
The Influence of Tourism Educational Qualification Levels On Perceived Contextual Job Performance Behavior in Tour Firms in Nairobi

Jane M. Kathurima

School of Hospitality and Human Ecology, The Technical University of Kenya

Beatrice O Imbaya

Department of Tourism Management, Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya.

Ondabu Kiage

Department of Tourism Management, Moi University, Eldoret, Kenya.

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ABSTRACT: *The aim of this study was to establish the influence of the Tourism Educational Qualification levels (TEQL) on Contextual Job Performance Behavior (CJPB) among employees in tour firms in Nairobi, Kenya. Studies have confirmed that besides formal job requirements for core- competencies, other forms of behaviors are also critical for the competitiveness of the tourism industry. This is due to the globalization of businesses, technological innovation, and the ever-evolving needs of the 21st century tourist among others. However, few studies have given attention to the correlation between educational qualifications and contextual performance behavior. Data was quantitatively gathered from one hundred and thirty-one (131) supervisors, who rated three (3) randomly selected employees from the following levels of qualification: a bachelor's degree holder; a diploma holder; & a certificate holder, on their CJPB. Both descriptive and inferential data analysis was conducted to assess the extent to which TEQL influences CJPB. The research findings showed that TEQL explained 59.1% of the total variations in the CJPB ($R^2= 59.1\%$). The regression coefficient output showed that TEQLs positively and scientifically influenced CJPB ($\beta=0.769$, $p=0.001$). The implication of these findings confirms that transitioning from a lower level of tourism educational qualification to a higher level improves an employee's contextual job performance behavior by 0.587 units. It is for this reason that investing in developing tourism professionals has benefits for both employers and employees. This study recommends that tourism educators embed contextual skills in tourism programs in order to produce graduates not only with core competencies and business acumen, but also with humanistic values to cope with emerging trends.*

KEYWORDS: tourism industry; tourism educational qualification level; contextual job performance; tour operations

INTRODUCTION

The exponential growth of the tourism industry in Kenya makes it a key driver for economic development. Tourism contributed 10% of Kenyas GDP in 2019 and is projected to increase to 12% by 2024. The industry creates about 1.1 million jobs in various sectors (Tourism Research Institute, 2022). Destination Kenya attracts about 2.4 Million international visitors per year, and this number is projected to grow to more than 3M by 2025. Tourists' pull factors for the destination are a variety of product offerings such as coastal attractions dubbed Sun, Sand, and Sea; wildlife tourism; cultural diversity; sports; meetings, incentives, conferences, and events (MICE) among others (Bitok, 2019). Tourism products and services must be offered in such a manner that will keep attracting visitors to the projected numbers. Research has shown that the attractiveness of a destination depends on superior products and services offered according to visitors' needs and wants (Chen, 2016). It is for this reason that businesses within tourism destinations must be determined to establish an environment that allows employees to innovatively meet visitors' demands beyond their expectations.(Abas & Imam, 2016; Bustreo et al., 2018). Hence businesses that treat their employees as their internal customers, providing them with an enabling environment to thrive in their talents and innovative ideas are bound to do well in meeting business and industry objectives (Chen, 2016).

It is for this reason that destinations must re-think tourism education system, that will not only equip learners with technical core but soft skills and competencies as well. According to (Suarda et al., 2017), employers in the tourism industry in the 21st Century are no longer considering occupation-specific skills as sufficient but rather demanding for much more than that. Employers are now looking for employees with such patterns of behavior which include: high level of professionalism; self-esteem; ability to build teams; and altruism among others(Abas & Imam, 2016; Bustreo et al., 2018; Sheldon et al., 2011). In the wake of competition, globalization of business, sustainability of destinations and technological innovations, it is increasingly becoming necessary for destinations to deliver quality products and services by highly specialized and skilled employees (Harvey et al., 2018). Hence the extra-roles skills otherwise referred to as contextual job performance behavior or organizational citizenship is becoming an area of interest in recent times.

With regards to this, there is a call for a paradigm shift in the tourism education. Tourism educators must re-think on how to review their programs to embed both hard and soft skills that will steer the industry to the envisioned future (Dredge, 2014). While tourism industry today is considering professional with much more than occupational specific skill, a number of studies have found a disparity between skills required by the industry and the skills educators consider as important(Attri & Kushwaha, 2018; Booyens, 2020; Mei, 2017). In today's business environment, any education system must consider preparing programs in consultation with the employers otherwise they risk qualifying graduates who will not be relevant market.

