

Utilisation of Research Findings Among Managers of Hospitality Industries in the Tamale Metropolis

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Abstract: *This study was conducted to assess the utilisation of research findings among managers of hospitality industries in the Tamale Metropolis. The study employed an analytical cross-sectional study design. The questionnaire was employed to gather the data from 25 respondents. The data was analysed using Statistical Package for Social Sciences version 26.0. The study found that 78% of respondents did not see the benefits of using research findings and 78% of respondents identified limited knowledge of hospitality managers as a challenge in utilising research findings. The study established that there was an association between the educational status of respondents and utilisation of research findings ($\chi^2=14.15$ $p<0.001$). There was no association between the work experience of respondents and utilisation of research findings ($\chi^2=6.15$ $p=0.061$). The study concentrated on only managers of hospitality industries in the Tamale Metropolis. This paper has the potential implications of providing justification for organizing research seminars for managers of hospitality industries to equip them with the needed knowledge and competence to conduct research and utilize the findings for improvements. The study would provide information to policy makers in addressing challenges that confront managers of hospitality industries with in relation to uptake of research findings. This paper is the first to be conducted among the study population in the study setting. Hence will serve as a baseline data in Ghana*

Keywords: Association, Hospitality, Industries, Utilisation

INTRODUCTION

Research over the years has contributed significantly to policy discourse across all sectors (Gennaro, 1994). In the hospitality sector, application of research findings is primarily to applying the knowledge to influence information and service delivery (Forsman et al., 2012) to the cherished customers. Creating new knowledge and building an evidence base for the hospitality sector is one of the goals of research (Hemsley, 2004). Improving the connection between theory, principles and practice is one of the main objectives of using research findings (Fineout-Overholt & Melnyk, Schultz, 2005) in the hospitality sector.

Fundamentally, utilization of research findings involves changing knowledge from research into practice (Stetler & Marram, 1976). This form of knowledge transformation provides the opportunity for employees in the hospitality sector to improve customer care, service provision and improvement in existing practices (Fineout-Overholt & Melnyk, Schultz, 2005; Black et al., 2015).

Despite the importance of research findings, limited studies have been conducted in terms of how the hospitality sector has made use of research findings. Employees in the hospitality sometimes revert to personal experience based on years of service, support from friends and sometimes the use of old ways of doing things. These flaws in the hospitality industry are often based on myriad of factors. The nature of the organization, the educational level as well as personal likes and dislikes are all factors that influence utilization of research findings (Kyalo Mutisya, KagureKarani & Kigundu, 2015).

Additionally, across sections of the Tamale metropolis, cultures, and hotel settings, lack of time for reading, uncooperative customers, inadequate facilities, and lack of research based desk as consistent barriers. These barriers also impact the reported customers, as well as management. There are limited studies in terms of utilization of research findings among employees in the Tamale metropolis. Given the importance of research to practice in the hospitality sector, the need to encourage employees to use research findings to improve practice is paramount. Given the nature and demand of customers as well as the need to maintain customers, there is the need for research to be conducted to assess the level of utilization of research findings among hotel employees as a first step to improve practices

METHOD

Study Area

Selected hospitals within the Tamale metropolis were used for the study. The metropolis has been considered as one of the largest cities in Ghana and provides all manner of commercial activities

for local and foreign nationals. The study sampled all the categories of hotels in the metropolis to recruit the respondents for the study. Due to the nature of the study, the name of the hotels sampled in the study setting had been included this study. The study sampled the hotels because of the high demand for hospitality services in the metropolis by customers. Hence improving on the services of hospitality services would improve customer satisfaction and return to see similar services in the future.

Research Design

The study employed an analytical cross-sectional study design. This type of study design was employed to collect both exposures and outcomes variables simultaneously at the same time from the study participants at the study setting.

Study Population

The study participants were managers of hospitality industries in the study setting. The study included all industry staff and those in managerial positions. The study however, excluded respondents that were newly employed in the industry in the Tamale Metropolis.

Sample Size Determination

The respondents were 250. The sample size was determined using the Yamane 1964 formula. The number of staff available from the four different hotels that were sampled across the various categories was 676 at the time of the study. This is explained as;

n

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

n= Sample size

N= Target study population in the hotels that were sampled

e=Precision desired

Therefore;

N=676

e= 0.05

$$n = \frac{676}{1+676 (0.05)^2}$$

n= 250

Sampling Methods

The study employed the total sampling method to recruit the study participants at the study setting. This sampling approach was used to recruit all the study participants that met the study inclusion criteria

Data Collection Procedure

A structured questionnaire was developed and administered to the respondents. The data was collected using trained personnel at the study setting. These trained personnel had been engaged in data collection in the study setting before and had knowledge of the geographic and cultural orientation of the people.

