

**EFFECT OF EMPLOYEE TRAINING ON SERVICE QUALITY IN PUBLIC  
CATERING INSTITUTIONS IN NAIROBI COUNTY**

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**A THESIS SUBMITTED TO THE KeMU BUSINESS SCHOOL IN PARTIAL  
FULFILMENT FOR THE AWARD OF MASTER OF SCIENCE DEGREE IN  
HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM MANAGEMENT OF KENYA METHODIST  
UNIVERSITY**

**OCTOBER, 2025**

**DECLARATION**

I hereby declare that this thesis is my original work and has not been presented in any university for a degree.

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**MHT-3-2615-2/2023**

We confirm that the work reported in this thesis was carried out by the candidate under our supervision.

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## **DEDICATION**

I would like to express my deepest gratitude to my dear family, whose constant love, encouragement, and sacrifices have been the bedrock of my academic success. To them I devote my study effort. I want to express my profound gratitude to everyone who has played a role in encouraging me to go for the stars, from my teachers to my friends and family. Lastly, to all aspiring researchers and hospitality professionals, may this study serve as a steppingstone towards continuous learning and service improvement.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT**

I would want to express my deepest appreciation to Kenya Methodist University, and more specifically to the School of Business and Economics, Department of Hospitality and Tourism, for granting me permission to do this research. Drs. Peter Muchai and Vivian Cheron, my supervisors, had an enormous impact on the success of my research project by providing me with insightful criticism, helpful suggestions, and constant encouragement. Their guidance and knowledge have been crucial in influencing our study. The academic experience would not have been the same without the helpful feedback and stimulating debates provided by my professors and fellow students.

Thanks to their unending support, tolerance, and selflessness, my loved ones have been able to concentrate on this project, and for that I am eternally thankful. Their confidence in me has been an enormous boost. Furthermore, I would want to convey my appreciation to the individuals from the public catering institutions in Nairobi County who willingly contributed informative comments to our study. Finally, I want to thank God for giving me the insight, courage and persistence to finish this project.

## ABSTRACT

Service quality in Public Catering Institutions is essential for customer satisfaction, operational efficiency, and institutional reputation. However, inconsistent service delivery, inefficiencies, and poor customer satisfaction remain challenges in these units. While structured training programs are recognized as crucial in enhancing employee competencies and service standards, limited research exists on the influence of employees' learning experience, employees' training content, employees' training-job alignment and employees' skill transferability on service quality in Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County. This study sought to assess the effect of employee training on service quality in Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County. The research assessed the effects of four specific variables: employees' learning experience, employees' training content, employees' training-job alignment and employees' skill transferability. Grounded in Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model, Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, Social Learning Theory, and the Knowledge-Based View of the Firm, the study employed a descriptive research design. A stratified random sampling technique was used to select 327 respondents from a target population of 2,211 staff members, including Heads of Catering Units, catering managers, and operational staff. Data were collected through semi-structured questionnaires and interviews. Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and inferential methods such as correlation and regression analysis, while qualitative data were evaluated thematically. Hypothesis test revealed that employees' learning experience quality had significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. Employees' training content relevance had significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. Employees' training-job alignment had significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. Employees' skill transferability level had significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. The study concludes that effective and strategically designed employee training is a key lever for improving service quality in public catering institutions. Merely conducting training is not sufficient; the training must be responsive to job realities, tailored to institutional goals, and structured to ensure practical application and skill adaptability. These insights affirm that service excellence in the public sector depends not just on resource allocation, but on the relevance and execution of employee development initiatives. Going forward, institutions must institutionalize continuous professional development, integrate modern training techniques such as blended and experiential learning, and foster a culture of ongoing skills enhancement. These measures will not only elevate service standards but also strengthen public confidence in government-run food service programs.