Problem statement

In the recent past, tourism education experts have advocated the need to have institutions of higher learning embed skills in tourism programs, that will not only qualify professionals with business acumen but also skills with humanistic values to cope with the emerging issues (Dredge, 2014; Pauline J. Sheldon & Cathy H. C. Hsu, 2015; Sheldon et al., 2011). Tour operations are an example of organizations that are seeking graduates with such behaviors that are far beyond core competences (Bustreo et al., 2018; Johnson et al., 2019). Although contextual performance behavior is not explicitly indicated in the job description of an employee, yet it is one of the key predictors of one's performance that supervisors use when making employees evaluation on their value to the organization(Borman & Motowidlo, 1997). Many studies have been carried out in an attempt to explain the factors that influence an individual's contextual performance. For instance, contextual performance behavior has been associated with an individual's personality (Borman & Motowidlo, 1997), demographics such as age(Kalia & Bhardwaj, 2019a), employee empowerment (Ma et al., 2021) and work environment and work environment (Walz & Niehoff, 2000). However, this study finds few studies that correlates educational qualification level with contextual job performance behavior even though there have been a clamor to embed such skill in tourism education programs (Pauline J. Sheldon & Cathy H. C. Hsu, 2015; Sheldon et al., 2011). The objective of this study is therefore to determine the influence of tourism qualification level on contextual job performance among employees in tour firms. The outcomes of this study emphasis on the need to have tourism educators see the need to embed the dimension of contextual performance skills in tourism programs.

Study objective

To establish the influence of tourism educational qualification level on perceived contextual job performance behaviour of employees in tour firms.

Theoretical framework

This study was guided by two theories which yielded the theoretical framework. The educational qualification framework model by Kenya Qualification Authority (KQFA) was used to define the composite independent variable, that is, tourism educational qualification levels (TEQLs) (Kenya National Qualification Authority, 2021) . The qualification descriptors helped identify the skills, knowledge, and competencies for each level of qualification, that is, bachelors degree, diploma and Certificate. National Qualification frameworks globally provide a generic skill description for each level of learning upon which institutions of higher learning use as a foundation for coming up with training programs. Qualifications are important for matching graduates' abilities with job roles. Educational qualifications are particularly vital in the selection and recruitment of human resources, as qualifications are then perceived to determine an employee's behavior at work. On the other hand, job performance behavior theory (JPB) provided the parameters for the variable of interest, that is, conceptual performance behavior(TJPB)((Sonnetag & Frese, 2005). Contextual performance behavior is an individuals ability to perform extra roles beyond what is described in the job description (Campbell & Wiernik, 2015). Contextual performance is defined by an employee's ability to motivate teams, initiate innovations that add value the organization, altruism among others.

These are the activities which enhance psychological wellbeing of teams enabling them to perform their technical-core functions. The two variables are conceptualized in figure 1.

