated hotels closed down in Kisumu City; electricity supply was disconnected in four two star hotels; water supply was disconnected in six two star rated hotels, and a total of 150 employees quit their positions among the star rated hotels in the city, according to the Ministry of Labour and Employment, Kisumu (MoLE, 2017). These are indicators of poor organizational performance. Psychologists have linked motivational factors like recognition to employee performance. However, scanty information seemed to be available with regard to the provision of the aforementioned factors among star rated hotels in Kisumu County.

## Research Hypothesis

Employee recognition has no significant influence on employee performance among star rated hotels in Kisumu County, Kenya.

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### Theoretical Review

The study was guided by Herzberg's (1959) two-factor theory. Herzberg's two-factor theory of satisfiers and dis-satisfiers, also known as motivational-hygiene model, states that employee motivation is achieved when employees are faced with challenging but enjoyable work where one can achieve, grow, and demonstrate responsibility and advance in the organisation. According to the two-factor theory, when the employees' efforts are recognized, it brings about job satisfaction and motivation. It alludes to the fact that environmental factors such as poor lighting, poor ventilation, poor working conditions, low salaries, and poor supervisory relationships are causes for dissatisfaction in a job. These for Herzberg (1959) are basic needs and for that matter, it is the responsibility of society's businesses and industrial institutions to provide for its people in order to self-actualize.

Thus, the work one considers to be significant leads to satisfaction (Herzberg, 1959). The two factor theory emphasize that factors that depict job satisfaction are completely different from those factors that lead to job dissatisfaction. Therefore, these feelings are not polar opposites: in other words the opposite of job dissatisfaction is not job satisfaction, but no job satisfaction.

According to George and Jones (2005), attention should be paid to motivator needs and to work itself as determinants of job satisfaction. They (George & Jones, 2005) therefore entreated managers to pay special attention to the important topic of job design and its effect on organizational behaviour and employee motivation. Managers are therefore to

concentrate on designing jobs that would create job enlargement and enrichment thereby increasing the number of tasks an employee performs, increasing employee's responsibility and control over the work. By so doing, managers would be serving the motivator needs of employees as postulated by Herzberg (2003).

In support of the original theory, Herzberg's (2003) Two Factor Theory of Job Satisfaction is explained as being useful in explaining relationships involving job satisfaction and performance. Job content and job design has a lot of influence on employee performance due to the level of motivation they arouse from employees. According to Rožman, Treven, and Čančer (2017), motivation will be enhanced by good working conditions (the work, working hours, and interpersonal relations at the workplace). Suitable systems such as employee remuneration and fringe benefits enhance retention and can increase employee satisfaction, loyalty, and performance (Urbancová & Šnýdrová, 2017). People are more likely to be motivated if they work in an environment in which they receive appreciation for what they are and what they do (Abdullah, Shonubi, Hashim & Hamid, 2016).

The two factor theory of job satisfaction benefitted this study, given that some researchers have linked lack of motivation with low employee performance. Shahzadi, Javed, Pirzada, Nasreen and Khanam (2014) established that that the only way to get people to like working hard is to motivate them. Low employee performance has been linked with poor motivational factors like inadequate employee benefits in Nigeria by Ekere and Amah (2014). Therefore, indicators of poor performance witnessed in the hospitality industry might be attributable to inadequate motivation.

However, there are other schools of thought that share different opinion with regard to measurement of motivation under the lenses of two factor theory.



Schroder (2008) used the two-factor theory as the theoretical framework for a study of 835 university employees in order to understand the impact of demographical factors on job satisfaction. The researcher found that overall job satisfaction was related to age and educational level, and that levels of intrinsic and extrinsic job satisfaction were not the same for different occupational groups – findings that contradicted Herzberg's findings (Schroder, 2008).

### **Empirical Review of Literature Relevant to the Study**

One of the laws of psychology positively articulates that if you want someone to repeat a behavior, you should positively recognize the behavior immediately (Abdullah, Shonubi, Hashim & Hamid, 2016). Studies covering employee recognition as a motivation practice employed by managers within the hospitality industry seem however to be scanty. A study conducted among hotels in the UK by Zhang (2016) sought to understand the procedures adopted by the HR manager in inspiring the employees to serve in the long-term. The result showed that the hotels have adopted monthly and annual reward schemes, such as, 'Employee of the month' to recognize exceptional customer service by the employees. However, a deviation was noticed in the perception the HR manager and the employees in context to the correct strategy of motivation. Abdullah, Shonubi, Hashim and Hamid (2016) explored the perception of recognition and appreciation and the influence it has on their job satisfaction, performance, productivity and commitment towards the organization goals and objectives of one IT company in Malaysia. Findings revealed positive relationship between the variables.

