

Employee training and hotel business performance: The moderating effect of organizational commitment

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Abstract: Employee training is an important tool for improving the knowledge, skills, and competencies of employees in the labor-intensive hotel industry. Through employee training, the efficiency and effectiveness of employees' work are improved, which leads to better business performance. The aim of this paper is to analyze the contribution of employee training to hotel business performance and the moderating effect of organizational commitment on this relationship in a developing country – the Republic of Serbia. The sample includes 83 hotels. Employee training is observed through the following components or dimensions: availability of training, motivation to learn, support from training, and benefits of training. The paper uses regression analysis to test the set research hypotheses. The results show that all components of employee training affect hotel business performance, while the moderating effect of organizational commitment on this relationship has not been proven.

Keywords: employee, training, performance, organization, organizational commitment, hotel industry

JEL classification: M53, L25, E24

Obuka zaposlenih i poslovne performanse hotela: Moderirajući efekat organizacione posvećenosti

Sažetak: Obuka zaposlenih je značajno sredstvo usavršavanja znanja, veština i kompetencija zaposlenih u radno-intenzivnoj, hotelskoj industriji. Kroz obuku zaposlenih unapređuje se efikasnost i efektivnost rada zaposlenih, što vodi ka boljim poslovnim performansama. Cilj istraživanja jeste da se istraži doprinos obuke zaposlenih poslovnim performansama hotela, kao i moderirajući efekat organizacione posvećenosti na ovu vezu u Republici Srbiji kao zemlji u razvoju. Uzorak obuhvata 83 hotela. Obuka zaposlenih posmatra se na osnovu odgovarajućih komponenti ili dimenzija: dostupnost programa obuke, motivacija za učenje, podrška nadređenih i koristi od obuke. Testiranje istraživačkih hipoteza vrši se primenom regresione analize. Rezultati istraživanja pokazuju da sve komponente obuke zaposlenih utiču na poslovne performanse hotela, dok moderirajući efekat organizacione posvećenosti na ovu vezu nije potvrđen.

Ključne reči: zaposleni, obuka, performanse, organizacija, organizaciona posvećenost, hotelska industrija

JEL klasifikacija: E53, L25, E24

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1. Introduction

The growth and development of the hotel business are based on human resources, which are important for improving the efficiency of all hotel activities (Ognjanović et al., 2022). The expansion of the global economy and technology and the need for hotels to permanently develop innovations require constant training and education (Ocen et al., 2017). Through the training process, employees acquire specific skills in order to correct deficiencies that occur when performing work (Ocen et al., 2017). Formal training, an environment that encourages learning and work practices combined with employees' commitment shapes the workforce competence (Islam & Amin, 2022). For Bashir and Long (2015), employee training is a sign of recognition of employees' contribution to the organization's business success, which results in the creation of motivated, talented, and committed employees. Training and other actions for developing practical skills are important for managers and other employees in establishing a balance between their work and life (Mladenović & Krstić, 2021). Organizational commitment (OC) potentially creates better work performance and a lower turnover rate (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020), as well as other business performances of an organization.

Difficulties in maintaining employee stability, increasing OC, and increasing competitiveness have become real challenges faced by organizations in the new employment background (Ling et al., 2014). The dynamic nature of the business environment means that organizations cannot simply respond to changes in the market, so the only solution for the growth of business success and high flexibility in such conditions is the development of dynamic capabilities. Through the improvement of employees' knowledge, skills, and abilities, the management of a business organization views employee training as a key tool for the growth of return on investment (Hughey & Mussnug, 1997), and innovation (Bashir & Long, 2015). In this way, employee training is one of the important tools for acquiring and maintaining a competitive advantage of the organization (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020).

Despite the proven contribution of employee training to organization operations, the literature points to certain problems. First, the lack of awareness of owners and managers about the benefits that can be gained from employee learning and development leads to the fact that few managers view employee training as a management tool (Panagiotakopoulos, 2020). Second, most employees are concerned about the lack and insufficient investment in training and development due to the pandemic crisis caused by Covid-19 (Jayathilake et al., 2021). The Covid-19 pandemic has changed the form and methodology of employee training, since during the pandemic there were a large number of layoffs, budget cuts, and termination of contracts with trainers in the hotel industry (Mikołajczyk, 2022). Such shortcomings are particularly characteristic of developing economies, such as the Republic of Serbia. For the above reasons, it is necessary to develop the awareness of hotel owners and managers as to how important training in crisis and regular conditions is for the hotel business.

The following research gaps were noted in the literature. First, research on the importance of employee training in hotels is modest and partly outdated (Amin et al., 2017; Avcikurt, 2003; Malek et al., 2018; McColl-Kennedy & White, 1997). In addition, previous studies did not analyze employee training through its respective components, but only as an independent variable. The study seeks to fill this gap through a more detailed analysis of employee training through appropriate components such as availability of training, motivation to learn, support from training, and benefits of training.

