

Fostering Sound Skill Development: An Examination of Staff Training Methods as Means of Knowledge Transfer

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Although various studies cover staff training, no empirical study to date has investigated the effectiveness of various training methods in facilitating the transfer of knowledge. Hence, the study sought to shed light on the effectiveness of different employee training methods on knowledge transfer in the hospitality industry. The study employed a correlational research design and a quantitative approach. Using empirical data from 118 employees in five subsidiaries of a big-scale hospitality company in Zimbabwe, multi-regression analysis was used to assess the impact of each training method on knowledge transfer. While different training methods can transfer knowledge, the findings of this study indicated that mentoring and coaching were the most effective training methods for transferring knowledge. On the contrary, out of six key training methods at the workplace, role-play was found to be the least effective training method in facilitating knowledge transfer. Thus, the study yielded several policy-relevant findings, particularly to inform training policies in the organisation. The primary limitation of this research is that it focused on organisations in Zimbabwe, hence the results may not be generalised to other nations unless they share similar setting.

Keywords: skill development; Knowledge transfer; training methods; capacity building; human resource development

Although staff training methods have been thoroughly studied (Amrik, 2014; Chukwuemeka & Endurance, 2022; Elsafty & Oraby, 2022; Gan & Yusof, 2019), there is a lack of studies about their effectiveness in transferring knowledge. Due to the rapid dynamic competitive landscape, organisations increasingly focus on advancing new skills and knowledge of their employees. Human capital has become various organisations' fulcrum to gain a competitive edge in the business environment. Nevertheless, poor selection of the appropriate training methods is a critical daunting challenge which retards efforts of upskilling employees in hospitality organisations. Various organisations face pressure to upskill their employees to develop ingenious solutions to upheavals of inefficiencies and a severe competitive environment. The scrutiny of training methods has come to the forefront due to poor results from employees experienced by organisations after offering them training (Ju & Li, 2019; Kandampully, Zhang & Jaakkola, 2018). Despite the importance and salient of the issues associated with training methods, to date, no empirical study has been conducted to establish the influence of every training method towards knowledge transfer. This paper gives a first examination of the level of effectiveness of every training method on knowledge transfer. Numerous organisations choose the training method based on the cost associated with the method (Gan & Yusof, 2019; Aboramadan & Karatepe, 2021) and the time spent on the training using the method. Most organisations prefer to utilise less costly training methods despite their ineffectiveness in transferring knowledge. Similarly, the management tends to opt for methods that take less time to complete the training. In this matrix, the knowledge transfer effectiveness of the training method is often overlooked. Alexander, Martin, Manolchev and Miller (2020) define knowledge transfer as the focused and unidirectional dissemination of knowledge among organisations, departments or employees, such that the recipient of knowledge acquires sufficient comprehension and proficiency in implementing the acquired knowledge. Research by Cocuľová (2017) examining the factors that influence the decision to select training methods established that organisations tend to opt for approaches that require minimal financial and time investment. Similarly, a study by Majovski and Davitkovska (2016) on skill development during difficult periods revealed a general decline in training expenditures, with companies prioritising in-house, job-specific training for their employees. Transferring tacit knowledge to trainees is invaluable, and not all training methods can effectively transfer it. Lamb and Sutherland (2010) indicate that once trainees acquire such knowledge, they become golden workers.

Some training methods do not perfectly transfer noble skills, resulting in knowledge transfer disintegration (Mota-Veiga, Figueiredo, Ferreira & Ambrósio, 2021; Vezi-Magigaba & Utete, 2023). The prevailing knowledge economy, the intellectual capacity of employees is increasingly valued over physical strength, as it is believed to be a key driver of organisational success. Tacit knowledge is associated with experience and skills built on the job (Gou, Li, Lyu, Lyu & Zhang, 2019; Ali & Majid, 2020).

According to Duvivier, Peeters, and Harzing (2019), knowledge transfer can enable organisations to convert knowledge into valuable assets and establish a culture of continuous learning. Knowledge transfer enables an organisation to disseminate valuable experiential skills and information internally throughout the company. Osabutey and Jackson (2019) state that implementing effective knowledge transfer procedures can facilitate the dissemination of crucial knowledge from teams and individuals within an organisation. According to Romanyshyn, Sheketa, Pikh, Poteriailo, Kalambet and Pasiaka (2019), this can enhance the utilisation of employees possessing relevant information at the appropriate time. The advantages of effective knowledge transfer include a reduction in reliance on individual knowledge champions, the implementation of employee incentive programmes, a decrease in the need for redevelopment, and a reduction in monitoring requirements. Idohyan, Al-Rawashdeh, Sakr, Rahman, Alfarhan and Salam (2019) observe that seasoned employees, typically trainers, are reluctant to transfer their knowledge to emerging professionals. Iddy (2021) emphasises that seasoned employees are apprehensive about losing their job worth when they transfer their knowledge. Certain employees believe that acquiring and retaining knowledge is the sole means by which they can earn authority and respect. Coetzee et al., (2009) assert that certain workers may be paired with seasoned workers who lack the skills to train others effectively. The effectiveness of staff training depends on the presence of mechanisms for transferring acquired knowledge to improve job performance.