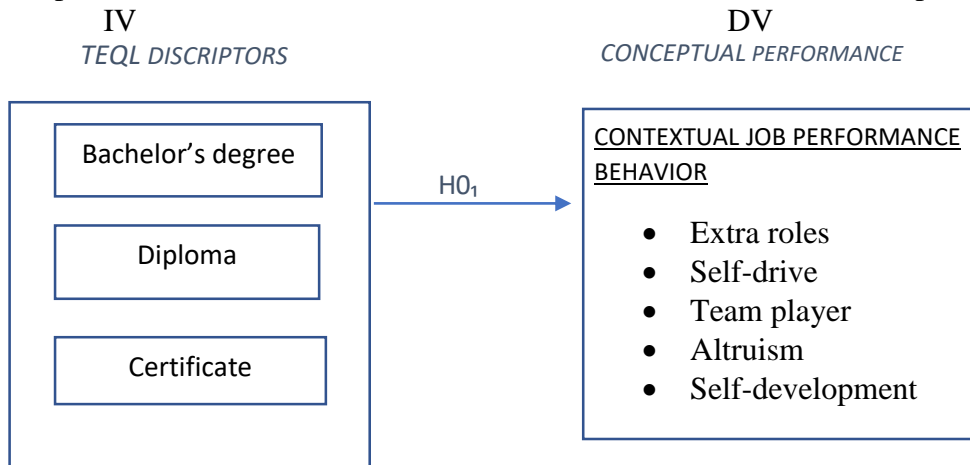


FIGURE 1 Conceptual Framework

LITERATURE REVIEW

Contextual job performance behavior is an individual's behaviour that supports the organizational social and psychological environment in which the technical core must functions. It is the extra effort an employee puts into work far beyond the prescribed duties such as taking extra roles, coaching new employees or showing initiative (Koopmans et al., 2011). The behavior includes activities that promote a spirit of teamwork in an organization which in turn helps improve the emotional space which support an employee's core tasks (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Contextual performance behavior is expected of an employee, although not overtly mentioned in one's job description, they are important in the sense that they help an employee optimize full potential thus becoming an organization's valuable asset. CJPB include other dimensions such as customer orientation skills, ethical conduct and respect, willingness to change and creativity and innovativeness (Sonntag & Frese, 2005). Employees with such work values that are far beyond core competences are considered valuable assets of an organization (Bertolini & Goglio, 2017).

In the wake of globalization, increased use of technology, and sustainability of tourism industry, businesses are now demanding for knowledge-based employee as opposed to operatives (Harvey et al., 2018; Kalia & Bhardwaj, 2019b). The dynamics of the 21st century tourists are also demanding for much more than being passive consumers, they want to participate in activities that will give them much more memorable experiences (Dean & Suhartanto, 2019). Other industry changes as influenced by health and safety, climate change, economic depression, destination sustainability and accessibility are becoming major determinants for tourist's choice of destinations (Bitok, 2019). Destinations must therefore invest in employees with additional skills other than occupation-specific skills (Suartha et al., 2017).

A number of studies have been done in attempt to explain factors that make people become motivated to exhibit contextual performance behavior. For instance, Collen, (2019), points out that contextual performance behavior is as a result of organizational support for employees. Organizations which have structures that support employees by allowing them some degree of autonomy to make independent decisions promote employees' positive contextual performance behavior. Employees' personal attitudes and self-efficacy is another factor that positively influences contextual performance (Testa et al., 2020). Self-efficacy is associated with one's belief about their ability and competence in displaying good performance in various tasks and work situations. Yet other studies have also found out that work engagement enhances contextual performance. Work engagement gives employees psychological ownership of the organization and trust for employees are perfect ingredients for contextual performance (Bhardwaj & Kalia, 2021).

There is also the flipside of contextual performance behavior of an employee. The study of Kalia and Bhardwaj found out that contextual behaviour can also be counterproductive to an individual as well as to the organization if not managed well (Kalia & Bhardwaj, 2019b). They argue that employees who work beyond job descriptions can experience job stress that lead to job burnout. Contextual performance, if it is of low quality, may therefore add no value to organizational goals. Moreover, this behaviour they argue, may be exhibited by an employee out of selfishness and a need to impress superiors more than the need to add value to the core task. Despite the difference in opinion, scholars agree that contextual job performance behaviour has far much more positive outcomes than negative outcomes (Charbonnier-Voirin & Roussel, 2012). Positive contextual behaviour are more of organization asset than mere employees. It is for this reason that many organizations today appraise their employees more on the basis of their contextual performance dimensions than their core competencies (Özçelîk & Uyargîl, 2019).

This has brought out a gap on what the employers and educators consider as the most important skills for tourism professionals (Bertolini & Goglio, 2017; Mohanty, 2019). For instance, Bertolini & Goglio, (2017) found out that employers are more interested in contextual performance skills which seem to influence decision to hire. Mohanty, (2019) also found out that academic grades rated least in the set of skills industry professionals look for when recruiting employee. This has caused a disconnect between what educators and the industry consider to be the relevant skills for tourism professionals (Mei, 2017). This raises such questions as to whether educators are qualifying tourism learners with futuristic skills that produce an all-rounded and thoughtful professional to take on the ever-evolving industry. This concern had been raised by tourism educators who had foreseen a situation where educators would be qualifying graduates with skills knowledge and competencies that are likely to be obsolete by the time learners are graduating (Sheldon et al., 2011).

