

The Impact of Training Activities on Quality of Service, Customer Satisfaction and Behavioral Intention

Hany Hosny Sayed Abdelhamied¹

Abstract

Hotels industry is a labor-intensive industry, the human element is crucial in this industry; where all hotels activities and services are based on the human elements. The hotels industry is distinguished, among other services industry, by an everlasting competitiveness, market globalization, continual technological advances and changes in work organization; therefore, the survival of hotels in fierce competition markets require sustainable competitive advantages over other hotels in the marketplace. Consequently, the need for well-qualified and well-trained employees becomes a strategic objective. In turn, an organization's human resource training system is a key factor in ensuring the knowledge, skills and attitudes necessary to achieve competitive advantage. The present study aims to measure the effects of training activities conducted in hotels on quality of service, customer satisfaction level and customer behavioral intention. Data were collected from both employees and customers in different hotels. Using simple and multiple regressions analysis, the emerged findings illustrated a great value for training activities. More precisely, the results suggested that training activities has a positive influence on quality of service, generating higher level of customer satisfaction, which boosts customers' behavioral intention.

Keywords: training; quality of service; customer satisfaction; behavioral intention.

Introduction

The hotel industry is characterized by an everlasting competitiveness, market globalization and continual need for development of personnel therefore, the survival of hotels in fiercely competitive markets requires sustainable competitive advantages over other hotels in the marketplace. Thus, several hotels attempt to retain their customers and attract those of their competitors through high-quality services and customer satisfaction. Therefore, training activities are a practical technique hotel use to remain competitive. However, quality of service is naturally intangible and non-standardized when being judged by different customers (Hartline & Jones, 1996). Because of these characteristics, the assessment of quality of service is primarily subjective and lies largely with the customers. Moreover, high quality of service offered by hotels will spill over onto customer satisfaction (Tsaur & Lin, 2004). The interaction between customers and employees is an essential part of the customer experience and customer satisfaction (Chand, 2010; Choi & Chu, 2001). Therefore, efforts to improve service quality must be based on management action or professional training (Chand & Katou, 2007).

Training is defined as the processes that help workers perform their tasks effectively and efficiently, through education and practice (Rouiller & Goldstein, 1993). There has been an increase in the number of empirical studies on the relation between training and effectiveness over the last two decades (Kidder & Rouiller, 1997; Murray & Raffaele, 1997; Barrett & O'Connell, 2001; Ng & Siu, 2004; Tzafir, 2006; Birdi et al., 2008; Danvila-del Valle, Sastre-Castillo, & Rodriguez-Duarte, 2009).

¹ Associate Professor, Faculty of Tourism and Hotels, University of Sadat City, Egypt. College of Business, Umm Al-Qura University, KSA

However, training activities have faced criticism for being costly, not reflecting on employees' performance, or for being applied only to remunerate and retain certain workers (Kraiger, McLinden, & Casper, 2004; Wright & Geroy, 2001). The issue of how to assess the results of training on performance at both an employee and an organizational level is still unclear (Wright, Gardner, & Moynihan, 2003). In addition, many firms force training activities on all employees, regardless of their positions or training needs, while they should instead be designed according to personnel and position needs.

Quality of service is the key success factor in the service sector, and scholars have pointed out that the quality of service offered by employees has a direct impact on a customer's decision to re-visit a hotel (Barrington & Olsen, 1987; Lassar, Manolis, & Winsor, 2000). According to Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1985), the gap between what the customers expect and what they receive may lead to a feeling of discontentment on their part. Without proper training for hotel employees, meeting the high expectations of customers cannot be achieved (Clark, Hartline, & Jones, 2009). Customer satisfaction is one of the most crucial concerns in the hotel industry, with satisfied clients more likely to become loyal customers and spread positive word of mouth about the hotel. It is well known that customer satisfaction is the key factor in increasing hotel revenues (Chi & Gursoy, 2009). In this regard, research on how training and customer satisfaction are related in the hotel sector is limited. The present study aims to explore the impacts of training activities conducted in three-star hotels on quality of service, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intention. The study objectives are

- 1) To examine the impact of training activities on service quality.
- 2) To verify the direct effects of training activities on customer satisfaction.
- 3) To verify the direct effects of training activities on customer behavioral intention.
- 4) To test effect of customer satisfaction on behavioral intention.

Review of theoretical literature and hypothesis development

Training in hospitality

Training in hospitality is a situational process that depends on the training needs of each department; no specific method is right for all situations (Kirkpatrick, 1994; Blanchard & Thacker, 1999). Training is one of a range of human resource improvement techniques, targeting the improvement of hotels' effectiveness by widening the pool of employees with knowledge, skills and a certain attitude. Training is a deliberate procedure used to change employees' approach, knowledge, skills, or behavior through a learning experience, so that they can perform effectively in a given service activity (Bartel, 1994). In line with this, Jie and Roger (2006) revealed that training could be delivered through different methods, such as, instructing and mentoring, cooperation between peers, and sharing by lower-level staff. Training activities not only improve personnel but also help firms to better utilize their work force so as to acquire a competitive advantage.

The service management literature has discussed the benefits of training, for both employees and firms. For example, training helps employees find jobs more easily, and swiftly, improves the work performance of the existing work force, and updates their skills. It also reduces mistakes and increases work rapidity. In addition, training reduces turnover among new and established staff, and increases productivity (Russell et al., 1985; Tersptra & Rozell, 1993; Bartel, 1994; Guest, 2011; Jiang et al., 2012; Nickson, 2007). Moreover, human resource practices greatly influence employee skills, motivation, and work structure, and are positively correlated with organizational results (Delaney & Huselid, 1996). Similarly, many scholars have agreed that firms that provide training are more effective (Geladem & Ivery, 2003).

