Managerial competencies, human resource development initiatives and business performance: a case of tourism sector in Bulawayo Metropolitan Province in Zimbabwe

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Abstract

The study sought to analyse the influence of managerial competencies on business performance in the tourism sector. The research was conducted in Matabeleland North Province towns of Hwange and Victoria Falls. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed amongst Tourism enterprises. The response rate was a 67% i.e. 100 out of the 150 distributed questionnaires. The descriptive multiple case study research design was used as data was collected from different entrepreneurial business enterprises. The data was analysed using the SPSS version 20 software. The analysis of data was in the form of both descriptive and inferential statistics, which made use of the linear regression model and chi-square testing especially when testing the hypotheses. The study found that there was a strong relationship between managerial competencies, human resource development and business performance in the tourism sector. The researcher established that if managers were equipped with the requisite competency skills they were more forthcoming to training and development initiatives and hence this resulted in them being able to adapt easily towards the ever-changing business environment especially in the tourism sector.

Key words: Managerial competencies; business performance; Tourism sector; intellectual capital.
Introduction
Hellriegel et al (2005) postulated that if a manager is to be deemed effective there is need for them to possess several managerial competencies that enabled him or her to perform efficiently and effectively at different managerial levels. These competencies may be a summation of attributes which include tacit and explicit knowledge, skills, behaviors, and attitudes that contribute to personal effectiveness and these need to be cascaded within the various supervisory levels within the organisation for enhanced effectiveness. Managerial competencies are a set of knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes that contribute to personal effectiveness as propounded by Hellriegel et al (2008). Boyatzis (1982) defined competencies as “the underlying characteristics of a person that lead to or cause effective and outstanding performance.” Research by Jena (2012) showed that managerial competencies among SME have resulted in better performance. Resource and capabilities analysis provides managers with a powerful tool for sizing up the organisation’s competitive advantage assets and determining whether they can provide the foundation necessary for competitive success in the market place. All of an organisation’s capabilities are knowledge-based, residing in people and in an organisation’s intellectual capital or in organisational processes and systems, which embody tacit knowledge (Thompson et al, 2013).

Over the years Zimbabwe has undergone immense economic changes which have seen companies shutting down resulting in the massive deindustrialization era, taking over the former glory of the Zimbabwean industry (Chiwara, 2015). This has resulted in greater attention being directed towards the Tourism sector as they have been contributing significantly towards the GDP of the nation (RBZ, 2014). Consequently, there has been a call to revamp the tourism sector to ensure creativeness and innovative in order to generate the much sought after foreign currency. Revamping of the tourism sector can only be realized through equipping managers with managerial competencies and capabilities.

The need for human capital competencies has been noted to require the impacting knowledge, skills and abilities which calls for systematic training and development. Human resource development initiatives are defined as any activities which provide new or current employees with the skills which are needed to perform their duties effectively, (Dessler; 2013). Therefore, the tourism sector has been seen wanting in this field as a result of a number of factors as highlighted by research by Johnson (2002), Storey and Greene (2010). The principal aim of the study was therefore to examine the relationship between the managerial competencies, human resource capabilities and business performance in the tourism sector.

Problem statement
Prior research by Prahalad and Hamel (1990) has shown that most organisations fall short in areas such as lack of managerial background, leadership, personal attributes, competitive strategy, human resource development and in turn this has a detrimental effect on the performance. It is therefore the grounding motive behind this research to establish the influence the managerial competencies have on tourism enterprise development and also to analyse how training and
development can impact performance of local firms. There is dearth information that explores the relationship between managerial competencies, human resource development and business performance. Hence the current study seeks to establish the relationship between managerial competencies and enhanced performance in the tourism sector.

1.5.2 Hypothesis

H1 There is a positive relationship between managerial competencies and performance as measured by return on investment.

H2 There is a positive relationship between managerial competencies and performance as measured by profitability.

H3 There is a positive relationship between managerial competencies and performance as measured by employment growth.

H4 There is a positive relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by return on investment.

H5 There is a positive relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by profitability.