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>AI</b>	Artificial Intelligence
<b>ANOVA</b>	Analysis of Variance
<b>CBT</b>	Competency-Based Training
<b>COVID-19</b>	Coronavirus Disease 2019
<b>ELT</b>	Experiential Learning Theory
<b>HOCUs</b>	Head of Catering Units
<b>HR</b>	Human Resources
<b>IPA</b>	Importance–Performance Analysis
<b>KBV</b>	Knowledge-Based View
<b>KNH</b>	Kenyatta National Hospital
<b>KM</b>	Knowledge Management
<b>KRA</b>	Kenya Revenue Authority
<b>M&amp;E</b>	Monitoring and Evaluation
<b>NACOSTI</b>	National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation
<b>OJT</b>	On-the-Job Training
<b>SERVQUAL</b>	Service Quality Model
<b>SIDP</b>	Strategic Integrated Development Planning
<b>SLT</b>	Social Learning Theory
<b>SPSS</b>	Statistical Package for the Social Sciences
<b>TVET</b>	Technical and Vocational Education and Training

# **CHAPTER ONE**

## **INTRODUCTION**

### **1.1 Background to the Study**

#### **1.1.1 Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

Globally, service quality in public catering institutions is vital for customer satisfaction and operational efficiency, impacting areas like food quality, cleanliness, and staff responsiveness (Wang et al., 2023). In public sector food service establishments, service quality is often measured using the SERVQUAL model, which assesses five dimensions: tangibles, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy. Over the years, studies have highlighted the importance of employee training in maintaining high service standards, particularly in public institutions where expectations for consistency and hygiene are paramount (Nama et al., 2022). Governments worldwide have implemented various strategies to enhance service delivery in public catering units, including employee upskilling programs and quality control frameworks. Despite these efforts, disparities in service quality persist, with variations evident between developed and developing nations (Wright, 2022).

In developed countries such as the United States and Japan, public catering institutions invest heavily in workforce training, resulting in higher levels of customer satisfaction (Harrington et al., 2021). A study by the National Restaurant Association (2023) in the United States revealed that 78% of customers prioritize service quality when choosing

dining establishments, emphasizing the need for continuous service improvements. In Japan, public food service institutions have adopted *Kaizen* principles, which promote continuous improvement through training and quality management practices (Fujimoto & Shibata, 2022).

Training in catering is globally acknowledged as a cornerstone of service quality, influencing efficiency, customer satisfaction, and institutional reputation. In the United States, the National Restaurant Association (2023) reported that 78% of customers prioritize service quality when choosing dining establishments, leading to heavy investment in structured staff training programs. Similarly, Japan's adoption of Kaizen principles in catering institutions has promoted continuous improvement, with staff receiving training in hygiene, efficiency, and customer service (Fujimoto & Shibata, 2022). In the United Kingdom, digital transformation in training has accelerated through e-learning platforms and competency-based models, reducing service errors and boosting productivity (Gupta & Sharma, 2023). In other developed countries such as Canada and Australia, longitudinal studies show that onboarding and experiential training significantly improve employee competence, staff retention, and service quality outcomes (Morrison et al., 2021; Smith & Watson, 2022). These examples highlight that globally, structured, innovative training is directly linked to enhanced service quality across catering institutions.

Service quality in public catering institutions has increasingly gained attention in recent years due to its significant impact on customer satisfaction and operational efficiency. Globally, the restaurant and catering industry continues to recover post-COVID-19, with

studies indicating that 80% of consumers prioritize food quality, while 74% emphasize service quality when selecting a dining establishment (Dorn et al., 2023).

In addition to consumer expectations, public catering institutions are increasingly investing in staff training and technology to enhance service delivery. A recent analysis noted that establishments employing staff training programs saw customer satisfaction rates rise by up to 30% (Minh, 2021). Digital platforms, including mobile apps and self-service kiosks, have also gained popularity, as they can significantly improve service speed and efficiency, with 67% of customers appreciating the reduced wait times (Shimmura et al., 2020). The introduction of customer feedback systems, such as online review platforms, has encouraged establishments to take service quality seriously, making transparency a critical factor, with around 82% of consumers stating that restaurant reviews significantly influence their dining decisions (Xia & Ha, 2023). As service quality becomes a competitive differentiator, catering institutions are continually adapting their strategies to meet evolving consumer preferences and maintain relevance in a rapidly changing market.