To accurately measure the effects of training activities on business, more research is needed on the areas that would benefit most from training and would be most likely generate profits for the companies. Therefore, the present study will focus on hotel employees working in the key revenue-generating departments namely the food and beverages and the rooms divisions. In this context, many authors have analyzed the relation between training and effectiveness; some of them have examined this relation by matching the outcomes obtained by staff who have participated in training activities to those who have not, and the findings have supported that there are positive outcomes for those who participate in training (Latham & Frayne, 1989; Connerley, 1997; Klein & Weaver, 2000). Furthermore, Ubeda-Garcia (2005) suggested that training activities equip employees with distinctive information, capabilities and abilities that contribute to firm value and enable firms to achieve their organizational objectives.

Other studies have examined whether performance increases when a company trains its employees and have again concluded that training is positively related to firms' performance (Bartel, 1994; Delaney & Huselid, 1996; Birdi et al., 2008). On the other hand, Gerhart (2005) claimed that not all training programs that are carried out are expected to improve performance or productivity. In line with this, Worsfold and Griffith (2003) contended that on-the-job training is more dependable in the hospitality and restaurant sectors, but proof of its results is inconclusive.

Training and quality of service

Hoque (1999a) reported that the chain hotels in the UK had adopted human resource management (HRM) practices to minimize expenses and focus on service quality in order to improve their outcomes. In another work, Hoque (1999b) explained that the link between HRM practices and organizational performance depends greatly on the nature of the strategy followed. The same author declared that hotels that adopt HRM approaches with a great emphasis on quality in their business strategy perform best. Parasuraman, Zeithaml, and Berry (1988) stated that quality of service is a sophisticated evaluation measure, meaning different things to different people. The common definition of quality of service is the distinction patrons make between their actual expectations and perceived experience/service. Parasuraman et al. (1985; 1988) developed a service quality scale (the SERVQUAL scale), which became the most popular instrument for measuring quality of service in the majority of service contexts, including hospitality. SERVQUAL identified five variables of service quality: the ability of staff to offer proper and consistent services, termed *reliability*; the ability of staff to respond to customers' wants and needs quickly, denoted *responsiveness*; employees' behavior and knowledge that reflect trust and confidence (*assurance*); individualized attention and appropriate care provided to clients, referred to as *empathy*; and the physical characteristics of the service facility, e.g. proper equipment, etc., which they named *tangibles*. Akan (1995) tested the relevance of SERVQUAL in Turkish hotels. Their study proposed and identified new dimensions for service quality, such as accuracy of service and service time, ability to handle complaints, communication, and their influences on customers' satisfaction. Similarly, Alexandris et al. (2002) utilized the SERVQUAL model in Greek hotels, and found that service quality dimensions explained a very high proportion of the variance in word-of-mouth communications and purchase intentions.

Likewise, Hartline and Jones (1996) proposed that contracts for hotel employees should clarify the training necessary for them to deliver high-quality service, due to the importance of training for quality of service. Furthermore, Chaichi (2012) tested the effects of staff training initiatives on tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy in travel agencies, aimed at enhancing the capabilities of employees to provide customer satisfaction. Arago ´n-Sa ´nchez et al. (2003) investigated the direct effects of training on quality of service, and proved that training has positive effects on quality of services. Similarly, other studies have verified the benefits stemming from training, in terms of positive effects on labor productivity, return on assets, staff turnover reduction, product/service, and overall quality (Cho et al., 2006; Guerrero & Barraud-Didiere, 2004; Kintana et al., 2006; Saks & Burke-Smalley, 2014). Conversely, Caudron (2002) and Kraiger et al. (2004) took a different perspective and found that the criticism of training often comes about because training is regarded simply as a current fashion, and costly, and does not reflect entry-level jobs or enhance the performance of the workers who do them.

Service quality and customer satisfaction

To a great extent, customer satisfaction has become a determinant of success for hospitality operations, due to the increasing and changing demands and expectations of the customer in the hospitality sector. Therefore, customer satisfaction is the leading criterion of high-quality services and products (Vavra, 1997). Customer satisfaction is defined as happening after the customer has experienced the service/product, when they make an evaluation or judgment of it (Chi & Qu, 2008). Several scholars have demonstrated a significant link between service quality and customer satisfaction (e.g., Gronroos, 1990; Cronin & Taylor, 1992; Parasuraman et al., 1985; Parasuraman, Zeithaml, & Berry, 1988; Fornell, 1992; Ryu, et al 2012; Lu et al., 2015). In the same context, Minh et al. (2015) found that service quality is an important driver of higher customer satisfaction levels with regards hotel services. Furthermore, Huang et al. (2017) confirmed that service quality positively influences customer satisfaction. On the other hand, Karunaratne and Jayawardena (2010) found that customers were not satisfied with regards to the reliability and empathy of five-star hotels.

Customer satisfaction and Behavioral Intentions

Return intention refers to the desire of a customer to engage in repeated visitations to an establishment (Kim, Lado & Torres, 2009). Retaining current customer is crucial for business survival. Zeithaml et al. (1996) have suggested that when service assessments are positive, it is the customers' desirable behavioral intentions that strengthen their relationship with the service provider. They classify behavioral intentions into desirable and undesirable intentions. Positive word of mouth about a given service provider to others and recommending it to them in the future, intention to pay higher prices, and remaining loyal to the provider are desirable behavioral intentions. On the other hand, complaining and switching toward competitors are examples of undesirable behavioral intents (Zeithaml et al., 1996).

Based on the aforementioned discussions in the literature review regarding training and performance, the following hypotheses are suggested:

- H1. There is a positive relationship between Work based training and quality of service.
- H2. There is a positive relationship between Personal based training and quality of service.
- H3. Work based training will have a positive impact on customers' satisfaction.
- H4. Personal based training will have a positive impact on customers' satisfaction.
- H5. Work based training will have a positive impact on customers' behavioral intention.
- H6. Personal based training will have a positive impact on customers' behavioral intention.
- H7. Customer satisfaction will have a positive impact on customers' behavioral intention.