H6 There is a positive relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by employment growth.

H7 There is a positive relationship between managerial competencies and human resource development.

Literature Review

The importance of the Tourism sector cannot go unnoticed as it is vital essential in contributing towards the economy of developing countries such as Zimbabwe as contended by Abdullah & Manan, (2011). Below is the proposed conceptual framework of the study.
Managerial competencies are a set of knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes that contribute to personal effectiveness as propounded by Hellriegel et al. (2008). Thompson et al. (2013) defined competencies as “the underlying characteristics of a person that lead to or cause effective and outstanding performance.” Hoffmann (1999) suggests that the purpose of defining competencies is to improve human performance at work. Shirazi and Mortazavi (2009) found that responsiveness, proactiveness, effective communication, team building, negotiation, and decisiveness are the main characteristics of an effective manager. The Domain Model on the other hand, also in light of the above, divided the competences into intrapersonal, interpersonal, business skills and leadership skills as fundamental for the managers to be competent at work. Good managers respond proactively and pay great attention to the market condition so as to keep abreast of the changes which have both direct and indirect impact in the running of the business.
Managerial competencies and tourism sector performance

Organisational success is highly dependent on being able to attract and retain the most competent workforce as eluded by Sims (2002). Prahalad and Hamel (1990) stated that in order for organisations to remain competitive it is as a result of core competencies which enable the management to adapt to environments easily. Research by Schroder (1989) showed that competencies of managers were important as they influenced the behaviour and predicted how they are able to react to experiences in their business. Leaford (1995) research also attributed managerial competency to managers being able to motivate their staff and hence ultimately resulting in organisational success in terms of improved performance.

The importance of managerial competencies cannot be underestimated as Jena (2012) came to the conclusion that deployment of core managerial competencies among managers resulted in them being more adaptable towards the ever changing business environment. Hence if managers are robust they are able to drive the business in the right direction.

Theoretical Framework

The Domain Model of managerial competencies

The study was guided by the domain model of managerial competencies by Hogan and Warrenfeltz (2003), who postulated that there are four fundamental facets that a manager should possess in order for them to be effective and these include intrapersonal skills, interpersonal skills, leadership skills and business skills. According to Ahmad et al. (2011) the critical resources for entities like the ones in the tourism sector are held by the individual entrepreneurial managers and these are reflected in their skills, knowledge, experience and education. On the other hand, Hellriegel et al. (2008) define managerial competencies as a set of knowledge, skills, behaviours and attitudes that contribute to personal effectiveness.

Challenges faced in fostering managerial competencies

The issue of implementing managerial competencies has been explored by a number of authors and it still remains a challenge in the sense that it is an aspect that requires full support of both the employer and the employee in order for it to be successful. Issues pertaining to shortage of resources to facilitate training and lack of management support are some of the challenges which the tourism sector face in the implementation process. Some of the challenges identified in other sectors faced by managers when implementing these competencies are discussed below:

Competency management is treated as an HR procedure instead of an integrated business initiative.

The concept of competency management is a fairly new dimension in tourism sector due to knowledge-based nature of their business focusing more on entertainment and leisure. Hence the chance of being ignorant of the importance of impacting competency skills throughout the organisation. As a result one will realise this has predominantly been considered as a human
resource function. Hence, in the event that there is no human resource personnel within the organization, it becomes void as the owners of these enterprises may fail to implement such initiatives which can contribute to change in the way their organisations perform (Leow, 2016). Adding on, if competency management is considered as an HR function the rest of the organisation will therefore fail to encourage the change implemented unless human resources monitors it closely, therefore this result in lack of ownership towards the competencies learnt.

**Knowledge gap**

The researcher has noted that there has been limited research that has been carried out in terms of investigating the relationship between managerial competencies, human resource development initiatives and business performance. Ahmad carried out research over a period of (2007), (2010) and (2011) which explored the impact of managerial competencies on performance but none have assessed the impact of how human resource development may also contribute towards Tourism sector performance. The study therefore serves to fill a gap in this area and see the impact of the two variables towards business performance.