Zvobgo and Chivivi (2014) assert that a low employee retention rate and a significant labour-intensive set-up characterise the hospitality industry. According to Rothwell (2010), a conspicuous indication of the necessity for knowledge transfer and distribution arises when there is a decline in employee retention. To easily facilitate the transference of knowledge from tacit to explicit, it is crucial to have access to suitable structures, language, culture, technology, and processes that enable its acquisition and utilisation within the organisation. Trequattrini, Massaro, Lardo, and Cuozzo (2019) state that organisations' poor management of explicit knowledge can result in conflicts and disruptions in their daily operational processes. Therefore, it is crucial for the organisation to cultivate a sense of safety among its workforce, incentivise them to enhance their motivation, provide them with training and delegate authority to enable effective transfer of knowledge. However, a study by Mubarik, Chandran and Devadason (2018) focused on human capital and found that experience is more important than qualification and education. Given the concerns about knowledge transfer, the study sought to examine the effectiveness of different staff training methods in transferring knowledge to employees. Despite the seemingly logical effectiveness of training methods on knowledge transfer, no study has empirically or theoretically tested how much each training method contributes to knowledge transfer. Drawing on this research gap in the staff training and knowledge transfer literature, the paper sought to answer the identified research questions: i) How effective are staff training methods in transferring knowledge? and ii) Is the knowledge transfer institutionalised in hospitality organisations? Hence, this paper filled the research void.

Literature Review

Theoretical Framework

The study is guided by human capital theory and adult learning theory. These theories complement each other in interpreting and explaining how effectively each staff training method transfers knowledge. Human capital theory was first introduced by Mincer (1958). The human capital theory assumes that formal training is highly invaluable and essential to stimulate the productive capacity of employees (Fagerlind & Saha, 1997). Human capital theory strives to prove that the staff training of employees is essential in enhancing the skills of an employee through knowledge transfer (Mouallen & Analoui, 2014). This entails a necessity to invest in human capital through employing different training methods to transfer knowledge to the employees. Training methods are essential for transferring knowledge to the employees. However, the most effective staff training method for transferring knowledge has yet to be discovered. The theory purports that there are different staff training methods, and their effectiveness in knowledge transfer differs from one method to another. Human capital accumulation is increased through training methods. Across the entire occupational strata within the organisation, training methods are required as the essential mediums of knowledge transfer to fill the skills gap of employees. The adult learning theory was propounded by Knowles (1973). Adult learning theory is derived from organisational development and is regarded as a manner of providing employees with the necessary tools to perform optimally at the workplace. Adult learning theory combines action learning, experiential, self-directed and project-based (Conlan, Grabowski & Smith, 2003). The adult learning theory emerged after traditional pedagogical models failed to fit well into the workplace training space. Adult learning is more than cognitive processing as it requires tailored instructional strategies that foster adults to learn. The strategy

of dialogue and reflection, whether with a group, another or self, is encouraged to enable learning. Nevertheless, learning to reflect is a critical developmental process required in the adult learning environment. Critical reflection is critical for developing brain capacity, politics in workplace learning, confronting power, and transformative learning. In this study, training methods emphasise reflections and dialogue differently; hence, their effectiveness in transferring knowledge differs.

The concept of staff training

Employee training is vital at all levels within an organisation, as it enables the proper implementation of a structured learning framework while aligning with corporate goals that emphasise knowledge sharing. Training can take place in proximity to the job, directly on the job, or externally (Blackman, DiGennaro-Reed, Erath, & Henley, 2022; Khan et al., 2015). However, the hospitality sector primarily relies on two key training methods: off-the-job training and on-the-job training. As noted by Brixiová, Kangoye, and Said (2020), off-the-job training occurs outside the workplace. Due to the industry's high work demands, this approach is rarely utilised. Instead, employers opt for on-the-job training for operational staff, where employees learn under the guidance of consultants, supervisors, or experienced colleagues and receive certification upon completion. This form of training takes place within the workplace, allowing employees to develop skills while performing their job duties. On-the-job training is recommended by Chukwuemeka and Endurance (2022) as the best type of training for keeping staff members with current developments in the hospitality sector. Nevertheless, usually, on-the-job training is associated with minimum theoretical knowledge, which is detrimental to the expectations of the trained staff (Elsafy & Oraby, 2022; Deery & Jago, 2015; Utete, 2024). For the overall professional growth of managers, seminars, workshops, and conferences are the preferred methods of training conducted in close proximity to the workplace. In contrast, on-the-job training remains the most widely used approach for the development and skill enhancement of non-managerial employees. Every situation may call for a distinct training approach because there is no one type of staff training that is appropriate for all circumstances (Gan & Yusof, 2019; Ahmed, Fiaz, & Shoab, 2015). While specific objectives can be achieved using just one method, others demand different methods. Understudy, job rotation, mentoring and coaching are the five main methods of staff training in the hospitality sector (Jeni & Al-Amin, 2021). Although on-the-job training occurs outside the workplace, the training venue resembles a workplace environment. Role-playing and simulations are vital methods of near-on-the-job training. According to Ju and Li (2019), near-on-the-job training for employees can include part-time studies that lead to externally accredited qualifications. In addition, the intranet is being increasingly utilised as a platform for both on-the-job and near-on-the-job training, particularly for improving technical competencies and knowledge.