Methodology

Study design

This study depends on a cross-sectional approach, in which a sample of individuals is selected from a defined population and contacted at a particular time to obtain simultaneous information on the outcomes of another group. The cross-sectional approach is suitable in this study for many reasons: (i) the study contains multiple variables; (ii) the approach is useful for investigating associations between two different groups and clearly describing the nature of those relationships; (iii) the cross-sectional approach can help to prove a study's assumptions. It was clear from the reviewed papers that many successful studies (18), in both the service and the manufacturing sector, have taken a cross-sectional approach (e.g., Bove & Johnson, 2000; Glaveli & Karassavidou, 2011; Guest, 1997).

Sample and data collection

Depending on random sampling strategy, the researcher collected the data from a sample includes three-star hotels in the greater Cairo and Sharm Al-Shikh areas during 2018. The rationale for selecting the target areas and the three stars categories are due to:

- (1) Three stars hotels are spread in the Greater Cairo and Sharm Al-Shikh areas, rather than any other areas of the country.
- (2) Occupancy rates are higher in Greater Cairo and Sharm Al-Shikh areas than any other district in Egypt. Therefore, conducting such a study in three-star hotels could provide useful knowledge that helps identifying the effects of training activities on quality of service, customer satisfaction and behavioral intention. About 93 three stars hotels have been approached to conduct the study in the specified areas, but only 67 hotels agreed to participate and allowed the researcher to conduct the study. The researcher focuses on the hotels that conducted training activities during the last six months to make sure the effects of training started to appear on personnel performance. .

After getting the ethical approval from the sampled hotels, two different surveys were conducted. Firstly, the researcher delivered a questionnaire to all employees (300) in rooms division and food and beverage departments in the sampled hotels. In order to fulfill the study objectives, staffs from the two assigned departments, who have completed training program in the investigated hotel were requested to fill in the questionnaire forms. Two hundred seventeen valid forms were returned with a response rate 72.3%. Secondly, another questionnaire were distributed to hotels' customers, where they were approached at checkout desks at the investigated hotels and after completing their check-out procedures to enquire about their perception regarding the quality of services provided at the hotel, customer satisfaction and their behavioral intention.

Approximately, 315 forms were distributed and 220 usable questionnaires were obtained. The contents and details of the two questionnaires will be illustrated below in the measurement part.

Measures

Staff measures

Generally, empirical literature focusing on the relationship between training and performance has used different variables as measures for training. Some studies investigated training characteristics and training activities (Lynch, 1992; Lynch, & Sandra, 1995) while others focused on percentages of trained workers and percentage of subsidized expenditure (Murray & Raffaele, 1997). For this paper, a questionnaire form has been developed including the following items to investigate training activities conducted in a sample of Egyptian hotels:

1- Training strategy: this part of the questionnaire focusing on the following elements?

- Frequency of training program for staff members per the year.
- The extent to which all members within a department are involved in the training programs.
- The allocated time for training is also investigated; hence, respondents are requested to indicate their viewpoint regarding the appropriateness of training time.

2- The second part of the instrument encompasses many items about the different training aspects, that employees received from participating in the hotels' training activities.

3- The last part includes employees' information (gender, age, job position and years of experience at the hotels).

Training activities were measured with 16 items adopted partially from earlier work by Dabale, Jagero & Nyauchi, (2014). Exploratory factor analysis with a Varimax rotation on these 16 items revealed two component solutions explaining 83.06 % of the total variance, with factor loadings on all items at least 0.582 (see Table 1). The reliability of these two components was satisfactory ($\alpha = 0.964$ and 0.791 , respectively). The first factor was named work-based training since it included items related to improve skills, knowledge, and performance, work behavior, productivity and employee competitiveness. The second, is personal based training, encompasses items related to pay, job-providing opportunities for taking initiative action, promotion, better relationships with staff members and reduction of absenteeism.

Table 1. Exploratory factor analysis of training activities.

Attributes	Loadings	% of variance explained	Alphas α
a- Work based training		48.431	0.964
The training identify the, skills, behavior and knowledge that staff need to develop	0.811		
Training focuses on skills and competences	0.819		
Training concentrates on staff requirements of training	0.799		
Training focuses on altering staff performance	0.878		
Training techniques are always changeable.	0.667		
Training focuses on increasing productivity	0.809		
Training seeks to boost the business and improve the working atmosphere	0.794		
Training focuses on staff motivation and workers satisfaction.	0.841		
Training focuses on sharing and transferring new knowledge in the hotels	0.902		
b- Personal based training		34.631	0.791
Training acquired staff competitive advantage	0.854		
Training leads to increase staff benefits and incentives.	0.789		
Training seeks to increase staff involvement in the hotel.	0.864		
training encourage staff to take initiatives	0.691		
Training improves the relationships among staff.	0.678		
Training gives opportunities to promotion to higher positions.	0.582		
Training reduces absenteeism	0.839		

Note: extraction method, principal component; rotation method, varimax with kaiser normalization

Customer measures

This part includes the measurement for quality of service, customer satisfaction and customer behavioral intention. To identify the extent to which the training activities had improved the quality of the services provided in the investigated hotels, the researcher developed a five point scale instrument adopted partially from the SERVQUAL index that has been widely applied in a variety of service sectors, including tourism and hospitality for example (Parasuraman et al., (1988 ; Douglas & Connor, 2003; Antony et al., 2004; Juwaheer, 2004; Marković, 2004; Nadiri and Hussain, 2005; Wang et al., 2007).

To reduce items number, the researcher ran a factor analysis (orthogonal varimax rotation). One variable was dropped from the analysis, as it did not reach the minimum saturation value recommended. Therefore, the factor analysis was performed with 22 items. Four significant factors emerged explaining 61.02 % of total variance with satisfactory reliability scores ranging between ($\alpha= 0.769$ and $\alpha= 0.878$). See table 2. This in accordance with other studies in the field, including, Glaveli et al., 2006; Karassavidou ; Glaveli and Papadopoulos 2008). The emerged four factors were named respectively: staff effectiveness, service attribute, assurance and tangibles and reliability (see Table 2). All scales referring to quality of service, and staff attitudes were anchored by 1 (Extremely agree) and 5 (Extremely disagree).