**Methodology**

**Quantitative research paradigm**

Alluding to the above research design which is quantitative in nature the appropriate research paradigm which the researcher could adopt was the positivism approach as it contends that there is only one reality and hence that reality can be tested to be proven right or wrong (Kothari, 2004, Irny and Rose, 2005, Cresswell, 2003). The quantitative research design enables one to establish the relationship between two variables which may be categorized as the independent and dependent variable.

**3.3 Population and Sample size**

The researcher distributed a total of 150 questionnaires to tourism sectors in Matabeleland North Province towns of Hwange and Victoria Falls. The questionnaires were targeted towards those in managerial level consisting of owners and managers.

**Results**

**The results of the study were as follows:**

**Presence of Human Resource Department**

The researcher sought to find out if the tourism sector had functional human resource departments in their businesses. This was so as to determine if they would be able to carry out any form of human resource development, as concurred by Kotei and Folker (2007), who suggested that failure to have this department would result in neglect of human development. From the 100 respondents the researcher found that 62% noted that they have an HR department whereas 38% did not have an HR department.
The questionnaires were distributed to a number of Tourism sector entities in different sectors which include hospitality and tourism, transport and logistics, food and beverages. From the 100 respondents the researcher found that the hospitality & tourism sector and food & beverages sector had the majority of respondents with (29%) each.

The researcher went on to cross tabulate the number of years of business with the nature of business to ascertain which business sector was more viable. The results from table 2 showed that the food and beverages sector had been viable for the past 5 years and hospitality and tourism was the second viable business between the ranges of 6-10 years. This could be reflective of the nature of sector as both deal with basic needs of consumers and tourists.

**What are the managerial competency skills necessary for performance as perceived by managers?**

The table below shows the responses of managers on their perceptive towards intrapersonal competency skills.
Table 1: Intrapersonal perceptions

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Intrapersonal Skills</th>
<th>Response (%) N= 100</th>
<th>Strongly disagree</th>
<th>Disagree</th>
<th>Uncertain</th>
<th>Agree</th>
<th>Strongly agree</th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Std Dev</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>MC1 I am aware of my personal strengths and weaknesses as a manager.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC2 My self-esteem is high and I am fully committed to my job.</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>4.5</td>
<td>0.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC3 I am able to exercise self-discipline when carrying out tasks</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC4 I ensure performance evaluations are objective</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>5.2</td>
<td>64.6</td>
<td>30.2</td>
<td>4.2</td>
<td>0.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC5 I am able to work under immense pressure</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0.49</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC6 I am a driver of excellence amongst the workforce</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>4.6</td>
<td>0.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>MC7 I have the drive to ensure that the business succeeds</td>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>4.4</td>
<td>0.53</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Own compilation, 2018

**Perception on intrapersonal competency skills**

The purpose here was to analyse the perceptions of managers and owners on intrapersonal skills which are intrinsic to the individual’s effort. The researcher found that from a mean of 4.44 the respondents were agreeable that they were aware of their personal strengths as propounded by Hogan and Warrenfeltz, (2003). A mean of 4.51 showed that respondents strongly agreed that they had high self-esteem and hence this contributed towards their performance as 4.61 strongly agreeing that they had the drive to ensure excellence within the organisation. From the table above one can deduce that tourism sector owners and managers have a strong view of their intrapersonal skills as their mean was above 4 which is in agreement with the findings of Hogan Warrenfeltz, (2003), who stated that intrapersonal skills form the foundation on which management and careers are built and that successful managers receive high scores on measures of intra personal skills.
Perception of Interpersonal competency skills

The table below shows the responses of managers in response to their perception on interpersonal skills.