The concept of knowledge transfer

Bustelo, Ferguson, and Forest (2019) explain that knowledge transfer serves as a process through which specialised expertise is shared from an individual or group to others. This concept incorporates both the viewpoint of the knowledge provider and that of the recipient. Thus, knowledge transfer is seen as transmitting expertise from the latter to the former, aiming to enable the latter to gain and utilise the knowledge. According to Fischer, Guerrero, Guimón and Schaeffer (2021), the prevailing approach is to facilitate knowledge exchange among staff. The process of knowledge transfer involves the dissemination and application of knowledge that has been selected from either internal or external sources within an organisation. According to D'Andreamatteo, Ianni, Rangone, Paolone and Sargiacomo (2019), effective knowledge transfer depends on the willingness of individuals who possess knowledge to share and communicate it. The two primary classifications of knowledge are explicit knowledge and tacit knowledge. According to Dahiyat, Khasawneh, Bontis, and Al-Dahiyat (2023), individuals acquire both tacit and explicit knowledge through active participation in their professional activities. However, fully converting tacit knowledge into an entirely explicit form is considered impractical. Giuri, Munari, Scandura, and Toschi (2019) further suggest that explicit knowledge can be categorised into two main types: rule-centered and object-centered. The term "object-centred" refers to knowledge that has been formalised into formulae, numerical representations and written documents. The acquisition of rule-based knowledge occurs through codifying knowledge in the form of rules, instructions and guidelines.

Shao and Ariss (2020) describes explicit knowledge as documented information that is reflected in symbols, figures and texts and may be expressed in writing and stored. The acquisition of explicit knowledge is facilitated through classroom manuals, textbooks, procedures, policies and process-flow documents. Systematising and codifying procedural knowledge, such as work procedures and processes, into data format is imperative. According to Khoirunnisa and Almahendra (2022), codifying and transferring explicit knowledge using electronic databases and documents is possible. Codification of explicit knowledge can produce tangible information. Knowledge recipients can access it upon being codified as it becomes available for distribution (Sun, Ren & Anumba, 2019; Bharwani & Talib, 2017; Ahmad, Malik, & Anwar, 2018). Explicit knowledge is characterised by its impersonal nature and lack

of attachment to social beliefs and individual ideologies. Amir, Okimoto, and Moeller (2020) describe tacit knowledge as the expertise held by employees that is challenging to formally document or articulate. Tacit knowledge refers to the knowledge possessed by staff members which shapes their cognitive processes and behaviours but cannot be fully articulated. This type of knowledge is embedded within the skills and expertise of an employee in performing job-related tasks. According to Racko, Oborn and Barrett (2019), tacit knowledge holds significant value, particularly when an employee is faced with a novel and unanticipated task. Tacit knowledge refers to the skills and expertise possessed by employees that are not formally recorded or explicitly articulated. This type of knowledge encompasses implicit regulations, methodologies, and approaches to resolving issues. Manville, Karakas, Polkinghorne and Petford (2019) state that the tacit aspect is based on the state of mind, intellect and experiences within a specific context, encompassing both cognitive and technical components. Milagres, Rosileia and Burcharth (2019) state that the technical aspect pertains to a comprehensive understanding and proficiency that can be implemented in a specific setting, while the cognitive aspect pertains to an individual's cognitive processes, values, ethics and viewpoints. This concept pertains to transferring knowledge and experiences across different contexts.

Development of research hypotheses

While previous research has examined staff training methods and knowledge transfer separately, the connection between these two aspects has not yet been explored. Silva, Silva and Martins (2019) studied the association between knowledge transfer and staff turnover and found that knowledge transfer greatly influence staff turnover. Hallin and Marnburg (2008) conducted a study on knowledge management in the hospitality industry and found that there is still low generalisation on the concept of management of knowledge. Murase (2021) studied tacit knowledge transfer and educational practice in global hotel chains and found that a close relationship between tacit knowledge transfer and educational practice. Ma and Chang (2013) studied training transfer in the Taiwanese hotel industry and the results indicated that training motivation is positively related to training transfer. Shaw and Williams (2009) conducted a study on knowledge transfer and management within tourism organizations, highlighting the significance of knowledge transfer in the sector. Similarly, El-Said, Al-Hajri, and Smith (2020) carried out an empirical investigation into the factors influencing training transfer in hotels, revealing that the key factors are the chance to perform and motivation to transfer. All the previous studies which include Silva, Silva and Martins (2019), Hallin and Marnburg (2008), Murase (2021), Ma and Chang (2013), Shaw and Williams (2009), and El-Said, Al-Hajri and Smith (2020) fail to explicitly show the impact of staff training methods on knowledge transfer. Hence, the current fills the gap by investigating the relationship between staff training methods and knowledge transfer.