At the regional level, African catering institutions reflect both opportunities and constraints in training practices. South Africa provides an advanced model, where institutions such as the South African Chefs Association offer accredited training courses that professionalize catering and improve service standards (Moyo & Nyanga, 2021). In contrast, Nigeria faces significant challenges, with 60% of public catering institutions lacking structured training programs, resulting in inconsistent service delivery and low customer satisfaction (Ogunlana & Ojo, 2023). In Ghana, studies in Accra cafeterias

revealed that tangibility and employee competence strongly affect customer satisfaction, yet training frameworks remain inadequate (Mensah & Asare, 2021). Tanzania and Uganda also grapple with outdated curricula and weak training-job alignment, leading to gaps between employee skills and customer expectations (Kilimbe & Mburu, 2021; Muhaire, 2022). Across the region, while digital learning, mentorship, and on-the-job training are gradually being introduced, disparities in access to resources hinder the effectiveness of training programs in public catering institutions.

High-quality service ensures that customers receive safe, nutritious, and timely meals, which is particularly important in settings such as Government offices, hospitals, government run educational institutions, and public institutions where catering services directly impact well-being and daily operations (Kruk et al., 2018). One aspect of service quality, tangibility, was found to significantly correlate with customer satisfaction in cafeterias, according to a study conducted in Ghana's Greater Accra Region (Mensah & Asare, 2021). In contrast, unsatisfactory service quality can cause operational expenses to rise owing to inefficiencies and waste, as well as customer displeasure and potential health hazards. It is crucial for hotels to maintain high levels of service because research in Kenya shows that customer satisfaction is heavily influenced by service quality aspects such as tangibility, reliability, responsiveness, assurance, and empathy (Mutinda, 2019). Meeting public expectations and maintaining effective service delivery requires public catering institutions to prioritize service quality.

In light of the growing importance of service quality within the hospitality industry, this study seeks to assess the effect of employee training on service quality in Public Catering

Institutions in Nairobi County. As customer expectations rise and food safety standards become more stringent, employee competence has emerged as a central factor influencing institutional performance and client satisfaction. The study is anchored on four specific objectives that aim to evaluate the effectiveness of training programs, assess current service quality levels, examine the relationship between training and service delivery, and analyze staff perceptions of the training they receive. These objectives are crucial for understanding how structured and continuous training efforts contribute to improved operational efficiency and enhanced customer experiences in the public catering sector.

To contextualize these objectives, Sections 1.1.2 to 1.1.4 provide a comprehensive overview of the global, regional, and local perspectives on staff training in catering institutions. Section 1.1.2 outlines international and regional trends, highlighting innovations such as digital learning and competency-based training models. Section 1.1.3 explores the direct link between employee training and service quality, referencing key theories like Kaizen and citing comparative studies from Kenya and other African countries. Section 1.1.4 focuses on emerging trends in employee training, including mentorship programs, certification standards, and environmentally focused training content. Together, these sections build a robust foundation for the study by illustrating how evolving training practices are shaping service delivery outcomes and why a focused inquiry into Nairobi County's public catering institutions is both timely and necessary.