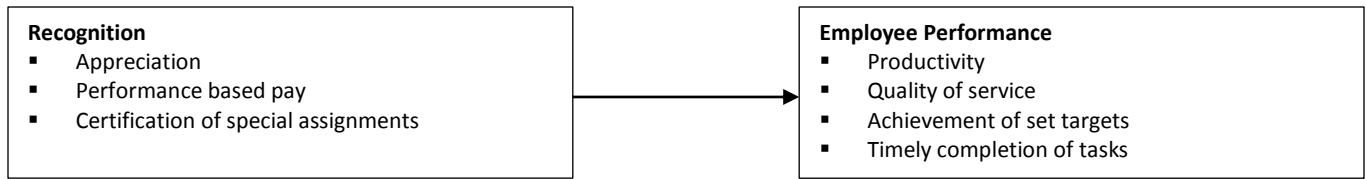
Tessema, Ready and Embaye (2013) analyzed the effect of employee recognition, pay, and benefits on job satisfaction. In this cross-sectional study, survey responses from university students in the U.S. (n = 457), Malaysia (n = 347) and Vietnam (n = 391) were analyzed. Employee recognition, pay, and benefits

were found to have a significant impact on job satisfaction, regardless of home country income level (high, middle or low income) and culture (collectivist or individualist). However, the effect of benefits on job satisfaction was significantly more important for U.S. respondents than for respondents from Malaysia and Vietnam.

Yurtseven and Halici (2012) sought to determine the causes of motivational problems related to the duties of employees. The scope of the study involved 4 and 5 star rated hotels around Ankara region in Turkey. Twenty-seven different factors were analyzed regarding employees' attitudes towards "importance" and "satisfaction" within the workplace. Results reveal that employees give more importance to behavioral approaches. Also, findings show that the least important issues that employees care about are being uninformed about job policy and working beyond the normal working hours.

Khan, Zarif and Khan (2011) sought to investigate the efficacy of recognition based rewards on employees' motivation to be efficient and effective on the job as compared to usual incentives particularly the monetary ones. Al-Karam Towel Industries (Pvt.) Ltd. Karachi was selected for the study whereat sample size of 100 employees was opted for. Findings showed significantly positive relationship between dependent and independent variables.

Ogbonnikan (2012) examined satisfaction and efficiency among hotel workers, through a case study of Giant Star Hotel Lagos in Nigeria. In other words, it was determined how job factors such as pay, working conditions, relationship with boss, personnel policies and the work itself affected the job satisfaction of the hotel workers. It was discovered that a lot of hotel workers were averagely satisfied with their jobs and job satisfaction leads to efficiency on the part of the employees.



**Independent variable**

**Dependent Variable**

**Figure 1: Conceptual Framework**

**METHODOLOGY**

The study was conducted using a correlational or explanatory survey that takes the form of quantitative method. The design was deemed suitable for the study because it (the study) aimed at establishing how motivation relates with employees performance in star rated hotels in Kisumu County using a portion of the population from these hotels. The study targeted 80 employees in the management positions and 240 non-management employees in the eight star rated hotels, bringing up a total of 320 employees. The sampling frame for this study was derived from employees of star rated hotels in Kisumu County who are on permanent employment contract. This study adopted Yamane’s (1967; cited in

Israel, 2013) formula to calculate the sample size as shown below:

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

$$n = \frac{320}{1 + 320(0.05)^2} = 178$$

Where n is the sample size, N is the population size, and e is the level of precision (0.05).

To ensure equal representation of each member in the study, stratified random sampling involving dividing the population into subgroups and then taking a simple random sample of  $f = n/N \times 100\%$  in each subgroup was used (Patton, 2002). Where f is the sample size of the sub group; n is the population of the sub group; and N is the total sample size. The sample distribution of hotels was as shown in Table 1.

**Table 1: Sample Size**

Hotel rating	Target population	Sample Size	Percent
Four Star	54	30	16.85
Three Star	86	48	26.97
Two Star	180	100	56.18
Total	320	178	100

The researcher used questionnaire as the main tool for collecting primary data. Questionnaire was used because the study was concerned mainly with variables which were not directly observable. Variables such as views, attitudes opinions, perceptions which the study focused on cannot be directly observed, but could only be indirectly gauged through questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of closed ended questions. The questionnaire was developed by the researcher and it consisted of closed ended items on a likert scale from 1- To a very small extent; 2- To small extent; 3- Neither small nor

large extent; 4- Large extent 5- Very large extent The content validity was rated at 80% by three experts then the instrument was accepted. Questionnaire reliability was tested using Cronbach’s test. The result of the test was analyzed using SPSS 21.0, where Cronbach’s alpha of 0.95 and 0.80 respectively was attained employee recognition and employee performance. According to Kathuri & Pals, 1993 as cited in Oso & Onen (2009), item with validity and reliability coefficient of at least 0.7 are accepted as valid and reliable.