Table 2: Interpersonal Skills

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Interpersonal skills</th>
<th>Response (%) N= 100</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly disagree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCI 1</strong> I have good relationships with my subordinates</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCI 2</strong> I am able to negotiate solutions easily with other staff members.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCI 3</strong> It is very difficult for me to trust my subordinates.</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCI 4</strong> I encourage team effort amongst subordinates</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCI 5</strong> I have created networks outside the organisation which have contributed to business performance.</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCI 6</strong> I have adopted an open door policy with my subordinates</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCI 7</strong> Communication with employees is very difficult</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCI 8</strong> Communication with senior executives is very difficult</td>
<td>22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>MCI 9</strong> Quality relationships have made work much easier for me</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The results from this section therefore showed that managers had created good relationships with their subordinates as the respondents agreed with a mean of (4.36) and hence there was a direct relationship between work and quality relationships as it enabled them to work easily with their subordinates as displayed by MCI2 which had (4.50) as a level of agreeableness in terms of mean average. The results also showed that the respondents strongly agreed that the quality relationships they created at work made work easier which may have been contributed by enhanced teamwork which was reflected on MCI5 with an average mean of (4.68) which showed a strong level of
agreeableness. This would therefore ensure the high performance of tourism firms as propounded by Ibrahim and Goodwin (1986) who found that interpersonal skills such as effective teamwork were a contributing factor towards the success of a business.

**Perceptions on human resource development initiatives**

The figure below shows the responses of managers in response to their perceptive on human resource development initiatives.

The researcher went on to find out the critical human resource development initiatives of managers and owners. Out of the 100 respondents the researcher noted that the respondents were given study leave as represented by the mean of (4.02) on HR3 so as to be able to go and pursue their studies. In HR5 a mean of (4.09) of respondents agreed that they had attended workshops in line with their work. Management went on to state that they sponsored their employees for work related workshops as reflected in HR7 were a mean of (3.73) showed that there was a sign of agreeableness. The respondents agreed that continuous training greatly improved their performance in HR11 with a mean of (4.14). 51% of the respondents strongly agreed that they had attended management development training which is influential in ensuring management efficiency.

![HRD Initiatives](source: Researcher 2018)

**Figure iii: HRD Initiatives (Source: Researcher 2018)**

**To what extent does training and development improve performance in the Tourism sector?**

The researcher made use of three hypotheses namely H₄, H₅ and H₆ to determine the extent to which training and development influence performance...
HRD vs. Return on investment

H₄ There is a positive relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by return on investment.

Table 3: Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.464¹</td>
<td>.215</td>
<td>.190</td>
<td>1.160</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ANOVA²

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1 Regression</td>
<td>33.598</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>11.199</td>
<td>8.329</td>
<td>.000²</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>122.360</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>1.345</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>155.958</td>
<td>94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The researcher went on to test the relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by return on investment and the results reflected that there was a relationship between the two variables of HRD and return in investment. But it should be noted that it was not as a very strong determinant as compared to other hypotheses as its F-value was at 8.329 whereas the rest were above 30. The researcher therefore accepts the alternate hypotheses which says that “there is a positive relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by return on investment”, as the P-value is still significantly below 0.05 at 95% level of confidence. The summary of the regression model in the table below shows the variation in Tourism sector return on investment as explained by the various variables under investigation. The R-value of 0.464 shows a slightly weak relationship between the return on investment and extracted predictors. Adding on the adjusted R-squared value of (0.190) shows that the model is not much a good predictor of return on investment.
Table 4: Coefficients

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Unstandardized Coefficients</th>
<th>Standardized Coefficients</th>
<th>T</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>B</td>
<td>Std. Error</td>
<td>Beta</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>(Constant)</td>
<td>.311</td>
<td>.674</td>
<td>.462</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Training is done religiously within the organisation.</td>
<td>.329</td>
<td>.088</td>
<td>.351</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Performance is greatly improving due to continuous training.</td>
<td>.285</td>
<td>.121</td>
<td>.223</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We fear to lose our employees after training them.</td>
<td>.149</td>
<td>.096</td>
<td>.145</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher 2018

The researcher went on to note that the positive Beta shown on the following predictors in the table above such as ‘training done religiously’ within the organisation (0.351) and ‘performance greatly improved due to continuous training’ (0.223) had a positive impact on return on investment of the small and medium enterprises. Hence the researcher concluded that an increase in the incentives given for attending training programs would then result in increased return on investments.
H5 - There is a positive relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by profitability.