Lan, Wong, and Wong (2022) investigated knowledge sharing during the socialisation of new hotel employees, and their findings indicated that those in the experimental group demonstrated a greater sense of value and attachment to the service principles. According to Marano et al., (2020), mentoring involves pairing a seasoned and proficient employee with a novice and junior employee to offer guidance and equip them with the prerequisite competencies to assume more significant responsibilities. The practice of formal mentoring has gained significant traction recently, owing to its perceived advantages for both the employer and the employee. A study by Gul, Akbar and Jan (2012) on the role of capacity development in Pakistan identified managerial mentoring as a training approach that helps develop skills and retain valuable employees. Additionally, research by Hobson, Doyle, Castanheira, Csigas, and Clutterbuck (2016) on the Mentoring Across Professions (MAP) project explored international best practices in employee mentoring and coaching. The study found that mentoring is highly operative and yields lucrative outcomes for organisations, mentors, mentees, and especially when a mentoring coordinator oversees the program. Van et al., (2018) conducted a multilevel study on career mentoring within different contexts, examining both differentiated career mentoring and the overall career mentoring climate. Their findings indicated a positive correlation between career mentoring climate and an individual's likelihood of promotion. However, the effectiveness of mentoring in knowledge transfer in comparison with other training methods has yet to be discovered. In line with the argumentation identified, the subsequent hypothesis was developed:

H1 Mentoring is the most effective method for facilitating knowledge transfer.

Another crucial sub-independent variable mentioned in this study is coaching, which has recently received attention in the training and development area. Coaching relates to the professional association between an employee and their direct supervisor to enhance their competencies and augment their work output. A study by Wang, Yuan, and Zhu (2017) on coaching leadership and employee voice behavior found that coaching leadership was positively associated with employee voice behaviour. Likewise, Kamunya and Nzulwa's (2020) conducted a study on coaching. They found that coaching can take place either spontaneously and without prior planning in the employee's workplace, or in a more formal and structured manner through scheduled coaching sessions held at a designated location within

the workplace. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of coaching in knowledge transfer compared to other training methods is still being determined. Based on the discussion mentioned above, the following hypothesis was developed:

H2 Coaching is the most effective method for facilitating knowledge transfer.

Erasmus, Loedoff, Mda and Nel (2010) define job rotation as transferring employees from one job position to another in that particular organisation. Typically, the duration of an assignment spans six months. Research by Cocol'ová (2017) on the factors affecting the choice of employee training methods found that job rotation plays a significant role in facilitating organisational change, being frequently utilised due to its lower cost and time demands. Similarly, a study by Ali-Mohammadi and Ramezani (2017) evaluating the effectiveness of the job rotation system in Tabriz City concluded that job rotation is both effective and impactful in driving organizational change. The practice of job rotation can equip a seasoned manager with a comprehensive comprehension of the vision and mission of the organisation. However, the effectiveness of job rotation in knowledge transfer compared to other training methods is unknown. The following hypothesis was developed:

H3 Job rotation is the most effective method for facilitating knowledge transfer.

According to Erasmus et al., (2010), the term 'understudy' relates to a person who supports a senior staff member. Daily, the apprentice carries out tasks under the guidance and direction of the senior staff member to acquire knowledge of how the job is executed. Generally, in areas that are not deemed critical, the apprentice can assume the responsibilities of the senior staff member in the event of his or her absence. According to Prasetyo, Aliyyah, Rusdiyanto, Tjaraka, Kalbuana and Alam (2021), an understudy assumes specific duties of a superior, thereby facilitating the acquisition of specific competencies related to the superior's work responsibilities. However, the effectiveness of 'understudy' in knowledge transfer compared with other training methods is still unknown. The following hypothesis was developed:

H4 Understudy is the most effective method for facilitating knowledge transfer.

Jashapara (2011) explains that simulation is a training technique that mimics real-life situations, where the decisions made by trainees result in outcomes that closely resemble those that could occur in a professional environment. Simulation offers a valuable chance for trainees to gain insight into the consequences of their decisions in a risk-free setting. Simulation is employed to showcase anticipated proficiencies in the realm of hospitality service procedures. The simulator emulates the authentic equipment utilised by the labour force during his or her employment. According to Rahayu, Rasid and Tannady (2019), the prevalent techniques for simulation are in-basket exercises and role-play games. The trainee gains insight into the consequences of their actions and participates in role-playing activities that involve a two-person scenario, where each participant assumes supporting and character roles related to case studies. However, the effectiveness of simulation in knowledge transfer in comparison with other training methods has yet to be discovered. The following hypothesis was developed:

H5 Simulation is the most effective method for facilitating knowledge transfer.

Workshops and seminars are essential to enhance knowledge and skills. Onwujekwe, Mbachu, Etiaba, Ezumah, Ezenwaka, Arize, Okeke, Nwankwor, and Uzochukwu (2020) examined capacity building in health sector of Nigeria and discovered that workshops equipped employees with new competencies and skills. Similarly, a study by Cocol'ová (2017) on the factors affecting the selection of methods of employee training found that workshops are among the highly demanding methods, as they are relatively inexpensive and do not require extensive time for implementation. Furthermore, Saira, Mansoor, Ishaque, Ehtisham, and Ali (2021) highlighted that workshops and seminars encourage two-way communication by promoting dynamic participation and offering attendees the opportunity to exchange viewpoints and feedback.

However, the effectiveness of workshops in knowledge transfer compared with other training methods is unknown. The following hypotheses was developed:

H6 Workshop is the most effective method for facilitating knowledge transfer.