### **1.1.2 Staff Training in Public Catering Institutions**

Globally, staff training in catering establishments has become increasingly critical as the industry adapts to evolving food safety standards and rising customer expectations. Recent trends show that many establishments are now integrating digital technologies into their training programs such as e-learning modules, virtual simulations, and mobile training applications to enhance employee skills and improve service delivery (Gupta & Sharma, 2023). In developed regions like North America and Europe, approximately 70% of catering businesses have adopted continuous professional development programs that blend on-the-job training with digital learning, leading to an estimated 25–30% boost in service efficiency (Patterson, 2021). Studies indicate that effective staff training correlates with reductions in service errors by up to 35%, which directly impacts customer satisfaction and operational performance (Morey et al., 2002). Moreover, a growing shift toward competency-based training models ensures that learning outcomes are systematically measured against industry benchmarks. This global focus on structured and innovative training reflects an industry-wide commitment to maintaining competitive advantage and delivering high-quality service in a rapidly changing market.

Regionally, the catering industry in Africa faces both similar opportunities and unique challenges in staff training. In Kenya, for example, while modern training methodologies are gradually being adopted, only about 45% of catering establishments currently provide formal training programs for their staff, highlighting a significant gap compared to global standards (Kenya Institute of Management [KIM], 2023). Limited access to advanced training technologies and budget constraints further restricts the implementation of

comprehensive employee development initiatives in the region (Mutua & Ndungu, 2023). Nevertheless, initiatives by the Kenyan government and industry bodies are beginning to promote digital learning and on-the-job training, with some institutions reporting improvements in service quality by as much as 20% after introducing structured training programs (Kaugi et al., 2023). Regional studies also reveal that effective staff training not only enhances food safety compliance but also boosts customer satisfaction factors that are crucial in an economy where the hospitality sector significantly contributes to overall growth (Malavi et al., 2021). Thus, while Kenya and the broader East African region may currently lag certain global benchmarks, targeted interventions and increased investment in staff training are paving the way for improved operational efficiency and service excellence in catering establishments.

At the global level, the quality of employees' learning experiences has been strongly linked to service performance. In countries such as the United States, Japan, and the United Kingdom, structured training programs that engage employees through interactive methods, simulations, and continuous feedback have been shown to significantly improve customer satisfaction and institutional reputation (Patterson, 2021; Morey et al., 2022). By contrast, institutions where training experiences are inadequate often face service inconsistency, higher error rates, and lower employee morale. These trends demonstrate that learning experiences must be carefully designed to ensure knowledge retention and application in food service operations.

Equally important is the relevance of training content, which determines whether acquired knowledge addresses real workplace demands. Globally, nations such as Australia and

Canada have emphasized competency-based curricula that prepare catering employees for dynamic customer needs, thereby raising overall service standards (Morrison et al., 2021; Smith & Watson, 2022). However, in many developing countries, training content remains outdated, generic, or disconnected from current service environments. In Africa, studies in Ghana and Nigeria have shown that catering curricula often fail to match industry expectations, leading to gaps between training and customer service outcomes (Mensah & Asare, 2021; Ogunlana & Ojo, 2023). This highlights the centrality of relevant and updated training content for achieving service quality.

Another critical factor is training-job alignment, which refers to how well training equips employees for the actual tasks they perform. Globally, institutions that provide role-specific training have consistently reported better performance and customer satisfaction (Gupta & Sharma, 2023). In contrast, when training is misaligned with job roles, employees struggle to apply knowledge, leading to inefficiencies and inconsistent service. Across East Africa, misalignment remains a challenge, with employees often trained in broad hospitality modules but required to perform highly specialized catering tasks in practice (Kilimbe & Mburu, 2021). This mismatch undermines the potential benefits of training in enhancing service delivery.

Finally, employees' skill transferability is increasingly recognized as essential in sustaining service quality across different service contexts. Drawing from Social Learning Theory, staff who can observe, adapt, and apply acquired competencies in varied situations are more flexible and responsive to institutional needs (Rumjaun & Narod, 2025; Schunk, 2012). Globally, transferable skills such as customer care, hygiene, and

efficiency contribute to error reduction and improved service outcomes. Yet studies in Uganda and Tanzania reveal that employees often struggle to apply transferable skills due to limited managerial support and resource constraints (Muhairi, 2022). In Kenya, Wambugu (2020) similarly observed that although employees acquired transferable skills, contextual differences in catering units limited their successful application, weakening the impact on service quality.