Second, as previous studies show, companies with developed "training programs have improved performance in a number of areas including revenues, profitability, employee

relations, quality, and productivity” (Panagiotakopoulos, 2020, p. 247). That is why it is necessary to investigate the contribution of employee training (and its components) to the business performance of hotels. Investing in employee training can be justified by the contribution it makes to business performance, but the literature has not indicated possible difficulties in defining causality between training and business performance of an organization (Newman et al., 2011). This conclusion is also supported by Panagiotakopoulos (2020) since he states that the relationship between employee training and business performance is not the clearest and therefore more empirical work is necessary to better understand this lack. Based on this, the study focuses on analyzing the contribution of employee training components to the business performance of a hotel as a business organization.

Third, the study examines OC in developing countries (Serbia), which is still not sufficiently researched. Most studies on OC come from Western studies, while little is known about OC outside the West (Newman et al., 2011).

Fourth, previous studies indicate a direct relationship between training and the OC of employees (Bashir & Long, 2015; Ling et al., 2014; Maurer & Lippstreu, 2008; Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020). A positive relationship between training components and OC leads to such an employee being more interested in staying with the organization and contributing to business success (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020). Therefore, it is necessary to investigate whether OC moderates the relationship between employee training and the performance of a business organization, which has not yet been sufficiently investigated in the literature. Accordingly, the aim of the research is to analyze the contribution of employee training to hotel business performance and the moderating effect of OC on this relationship in the Republic of Serbia. The contribution of the study is as follows.

First, employee training is observed through four components, thus more comprehensively monitoring the contribution of this variable to the hotel business performance. In this way, assessing which training component contributes most significantly to the hotel business performance is possible. The selection of training components is in line with the recommendations (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020) that future research should include other, additional training components – such as motivation to learn and co-worker support for training. In addition, studies mostly analyze what is expected from training, while little attention has been paid so far to what employees see as important in evaluating training and development (Pernkopf-Konhäusner & Brandl, 2011).

Second, the study uses a qualitative approach to assess training components, business performance, and OC. This is in line with Rawashdeh and Tamimi’s (2020) recommendations that future research examines the relationships between training variables using interviews.

Third, the study analyzes the contribution of employee training components to the hotel business performance, which fills the observed research gap and provides a contribution to an under-researched issue in developing countries.

Fourth, the paper investigates whether OC moderates the relationship between employee training and hotel business performance, which previous research has not analyzed in detail, especially not in the hotel industry.

According to the defined research aim and observed research gaps, the study should answer the following research questions:

1. Which of the components or dimensions of employee training is the most developed in the observed hotels?

2. Do the employee training components contribute to the hotel business performance?
3. Is OC moderating the relationship between employee training components/dimensions and the hotel business performance?

2. Background

2.1. Employee training in the hotel industry

Employee training is a planned effort by the hotel to improve the process of acquiring knowledge, skills and abilities of employees in order to work more efficiently (Došenović & Zolak Poljašević, 2021). As a key activity in the development of human resources (Berber & Lekovic, 2018), training refers to the systematic activities of developing and improving the skills, knowledge, and behavior of employees in order to enable them to perform jobs, perform specific tasks, and meet quality requirements for the future (Ling et al., 2014). Other authors view training as a vital human resource management practice that changes the behavior of employees in a direction that enables the hotel business goals to be achieved (Ocen et al., 2017). Ocen et al. (2017) emphasize that the employer's support is needed in the process of implementing the training because in this way the training will be more effective. Employers are the ones who define the need for training and develop awareness among employees about how important training is both for employees and the organization. The issue of employee training is particularly important for small and medium-sized hotels where employee turnover is high. Employee training is one of the benefits that can keep employees in hotels and at the same time increase their work efficiency and impact the financial results of the hotel.

Through training and development, the skills of employees are enriched and add value to the hotel, maximizing overall productivity and profitability (Bashir & Long, 2015; Ta'Amnha et al., 2023). Employee training has specific goals in three areas (Mikołajczyk, 2022): increasing the individual productivity of employees through increasing competencies (a), increasing added value through the use of new systems (b), creating future value through the development of employee expertise and potential (c). The analysis of the contribution of training and development determines how the hotel's business knowledge, abilities, and skills are nurtured and maintained (Abugre & Nasere, 2020). In that process, the management also plays an important role, which must provide support to employees for the implementation of training: by providing resources, work rules, and an adequate reward policy (Maurer & Lippstreu, 2008). The benefits of training can be summarized in the following: efficiency and achievement of organizational goals by changing employees' attitudes, behaviors, and skills (Ling et al., 2014); retaining employees, increasing labor productivity, screening the internal labor market, strengthening organizational culture (Pernkopf-Konhäusner & Brandl, 2011).