Table 2. Confirmatory factor analysis of quality of service.

Attributes	Loadings	% of variance explained	Alphas α
a-Staff effectiveness		19.845	0.878
Reflection of hospitality Spirit by staff	0.842		
Greeting and welcoming the guests	0.798		
Staff appearance neatness	0.812		
Confidence	0.687		
Staff knowledge	0.781		
Language skills	0.878		
Attention paid by staff	0.811		
Well-educated and trained staff.	0.735		
b-Service attribute		16.747	0.854
Staff professionalism in performing the services	0.744		
Prompt services	0.848		
Staff politeness	0.809		
Service initiative of staff	0.679		
Service flexibility of staff	0.874		
Quick reaction of staff	0.832		
c- Assurance and tangible		13.581	0.769
Attractiveness	0.781		
Feeling of security	0.792		
Cleanliness of the hotel facilities	0.619		
Having new modern facilities	0.832		
Pleasant ambiance	0.714		
d-Reliability		10.843	0.839
Absence of errors in service delivery	0.868		
Adaptation of the services to the guest expectation	0.829		
Sincere interest in solving the problem.	0.745		

Note: extraction method, principal component; rotation method, varimax with Kaiser normalization

Customer Satisfaction

Satisfaction with the services offered at the hotels has been evaluated using a Six-item construct. Hence, the respondents were asked to rate the following items:

- *The quality of food and beverage products during their stay in the hotels.*

- *Variety of menu choices.*
- *Prices of drinks and meals.*
- *Quality of guests' rooms and quietness of hotel.*
- *Reservations system.*
- *The overall satisfaction of their experience in the hotel.*

These items are in fact were adopted and developed partially from Pizman & Ellis (1999) who discussed the customer satisfaction as a leading criterion for determining the quality that is actually delivered to customers through the product and services.

Exploratory factor analysis and a Varimax rotation on the above-mentioned items indicated a single component ($\alpha = 0.789$) with 61.245% of the total variance explained and with factor loadings on all items at least 0.648.

Behavioral intention

The last part of customers' measurements dealt with the behavioral intention towards the hotels. Using four items original to this study. Customers were asked to answer the following questions using a five-point likert scale where (1: extremely not agree and 5: extremely agree):

- *I'm confident I will stay in this hotel every time I come to this city*
- *I intend to choose this hotel if other hotels' prices are lower than this hotel.*
- *I have experienced better quality of products and services in this hotel than any other hotels.*
- *I will certainly recommend this hotel to friends and relatives.*
- *I'd like to come to this hotel in the future.*

Exploratory factor analysis and a Varimax rotation on the above five items formed a single factor ($\alpha = 0.673$) explaining 57.217% of the total variance. The loadings on all items were at least 0.635.

A pre-tested prompt was conducted for both the employees and customer questionnaire. A jury of hotels experts and academics read both the surveys and amended some parts. A pilot study with a convenience sample of seven hotels employees and eight customers were conducted and accordingly, both instruments were slightly amended. Corrections were basically related to the phrasing of questions.

Statistical analysis

This study defines three different dependent variables; named quality of service, customer satisfaction and customers' behavioral intention to measure impact of training activities. The independent variable for this study is the training activities conducted by a sample of hotels. To establish a relationship between training activities and quality of service, customer satisfaction and behavioral intention, confirmatory and exploratory factor analysis, simple regression analysis and multiple regressions analysis have been used as analysis techniques to test the hypotheses. Descriptive statistics (mean scores and frequencies) were also used in the analysis.

Empirical study results

The descriptive data indicated that the sampled hotels gave much attention for training activities; hence, numbers of training programs applied in hotels each year were ranging from two to five training programs each year in the majority of the investigated sample. Results showed that food and beverage departments in hotels received more training activities than rooms' divisions departments. Contrary to expectations, not all staff received the same numbers of training activities during the year in both food and beverage and rooms division departments. The reason behind this could back to the fact stated by (Kennedy, 2009) who declared customers' contact staff receive more training efforts' than none customers' contact staff. The findings indicated that hotel placed much emphasis for (on-job training) during. However, off-job training was carried out with new staff members.

It is worth mentioning that, staff with more experiences (over 6 years) receives less training programs than staff with fewer years of experience and this result may justify why not all the staff were involved in the training activities. Variances have been detected regarding the allocated time for training; hence, 53% of the respondents found the allocated time for training activities were proper and convenient for them. On the other hand, 47% claimed that training times were not appropriate.

To test the relationship between training activities and quality of service, customer satisfaction and customers' behavioral intention, several simple and multiple regression analysis have been conducted which enable to analyze the linear relationship between the study independent variables the training activities (Work based training and Personal based training) and multiple dependent variable (quality of service, customer satisfaction and behavioral intention) by estimating coefficients for the equation for the straight line. However, some issues should be considered when conducting the regression because the differences of the used scales for the independent variable. To overcome this problem, the standardized regression coefficient (beta coefficient) has been calculated hence, it shows the change level in the dependent variable for each unit change in the independent variable. Use of beta coefficient allows direct comparisons between many independent variables and their influences on dependent variable.

Hypothesis H1 and H2 refer to the relationship between training activities which is divided into work-based training (WBT) and personal based training (PBT) and quality of service in the sampled hotels. As it has been discussed earlier, the quality of service variable includes four components extracted from the factor analysis (staff effectiveness, service attribute, assurance and tangible and reliability).

Clearly, H1 and H2 suppose that (WBT) and (PBT) are expected to have a positive effect on staff effectiveness. The results emerged from the regression models outcomes (see Tables (3) and (4) reflected that staff effectiveness has been affected greatly from work-based training hence, high level of β (0.879), R^2 adj 0.881, at statistical significance p , (0.000). As it can be depicted from results of R^2 which describe the amount of variation in the quality of service as a dependent variable which associated with variation in the training activities as independent variable R^2 adj. also indicated the percentage of total variation in the dependent variable (quality of service) which can be explained when using the independent variable (WBT). The high level of β (0.879) showed that an increase in the dependent variable based on an increase in the independent variable.