Method

Research design

The study followed a quantitative approach and correlational design. The study applies a quantitative research methodology to assess the effectiveness of staff training methods in promoting knowledge transfer. This study employed closed-ended questionnaires to collect primary data (Truong, Xiaoming Liu & Yu, 2020). Pandey and Pandey (2021) state that the utilisation of a questionnaire confers advantages to research endeavours by allowing

participants ample time to contemplate their responses before finalisation. The target population of this study encompasses all employees, excluding senior management, from the five subsidiaries of the prominent hospitality company in Zimbabwe. Therefore, the target population consisted of a total of 240 employees. The study utilised a probability sampling method, and the systematic sampling technique to select the sample. Patel and Patel (2019) argue that the probability sampling method guarantees each member in the population has an equal likelihood of being chosen for the sample. Mukherjee (2019) explains that systematic sampling entails choosing every *n*th individual from the sampling frame. The method employed in this study involves the selection of the sample by utilising a systematic approach of choosing every odd-numbered element from a list of 240 employees' names. The Head Office of the five subsidiaries provided a comprehensive list of all targeted employees.

Questionnaire design and measurements

The questionnaire's initial section focused on collecting biological data, namely, educational level, age, experience and gender. The earlier studies developed and validated research instruments utilised for data collection and met acceptable validity and reliability. The scores are indicated under the 'results' section. Furthermore, the gathered data confirmed its validity and reliability. Both studies proved that the scale of the item is valid in management settings. All survey items were weighed on a 5-point Likert scale, range from 1 = "strongly disagree" to 5 = "strongly agree". Furthermore, reliability and validity were examined and confirmed by the data.

Staff training methods

Staff training methods were assessed by the research instrument that was already developed and validated. The items for the staff training methods construct were adapted and revised from the research conducted by Chiang, Back, and Canter (2005). According to Thomas (2021), a reliability coefficient of 0.60 or higher is considered "acceptable" for a recent developed construct. Employee training variable constituted 25 items and 7 subscales: mentoring, coaching, job rotation, understudy, simulation, role-play and workshop. Average Cronbach's alpha for all items was $\alpha = .73$, and for the subscales, it was as follows: mentoring $\alpha = .76$, coaching $\alpha = .74$, job rotation $\alpha = .73$, understudy $\alpha = .77$; simulation $\alpha = .70$; role-play $\alpha = .71$; and workshop $\alpha = .70$. Prior to conducting regression analysis, exploratory factor analysis (EFA) and tests for convergent validity were carried out to validate the data. The analyses were performed using SPSS version 29. Bartlett's Test of Sphericity and the Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) measure were utilised to evaluate sampling adequacy. The findings revealed a Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) value of 0.766, along with an approximate Chi-square of 541.343, 66 degrees of freedom, and a significance level of $p < 0.000$. These results confirmed the adequacy of the sample for conducting exploratory factor analysis. Consequently, factor analysis was performed using Varimax rotation, which reached convergence after seven iterations. The analysis accounted for 73.103% of the total variance. Additionally, three items were excluded due to cross-loading.

Knowledge transfer

Knowledge transfer was assessed by the research instrument developed and validated. Knowledge transfer constructs were adopted and modified from a study carried by Khachlouf and Quélin (2018). The knowledge transfer variable is comprised of 13 items. The average Cronbach's alpha for all items was $\alpha = .70$. The analyses were performed in SPSSVR version 29. The study utilised Bartlett's Test of Sphericity determine, and Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) measure to sampling adequacy. The findings revealed a Kaiser-Meyer Olkin (KMO) value of 0.826, an approximate Chi-square of 324.421, 45 degrees of freedom, and a *p*-value of less than 0.000, indicating that the sample was adequate for exploratory factor analysis. To analyse the data, factor analysis was performed using Varimax rotation, which reached convergence after seven iterations. The results accounted for 71.03% of the total variance, confirming the validity of all items.

Sample

By employing the systematic sampling method, 120 participants were chosen for the sample. Systematic sampling is justified because it ensures a structured and evenly distributed selection of participants, reducing the risk of clustering and enhancing representativeness (Patel & Patel, 2019). According to Sileyew (2019), conducting a pilot study can aid researchers in assessing the validity and reliability of the data obtained from a questionnaire. The preliminary survey instrument was distributed to a sample of twenty (20) respondents who were not part of the sample but were from the same five subsidiaries. The researcher personally distributed all questionnaires. The feedback obtained from the pilot testing phase was utilised to revise the questionnaires and eliminate any potential ambiguities. Subsequently, the refined questionnaire was distributed to the entire cohort of 120 sample participants within the chosen company. The instrument comprised 40 statements covering the methods of training and knowledge transfer. The items were rated on a scale, with '5' indicating strongly agree and '1' indicating strongly disagree. According to Thomas (2021), internal consistency reliability measures the extent to which a given instrument yields consistent outcomes when applied multiple times under the same conditions. In this study, Cronbach's Coefficient Alpha was

utilized to evaluate reliability. The data analysis incorporated both descriptive and inferential statistics. The most recent version of the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS), version 28 for Windows, was used to collect and statistically analyze the data (Gupta & Gupta, 2022).