There are two ways of measuring training: one measures training practice and the other evaluates an organization's training policy (Ling et al., 2014). However, an organization's training policy from the employee perspective is widely evaluated in the literature (Ling et al., 2014). A detailed training evaluation implies an analysis of employee training through appropriate components or dimensions. The following dimensions of employee training are analyzed in the literature: "availability of training, motivation to learn, co-worker support for training, supervisor support for training, and benefits of training" (Bashir & Long, 2015, p. 1227); "perceived availability of training, perceived support for training and perceived benefits of training" (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020, p. 191); "training will, training opportunities, training benefits and supervisor support for training" (Ling et al., 2014, p. 164); motivation to learn, perceived availability of training, perceived co-worker support for

training, perceived supervisor support for training and perceived benefits from training (Newman et al., 2011).

Based on previous studies, employee training includes the following components:

- a) availability of training,
- b) motivation to learn,
- c) support from training, and
- d) benefits of training.

The choice of variables is consistent with the observation of the components of employee training in previous research. In addition, the selected variables of employee training take into account the individual needs of employees (Pernkopf-Konhäsner & Brandl, 2011) and are evaluated from the perspective of employees (Ling et al., 2014), which is of great importance for the hotel as a labor-intensive industry.

Availability of training refers to the degree to which employees can access the training programs provided by the hotel (Newman et al., 2011; Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020). This dimension monitors the effective participation of employees in training programs (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020).

The motivation to learn represents the specific desire of the employees to study the content of the training program (Bashir & Long, 2015). Employees who have no motivation to learn will fail to learn the training content (Bashir & Long, 2015).

Supervisor support for training is essential for creating “a successful work environment for the development of the firm and its employees and has fundamental implications for organizational effectiveness” (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020, p. 195). When there is a strong emotional connection between employees and supervisors, employees become more motivated to complete the tasks (Bashir & Long, 2015).

Benefits from training are contributions that the organization provides to employees through the training process. Benefits are most significantly “related to performance improvement, productivity, profitability, efficiency, effectiveness” (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020, p. 195), and employee retention (Bashir & Long, 2015). Such benefits also have an impact on hotel business performance.

2.2. Employee training, organizational commitment and hotel business performance

Theoretical support for the analysis of the relationship between employee training and hotel performance is provided by human capital theory and research (Veselinović et al., 2021). According to this theory, human capital represents a “key element that improves firm assets increases employee productivity, and gains a sustainable competitive advantage” (Mehreen & Ali, 2022, p. 530). Authors Bashir and Long (2015), when explaining the relationship between employee training and business performance, refer to the social exchange theory, according to which the positive attitudes and behaviors of employees are influenced by psychological contracts, which ultimately have an impact on the hotel’s organizational performance.

Employee training

Employee training is a key factor in the growth of human capital productivity and hotel competitiveness since through training employees acquire knowledge that improves product/service quality as a result of improved production processes and systems (Ta'Amnha

et al., 2023). Through attending the training program, an increase in the efficiency of the employees' work, greater job satisfaction, labour productivity, and profitability are ensured (Hughey & Mussnug, 1997). The essence of investing in employee training is that you can get more from workers if you give them more (Lorenzet et al., 2006).

The task of management is to contribute to the understanding of the importance of training among employees and they need to know what is "good performance" and how their results are measured/compared against the standard (Lorenzet et al., 2006). However, employee commitment to training is often difficult to achieve as small hotels may lack managerial expertise, preventing them from focusing on human capital issues (Lorenzet et al., 2006).

Organizational commitment

Organizational commitment is the attachment of employees to the business organization. More precisely, it is a view of an employee towards his or her attachment to the organization. OC represents "the relative strength of an individual's identification and involvement in a particular organization" (Ocen et al., 2017, p. 743). Organizational commitment measures the level of employee loyalty to employers.

Employees expect to receive training and development in exchange for OC (Newman et al., 2011), which is consistent with the social exchange theory (Bashir & Long, 2015). Improving the OC of employees is the main training goal (Ling et al., 2014). By organizing training, the organization shows its commitment to employees, which leads to employees strengthening their commitment to the organization. The result of mutual commitment is high productivity and good organizational (business) performance (Newman et al., 2011; Samuel & Nurudeen, 2014). In order to better evaluate the effectiveness of the training, Newman et al. (2011) suggest examining the relationship between training and OC, since previous research has linked commitment to organizational effectiveness. Some of the indicators of the hotel's long-term orientation toward employee development are the availability of training programs and investments in employees (Berber & Lekovic, 2018).

Hotel business performance

Performance management is a set of managerial methodologies that enable managers to achieve organizational goals (Ta'Amnha et al., 2023). Hotel performance management is a process of planning, measuring (controlling), analysing, reporting and improving hotel's performance (Krstić, 2022).

Generally, business performance is defined as a set of characteristics, attributes, and indicators that describe certain economic resources (inputs), results (outputs), outcomes, contributions, economic efficiency, effectiveness, etc.