Table (3) Multiple Regression model between the variables.

<i>Regression</i>	<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Dependent variable</i>	<i>Standardized coefficient</i> β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>- R2</i>
	Work based training	QoS: Staff effectiveness	0.879	21.015	0.000	0.881
		QoS: Service attributes	0.841	20.129	0.000	
		QoS: Assurance and tangible	0.486	15.545	0.003	
		QoS: Reliability	0.458	14.214	0.001	

Note: (QoS): quality of service. $P < 0.05$, R^2 adjusted.

Likewise, the same results have been repeated from the multiple regression model for (PBT) where high level of β was 0.714 and R^2 adj. (0.813), the statistical significance p , (0.000). Obviously, results in table (3) demonstrated the extent to which the work-based training affected the service attribute, thus, high level of β (0.841), the statistical significance p , (0.000) were obtained. It was also found personal based training has a positive effect on service attributes, as it focuses on encourage staff to take initiatives and to increase staff involvement in the hotel, as a moderate level of β (0.623), at significance value p , (0.000). To some extent, (WBT) affects assurance and tangibility of the hotels from the customers' viewpoints, where results illustrated that β (0.426), at significance value p , (0.003). On the other hand, (PBT) has no effect in regards to assurance and tangibility and the emerged results presented negative beta β (- 0.148), with no significance p , (0.026). That's why H2 is partially accepted. Again, (WBT) appeared to be effective for reliability; hence the training improved the service delivery and reduced the service errors, and exceed the customer expectation of the service with professional ability in solving problems. Results in table (3) showed high level of β (0.858) with significance level p , (0.000). Regarding personal based training, to some extent it affected the reliability as indicated obtained results see table (4).

From the emerged regression, the quality of service is affected positively by the training activities carried out by the hotels, specifically work based training affects the quality of service more than personal based training. Obviously, results showed that the work-based training in particular have improved the perceived quality of service. This result is inconsistent and accords with (Saks & Burke-Smalley, 2014) who found a positive relationship between human resources practices and productivity.

Based upon previous discussion of the regression results and the descriptive date obtained, it can be said that H1 is strongly supported and accepted. In addition, the findings supported H2 partially.

Table (4) Multiple Regression model between the variables.

<i>Regression</i>	<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Dependent variable</i>	<i>Standardized coefficient</i> β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>- R2</i>
	Personal based training	QoS: Staff effectiveness	0.714	20.457	0.000	0.813
		QoS: Service attribute	0.623	17.442	0.000	
		QoS: Assurance and tangible	-0.148	19.204	0.026	
		QoS: Reliability	0.369	12.089	0.004	

Note: (QoS): quality of service. $p < 0.05$, R^2 adjusted.

According to H3. Which hypothesizes that (WBT) will have a positive impact on customers' satisfaction. Results of the simple regression analysis in table (5) assured the existence of a positive and statistical significance relationship between (WBT) and customer satisfaction, hence, *Standardized coefficient* $\beta = (0.889)$ and $R^2 (0.726)$ at a significance level $p, (0.000)$ the obtained results reflected the powerful of (WBT) in predicting customer satisfaction. This finding is also supported by the obtained results from the multiple regression models in table (3) regarding H1 where, results indicated positive relationship between both training activities and quality of service. Customers positively perceived the different services provided by hotels and consequently, they were satisfied.

Table (5) simple regression model between the variables.

<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Dependent variable</i>	<i>Standardized coefficient</i> β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R2</i>
Work based training	CS: Customer Satisfaction	0.889	19.031	0.00	0.76
				0	2
Personal based training		0.109	2.076	0.91	0.10
				1	1

Conversely, H4 which proposed that (PBT) will have a positive impact on customers' satisfaction, the regression also indicated a positive and statistical insignificance relationship with customer satisfaction as illustrated from the tabulated results $\beta = (0.109)$ and $R^2 (0.101)$ at a significance level $p, (0.911)$. The results of the simple regression models for the H3 demonstrated the strong impact of training activities on customers' satisfaction. Thus, Hypothesis H3 is accepted, regarding H4 unexpectedly, the second dimension of training PBT was found to have no influence on customer satisfaction. This may back to the nature of personal-based training that concentrates more on staff benefits, relations among staff, staff involvement and promotion, and all these elements did not contribute directly to customer satisfaction. Although the items of personal-based training are quite important in building good relations among staff, but improving staff interpersonal skills throughout training would be more beneficial, in other words improving the communication among the staff and between staff and customers can lead to delighted customers. Personal-based training items did not include interpersonal skills elements and it is important to be included rather than factors such staff promotion or staff recognition. The obtained results accord with Cook and Verma (2002) found that certain training programs provided by organizations in the banking sector had no effect on any dimension of service quality or customer perceptions. Therefore, H4 is rejected. Work based training was hypothesized (H5) to have a positive impact on customer's behavioral intention. Based on the results of the simple regression table (6), it can be depicted that work-based training has a strong positive relationship with customer behavioral intention as, *Standardized coefficient* $\beta = (0.675)$ and $R^2 (0.709)$ at a significance level $p, (0.000)$.

The obtained results are congruent with Huang et al., (2017). Therefore, H5 is supported. Conversely, H6, which hypothesized that (PBT) will have a positive impact on customers' behavioral intention, was rejected. The results in table (6) showed a very weak *Standardized coefficient* $\beta = (0.119)$ and $R^2 (0.098)$ and it was not statistically significant $p, (0.503)$. Thus, H6 was rejected.

Table (6) simple regression model between the variables.