### **1.1.3 Employee Training and Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

Employee training is a crucial determinant of service quality in Public Catering Institutions, as it directly influences efficiency, customer satisfaction, and institutional performance (Ji & Ko, 2023). Well-structured training programs equip employees with the necessary skills to enhance food preparation standards, improve customer service, and adhere to health and safety regulations. Studies indicate that service-oriented businesses with structured training programs record higher customer satisfaction scores and increased profitability. Over the years, scholars have emphasized the role of employee training in enhancing service quality, as well-trained employees exhibit improved efficiency, problem-solving skills, and customer engagement (Chikazhe & Nyakunuwa, 2022).

In the United Kingdom, catering institutions invest heavily in employee training to enhance service standards (Harrington et al., 2021). Digital transformation and automation in hospitality training have further revolutionized service delivery, with institutions adopting e-learning platforms for staff training (Gupta & Sharma, 2023). The *Kaizen*, a Japanese management philosophy meaning “continuous improvement,” focuses on

incremental changes to enhance efficiency, quality, and productivity in organizations. Initially developed in the manufacturing sector, particularly within Toyota's production system, *Kaizen* has been widely adopted across various industries, including hospitality and public catering (Morell-Santandreu et al., 2020). The principles of standardization, teamwork, waste elimination, and employee involvement are key to ensuring sustainable service improvements (Fujimoto & Shibata, 2022). Public catering institutions that implement *Kaizen* emphasize continuous staff training, process optimization, and customer feedback integration to enhance service quality.

Across Africa, service quality in Public Catering Institutions varies due to disparities in training programs and resource allocation. South Africa, for instance, has integrated hospitality training into its formal education system, with institutions such as the South African Chefs Association offering specialized courses to improve service quality (Moyo & Nyanga, 2021). However, in other African nations, challenges such as inadequate training facilities, outdated curricula, and limited government support hinder service quality improvement (Nyamtema et al., 2022). A study in Nigeria revealed that 60% of Public Catering Institutions lack structured employee training programs, resulting in inconsistent service delivery and customer dissatisfaction (Ogunlana & Ojo, 2023). These disparities highlight the need for standardized training models to elevate service quality across African hospitality industries.

A study in Nigeria found that 60% of public catering institutions lack structured employee training programs, leading to inconsistent service delivery and widespread customer dissatisfaction (Ogunlana & Ojo, 2023). Similarly, in Kenya, the KIM (2023) reported

that only 45% of catering institutions provide formal training for their staff, affecting service efficiency and customer experiences. These statistics highlight the pressing need to examine the effectiveness of employee training programs in government-run catering institutions to identify solutions for improving service quality and customer satisfaction.

In Kenya, the hospitality industry is a significant contributor to the economy, generating revenue through domestic and international tourism. However, service quality in Public Catering Institutions remains inconsistent, yet these organizations hire trained employees. The KIM (2023) reported that only 45% of catering institutions provide formal training for their staff, impacting service efficiency and customer satisfaction. Moreover, studies indicate that institutions offering continuous professional development programs record higher customer retention rates and positive reviews (Mutua & Ndungu, 2023). The Kenyan government, through the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife, has initiated skill enhancement programs to boost service quality in Public Catering Institutions (Government of Kenya [GOK], 2023).

In Public Catering Institutions, training initiatives typically include on-the-job training, mentorship programs, professional development workshops, and certification courses aimed at improving employee competencies. However, despite the recognized importance of structured training, many Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County face challenges such as inconsistent training policies, resource constraints, and outdated training curricula, which negatively impact service delivery. Addressing these gaps through standardized training frameworks, competency-based programs, and increased investment in staff

development can significantly enhance service quality, ensuring that Public Catering Institutions meet the expectations of their diverse clientele.