HRD vs. Profitability

Model Summary

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>R</th>
<th>R Square</th>
<th>Adjusted R Square</th>
<th>Std. Error of the Estimate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>.846a</td>
<td>.715</td>
<td>.695</td>
<td>.681</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 5: ANOVAa

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Model</th>
<th>Sum of Squares</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>Mean Square</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Sig.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Regression</td>
<td>97.802</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>16.300</td>
<td>35.158</td>
<td>.000b</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Residual</td>
<td>38.945</td>
<td>84</td>
<td>.464</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>136.747</td>
<td>90</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Researcher 2018

The researcher also investigated the relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by profitability. The researcher deduced that there was a positive relationship with a P-value of less than 0.05 at 95% level of confidence. The researcher therefore accepted the alternate hypotheses which says that “there is a positive relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by profitability”

The researcher noted that the contributing factors towards increased profitability were strong as a result of management attending training and development programs. The R-value of (0.715) shows a strong relationship between the profitability and the selected human resource development initiatives. The adjusted r- square value of (0.695) shows that the model is a strong prognosticate of profitability.

The researcher went on to note that the Positive Beta shown on predictors such as ‘incentives given for training’ (0.593), ‘attending management development training’ (0.911) had a positive impact on net profits of the small and medium enterprises. Hence the researcher deduced that an increase in the incentives given for attending training programs would then result in increased net profits.
Major HRD challenges

From the 100 respondents the researcher discovered four major challenges which managers were facing when it came to the implementation of their human resource development initiatives. The majority agreed that hiring external trainers was very costly in C5 (3.91) and this was in accordance to the findings of Kotey and Folker (2007), this was seconded by Tourism sector owners not being confident with their employees as they feared they would leave after they would have trained them. The respondents went on to highlight they had limited time for training as shown by the average mean response of (3.40) in C1 as they may be focusing on running the day to day activities of the organisation. Lastly the respondents highlighted that they were no incentives given for training in C3 with a mean of (3.36) and hence they were not motivated enough to engage in any human resource development initiatives.

Discussion of findings

What are the managerial competency skills necessary for SME performance as perceived by managers?

Intrapersonal skills

The researcher found that from a mean of 4.44 the respondents were agreeable to that they were aware of their personal strengths as propounded by Hogan and Warrenfeltz, (2003). A mean of 4.51 showed that respondents strongly agreed that they had high self-esteem and hence this
contributed towards their performance as 4.61 strongly agreeing that they had the drive to ensure excellence within the organisation. From the findings the researcher noted that in terms of intrapersonal skills the respondents were cognisant of their strengths and weakness and had the intrinsic drive to achieve excellence which are fundamental competencies a managers has to have in order for them to excel. This was concurred by Hogan Warrenfeltz, (2003) who stated that intrapersonal skills formed the foundation on which management and careers were built and successful managers were evidenced by the high score they would receive in terms of intrapersonal skills.

**Interpersonal skills**

In terms of the interpersonal skills, which are employee relationships, the researcher noted that the majority of respondents emphasized that they had quality relationships with their subordinates and this resulted directly in efficiencies in terms of work standards as displayed by MC12 which had a mean of (4.50). The researcher noted that interpersonal skills resulted in enhanced teamwork as was reflected by the high agreeableness rate on MC15 with an average of (4.68). The researcher therefore deduced that interpersonal skills ensured high performance of Tourism sector firms as propounded by Ibrahim and Goodwin (1986) who found that interpersonal skills such as effective teamwork were a contributing factor towards the success of a business. Therefore the results concurred with literature discussed earlier. Therefore it is imperative that organisations and managers foster good relationships within their firms so as to accrue benefits associated with interpersonal competencies.