<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Dependent variable</i>	<i>Standardized coefficient</i> β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R²</i>
Work based training	BI: Behavioral intention	0.675	16.836	0.00	0.70
Personal based training		0.119	5.076	0.50	0.09

CS): Behavioral intention. $p < 0.05$, R^2 adjusted

Through hypothesis H7 which proposed that customer satisfaction will have a positive impact on customers' behavioral intention, the obtained results in table (7) confirmed a strong positive relationship between customer satisfaction and behavioral intention where $\beta = (0.837)$ and $R^2 (0.810)$ and it was statistically significant at $p, (0.000)$. It can be concluded that customer satisfaction is a powerful predictor of customers' behavioral intention, as clients will repeat their visits to the same hotels as long as they were satisfied with the provided products and services. This finding accords with previous studies Ryu, et al., (2012) who found customers' satisfaction as a significant predictor of behavioral intentions in food service context, and Reu, et al., (2008) who confirmed that customer satisfaction can act as a partial mediator in the relationship between overall quick-casual restaurant image/perceived value and behavioral intentions. Based upon the previous discussion H7 is supported.

Table (7) simple regression model between the variables

<i>Independent variable</i>	<i>Dependent variable</i>	<i>Standardized coefficient</i> β	<i>t</i>	<i>p</i>	<i>R²</i>
Customer satisfaction	BI: Behavioral intention	0.837	19.963	0.00	0.81

BI): Behavioral intention. $p < 0.05$, R^2 adjusted

Conclusion

In hospitality sector, training activities have begun to be a fundamental policy to achieve success and acquiring a competitive advantage. The extensive literature in this paper shed the light on the various models of training programs and their influences on hotels' productivity and effectiveness. It also covered the different approaches adopted by hospitality organizations in training their staff. Quality of service in hospitality context was discussed with a clear explanation of the various dimensions of quality of service. Customer satisfaction and behavioral intention were also presented in service sector. The focus of this paper is to investigate the impacts of training activities applied in hotels on the quality of service provided, level of customer satisfaction and behavioral intention of customers. To this end the researcher developed the study hypothesis depend on a wide literature, using training activities as independent variables and quality of service, customer satisfaction and behavioral intention as dependent variables to predict and measure the impacts of training activities. Empirical results showed the direct effects of training activities on quality of service. Although, the emerged results reflected the powerful of work-based training on quality of service, personal based training also associate quality of service. The findings revealed the positive effects of WBT on customers' satisfaction, as they were totally satisfied of the quality of food and beverage products offered in the hotels, variety of menu items, prices, guests' rooms and reservations systems. PBT has no effect on customer satisfaction due to the nature PBT which focuses more staff involvement, promotion and staff benefits. The finding proved a positive relationship between work-based training activities and customers' behavioral intention, it is considered a logical finding as customers were satisfied of quality of service and quality of the products offered in hotels and accordingly will revisit the same hotels in the future. However, personal based training activities have no effect on customers' behavioral intention. Customers' overall satisfactions of the hotels' services and products have positive influence on customers' future decisions to repeat the visit to the same hotels.

The findings that have emerged from the current study provide important implications for three-star managers and operators. First, training programs applied in three-star hotels are limited and are not sufficient to develop or improve staff capabilities, whereas the three-star hotels depend on staff with limited experience and casual staff or seasonal staff in some positions, accordingly these personnel have limited knowledge of the hotels work, though operators should categorize their training into three stage with sufficient training hours firstly, orientation training to enable the new members to be aware of the different services and facilities provided by the hotels, secondly; interpersonal communication competences, thirdly, intercultural training that enable staff to understand different cultures and to deal effectively with foreign guests. Moreover, training should not be restricted to new employees only but should be provided to all staff in the department to ensure a consistent level of quality in the services performed by all employees. Secondly, the time allocated for employee training is not appropriate; about half of the sample involved in training activities stated that the training time was not suitable. Therefore, hotel operators should consider the time allocated for training and ensure it is convenient for the employees so they will benefit from training programs and achieve the required outcomes. Moreover, Human resources departments' in three-star hotels should assess staff feedback regarding the training and identify the extent to which they could benefit from the training programs. Notably, the majority of staff had limited experience in hotels and hold degrees in different specialization away of hospitality education, therefore operators should review their staff selection policy and recruit individuals with enough experience in hotels or holding degrees in hospitality education to achieve higher level of service.

Meanwhile, the results indicated that WBT has affected customer satisfaction through service attributes only while, reliability, staff effectiveness and assurance and tangibility have no mediation role in the relationship between training and customer satisfaction. It can be concluded that the WBT affected the service delivery process while aspects related to staff needs to be developed for example; training program should focus on improving staff knowledge of menu items, the ability to interact effectively with foreign guests, the ability to communication in guests' languages, the ability to respond to guests quickly, enhancing the ability to welcoming guests and giving them the feeling of safety, improving the ability to understand foreign cultures and customer expectations for all staff members either customer contact or none customers contact to provide a competitive advantage and leave a good impression on customers. It was noticeable that hotels tangibility and assurance were not affected by training, therefore training activities should focus on improving aspects related to staff behavior, staff uniform, appearance of the hotels and physical capabilities. It is important for the human resources departments in three-star hotels to assess the extent to which employees have benefited from training throughout staff feedback.

Moreover, customer satisfaction feedback surveys should be reviewed regularly to identify guests' perceptions of hotels' services and staff, and based on review the training needs should be determined. Another point emerged from the study and should be considered by managers and supervisors, they must deploy staff among service areas properly, in particular service areas involving customer contact should have sufficient members of staff as guests negatively perceived responsiveness of staff.

Limitations

Some limitations deserve to be highlighted with regards to this study. Using a restricted sample from two hotel departments, food and beverages, and rooms division means the results cannot be generalized to the remaining departments. In addition, this study was only conducted in four areas of Egypt, which means the study findings may not be generalized to the rest of Egypt. The current paper has focused on testing different items within the study's constructs, which are relevant to training activities, ignoring other elements associated with the success of training programs. For example, training location, trainer characteristics and instruction methods may all play a relevant role in training effectiveness, as indicated by Tews and Tracey (2008). Another potential limitation of this study is the use of two sources of data, which may be questionable.