Tourism education experts have recommended a shift in tourism education. The recommendation to educators is to focus more on preparing professional with high level of responsibility and stewardship in order to fit into the dynamism of the industry for both present and future outlook (Dredge, 2014; Sheldon et al., 2011). Other than the traditional courses that

focus on the core-technical courses, other values and skill must be embedded in tourism training in order help shape an all rounded tourism professional. Tourism education has for a long time overlooked the focus to equip graduates with contextual skills and must re-think on how to embed them in the curricula (Sheldon et al., 2011). According to Romero & Tejada, (2020), destinations that invest in these special set of abilities have a competitive edge over other destinations, especially skills that are necessary to avert industry crisis and accelerate industry recovery and attractiveness after crisis. Tourism education is not only expected to equip graduates with business acumen, but also with other skills that will help professionals navigate through global emerging issues (Pauline J. Sheldon & Cathy H. C. Hsu, 2015). Education is presumed to be the foundation of all advancement and economic development. Tourism, being a service industry relies on quality and high standards as part of an overall visitor experience. It is therefore paramount that tourism education standards, transferability and transparency of qualifications are continuously improved. This will require a tripartite approach whereby the educator, national qualification framework authority and industry must work closely to develop all rounded industry professionals for an economically viable industry (Dupeyras & MacCallum, 2013).

METHODOLOGY

The study was carried out in tour firms in the capital city of Kenya. A survey design was adapted where data was collected using Likert scale containing individual work performance (IWP) questions. The unit of analysis consisted of supervisors responsible for monitoring employees' job performance. Out of one hundred and seventy-five (175) tour firms in tourism regulatory authority (TRA) register for 2019, only 131 responded and met the threshold set for the study. The response was an acceptable response rate of 70%. Each of the one hundred and thirty-one (131) supervisors was required to give responses on contextual job performance behavior of one randomly sampled holder of bachelor's degree, diploma and certificate level of qualification.

Both descriptive and inferential data analysis was conducted to assess the influence of TEQL on CJPB. The regression coefficient output showed that TEQLs positively and scientifically influence CJPB ($\beta=0.769$, $p=0.001$). This means that TEQL has a significant influence on CJPB. However, the research findings showed that TEQL explained up to 59.1% of the total variations in the CJPB ($R^2= 59.1\%$).

RESEARCH FINDINGS

DESCRIPTIVE ANALYSIS: Responses on Contextual Job Performance Behavior

In contextual job performance behavior, focus was on willingness to do extra roles, ability to demonstrate the spirit to work as teams, willingness to motivate and develop self and others as well as ability to defend and safeguard everything that appertains to the organization. A 5-point Likert scale, where "1 = Poor" and "5 = Excellent" was used. Mean scores, standard deviations and coefficient of variation for the indicators are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1

Indicators	M	SD	CV
Degree Holders			
Willing to take extra job roles beyond what is assigned	4.43	.745	16.8
Takes initiative in proposing innovative ways of improving the organization and/or industry	4.17	.681	16.3
Has self-drive to keep abreast with tourism industry trends by attending professional meetings/conferences	4.19	.735	17.5
Intentionally works as a team player and motivates other to achieve organizational goals	4.05	.683	16.7
Defends and safeguards organization's information and assets at all costs	4.41	.678	15.4
Takes initiative to develop and upgrade his/her skills	4.28	.558	13.0
Diploma Holders			
Willing to take extra job roles beyond what is assigned	4.37	.817	18.7
Takes initiative in proposing innovative ways of improving the organization and/or industry	4.17	.584	14.0
Has self-drive to keep abreast with tourism industry trends by attending professional meetings/conferences	4.18	.721	17.2
Intentionally works as a team player and motivates other to achieve organizational goals	4.07	.659	16.2
Defends and safeguards organization's information and assets at all costs	4.30	.731	17.0
Takes initiative to develop and upgrade his/her skills	4.18	.638	15.3
Certificate Holders			
Willing to take extra job roles beyond what is assigned	4.34	.752	17.3
Takes initiative in proposing innovative ways of improving the organization and/or industry	4.11	.664	16.2
Has self-drive to keep abreast with tourism industry trends by attending professional meetings/conferences	4.20	.759	18.1
Intentionally works as a team player and motivates other to achieve organizational goals	4.13	.695	16.8
Defends and safeguards organization's information and assets at all costs	4.34	.686	15.8
Takes initiative to develop and upgrade his/her skills	4.08	.730	17.9

The results shown in Table 1 gives the responses of supervisors regarding various indicators of contextual job performance. In the mean (M) column, it can be observed that in the three academic qualification levels, willingness to take extra roles beyond what is assigned had the highest mean score. In this indicator, the mean scores for degree, diploma and certificate holders were 4.43, 4.37 and 4.34 respectively. On the other hand, intentionally working as a team player and motivates others to achieve organizational goals had the least mean scores for degree, diploma holders. The respective mean scores were 4.05 and 4.07. For certificate holders, the least mean score was the ability to take initiative to develop and upgrade his/her skills (M = 4.08). This mean score was closely followed the mean score in the intention to work as a team player and motivates other to achieve organizational goals (M = 4.13). Again, the distribution of mean scores in the three academic qualification levels do not show any significant difference.