**Business Skills**

The results showed that respondents were also equipped with the technical qualifications in line with their professions as the majority agreed with a mean of (4.21) and (42%) strongly agreed on having these skills on MCB6. The following skills were noted by the respondents such as idea generation, proactiveness and the ability to identify critical opportunities and threats. This therefore concurred with the Chandler and Jansen (1992) who propounded that in order for firms to be sustainable they needed to take a proactive approach in the way they handled business by making use of opportunities when they present themselves. The researcher went on to note that the majority of the respondents had the technical qualifications to run the business therefore this may have had a positive impact on their perspective in terms of business management.

**To what extent does training and development improve performance of Tourism sector firms?**

The researcher made use of three hypotheses namely H4, H5 and H6 to determine the extent to which training and development influence performance
**H₄** There is a positive relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by return on investment.

The findings derived from testing the null hypotheses showed that there was a slightly weaker relationship between human resource development initiatives and return on investment as reflected through the regression model. The R-value of 0.464 showed a slightly weak relationship between the return on investment although the hypothesis could not be rejected due to the P-value which was below 0.05 at 95% level of confidence. It should be noted that it was not as a very strong determinant as compared to other hypotheses as its F-value was at 8.329 whereas the rest were above 30. This maybe as a result of firms fearing loss of employees after training and hence training is not a direct predictor of return on investment but maybe other variables, Johnson (2002).

**H₅** There is a positive relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by profitability.

The researcher accepted the alternative hypothesis as evident from the results which showed that the R-Value of (0.715) reflected a strong relationship between the profitability and the human resource development initiatives. The adjusted R- Square value of (0.695) also showed that the model was a strong prognosticates of profitability.

The major determinants observed were that if incentives were provided for attending training employees would also then put into practice the knowledge and skills they would have acquired(Hill and Stewart;2000). To add on management attending training programs also enable them to have a clear focus on the direction of the business and exert themselves fully.

**H₆** There is a positive relationship between human resource development initiatives and performance as measured by employment growth.

The chi-square was used to determine the level of association between human resource development initiative and performance as measured by employment growth. The result of (0.05) which was below the Chi- square value proved a strong association between human resource development initiatives and employment growth. Therefore the researcher accepted the alternate hypothesis which shows a positive relationship between human resource development and employment growth. This can go on to show that if employees engage in training and development initiatives they are bound to stay longer within an organisation which caters for their career growth.

The research outcomes though differed from the findings of Bruederl et al (1992) who stated that they was little relationship between training and business success as evident by the findings in this research which proved that there was a very strong relationship between these variables.
What are the challenges faced by Tourism sector when implementing human resource development initiatives?

The researcher here aimed to understand what could be the pulling factors which result in firms not engaging in training and development and four major problems were identified by the researcher which seemed to have the majority response. The researcher found that the tourism firms could not afford hiring external trainers as it was very costly therefore this affected their ability to keep abreast with more efficient ways of conducting business. The findings concurred with Kotey and Folker (2007) who noted that tourism sector tended to lack funds designated for training and development.

The researcher also noted that tourism sector owners feared losing their staff after investing in their training which may result in them holding back such initiatives and this concurred with the findings of Storey and Greene (2010). The third problem observed by the researcher was that the respondents had limited time for them to engage in any training initiative and this may be due to the fact that they may be overwhelmed with the day activities of the business.

Lastly the respondents highlighted that they were no incentives given for training and hence they were not motivated enough to engage in any human resource development initiatives. This corresponds with the findings of Hill and Stewart (2000) who noted that the lack of promotional structures after training were detrimental as employees would hold back in taking any training programs. From these findings the researcher noted that there was a need to managers and business owners to try and create a platform which supported training initiatives within their firms.

What is the fundamental relationship between managerial competencies and human resource development initiatives?

The researcher here made use of hypothesis testing to determine the relationship between the variables

H₁: There is a positive relationship between managerial competencies and human resource development.