Reliability and Validity of the Questionnaire

The data collection tool was critically examined for content by experts in the hospitality sector. After the review, a pilot study was carried out with ten respondents employed in the hospitality sector in Yendi municipality different from the study location. The test provided the opportunity for restructuring of the questions to reduce challenges that were more likely to affect respondents before the actual data collection.

Additionally, the test of reliability was done at the variable levels using the Cronbach's alpha. Cronbach's alpha that showed the combination of the questions to yield 0.70 was considered because those variables have less internal consistency. Hence the acceptability of reliability of 0.70 was based on Taber's interpretation (Taber, 2017). Taber (2017) revealed that, a reliability of 0.70 is the ideal Cronbach's alpha value.

Statistical Analysis

The data collected were entered into Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software package (version 26.0). Descriptive and inferential statistics were employed to present the findings. Under the descriptive statistics, simple frequencies and percentages tables were used. For the inferential statistics, Chi-square test and multinomial logistic regression were used to establish the relationships. All statistical tests were performed using two-sided tests at the 0.05 level of significance. P-values less than 0.05 were considered significant.

Ethical Considerations

Permission was requested and granted by management of the hotels before the administration of the questionnaire. All participants informed consents were obtained and there was no rewards whatsoever to any participants. All data collected remained confidential.

RESULTS**Table 1: Demographic data of respondents**

Variables	Frequency	Percent
Age group in years		
20-30years	55	22.0
31-40 years	80	32.0
41 + years	115	46.0
Educational status		
Diploma	40	16.0
HND	115	46.0
Degree	90	36.0
Masters	5	2.0
Nature of industry		
1 Star	80	40.0
2 Star	15	1.8
3 star	8	0.2
Others*	147	58.0
Work experience		
0-5 Years	150	60.0
6-10 years	70	28.0
11 + years	30	12.0

Others*: Not in the category of 1, 2 or 3 star hotels

Table 1 presents the demographic data of the respondents. Based on the findings, majority of the respondents were aged 41 years and above and 40% were sampled from 1 star hotels in the study setting.