Procedure

Prior to the collection of data, the institutional faculty committee approved the research proposal. Gatekeeper permission was obtained from the head of the five divisions of the leading hospitality organisation in Zimbabwe. Before participating in the study, individuals were given a detailed explanation of its objectives, and informed consent was obtained from each individual, along with instructions on how to complete the survey. Furthermore, participants were notified that their participation was entirely voluntary. Furthermore, the participants were guaranteed confidentiality and anonymity. The survey took approximately 15 to 20 min to complete. The questionnaires were administered to 120 participants.

Data Analysis

The data gathered was analysed utilising version 29.0 of the SPSS. Initially, standard deviations and means were calculated. After the validation of the research instrument, a regression analysis was tested to evaluate the hypothesised relationships and the effectiveness of sub-constructs, namely mentoring, coaching, job rotation, understudy, simulation, role-play and workshop in transferring knowledge.

Results

The preliminary data were analysed using descriptive statistics in the form of frequencies and tables. Using SPSS, descriptive statistics focusing on biographical data were first analysed. All 120 respondents received the structured questionnaire. Since most of the statements on two questionnaires went unanswered, only 118 returned questionnaires were considered for analysis. Consequently, a 98.3% response rate was attained. The analysis revealed that male employees made up 93.20% of the respondents. The results indicated that 56% of the respondents had only nine (9) years or less of experience. Most respondents (96.7%) were Black Africans. A big chunk of the respondents who were between the ages of 20 and 35 had a maximum length of service of 9 years, whilst those aged 40 and older had 15 years. The analysis revealed that secondary school (Ordinary level) was the highest level of education obtained by the most respondents (55.90%).

Descriptive statistics

The second objective of paper examines the institutionalisation of knowledge transfer in the organisation. Mean calculations were utilised to measure whether organisational knowledge transfer was institutionalised.

Table I

Institutionalisation of knowledge transfer

Statement	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Whenever I get trained, my organisation encourages me to utilise new skills that I have gained in my work.	118	3.06	1.235
I always see that my organisation uses the old systems even if I am trained to use new systems.	118	3.57	1.033
All the knowledge that I get from training is documented within the organisation.	118	3.06	1.056
I am demotivated when the organisation uses previous work systems when I gained skills for the new system.	118	4.31	1.121
My superiors share their work experiences and written manuals with me.	118	2.68	1.124
It is usual at my organisation that one team adapts other team's knowledge to solve their problems.	118	2.98	1.054
My organisation disseminates information about management activities to me.	118	2.00	1.205
Experts in my organisation freely share information relevant to my work to me.	118	2.67	1.206
I feel I have no hurdles to share knowledge with my superiors in my organisation.	118	2.70	1.135
The staff training at my organisation enables me to feel adequately skilled for my present job.	118	2.81	1.109
I discuss the new developments in work-related activities with my co-workers.	118	3.89	.941
I can only apply a little part of the knowledge I get from training at my workplace.	118	3.53	1.107
Valid N (listwise)	118		

As shown in Table I, the respondents agreed (mean score 3.57) that their organisation continues to use outdated systems, even after they have been trained on new ones. However, they expressed a neutral view (mean score 3.06) when asked whether their organisation encourages them to apply the new skills they gain during training in their daily tasks. Similarly, they remained neutral (mean score 3.06) regarding whether all the knowledge they acquire from training is documented within the organization. In Table I, respondents also confirmed (mean score 4.31) that they felt demotivated when the organisation continued using older systems despite their training on new ones. They were somewhat neutral (mean score 2.68) about whether their superiors shared their work experiences and written manuals

with them. Interestingly, the respondents again took a neutral stance (mean score 2.70) when asked whether one team utilises another team's knowledge to solve organisational problems. Additionally, as shown in Table I, the respondents disagreed (mean score 2.00) that the organisation disseminates information about management activities to them. The respondents could neither agree nor disagree (mean score 2.67) when asked whether experts in their organization freely share relevant work-related information. Furthermore, they expressed a neutral opinion (mean score 2.70) regarding whether they faced no barriers to sharing knowledge with their superiors. Once again, the respondents were neutral (mean score 2.81) when asked if the staff training at their organisation helps them feel adequately skilled for their current roles. They agreed (mean score 2.89) that they discuss new developments in work-related activities with their colleagues. As shown in Table I, the respondents acknowledged (mean score 3.53) that they apply only a small portion of the knowledge gained from training in their workplace.

Inferential statistics

Inferential statistics

The first objective of the study assesses the impact of staff training methods on knowledge transfer. Multiple regression analysis was employed to statistically evaluate the extent to which staff training methods influence knowledge transfer.

Table 2
Impact of staff training methods on knowledge transfer

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate	Change Statistics		
					R Square Change	F Change	df1
1	.550 ^a	.703	.297	4.624	.303	50.426	1

ANOVA^a

Model		Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	1078.003	1	1078.003	50.426	.000 ^b
	Residual	2479.827	116	21.378		
	Total	3557.831	117			

a. Dependent Variable: Knowledge transfer

b. Predictors: (Constant), Staff training methods

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta	
1	(Constant)	28.287	2.096		.000
	Mentoring	.407	.057	.550	.000
	Coaching	.389	.078	.520	.000
	Understudy	.371	.089	.485	.000
	Job rotation	.362	.083	.434	.000
	Simulations	.353	.092	.410	.000
	Workshops	.295	.095	.350	.000
	Role-plays	.269	.098	.298	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Knowledge transfer

As shown in Table II, staff training methods have a statistically significant impact on predicting knowledge transfer, as indicated by an adjusted R-squared value of 0.703. This suggests that staff training methods account for 70.3% of the variance in knowledge transfer. The remaining 29.7% (100% - 70.3%) of the variation in knowledge transfer can be attributed to other factors not explored in this study. It can be concluded that there are additional independent variables not considered in this study that may play a crucial role in explaining knowledge transfer. In other words, staff training methods are linked to knowledge transfer.