Business performance indicators may be financial and non-financial. Financial business performance indicators are "lagging performance indicators, which represent the outcome of past actions and management actions that took place in the past, but they say nothing about the generating causes of those managerial activities, and of the consequent organisational performance of the company" (Panno, 2020, p. 137). Financial business performance indicators do not include corporate/enterprise "efforts to constantly improve quality of products and services to enhance customer satisfaction" so non-financial aspects that form the basis of operating results should be calculated using non-financial indicators (Panno, 2020, p. 137). Generally, non-financial business performance indicators (employee competences, intellectual resources, customer loyalty, employee satisfaction, etc), have proven to be leading performance indicators. Moreover, non-financial business performance

metrics provide little information useful for effective strategic planning by managers (Panno, 2020), which can be outlined as their limitation in managerial purpose.

Business performance can be measured and monitored at the enterprise level, organisational units level, process/activity level, group/team level, and individual (personal, employee) level (Krstić, 2022).

At the individual level, performance refers to individual (employee) contribution to the realisation of organisational goals, individual (personal) outcome, job satisfaction, individual effectiveness (goals achieved), and personal adjustment to a working environment. At the group level, performance refers to group or team result/outcome, morale, cohesion, labor efficiency or team productivity, etc. Finally, at the organization (hotel) level, performance refers to: revenue (total revenue per available room), costs (cost per occupied room), profit (gross operating profit, EBITDA), economic value added (EVA), profitability ratios (operating profit margine, EBITDA margine, return on equity, return on assets), labour/human productivity ratios, market value (market capitalisation), and many other non-financial performance indicators of business success, such as average room rate, average leng of stay, adaptibility, absenteeism rate, turnover rate, green or environmetal performance of hotels, etc.) (Jovanović, 2019). Also, the performances indicate the ability to successfully achieve the future goals of the hotel as a business, for-profit organisation or enterprise. All the above-mentioned performance actually indicate the hotel's business success.

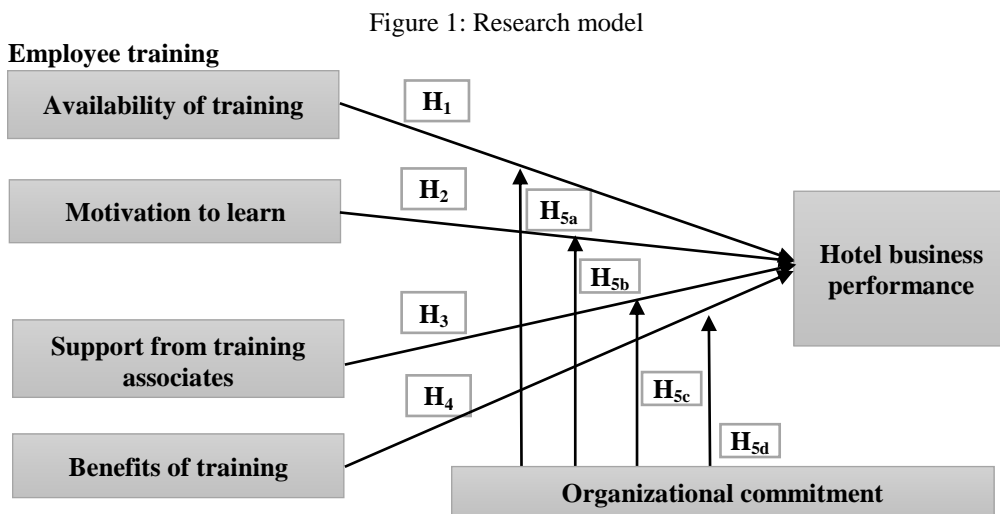
Literature provides modest results related to the connection between employee training and business performance. The relationship between employee training and business performance was confirmed in manufacturing companies (Ta'Amnha et al., 2023) and small Greece firms (Panagiotakopoulos, 2020). Renaud and Morin (2020) conclude that the training offer has an impact on the business performance of Canadian for-profit firms. However, this relationship has not been analyzed in the hotel industry so far. Studies have shown that employee training contributes to innovation performance (Berber & Lekovic, 2018), and sustainable business performance during the pandemic crisis (Deshpande & Srivastava, 2022). Other studies (Sutton & Atkinson, 2023) have shown that the relationship between business performance and training is not significant.

In addition, previous research shows that OC is associated with various business results - job performance (Chen et al., 2006) and job satisfaction (Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020). Ocen et al. (2017) explain the positive impact of training on the commitment of employees since employees tend to create experience, competencies, and knowledge, as well as to develop the feeling that employees must return the benefits to the employer. Saira et al. (2021, p. 310) concluded that “gender moderates the relationship between effective diversity training and affective commitment” in the manufacturing sector. None of the previous studies tested the moderating effect of employee commitment on the relationship between the training of employees and the business performance of hotels.

There was an academic debate among scholars about the relationship between training and employee commitment. Research (Bashir & Long, 2015; Ling et al., 2014; Maurer & Lippstreu, 2008; Newman et al., 2011; Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020) confirmed the positive relationship between employee commitment and training. Marić et al. (2021) concluded that employee commitment has a mediation effect on the relationship between CSR and firm performance.