References

- Akan, P. (1995). Dimensions of service quality: a study in Istanbul. *Managing Service Quality*, 5(6), 39-43.
- Alexandris, K., Dimitriadis, N. & Markata, D. (2002). Can perceptions of service quality predict behavioral intentions? An exploratory study in hotel sector in Greece. *Managing Service Quality*, 12(4), 224-31.

- Antony, J. & Antony, F. J. (2004). Evaluating service quality in a UK hotel chain: a case study. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 16(6), 380-384.
- Bartel, A.P. (1994). Productivity gains for the implementation of employee training programs. *Industrial Relations*, 33(4), 411-28.
- Barrett, A., & O'Connell P. (2001). Does Training Generally Work? The Return to In-Company Training?. *Industrial and Labor Relations Review*, 54(3), 647-663.
- Barrington, M. N., & Olsen, M. D. (1987). Concept of service in the hospitality industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 6(3), 131-138.
- Blanchard, P.N. & Thacker, J.W. (1999). *Effective Training: Systems, Strategies and Practices*. N.J.: Prentice Hall
- Birdi, K., Clegg C., Patterson, M., Robinson, A. & Stride, C. (2008). Wall The impact of human resource and operational management practices on company productivity: a longitudinal study. *Personnel Psychology*, 61, 467–501.
- Bove, L.L., & Johnson, L. W. (2000). A Customer–Service Worker Relationship Model, *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 11(5), 491–511.
- Caudron, S. (2002). Just say no to training fads. *Personnel Management*, 56, 38—44.
- Chaichi, K. (2012). Impact of Staff Training On Customer Satisfaction in Travel Agencies in Klang Valley Malaysia. *European Journal of Social Sciences*, 29(2), 1450-2267.
- Chand, M., & Katou, A. A. (2007). The impact of HRM practices on organisational performance in the Indian hotel industry. *Employee Relations*, 29(6), 576-594.
- Chand, M., (2010). The impact of HRM practices on service quality, customer satisfaction and performance in the Indian hotel industry. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(4), 551-566.
- Chi, C. & Qu, H., (2008). Examining the structural relationships of destination image, tourist satisfaction and destination loyalty: An integrated approach. *Tourism Management*, 29(4), 624-636.
- Choi, T. Y., & Chu, R. (2001). Determinants of hotel guests' satisfaction and repeat patronage in the Hong Kong hotel industry. *International Journal of Hospitality Management*, 20(3), 277-297.
- Clark, R. A., Hartline, M. D., & Jones, K. C. (2009). The effects of leadership style on hotel employees' commitment to service quality. *Cornell Hospitality Quarterly*, 50(2), 209-231.
- Connerley, M., L., (1997) The influence of training on perceptions of recruiters' interpersonal skills and effectiveness. *Journal of Occupational and Organizational Psychology*. 70(3), 259–272.
- Cronin Jr, J., & Taylor, A. (1992). Measuring service quality: a reexamination and extension. *The journal of marketing*, 55-68.
- Dabale, M. Jagero, N. & Nyauchi, M. (2014) The Relationship between Training and Employee Performance: The Case of Mutare City Council, Zimbabwe. *International Journal of Human Resource Studies*, 4(4), 61-72.
- Danvila-del Valle, I., Sastre-Castillo, M.A., & Rodriguez-Duarte, A. (2009), 'The Effects of Training on Performance in Service Companies. A Data Panel Study,' *International Journal of Manpower*, 30, 393–407.
- Delaney, J.T. & Huselid, M.A. (1996). The impact of human resource management practices on perceptions of organizational performance. *Academy of Management Journal*, 39(4), 949-69.
- Douglas, L. & Connor, R. (2003). Attitudes to service quality- the expectation gap. *Nutrition & Food Science*, 33(4),165-172.
- Fornell, C. (1992). A national customer satisfaction barometer: The Swedish experience. *the Journal of Marketing*, 6-21.
- Geladem, G. & Ivery, M. (2003). The impact of human resource management and work climate on organizational performance. *Personnel Psychology*, 56, 383-404.
- Gerhart, B. (2005). Human resources and business performance: Findings, unanswered questions, and an alternative approach, *Management Review*, 16, 174-185.
- Glaveli, N., Petridou, E; Liassides, C., & Spathis, C. (2006). Bank Service Quality: evidence from five Balkan countries. *Managing Service Quality: Global Trends and Challenges in Services*, 16(4), 380-394.
- Gronroos, C., (1990) Service Management: A Management Focus for Service Competition", *International Journal of Service Industry Management*, 1(1), 6-14.
- Guest, D. (2011) Human resource management and performance: still searching for some answers. *Human Resource Management Journal*, Vol.21 (1) 1-13.