As shown in Table II, the test revealed a statistically significant F calculated value of 50.426, which is above the minimum critical F value 2.51304. This means the generated regression equation by this study significantly and perfectly predicts the dependent variable. This is also supported by a p-value in which $p=0.000 < 0.05$. This indicates that the observed p-value (0.000) falls below the standard significance threshold of 0.05. The test results confirm that

the chosen regression model is well-suited for the analysis, making it a reliable tool for forecasting knowledge transfer based on the staff training methods examined in this research.

Table II presents an analysis of the coefficients, allowing for a comparison of the seven sub-independent variables (coaching, mentoring, workshops, understudy, job rotation, role-plays, and simulations) in terms of their contribution to the variation in knowledge transfer. To facilitate comparisons, Beta standardized coefficients were used. The results revealed that mentoring was the strongest predictor, contributing the most to the variation in knowledge transfer ($\beta = 0.550$; $p = 0.000$). As a result, hypothesis 1 was confirmed and accepted. The following variables, in order of contribution, were coaching ($\beta = 0.520$; $p = 0.000$), understudy ($\beta = 0.485$; $p = 0.000$), simulations ($\beta = 0.410$; $p = 0.000$), job rotation ($\beta = 0.434$; $p = 0.000$), workshops ($\beta = 0.350$; $p = 0.000$), and role-plays ($\beta = 0.289$; $p = 0.000$). Hypotheses 2 to 7 were rejected.

Discussion

The results revealed that mentoring is the most effective method of transferring knowledge. This means that hypothesis 1- mentoring is the most effective method in facilitating knowledge transfer, was accepted. This implies that mentoring is the most crucial training method in the hospitality workplace setting. The results of this study are supported by earlier studies, which established that mentoring imparts skills, retains productive employees, and is positively related to promotability (Gul, Akbar & Jan, 2012; Van et al., 2018). However, Asiya et al., (2012), Hobson et al., (2016), and Van et al., (2018)s' studies did not explicitly indicate the effectiveness of mentoring in facilitating knowledge transfer. Hence, the findings of the current study contribute new knowledge. Results from the study also indicated that coaching is the second most effective method of transferring knowledge. Hence, hypothesis 2 - coaching is the most effective method in facilitating knowledge transfer, is rejected. This is affirmed by a similar study done by Wang, Yuan and Zhu (2017), who found that coaching leadership was positively related to employee voice behaviour. However, the study by Wang et al., (2017) did not demonstrate the effectiveness of coaching in facilitating knowledge transfer. As a result, the present study contributes further to the existing body of knowledge. The findings revealed that understudy and job rotation are the third and fourth effective methods supporting knowledge transfer. This means that hypothesis 3, job rotation is the most effective method in facilitating knowledge transfer, is rejected. This is validated by earlier studies done by Cocuľová (2017), and Ali-Mohammadi and Ramezani (2017), who found that job rotation is influential in bringing organisational change and is regularly used as it is considered less costly and less time-consuming. However, Cocuľová (2017) and Ali-Mohammadi and Ramezani (2017) studies did not clearly indicate the effectiveness of job rotation in facilitating knowledge transfer. Hence, the results from the current study contribute new knowledge.

The findings evidence that simulation is the fifth most effective method of transferring knowledge. The findings of this study align with Clapper's (2010) research on role play and simulation, which discovered that although simulation is increasingly used across various professions to enhance understanding and skill development, the broader training community has yet to fully adopt this essential learning approach. This means hypothesis 5, simulation is the most effective method in facilitating knowledge transfer, is rejected. However, Clapper's (2010) study did not reveal the effectiveness of simulation in facilitating knowledge transfer. Hence, the findings from the current study contribute new knowledge. The findings revealed that a workshop is the sixth effective method that encourages the transfer of knowledge. This means hypothesis 6, that workshop is the most effective method in facilitating knowledge transfer, is rejected. This is incongruent with what was found earlier in other studies (Onwujekwe, Mbachu, Etiaba, Ezumah, Ezenwaka, Arize, Okeke, Nwankwor and Uzochukwu, 2020; Cocuľová, 2017). However, Onwujekwe et al., (2020) and Cocuľová (2017) studies failed to disclose the effectiveness of workshops in transferring knowledge. Thus, the findings from the current study contribute new knowledge. The findings showed that role-play is the seventh effective method of transferring knowledge. The results are in agreement with Jamaludin et al., (2009)'s study on promoting argumentative knowledge development through active role play, which found that trainees appreciated the immersive experience provided by the virtual environment. Additionally, Gillespie et al., (2015) carried out a qualitative examination of a role-play bullying-simulation and discovered that role-plays serve as an active learning method to disseminate knowledge about bullying in nursing practice. The studies of Jamaludin et al., (2009) and Gillespie et al. (2015) did not explicitly indicate the effectiveness of role-play in facilitating knowledge transfer. Thus, the findings from the current study contribute new knowledge.