In the standard deviation values, results in Table 1 shows that willingness to take extra roles beyond what is assigned did not only show high mean scores in the three academic qualification

levels, but also generally exhibited high standard deviations (SD (degree) = 0.745, SD (diploma) = 0.817 and SD (degree) = 0.752). Having self-drive to keep abreast with tourism industry trends by attending professional meetings/conferences also demonstrated high standard deviations, with the highest relative standard deviation seen on certificate holders (SD = 0.759).

In the measure of how uniform the responses were, the coefficient of variation values shows a slightly different trend is observed. For degree holders, high level of uniformity in the responses was observed on taking initiative to develop and upgrade individual skills (CV = 13.0%). For both diploma and certificate holders, uniformity in the responses was observed on taking the initiative in proposing innovative ways of improving the organization, with CVs of 14% and 16.2% respectively. Conversely, lack of uniformity (relatively) in the responses, which is also known as heterogeneity, was on having self-drive to keep abreast with tourism industry trends by attending professional meetings/conferences for degree and certificate holders, with corresponding CVs of 17.5% and 18.1%. For diploma holders, willingness to take extra job roles beyond what is assigned had the highest coefficient of variation (CV = 18.7%), an indication that there were varied responses compared to other indicators for the same academic qualification level.

Testing of Hypothesis

Tourism Educational Qualification Level and Contextual Job Performance Behavior

Influence of tourism educational qualification level on contextual job performance behavior of employees was determined by testing the null hypothesis presented below;

H₀₁: There is no significant influence of educational qualification level on contextual job performance behaviour of employees.

Based on the null hypothesis **H₀₂**, the corresponding regression model took the general form

$$CJPB = \beta_0 + \beta_1 EQL + \varepsilon \quad (4.2.1)$$

CJPB is Contextual Job Performance Behaviour (Dependent variable) and EQL is Educational Qualification Level (Independent variable), while β_0 and β_1 are regression coefficients for the constant term and the independent variable respectively. Regression analysis output for testing

H₀₂ was summarized as shown in Tables 2, 3 and 4

4.2.1 Tourism Educational Qualification Level and Contextual Job Performance Behavior

<i>Table 2</i>	R Square	Adjusted R Square	SE
.769	.591	.588	3.680
Dependent Variable: Contextual Job Performance Behavior			
Predictors: Constant, Tourism Educational Qualification Level			

From Table 2 the explained variation (R^2) was observed to be 0.591, which translates to 59.1%. The value of R^2 implies that tourism educational qualification level, as a predictor variable, explains up to 59.1% of the total variations in contextual job performance behaviour. This observation further implies that the remaining 40.9% of the variations in the dependent variable is attributed to other variations in other factors apart from tourism educational qualification level. Further, the adjusted R^2 was observed to be 0.588, a value not so much deviated from the actual R^2 . For the estimate of the explained variation, the observed standard error was found to be 3.68. To determine the magnitude and the direction of influence that tourism educational qualification level has on contextual job performance behaviour of employees, the output of regression coefficients was used. This was summarized as shown in

4.2.2 ANOVA Results: Tourism Educational Qualification Level and Contextual Job Performance Behavior

Table 3

Source	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	2522.659	1	2522.659	186.239	.001
Residual	1747.341	129	13.545		
Total	4270.000	130			

Dependent Variable: Contextual Job Performance Behavior
Predictors: Constant, Tourism Educational Qualification Level

ANOVA results in regression analysis is used to check whether the conceptualized regression model is a good fit for the collected data or not. Significance of the model fit is determined using the corresponding p-value or F-ratio is the ANOVA results. In this case, the obtained p-value was 0.001, an indication that there is a significant linear regression model of contextual job performance behaviour on tourism educational qualification level. The value of the F-ratio (= 186.239) can also be used to check for significance of the model fit. By comparing the F-statistic value and the tabulated value, which is read at (1, 129) degrees of freedom, significance of the model fit can be evaluated. At (1, 129), the tabulated F-critical value is 3.90 and the decision is that a significant model fit is shown by F-statistic value being greater than the tabulated value. Clearly, 186.239 is greater than 3.90, an evidence of a significant model fit. Since there exists an explained variation and a significant model fit, significance of the influence of tourism educational qualification level on contextual job performance behaviour can thus be determined using the results of the regression coefficients. The regression coefficients output was summarized as shown in Table 4.