- Guerrero, S., & Barraud-Didier, V. (2004). High-involvement practices and performance of French firms, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 15(8), 1408-1423.
- Hartline, M. D., & Jones, K. C. (1996). Employee performance cues in a hotel service environment: Influence on perceived service quality, value, and word-of-mouth intentions. *Journal of business research*, 35(3), 207-215.
- Hoque, K., (1999a) Human Resource Management and Performance in the UK Hotel Industry, *British Journal of Industrial Relations*, 37(3), 419-443.
- Hoque, K., (1999b). Human Resource Management in the Hotel Industry: a comparative analysis, *Human Resource Management Journal*, 9 (2), 64-76.
- Jiang, K., Lepak, D.P., Hu, J. & Baer, J.C. (2012). How does human resource management influence organizational outcomes? A meta-analytic investigation of mediating mechanisms. *Academy of Management Journal*, 55(6), 1264-1294.
- Jie, S. & Roger, D. (2006) Training and Management Development in Chinese Multinational Enterprises. *Employee Relations*, 28(4), 342-362.
- Juwaheer, T. D. (2004). Exploring international tourists' perceptions of hotel operations by using a modified SERVQUAL approach – a case study of Mauritius. *Managing Service Quality*, 14(5), 350-364.
- Karunaratne, W., & Jayawardena, L. (2010). Assessment of Customer Satisfaction in a Five Star Hotel-A Case Study. *Tropical Agricultural Research*, 21(3), 258-265.
- Karassavidou, E., Glaveli N. & Papadopoulos C. (2008). Health Care Quality in Greek NHS Hospitals: No one knows better than patients, 11th QMOD Conference. Quality Management and Organizational Development Attaining Sustainability From Organizational Excellence to Sustainable Excellence, 20–22 August, 2008 in Helsingborg, Sweden.
- Kennedy, D. (2009). Generate revenue by making training everyone's job. *Hotel and Motel Management*. Retrieved from <http://www.hotelworldnetwork.com/>
- Kidder, P. J., & Rouiller, J. Z. (1997). Evaluating the success of a large- scale training effort. *National Productivity Review*, 16(2), 79-89.
- Kim, M., Lado, N., and Torres, A. (2009). Evolutionary changes in service attribute importance in a crisis scenario: the Uruguayan financial crisis. *Journal of Service Research*, 11(4), 429–440.
- Kintana, M. L., Alonso, A. & Olaverri, C. (2006). High-performance work systems and firms operational performance: the moderating role of technology, *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 17(1), 70-85.
- Kirkpatrick, D. L. (1994). *Evaluating training programs: the four levels*. San Francisco: Berrett-Koehler.
- Klein, H. J., & Weaver, N. A. (2000). The effectiveness of an organizational-level orientation training program in the socialization of new hires. *Personnel Psychology*, 53, 47–66.
- Kraiger, K., Mclinden, D., & Casper, W. J. (2004). Collaborative planning for training impact. *Human Resource Management*, 43(4), 337-351.
- Lassar, W. M., Manolis, C., & Winsor, R. D. (2000). Service quality perspectives and satisfaction in private banking. *Journal of services marketing*, 14(3), 244-271.
- Latham, G. P., & Frayne, C. A. (1989). Self-management training for increasing job attendance: A follow-up and a replication. *Journal of Applied Psychology*, 74, 411–416.
- Lynch, L. (1992) Private-Sector Training and the Earnings of Your Workers. *The American Economic Review*, March, 299–312.
- Lynch, L. M. & Sandra, E. B. 1995. Beyond the Incidence of Training: Evidence from a National Employers Survey. NBER Working Paper No. 5231, August.
- Marković, S. (2004). Measuring Service Quality in Croatian Hotel Industry: A Multivariate Statistical Analysis. *Our Economy*, 1/2: 27-35.
- Minh, N. H., Ha, N. T., Anh, Phan C. & Matsui, Y. (2015). Service Quality and Customer Satisfaction: A Case Study of Hotel Industry in Vietnam. *Asian Social Science*, 11 (10), 73-85.
- Murray, B. & Raffaele, G. (1997). Single-site, results-level evaluation of quality awareness training. *Human Resource Development Quarterly*, 8, 229-245.
- Nadiri, H. & Hussain, K. (2005). Perceptions of service quality in North Cyprus hotels. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 17(6), 469-480.
- Nickson, D., 2007. *Human Resource Management for The Hospitality and Tourism Industries*. Elsevier.

- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A. & Berry, L.L. (1985). A conceptual model of service quality and its implications for future research. *Journal of Marketing*, 49, 41-50.
- Parasuraman, A., Zeithaml, V.A. & Berry, L.L. (1988). SERVQUAL: a multiple-item scale for measuring consumer perceptions of service quality. *Journal of Retailing*, 64, 12-40.
- Pizman A. & Ellis T (1999). Customer satisfaction and its measurement in hospitality enterprises. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*. 11(7), 326-339.
- Tsaur, S. H., & Lin, Y. C. (2004). Promoting service quality in tourist hotels: the role of HRM practices and service behavior. *Tourism Management*, 25(4), 471-481.
- Tzafirir, S. S. (2006). A universalistic perspective for explaining the relationship between HRM practices and firm performance at different points in time. *Journal of Managerial Psychology*, 21 (2), 109-130.
- Ubeda-Garcia, M. 2005. Training and business performance: the Spanish case. *International Journal of Human Resources Management* 16.1691-1710.
- Rouiller, J. Z., & Goldstein, I. L. (1993). The relationship between organizational transfer climate and positive transfer of training. *Human resource development quarterly*, 4(4), 377-390.
- Russell, J. S., Terborg, J. R., & Powers, M. L. (1985). Organizational performance and organizational level training and support. *Personnel Psychology*, 38, 849-863.
- Ryu K., Lee, H. & Kim, W. (2012). The influence of the quality of the physical environment, food, and service on restaurant image, customer perceived value, customer satisfaction, and behavioral intentions. *International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management*, 24 (2), 200 - 223.
- Saks, A. M. & Burke-Smalley, L.A. (2014). Is transfer of training related to firm performance. *International Journal of Training and Development*, 18(2), 104-115.
- Vavra, T.G. (1997). Improving your measurement of customer satisfaction: a guide to creating, conducting, analyzing, and reporting customer satisfaction measurement programs. *American Society for Quality* 42, 41-54
- Wang, M., Wang, J. & Zhao, J. (2007). An Empirical Study of the Effect of Customer Participation on Service Quality. *Journal of Quality Assurance in Hospitality & Tourism*, 8 (1), 49-73.
- Worsfold, D. & Griffith, C. 2003. A survey of food hygiene and safety training in the retail and catering industry. *Nutrition and Food Science* 33(2), 68 – 79.
- Wright, P. & Geroy, D.G. (2001). Changing the mindset: the training myth and the need for word-class performance. *International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 12 (4), 586-600.
- Wright, P. M., Gardner, T. M., & Moynihan, L. M. (2003). The impact of HR practices on the performance of business units. *Human resource management journal*, 13(3), 21-36.
- Zeithaml, V.A., Berry, L.L. and Parasuraman, A. (1996). The behavioral consequences of service quality. *Journal of Marketing*, 60, 31-46.