The statistical analysis performed in this study was categorized into two major categories namely: descriptive statistics and inferential statistics. In light of descriptive statistics, the main statistical operations performed included frequencies, mean and standard deviation. Inferential statistics was used to make inferences on the population from the findings on the sample. The researcher applied the Pearson's two-tailed correlation analysis and multiple linear regression analysis to establish whether there was causation between the dependent and independent variables at 5% significance level with aid of SPSS version 22. The following regression model was used for quantitative procedures examining the relationship between independent and dependent variables;

$$Y = \alpha + \beta_1 X_1 + \epsilon$$

Where;

Y = Employee performance

$\alpha$  = constant

$\beta_1$  = Regression Coefficient

$X_1$  = Recognition (measured on a summated scale of 1 to 5)

$\epsilon$  = the error of term.

## RESULTS

Descriptive statistics were run whereby the respondents were requested to state the level of their agreement with various practices presented in the questionnaire as have been used to control employee performance at the Star rated Hotels as: 1= To a very Small Extent; 2=To a Small Extent; 3=Neither Small Nor Large Extent; 4= To a Large Extent, and 5=To a Very Large Extent. The Mean (M) of the factors as well as percentages obtained through descriptive statistics was presented in Table 2. The mean (M) rating was interpreted as:

Key: Interpretation of mean ratings

1.00 – 1.44: Very Small Extent

1.45 – 2.44: Small Extent

2.45 – 3.44: Neither Small nor Large Extent

3.45 – 4.44: Large Extent

4.45 – 5.00: Very Large Extent

**Table 2: Recognition and employee Performance**

Statement	N	M	5	4	3	2	1	SD
The management of hotel praise & appreciate staff	165	2.26	28.2	25.2	18.5	17.8	10.3	1.07
The management of hotel always provides certificates adequate plaque & tokens and trophies for good work	165	4.13	12.5	14.7	11.3	33.8	27.7	0.90
The management of hotel always provide more amenities to staff	165	2.29	32.1	24.6	15.3	15.8	12.2	1.19
The management of hotel mentions employee's names and posts them on bulletin boards with a description of their accomplishment in memos, status report and letter to be seen by staff and public.	165	4.21	12.4	10.2	0.3	32.6	44.5	0.92
<b>Overall Mean</b>		<b>3.22</b>						<b>0.77</b>

Table 2 illustrated that recognition had influenced employee performance to a moderate extent (M=3.22; SD=0.77). Praise and appreciation directed towards staff (53.4%; M=2.26); provision of adequate gifts like plaque and tokens (56.7%; M=2.29); posting of employees' names on bulletin boards with a description of their accomplishments, etc. (57.1%;

M=2.47), mentioning of employees' names in memos, status reports and letters to be seen by staff and letters seen by staff and public (61.6%; M=2.32) had contributed to employee performance to a small extent. These tend to imply that the manner in which these factors related to recognition had been employed by the sampled star rated hotels had



satisfied the employees and had not motivated them to improve their performance.

The respondents on the other hand, indicated that provision of certificates and trophies for good work (61.5%; M=4.13), the provision of more amenities to the staff (77.1%; M=4.21), and availability of proper arrangement for paid leave (70.4%; M=4.23) had contributed to employee performance to a large extent. Results in Table 2 revealed that employees were moderately motivated with how praise and appreciation directed towards staff; provision of gifts like plaque and tokens; posting of employees' names on bulletin boards with a description of their accomplishments, as well as mentioning of employees' names in memos, status reports and letters to be seen by staff and letters seen by staff and public.

This was perhaps due to perception of inequity in provision of such recognition practices: perception of imbalance in the ratio between outcomes (reward for work) and inputs (efforts at work) as other workers' outputs and incomes (Miner, 1980). This seemed to be in line with the Equity Theory (Adams, 1965) which articulated that perception of inequity arise when an individual compares his or her ratio of recognition with a co-worker, whereby the co-worker is perceived to be receiving more recognition yet the efforts put in by both is equal.