In deducing the findings of this hypothesis the researcher used the chi-square and the results show that there was a strong association between managerial competencies and human resource development initiatives as it recorded a values less than (0.05). Hence one could conclude that an increased appreciation of the competencies may result in more engagement in human resource development programs as managers and owners are able to see the need of them for the greater success of the business (Jena ;2012).
What is the relationship between managerial competencies and business performance

The researcher here made use of hypothesis testing to determine the relationship between the variables

**H1:** There is a positive relationship between managerial competencies and performance as measured by return on investment.

The researcher made use of the regression linear model in analyzing the relationship between managerial competencies and return on investment. From the regression summary model the researcher noted that the R Value of (0.819) showed a strong relationship between managerial competencies and Tourism sector performance as measured by return on investment. It can therefore be concluded that indeed managerial competencies influence positively the return on investment. Hence investing in nurturing of managerial competencies would benefit Hwange and Matebeleland North tourism firms. The researcher therefore rejected the null hypothesis as the results showed that there was a positive relationship.

**H2:** There is a positive relationship between managerial competencies and tourism sector performance as measured by profitability.

The researcher went on to test the relationship between managerial competencies and performance as measured by profitability and through regression the researcher was able to reject the H₀ as the ANOVA model showed that there was a strong relationship between the two variables as the P-value was below 0.05 at 95% confidence. The positive hypothesis is concurred with the benefits cited by Hogan Warrenfeltz, (2003) who stated that managerial competency skills ensured that an organisation is focused and has a unity of direction which in turn yield returns such as profits and enhanced market share.

**H3:** There is a positive relationship between managerial competencies and performance as measured by employment growth.

From the findings the researcher noted that there was a strong level of association between managerial competencies and performance as measured by employment growth. The major contributors towards employment growth were as a result of good interpersonal relationships and managers being able to practice autonomy and also drive innovativeness from their subordinates and fostering team work which creates a sense of belonging.

**What has been the performance level of tourism sector in Victoria Falls for the past two years (2016-2017)?**

The researcher used a two year time frame from 2016- 2017 in order to measure any movements in terms of profitability, employment growth and return on investment as measures of tourism sector business performance. From the tables attached in the appendix the researcher noted that
there was an increase in the number of employees from 2016 to 2017 and they were no dismissals done during these two years. Therefore this ensures smooth flow of business operations. In terms of net and gross profits the researcher noted that the respondents agreed that there was an increase in the net profits and gross profits within the two years. The firm’s income outweighed the expenditure over the past two years and this revealed a clear sign that there was a positive return on investment on organisational capital. Therefore return on investment is a clear predictor of future sustainability of the small and medium enterprises. This is also supported by the fact that the Tourism sector firms were viable for more than five years and this maybe as a result of returns from their investments.

Conclusion
Based on the discussions of the findings above the following conclusions were drawn:

- Managerial competencies were critical skills which managers needed to have in order for them to ensure business performance, namely having quality relationships, being proactive and self-driven.
- Training and development of managers was directly linked to the success of the business hence management development initiatives were critical for a manager to be adaptable to the ever changing business environment.
- The challenges faced by managers in terms of human resource development were characterized of: limited time for training, lack of incentives for training and hiring external highly accredited trainers were expensive.
- There was a positive relationship between managerial competencies and human resource development but it was noted that the relationship was slightly weak.
- The researcher concluded that there was a positive relationship between managerial competencies and business performance as measured by H1, H2 and H3, which were employment growth, profitability and return on investment.
- Business performance was enhanced over the period of two years as a result of managerial competencies and development of employee skills.

Recommendations
The researcher recommends that hospitality and tourism sectors should ensure that they take a holistic approach in terms of human resource development so as to keep abreast with the latest trends of ensuring sustainability of their organisations. They should also ensure that managers are equipped with competency skills requisite with the needs of their organisations and craft policies which foster such initiatives. Thus, the human resource must be managed dynamically to sustain the organisation’s competitiveness. Training and development must be conducted to equip employees with knowledge, skills and attitudes which will ensure that they align their activities with the strategic direction of the enterprise.
REFERENCES


Reserve Bank of Zimbabwe (2014), *Role of the banking sector on promoting growth and development of Tourism sector*, 2nd SME Banking and Microfinance Summit.