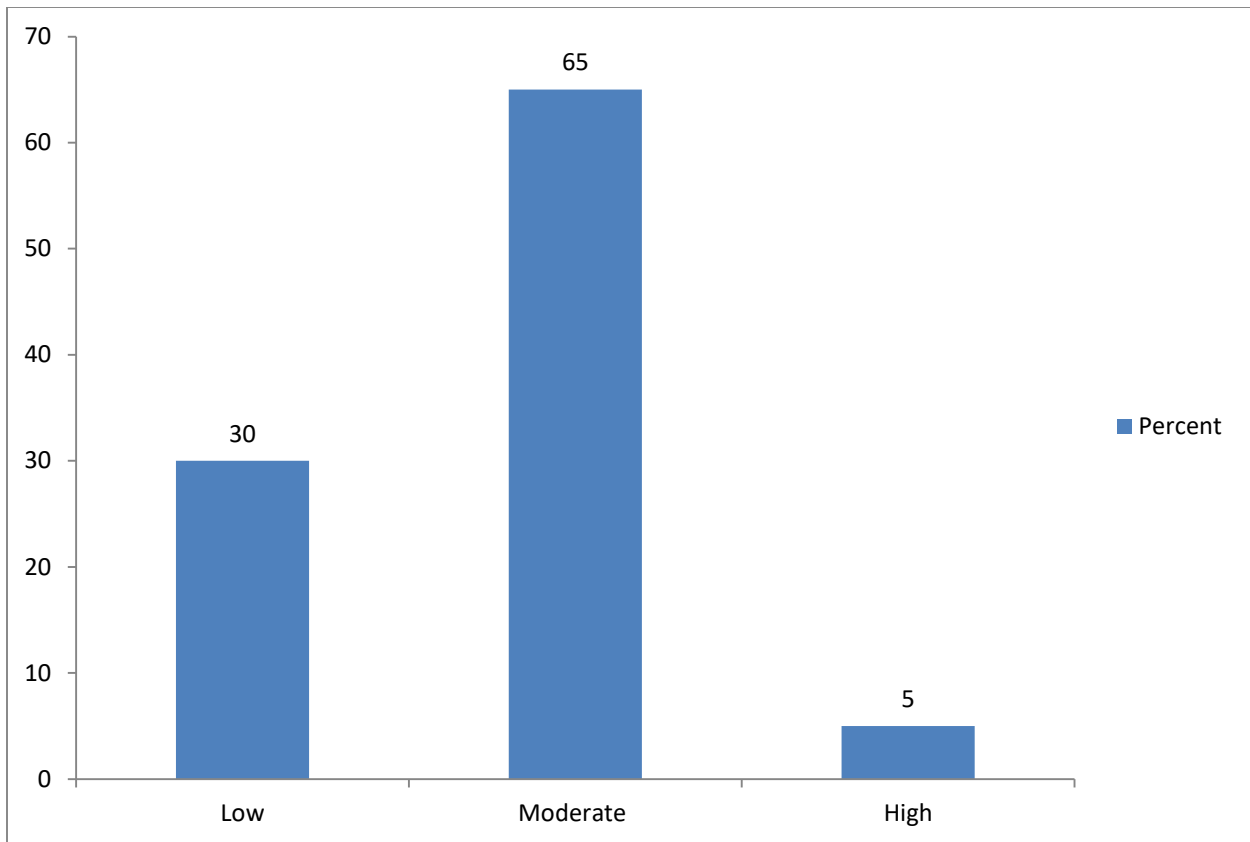


Figure 1: Self rating of respondents on research

From Figure 1, 65% of the respondents rated their knowledge on research as moderate.

Table 2: Utilization level of research findings among respondents

Variables	Yes N (%)	No N (%)
Updated practice based on research	0 (0.0%)	250 (100.0%)
Conduct research on the facility by management	0 (0.0%)	250 (20.0%)
Ensure collaborative research	0 (0.0%)	250 (20.0%)
Administrators provide resources for research	0 (0.0%)	250 (20.0%)
Conference participation	60 (24.0%)	190 (76.0%)
Publications	2 (1.0%)	248 (99.0%)

From Table 2, all the respondents indicated that, there has never been any form of support for staff to engage in research work in the hotels. It was also found that, 99% of the respondents never had any form of publications on their own.

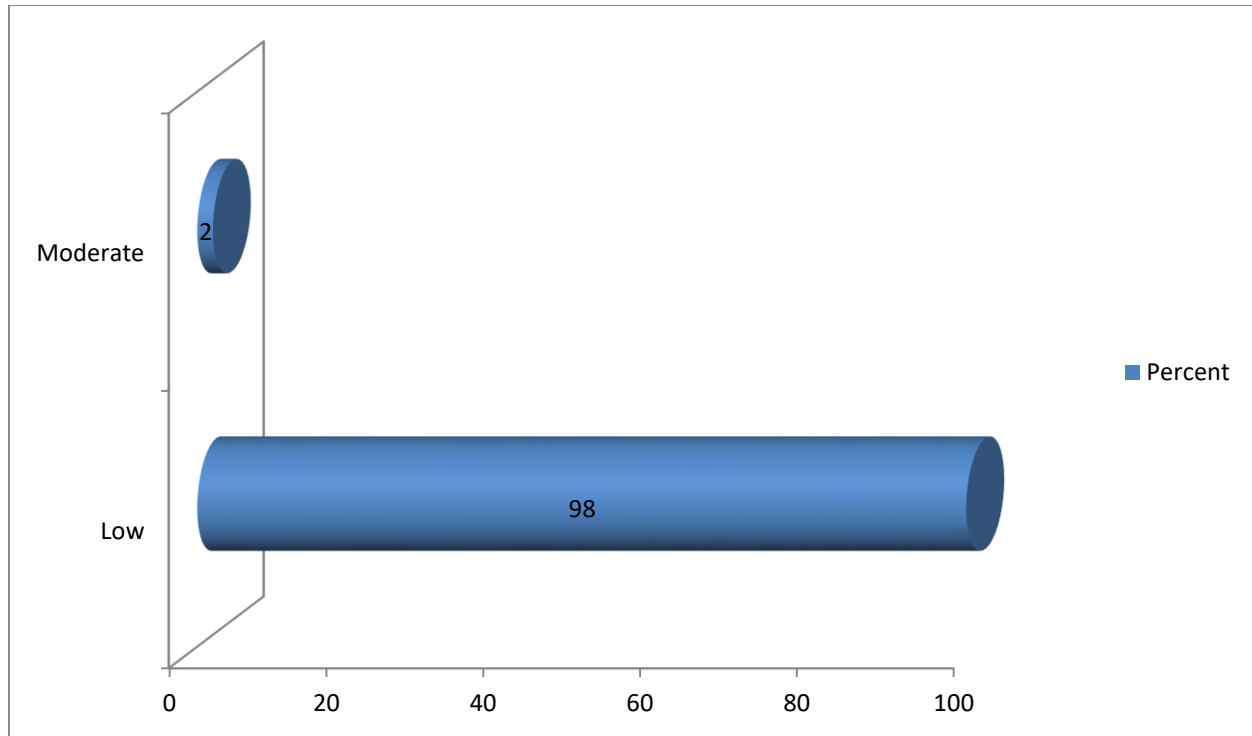


Fig 2: Utilization of research findings

From the findings in Figure 2, 98% of the respondents rated their level of utilization of research findings as low.