3. Research model and hypotheses

The research model of this study is presented in Figure 1.



Source: Authors' presentation

Previous studies in the field of hotel industry did not analyze employee training through the appropriate components – availability of training, motivation to learn, support from training, and benefits of training (see Bashir & Long, 2015; Newman et al., 2011). In addition, employee training becomes a particularly important human resource management tool of the hotel industry as a labor-intensive activity in which employees are the key factors of business success. For the stated reasons, it is necessary to analyze the relationship between the components/dimensions of employees training and organizational performance in hotels based on the following hypotheses (Figure 1):

Hypothesis 1: *Availability of training positively contributes to hotel business performance;*

Hypothesis 2: *Motivation to learn positively contributes to hotel business performance;*

Hypothesis 3: *Support from training associates positively contributes to hotel business performance;*

Hypothesis 4: *Benefits of training positively contribute to hotel business performance.*

As organizational commitment is one of the key outcomes of training (Ling et al., 2014), it is necessary to test whether this variable can contribute to strengthening the relationship between the components/dimensions of employee training and the hotel's performance. For these purposes, the following hypotheses were defined (Figure 1):

Hypothesis 5a: *Organisational commitment moderates the relationship between the availability of training and hotel business performance;*

Hypothesis 5b: *Organisational commitment moderates the relationship between the motivation to learn and hotel business performance;*

Hypothesis 5c: *Organisational commitment moderates the relationship between the support from training associates and hotel business performance;*

Hypothesis 5d: *Organisational commitment moderates the relationship between the benefits of training and hotel business performance.*

4. Materials and measures

4.1. Data collection and sample description

The sample includes 83 hotels that were active in the market of the Republic of Serbia in 2022. The list of active hotels was taken from the [Ministry of Trade, Tourism, and Telecommunications of the Republic of Serbia](#) website (October 2022). The research focuses on the following hotel forms: garni hotels, hotels, and apart-hotels. Hotels in the form of motels, tourist resorts, guesthouses, and camps are not included in the research. Data were collected using a questionnaire. The questionnaire was sent to 332 e-mail addresses. Hotel employees were surveyed as authoritative evaluators of employee training and development programs ([Pernkopf-Konhäusner & Brandl, 2011](#)) and the hotel's business success. The data were collected according to the principle of one hotel - one employee to avoid data duplication. The survey was conducted online and by telephone.

The sample was observed from the aspect of category, number of employees, and ownership structure. Three-, four- and five-star hotels are included in the analysis, since these hotels have a larger number of employees for whom training programs are organized. The sample is dominated by four-star hotels (58.1%). Three-stars hotels make up 30.2% of the sample, while five-star hotels make up 11.6% of the sample. Observed according to the number of employees, hotels with the number of "employees from 10 to 49" are the most represented in the sample (62.8%). A slightly smaller percentage is made up of hotels that employ from "50 to 249 employees" (25.6%) as well as hotels that employ "up to 9 employees" (11.6%). In terms of ownership structure, the most represented hotels are owned by domestic investors (88.4%).

4.2. Measures

The variables were evaluated by a questionnaire. Respondents rated items for the previous year, 2022. Data on employee training as well as its components cannot be expressed in any other way than by the Likert scale. Organization performance of hotels or hotel's performance was also assessed in a qualitative way. Items were evaluated on the basis of a Likert scale of agreement from "1 - absolutely disagree" to "5 - absolutely agree".

The questionnaire includes four parts. The first part of the questionnaire contains questions on the basis of which general data on the hotel's operations are collected. The second part of the questionnaire includes items about employee training. This variable is observed based on four sub-variables: availability of training; motivation to learn, support of training associates, benefits of training. Items in the questionnaire for variable employee training were defined by studies [Bashir and Long \(2015\)](#); [Noe and Wilk \(1993\)](#); [Newmana et al. \(2011\)](#); and [Rawashdeh and Tamimi \(2020\)](#). The third part of the questionnaire contains items that evaluate the hotel business performance and are defined by [Tseng and Lee \(2014\)](#). In the questionnaire, respondents rated the following statements: "Our sales amount is very high"; "Our operating profit margin is very high"; "Our return on investment is very high". The fourth part of the questionnaire refers to the items used to examine OC, which are defined by [Shepherd and Mathews \(2000\)](#). In the questionnaire, respondents rated the following statements: "I make efforts to enable the hotel to achieve its goals and values"; "I consider the hotel to be the best choice and I want to stay there"; "I am loyal to the hotel and I want to continue working here".

5. Results

5.1. Descriptive statistics

The results of descriptive statistics are shown in Table 1. The benefits of training have the highest mean value (Mean = 4.548), while the availability of training has the lowest value mean (Mean = 3.793). The mean of hotel business performance is 3.936. Availability of training has the highest standard deviation value (St. Dev. = 1.115).

