

ENTREPRENEURIAL LEADERSHIP AND INNOVATION BY 1-3 STAR RATED HOTELS IN KENYA

¹Daniel Karani, ²Dr. Lilian Mwenda and ³Dr. Anita Wachira

Postgraduate Student: Business Management Department, School of Business Management and Economics,
Dedan Kimathi University of Technology

*Corresponding Author's E-mail: karanid2004@gmail.com

Business Management Department, School of Business Management and Economics, Dedan Kimathi University
of Technology

Business Management Department, School of Business Management and Economics, Dedan Kimathi University
of Technology

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Purpose: The study aimed to assess the effect of entrepreneurial leadership on innovation by 1-3 star rated hotels in Kenya.

Methodology: This study considered positivism philosophy, quantitative measurement paradigm. The study targeted 111 hotels (1-3 star rated) through census, of which 3 respondents per hotel (CEO, Finance manager and Operations manager) were considered, from the hotels' list provided by the Kenya Tourism Regulatory Authority (TRA). A cross sectional survey was conducted where the self-administered questionnaire was used. Both the reliability and validity tests were done before the data analysis. The collected data was analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics with the help of Excel and SPSS version 25.0. The hypotheses were presented and tested using multiple analysis and accepted at 95 percent confidence level.

Results: The findings revealed that entrepreneurial leadership and hotel innovation are positively and statistically related ($\beta=0.669$, $p=0.000$). This led to the rejection of the null hypothesis that; the effect of entrepreneurial leadership on innovation by 1-3 star rated hotels in Kenya is not statistically significant. The study concludes that hotel leadership plays a critical role in fostering hotel innovation. In this respect, the leadership offers hotel employees opportunity for learning new things; ensures employees attain the necessary skills and tools to perform their jobs; encourages employees to make mistakes and learn from the mistakes; is focused and guided towards the overall organizational goals; encourages teamwork among the employees in order to boost on their brainstorming abilities; empowers the employees through career development and provides protection of the employees' innovations.

Unique contribution to theory, policy and practice: Based on the study findings, the study also recommends leaders be involved in enhancing staff capacity, and this would mean Hand holding of staff to upscale them in knowledge. Likewise, staff members need to be allowed and encouraged into free sharing of knowledge among themselves. The study also recommends interdepartmental transfers meaning better understanding of the business.