4.2.3 Regression Coefficients: Tourism Educational Qualification Level and Contextual Job Performance Behaviour

Table 4

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
	β	Std. Error	β	t	Sig.
(Constant)	15.758	4.426		3.560	.001
EQL	.587	.043	.769	13.647	.000

Dependent Variable: Contextual Job Performance Behaviour
Predictors: Constant, Tourism Educational Qualification Level

In the regression coefficients results shown in Table 4.20, the constant term was observed to be 15.758 with a standard error of 4.426. The corresponding p-value of the constant term was found to be 0.001, an indication of a significant coefficient. For tourism educational qualification level (independent variable), regression coefficient was observed to be 0.587 (SE = 0.043) and a corresponding t-statistics = 13.647 and p-value of 0.000. The p-value of 0.000 shows that the independent variable has a significant influence on contextual job performance behaviour of employees. Since 0.000 is less than 0.05 and that the regression coefficient for the independent variable is positive, it can be inferred that tourism educational qualification level significantly influences contextual job performance behaviour in a positive way. That is, transiting from a lower educational qualification level to a higher one results to an improvement in contextual job performance behaviour by 0.587 units. This influence can be expressed using the regression model

$$\text{CJPB} = 15.758 + 0.587 \text{ EQL} \quad (4.2.2)$$

Therefore, to test the null hypothesis H_{02} , both t-statistics and the corresponding p-value for the independent variable (EQL) were used. Using the p-value criterion, the observed p-value was 0.000, which was less than 0.05, an evidence that there is a significant influence of educational qualification level on contextual job performance behaviour. Consequently, the null hypothesis H_{02} was rejected. On the other hand, a comparison of the tabulated t-critical at 130 degrees of freedom (= 1.976) with the t-statistic (13.647) implies a significance influence since the computed t-value is greater than the t-critical value. Again, this comparison leads to rejecting H_{02} . It can thus be concluded that educational qualification level has a significant and positive influence of contextual job performance behaviour of employees.

DISCUSSION

Research findings indicate that TEQLs influence CJPB. This confirmed studies others studies whose findings indicate a general relationship between professional qualification and education. (Abdulrahamon et al., 2018; Budhiraja, 2021; Ng & Feldman, 2009). Each level of qualification does also contribute to contextual job performance, despite the insignificant variations in some dimensions of contextual job performance among the three levels of

qualifications. There was a general consensus among supervisors that all levels of tourism educational qualifications contribute to contextual job performance behavior. However, willingness to perform extra roles beyond the call of duty had the highest mean score across all levels of qualifications. The dimension of contextual job performance that attracted the least mean score was the ability to intentionally work together as a team and the propensity to motivate others to achieve organizational goal. This same observations was made by Abas and Imam, whose study findings indicate that teamwork skills, particularly working with others, moderately correlated with employees contextual performance (Abas & Imam, 2016).

Other findings concluded that transitioning from one level of education to another enhances contextual job performance behavior. This observation is consistent with other study findings which confirm that continuous learning enhances contextual performance(Budhiraja, 2021). According to the study of Hashmi et al., (2019), professionals were found to have a significant change the contextual work behavior after acquiring a higher level of qualification. From regression coefficient, Tourism Educational Qualification Level has a significant influence on Contextual Job Performance up to 59.1%. The rest of the percentage, that is, 40.1% may be explained by other factors such as organizational environment, organization's degree of autonomy, motivation of employees and supervisor's support (Collen, 2019; Robescu & Iancu, 2016; Testa et al., 2020).

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

This study embarked on establishing the influence of tourism educational qualification levels on contextual job performance behavior. It can therefore be concluded that the objective of the study was met and that the study has added value to the existing body of knowledge. The findings have confirmed tourism educational qualifications level contribute to contextual job performance behavior to a certain degree. The researcher makes a recommendation for further research to establish the factor/s which contribute to the remaining 40.9% of total variation. The findings ascertained the capabilities of the three levels of qualification, exposing the areas of strength and weakness across the dimensions of contextual job performance behavior. The research makes a recommendation to have further research done using either peer to peer evaluation or self- evaluation or other research paradigms. This will help establish the causes of variability in the dimensions of contextual job performance of the three levels of qualifications.

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