Table 1: Descriptive statistics

Variables	Mean	St. Deviation	Kurtosis		Skewness	
			Statistics	St. Error	Statistics	St. Error
Availability of training	3.793	1.115	0.336	0.493	-1.035	0.249
Motivation to learn	4.400	0.602	0.007	0.493	-0.921	0.249
Support from training associates	4.372	0.635	1.243	0.493	-1.143	0.249
Benefits of training	4.548	0.460	1.294	0.493	-1.285	0.249
Organizational commitment	4.500	0.544	0.810	0.493	-1.184	0.249
Hotel business performance	3.936	0.956	-0.516	0.493	-0.464	0.249

Source: Authors' research

The kurtosis values for the observed variables are positive in most cases, which means that the distribution is sharper than normal. The skewness values for the observed variables are negative, which means that most of the values of the dependent and independent variables are positioned so that they are closer to higher values. Testing the normality of the distribution was performed using the Kolmogorov-Smirnov test since the sample is larger than 50 observed hotels. For all observed variables, the value of sig. of this test is greater than 0.05, which means that the normality of the sample distribution is not supported.

5.2. Correlation analysis

Correlation analysis measures the degree of strength and direction of the relationship between variables in the model. Since the normality of the distribution has not been proven, Spearman's rho coefficient will be used to test the correlation (Table 2).

Table 2: Correlation analysis

Variables	Availability of training	Motivation to learn	Support from training associates	Benefits of training	Employee commitment	Hotel business performance
Availability of Training	1					
Motivation to Learn	0.786**	1				
Support from training associates	0.606**	0.677**	1			
Benefits of training	0.743**	0.747**	0.607**	1		
Organizational commitment	0.415**	0.533*	0.411**	0.467**	1	
Hotel business performance	0.482**	0.436**	0.430**	0.457**	0.345**	1

* Correlation is statistically significant on the level of 0.050
 ** Correlation is statistically significant on the level of 0.000

Source: Authors' research

By observing the correlation between the components/dimensions of employee training, it can be concluded that there is a strong, positive, and statistically significant correlation between the components. The strongest correlation is between the availability of training and motivation to learn ($\rho = 0.786$; $p = 0.000$). OC achieves a medium, positive, and statistically significant correlation with the components of employee training. Hotel business performance also has a positive, statistically significant, and moderate correlation with the components of employee training. Hotel business performance has the strongest correlation with the availability of training ($\rho = 0.482$; $p = 0.000$), while the weakest correlation is with OC ($\rho = 0.345$; $p = 0.001$).

5.3. Reliability analysis

In order to test the reliability of the used items, reliability analysis and Cronbach's alpha coefficient are used. For the observed model, Cronbach's alpha coefficient is 0.869. This means that there is a high degree of reliability and consistency of the items since the value of this coefficient is greater than 0.7, which is the recommended minimum value (Nunnally, 1978).

Table 3: Reliability analysis

Variables	Value of coefficient Cronbach's alpha
Availability of training	0.841
Motivation to learn	0.821
Support from training associates	0.844
Benefits of training	0.844
Organizational commitment	0.854
Hotel business performance	0.877

Source: Authors' research

By observing the value of Cronbach's alpha coefficient for each variable individually, it can be concluded that this coefficient ranges from 0.821 (Motivation to learn) to 0.877 (Hotel business performance) (Table 3).

5.4. Multiple regression analysis

Conducting regression analysis requires multicollinearity testing via the Variance inflation factor (VIF). For all observed models, VIF ranges from 1.810 to 2.076, which is within acceptable limits - lower than 2.5 (Ramirez et al., 2021). These results do not indicate the problem of multicollinearity, i.e. there is no high correlation between the observed variables, which does not jeopardize the implementation of the regression analysis.

The set of regression analysis that tests the direct effect of the components of employee training on the hotel business performance is shown in Table 4. The results indicate that *Hypothesis H₁ is supported*, that is, availability of training positively contributes to a hotel business performance ($\beta = 0.506$, $p = 0.000$) (Model 1). It can be concluded that the availability of employee training is a significant factor in the hotel business success. These results are also supported by the results of the correlation analysis since the availability of training component has the strongest correlation with business performance ($\rho = 0.482$; $p = 0.000$). The R^2 coefficient is 0.256, which means that 26% of the variability of the hotel business performance is explained by the regression model, while the rest is influenced by other factors.

Motivation to learn positively contributes to hotel business performance ($\beta = 0.504$, $p = 0.000$), which means that hypothesis H_2 is supported (Model 2). The R^2 coefficient is 0.254, which means that 25% of the variability of hotel business performance is explained by the regression model, while the rest is influenced by other factors.