Table 3: Factors that affect research utilization among respondents

Variables	Yes N (%)	No N (%)
Inaccessibility of research findings	250 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Use of complex statistics to present results	200 (80.0%)	50 (20.0%)
Lack of funding for hospitality research	250 (100.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Low research interests	197 (79.0%)	53 (47.0%)
Lack of collaboration between researchers and industries	190 (76.0%)	60 (24.0%)

From Table 3, majority of the respondents, 200 (80%) cited the use of complex statistical terms to present research findings as a factor that influence research utilization among managers of hotels in the study setting. It was also found that, 190 (76%) respondents cited lack of collaboration between researchers and industries as a factor that affects utilization of research findings in the study setting.

Table 4: Bivariate analysis of demographic data and utilization of research findings

Variable	N	Utilization of research findings		Test statistic
		Yes Frequency (%)	No Frequency (%)	
Age (years)				
20-30	55	35 (14)	20 (8)	
31-40	80	40 (16)	40 (16)	
41 and above	115	70 (28)	45 (18)	$\chi^2_{(2)}=4.34; p=0.103$
Educational status				
Diploma	40	15 (6)	25 (10)	
HND	115	65 (44)	50 (2)	
Degree	90	70 (28)	20 (8)	
Masters	5	5 (2)	0 (0)	$\chi^2_{(2)}= 14.15; p<0.001$
Nature category				
1 Star	80	40 (16)	40 (16)	
2 Star	15	15 (3)	0 (0)	
3 star	8	8 (0.2)	0 (0)	$\chi^2_{(2)}= 11.59; p=0.003$
Others*	147	89 (37)	58 (21)	$\chi^2_{(2)}= 6.15; p=0.061$
Work experience				
0-5 Years	150	45 (18)	105 (42)	
6-10 years	70	20 (8)	50 (20)	
11 + years	30	30 (12)	0 (0)	

From Table 4, the study established that there was an association between the educational status of respondents and utilisation of research findings ($\chi^2_{(2)}=14.15$ $p<0.001$). There was no association between the work experience of respondents and utilisation of research findings ($\chi^2_{(2)}=6.15$ $p=0.061$).

Table 5: Multinomial logistics regression

Variables	COR (95% CI) p-value	AOR (95% CI) p-value
Age group in years		
20-30years	1	1
31-40 years	1.48 (1.19, 5.14) 0.015	2.79 (0.22, 2.80) 0.024
41 + years	1.72 (0.36, 1.43) 0.02	3.99 (0.47, 2.08) 0.001
Educational status		
HND	1	1
Degree	2.48 (1.19, 3.24) 0.015	2.79 (0.22, 2.80) 0.004
Masters	2.63 (0.72, 9.55) 0.041	4.72 (0.73, 10.18) 0.003
Nature of industry		
Others	1	
1 Star	0.63 (0.72, 9.55) 0.041	2.72 (0.73, 10.18) 0.002
2 star	2.16 (2.11, 24.88) 0.002	4.91 (1.36, 17.68) 0.001
Work experience		
0-5 Years	1	1
6-10 years	2.69 (1.15, 6.27) 0.002	1.29 (0.31, 5.38) 0.211
11 + years	2.01 (2.26, 5.12) 0.001	3.28 (1.31, 8.81) 0.0611

Table 4.5 shows that, respondents with degree certificates were 2.48 times more likely to use research findings as compared to those with HND certificates [COR =2.48 (95%CI:1.19-3.24);

P=0.015]. Also, respondents working in 2 star hotels were 2.16 times more likely to use research findings as compared to those in guest houses [COR =2.16 (95% CI:2.16-24.88); P=0.002.

It was further revealed that, respondents who had first degree were 2.79 times more likely to use research findings as compared to those with HND [AOR = 2.79 (95% CI:0.22-2.80); P=0.004].

DISCUSSION

Given the importance of research findings to the hospitality sector, owners and managers of hotels should ensure that, employees are have enough resources to conduct research to improve customer service delivery (Tingen et al., 2009). Study participants identified limited knowledge of employees on research findings, use of technical language to present research findings among others as factors that influence utilization of research findings in the study setting (Bahadori et al., 2016). These findings are consistent with previous studies.

CONCLUSION

The study found that, respondents rated their knowledge on research as moderate. However there was low utilisation of research findings among respondents. Factors such as nature of the hotel and educational level of respondents after adjusting for age and work experience were determinants of utilization of research findings among respondents. The implications of the study findings are to practice are multifold. Owners of hotels in the study setting could provide funding for research purposes in their hotels. The limited use of research findings in the hotels could prevent the incorporation of modern hotel practices and services to customers. This could influence customers' satisfaction negatively. To improve utilization of research findings among managers of hotels in Tamale metropolis;

- Universities should invite industry players to play part in conferences to whip their interests in research
- Researchers should involve industry players in research to encourage the use of the findings
- Industry players should be encouraged to further their education

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