Regarding the second objective, which sought to explore the institutionalisation of knowledge transfer within the organisation, the results revealed that knowledge transfer was not effectively institutionalised. These findings are consistent with Boh's (2007) study on knowledge-sharing mechanisms in project-based organisations, which discovered that most institutionalised knowledge-sharing methods lack formality and integration into organisational routines and structures. However, Boh's (2007) research did not specifically focus on the institutionalisation of knowledge transfer, making the current study's findings a valuable contribution to the field. The findings indicated

that supervisors were reluctant to disclose their work experiences, limiting employees to applying only a minimal fraction of the knowledge acquired from training in their workplaces. Additionally, employees expressed frustration with the continued use of outdated systems despite having acquired skills for newer ones. Similarly, Santoro and Gopalakrishnan's (2000) study on the institutionalisation of knowledge transfer in industry-university collaborations found that knowledge transfer activities are more effective in stable, direction-oriented organisational cultures. However, their study did not address the challenges involved in knowledge transfer, meaning the current study provides new insights into this area.

Conclusion

This study represents a valuable contribution to the field of organizational learning and knowledge management, particularly within the hospitality sector. By providing empirical evidence on the relative effectiveness of training methods, it offers organizations actionable insights to refine their training programs. However, the study's limitations highlight the need for further research to generalize its findings and deepen our understanding of effective knowledge transfer practices on a global scale. The primary objective of this study was accomplished, as substantial evidence was provided demonstrating varying levels of effectiveness among different training methods. The results identified mentoring and coaching as the best training methods. Hence, managers may channel resources towards training methods in order to realise optimum knowledge transfer. The void identified by this study has been filled. Regarding the second objective, which sought to explore the institutionalisation of knowledge transfer within the organisation, the findings revealed that knowledge transfer had not been effectively institutionalized. The contemporary instabilities and scarce resources in the business environment require managers to invest in training methods which bring the best output in terms of knowledge acquisition. The study contributes to research by providing a more nuanced degree of effectiveness of each training method in facilitating knowledge transfer.

Practical implications

It is imperative for contemporary hospitality managers to foster a culture of knowledge transfer throughout the organisation, especially regarding self-management skills, problem-solving, conceptual, analytical and interpersonal skills. Furthermore, management must provide a platform for knowledge transferees to apply their acquired knowledge and furnish them with essential tools to expedite the knowledge transfer process. The managers should communicate to their subordinates that they will not administer disciplinary action for errors committed during work. The managers must foster positive interpersonal connections and interactions among employees across all hierarchical levels within the organisation. In addition, organisational management must foster an environment that promotes open communication among employees, free from negative attitudes and interpersonal conflicts, and consistently implement actionable strategies. In this scenario, senior executives should furnish knowledge providers with a comprehensive agenda of subjects and corresponding checklists delineating post-transfer responsibilities. This approach facilitates the transfer of skills from the transferor to the recipient. The managers must establish a decentralised and open work environment that fosters employee empowerment and encourages sharing knowledge as a valuable resource rather than hoarding. The management must offer incentives to trainees, coaches and mentors who effectively apply newly acquired competencies in the workplace. The findings are integral to policymakers to rehash policies by incorporating the methods that stimulate knowledge transfer. The study helps managers strengthen their level of understanding and shines a light on methods to prioritise when contemplating conducting training in the organisation. The managers should increase the use of coaching and mentoring to obtain optimum results.

Theoretical implications

This paper makes a significant contribution to the literature on employee training methods by linking and evaluating their effectiveness in promoting knowledge transfer. The research expands the existing body of research on employee training. The findings offer valuable insights into the effectiveness of staff training programs within organisations, potentially improving their competitive advantage. The findings provide substantial benefits for the organisation, its employees, and the broader academic community. The findings offer a foundation for organisations to enhance their performance by understanding which staff training methods positively influence knowledge transfer. This study's results contribute to the existing knowledge base, and they offer a point of comparison for future research, fostering the advancement of knowledge in this field.

Limitations

Although the focus on Zimbabwe yields valuable localised insights, the study acknowledges significant limitations. The results may not be applicable to other countries or industries due to variations in cultural, economic, and organizational contexts. In addition, the study is based on data from only five subsidiaries of a single company. This limited scope may constrain the generalizability of the findings, even within Zimbabwe's hospitality industry. While the study assesses the effectiveness of training methods, it overlooks other factors that may influence knowledge

transfer, such as organizational culture, employee motivation, and technological tools. The findings have significant implications for organizational training strategies. They emphasize the necessity of designing training programs that utilize mentoring and coaching, which facilitate experiential learning and personalized feedback. For practitioners, the study offers evidence-based guidance to optimize training investments. For researchers, it highlights the need for further studies in diverse geographic and industrial contexts to validate and expand upon these findings. Future research studies should incorporate qualitative data to complement quantitative findings, providing a richer understanding of employee experiences. In addition, examine the factors that affect the efficacy of training methods, such as technology integration or trainer expertise. In addition, future research should broaden its geographic focus to encompass diverse cultural and organisational settings.

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