Table 4: Results of regression analysis

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4
Availability of training	0.506** (5.630)	0.504** (5.600)	0.437** (4.654)	0.514** (5.749)
Motivation to learn				
Support from training associates				
Benefits of training				
<i>n</i>	83	83	83	83
<i>F</i> -value	31.702**	31.362**	21.659**	33.052**
R^2	0.256	0.254	0.191	0.264
Adj. R^2	0.248	0.246	0.182	0.256
<i>Dependent variable: Hotel business performance</i>				
<i>Significance: ** $p \leq 0.01$; * $p \leq 0.05$</i>				

Source: Authors' research

Hypothesis H_3 is also supported, which means that support from training associates positively contributes to the hotel business performance ($\beta = 0.437$, $p = 0.000$) (Model 3). This means that hotels that provide the support of supervisors and managers for the implementation of training tend to have better hotel business performance. The coefficient of determination R^2 is 0.191, which means that 19% of the variability of hotel business performance is explained by the model. Hypothesis H_4 is supported – benefits of training positively contribute to a hotel business performance ($\beta = 0.514$, $p = 0.000$) (Model 4). When training creates benefits for employees, the hotel tends to have better performance. The coefficient of determination R^2 is 0.260, which means that 26% of the variability of the hotel business performance is explained by the regression model.

Table 5 shows the results of the regression analysis where the moderating role of OC on the relationship between training components and hotel business performance was tested. OC positively contributes to the hotel business performance, except in Model 3. This is consistent with the research (Mansour et al., 2014) indicating that OC contributes to better performance on the organizational level.

Table 5: Results of regression analysis

Variables	Model 1	Model 2	Model 3	Model 4	Model 5	Model 6	Model 7	Model 8
<i>Independent variables</i>								
Availability of training	0.384** (3.647)	0.653 (0.896)	0.389** (3.189)	1.056 (1.522)	0.285** (2.634)	0.251 (0.411)	0.399** (3.504)	0.718 (1.202)
Motivation to learn								
Support from training associates								
Benefits of training								
<i>Moderator</i>	0.225* (2.136)	0.320 (1.161)	0.170 (1.397)	0.726 (1.248)	0.280** (2.582)	0.251 (0.499)	0.184 (1.614)	0.571 (0.792)
Organizational commitment								
<i>Interactions</i>								
Availability of training x OC		-0.332 (-0.373)		-1.125 (-0.977)		0.055 (0.057)		-0.640 (-0.544)
Motivation to learn x OC								
Support from training x OC								
Benefits of training x OC								
<i>n</i>	83	83	83	83	83	83	83	83
<i>F</i> -value	18.745**	12.425**	16.819**	11.525**	14.828**	9.778**	18.117**	12.084**
R^2	0.292	0.293	0.270	0.278	0.246	0.246	0.285	0.287
Adj. R^2	0.276	0.269	0.254	0.253	0.229	0.221	0.269	0.263
<i>Dependent variable: Hotel business performance</i>								
<i>Significance: ** $p \leq 0.01$; * $p \leq 0.05$</i>								
<i>OC – Organizational commitment</i>								

Source: Authors' research

The results of the regression analysis, shown in Table 5, test the moderator role of OC on the relationship between the availability of training and hotel business performance (Model 2). Based on the data presented, the coefficient *availability of training x organisational commitment* is negative and not significant ($\beta = -0.332$, $p = 0.710$). This means that hypothesis H_{5a} is rejected, i.e. organisational commitment does not moderate the relationship between the availability of training and a hotel business performance. The results of Model 4 also show that the coefficient of *motivation to learn x organisational commitment* is negative and not significant ($\beta = -1.125$, $p = 0.331$), so hypothesis H_{5b} is rejected.

Hypothesis H_{5c} is rejected since the coefficient *support from training associates x organisational commitment* is positive but not significant ($\beta = 0.055$, $p = 0.331$), which means that organisational commitment does not moderate the relationship between the support from training associates and a hotel's performance. Also, *hypothesis H_{5d} is rejected*. The coefficient *benefits of training x organisational commitment* is negative and not significant ($\beta = -0.640$, $p = 0.588$), which means that employee commitment does not moderate the relationship between the benefits of training and a hotel business performance.

6. Discussion, implication, and limitation of the research

The results of the study provide answers to the above defined research questions.

First, the most developed component/dimension of employee training is the benefits of training (Mean = 4.548). This research showed that employees recognize the importance of training both at the individual (personal) level through the acquisition of new knowledge and better value on the labor market, and at the organizational level through more efficient, productive work of employees and better service, the volume of service and other business results.

However, the first concern is that good training programs can increase employability and the desire of employees to leave the organization (Ling et al., 2014). That is why the realisation of training for employees becomes interesting in the new employment background (Ling et al., 2014). The second concern stems from the low availability of training (Mean = 3.793). Such results can be justified by lower current investments in the training and development of employees as a consequence of the pandemic crisis (Jayathilake et al., 2021; Mikołajczyk, 2022).