### Inferential Statistics

The researcher was also able to correlate the mean of components of employee performance and recognition. Table 3 presented result of Pearson's correlations between recognition and employee performance.

**Table 3: Correlations between Recognition and employee performance**

		Employee Performance	Recognition
<b>Employee Performance</b>	Pearson Correlation	1	.53**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	165	165
<b>Recognition</b>	Pearson Correlation	.53**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	165	165

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

Table 3 illustrated Pearson correlation between recognition and employee performance was 0.53\*\*,  $p < 0.00$  which was positive. It showed that there is a positive relationship between recognition and employee performance. The correlation was significant at 0.01 level (2-tailed)  $p < 0.00$ . Thus there is a significant relationship between recognition and employee performance. This implied that with improved recognition of efforts put by employees, there will be improvement in employee performance at Star rated Hotels.

### Hypothesis Testing

The null hypothesis posited, **H<sub>0</sub>**:- There is no significant influence of employee recognition on employee performance among star rated hotels in Kisumu County, Kenya. The hypothesis was meant to test the relationship between employee recognition on employee performance among star rated hotels in Kisumu County. The actual influence of the coefficient (employee recognition) on employee performance among the star rated hotels was computed using linear regression analysis. Table 4 presented the linear regression analysis.

**Table 4: Linear Regressions Analysis for Recognition and Employee performance**

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	47.246	0.896		52.730	.000
	Recognition	5.277	0.371	.529	14.224	.000

Dependent Variable: Employee Performance

According to Table 4, the unstandardized beta for employee recognition was 5.277. This implied that for every unit improvement in the employee recognition, there would be 5.277 unit improvements in employee performance among the star rated hotels. The regression equation  $Y = \beta_0 + \beta_2 X_2$ , with the constant ( $\beta_0$ ) being 47.246, the coefficient could be plugged into the formula to predict employee performance among the sampled star rated hotels using employee recognition as:

$$Y = \beta_0 + \beta_2 X_2$$

$$Y = 47.246 + 5.277 X_2$$

The amount of change caused by the coefficient of the independent variable (employee recognition) and the direction of the relationship (whether negative or positive) between employee recognition and employee performance among the sampled star rated hotels was also analysed. Table 5 presented the model summary of the analysis.

**Table 5: Model Summary for recognition and employee performance**

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics			
					R Square Change	F Change	df1	Sig F Change
1	.803 <sup>a</sup>	.645	.642	.40021	.641	17.416	1	0.000

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employee Recognition

Table 5 illustrated that  $R^2$  is .645 ( $R^2 = .645$ ;  $P < 0.05$ ). The coefficient of determination (predictor indicator) revealed that 1 unit change in employee recognition under this study results in 65% change in employee performance among the star rated hotels. The stability of this result was reflected by the minimum adjustment in the adjusted  $R^2$  value of 0.65; only showing a decrease of 0.003. Hence, employee recognition by the management of the star rated hotels under study explain 64.5% of employee performance among the sampled hotels, with a significant model fitting ( $F = 17.416$ ;  $p < 0.000$ ). This implied that 35.6% of employee performance among the sampled hotels is attributed to other factors other than recognition accorded to employees.

The foregoing findings illustrated that recognition is a significant predictor of employee performance:

explaining 64.5% change in employee performance. However, the results illustrated that recognition was moderately applied by the management of the sampled star rated hotels. This tends to imply that the star rated hotels stand to attain maximum employee performance via enhanced employee recognition. This seemed true as confirmed in a study in one IT company in Malaysia by Abdullah et al (2016) who found that positive relationships exist between recognition / appreciation and employee performance. Significant relationship was also found between recognition and employee performance in a study by Khan et al (2011) in a study done Al-Karam Towel Industries (Pvt.) Ltd. Karachi. It is therefore clear that recognition plays a major role in soliciting employee performance among star rated hotels

## CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The study found that recognition influences employee performance to a moderate extent. Equally, praise and appreciation directed towards staff; provision of adequate gifts like plaque and tokens; posting of employees' names on bulletin boards with a description of their accomplishments, mentioning of employees' names in memos, status reports and letters to be seen by staff and letters seen by staff and public have contributed to employee performance to a small extent. The study concluded that recognition influences employee performance to a moderate extent. There is a positive

and significant relationship between recognition and employee performance. Recognition causes 0.78 unit increases in employee performance among star rated hotels.

The study also established that recognition as provided by the star rated hotels enhance employee satisfaction to a moderate extent. It is therefore recommended that appreciation of good performance should be applied equitably. Additionally, the hotels should embrace performance based pay where well performing employee would be recognized through paid for their efforts.

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