Second, the results of the study indicate the contribution of all observed components of employee training to the hotel business performance. The results of this study are aligned with the conclusions of studies (Panagiotakopoulos, 2020; Ta'Amnha et al., 2023) as well as with social exchange theory (Renaud & Morin, 2020) and human capital theory. Formal employee training becomes an important strategic tool for hotels that help management gain a broader understanding of how to motivate their employees (Panagiotakopoulos, 2020). Employees who have completed the training program are better able to meet the demands of the job, get positive personal performance evaluations, and make decisions (Renaud & Morin, 2020). Therefore, it can be concluded that the result of the training is a significant improvement in the quality of hotel services through employee skills and morale because most employees feel that they belong to a hotel that shows interest in the professional development of its employees (Panagiotakopoulos, 2020). Providing high-quality hotel services leads to maximizing business success (Renaud & Morin, 2020).

Third, OC has no moderating effect on the relationship between employee training components/dimensions and hotel business performance. It is clear that the surveyed employees do not view training as an important benefit that they consider when evaluating their commitment to the hotel (Bashir & Long, 2015). Employees remain committed to the

hotel because of the investments or expenses they have made (retirement, connections they have made with co-workers), not because of the training programs implemented (Bashir & Long, 2015). When interpreting the obtained results, we follow the conclusion of Rawashdeh and Tamimi (2020) that the results cannot be generalized since there are differences in the level of knowledge and commitment to training among the respondents. Also, cultural differences between countries significantly affect the development of awareness about the commitment of employees to the hotel (Newman et al., 2011). In the literature, authors (Ling et al., 2014; Newman et al., 2011; Rawashdeh & Tamimi, 2020) interpret the lack of training contribution in the following ways. First, organization commitment will be lacking if the training is not voluntary, but supervisors decide who will attend the training. Second, the limited opportunities for career development and promotion of employees after completing training and acquiring knowledge lead to the absence of organisational commitment. Third, even if employees perceive the benefits of training, it may not increase their commitment if they are not able to apply the acquired skills in the hotel. Fourth, the content of the training is directed mainly towards the needs of the organization, while the needs of individual employees are not analyzed more broadly. Performance-oriented employees are interested in maximizing current job performance, so they may not support and participate in learning and development programs because this will mean engaging the employee beyond the optimal level of performance (Maurer & Lippstreu, 2008).

6.1. Practical implication

The research has several practical implications. First, hotel management must provide additional training programs for employees. Availability of training has the lowest mean value, which means that the hotels are not sufficiently committed to the organization of training programs. This is understandable given the turbulent business in pandemic conditions. However, the management must use the next period for the promotion of training among employees and the organization of various training programs, respecting the needs of the hotel as well as the needs of the employees.

Second, looking at the impact of training components on the hotel business performance, it is certain that investment in training should be one of the reliable tools for improving performance. This is particularly typical for the hotel industry, where human resources are key factors in the quality and experience of hotel service. Management must pay special attention to the benefits that training provides to employees since this variable mostly explains hotel business performance. Therefore, management must direct attention to building awareness among employees about the benefits that training can bring to both employees and the organization. Employee benefits create better marketability of the workforce and increase its value. Such hard-working and trained employees bring benefits to the hotel through better work efficiency and results per unit of time.

Third, the results that do not support the moderating influence of OC on the relationship between employee training and hotel business performance are worrying. This means that investing in employee training in order to improve performance does not lead to satisfactory organisational commitment. The issue of commitment is of particular importance for retaining employees and improving their performance. Therefore, hotel management must provide and invest in other benefits for employees - social benefits, psychological or economic benefits - in order to improve organisational commitment.

6.2. Limitation of research

The first limitation refers to the lack of quantitative support for the calculation of employee training contributions. There are certain financial allocations in hotels for the training of employees, but this information does not say much. Its comparison in relation to the total sum allocated for employee training does not determine the size of the contribution of this variable to hotel business performance. In addition, information about the availability of training, motivation to learn, and support from supervisors can not be quantified, which means that employee training could not be observed through these components.

The second limitation relates to the assessment of hotel business performance. Performance can be measured using financial and non-financial indicators. The assessment of hotel business performance in the paper refers to the assessment of financial indicators that are descriptively presented (according to Tseng and Lee, 2014). The next limitation relates to a narrow set of business performance (financial and non-financial), as well as this study did not include some specific performance for the hotel industry, such as total revenue per available room, cost per occupied room, average room rate, average length of stay, etc.

In addition, the traditional lack of interest of employees to approach the survey process leads to a low respondent rate. Respondents in hotels make up 25% of the total number of hotels available for surveying.

6.3. Future research

Future research should be based on expanding the components of employee training and a more detailed analysis of organizational performance – profitability indicators, market value performance, etc. Future research can focus on comparing the availability and development of employee training with other, labor-intensive activities. It is also possible to analyze the achieved financial results of the hotel before and after investing in employee training. It is very important to determine the department in the hotel where the training had the greatest effect on the results of the department.

Conflict of interest

The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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