#### **1.1.4 Emerging Trends in Employee Training for Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

Employee training in public catering institutions is evolving to address the growing demands for efficiency, customer satisfaction, and compliance with food safety standards. One of the most notable trends is the adoption of digital learning platforms, which offer employees access to online courses on hygiene, customer service, and modern culinary techniques (Wang et al., 2023). Governments and training institutions are increasingly integrating blended learning models, combining in-person practical sessions with virtual modules to enhance accessibility and flexibility in training (Kruk et al., 2018). Additionally, competency-based training has gained traction, focusing on measurable skills rather than theoretical knowledge, ensuring that employees can immediately apply what they learn in real-life catering environments (Ji & Ko, 2023). Another key trend is the emphasis on soft skills development, where training programs incorporate communication, problem-solving, and teamwork exercises to improve service delivery. These advancements highlight a shift towards employee-centered, technology-driven, and skills-based training approaches aimed at enhancing service quality in public sector catering units.

Moreover, on-the-job coaching and mentorship programs are becoming essential components of employee training in government catering units. Unlike traditional

classroom-based learning, mentorship programs pair experienced staff with new employees, ensuring knowledge transfer and continuous professional growth (Wachira & Musyoka, 2023). Governments are also embracing certification and accreditation programs, requiring catering employees to complete industry-recognized food handling and customer service training. Additionally, behavioral training techniques, such as role-playing and simulations, are being used to reinforce customer service standards and responsiveness in high-pressure environments (Kamau & Wainaina, 2022). Another growing trend is the integration of sustainability and environmental awareness training, educating employees on waste reduction, eco-friendly packaging, and energy-efficient kitchen practices (Ali et al., 2021). These trends underscore the shift towards practical, adaptive, and policy-driven training approaches aimed at improving service quality in government-run catering institutions.

Another important development is data-driven training evaluation, which involves organizations using analytics to determine how effective training was and then utilize that information to make decisions. Management can find areas where employees are lacking in skills and adjust training programs appropriately by monitoring performance indicators including customer happiness, service speed, hygiene audit results, and staff turnover rates (Chen et al., 2022). Training investments in public catering institutions can be directly tied to increases in service quality through this evidence-based approach, which promotes increased accountability and continual learning. Mobile learning, often known as m-learning, is on the rise; it encourages employees to learn on their own time by making

training materials available on tablets and smartphones during slow periods or breaks (Hill, 2024).

Public and private training providers are working together more closely to provide specialized and current training modules; this is another big change. Partnerships like these introduce public catering employees to cutting-edge kitchen technology and worldwide best practices by bringing in industry experts and new ideas. As an example, public sector training programs that are jointly developed by culinary schools, hospitality academies, and food safety certification agencies have been developed (Kinyua & Thebe, 2023). Training programs are also trying to be more welcoming to all employees by include disability and gender-sensitive strategies in their development and delivery. With an inclusive perspective, we can grow capacity more equitably and empower our team to serve a diverse range of clients with high-quality culinary services.

In Kenya, catering institutions face similar challenges despite the country's hospitality sector being a major contributor to economic growth. Only 45% of catering institutions provide formal training for staff, a figure below the levels observed in South Africa and significantly lower than global standards (KIM, 2023). Research in Nairobi hotels revealed that although training improved performance, 22% of customers were dissatisfied with service quality, suggesting gaps in content relevance and skill application (Wang'ombe, 2014). Further, studies in Nakuru County indicated that despite multiple training approaches, persistent challenges in service delivery affected institutional performance (Gitongu, 2021). Government initiatives such as skill enhancement programs under the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife aim to improve staff competence, yet many

public catering institutions continue to struggle with outdated curricula, inconsistent training policies, and poor job alignment (GOK, 2023 ; Mutua & Ndungu, 2023; ).

### **1.1.5 Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County**

Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County play a critical role in providing affordable and accessible meal services to employees in government offices, students in public institutions, and vulnerable populations under government-sponsored feeding programs (Mokua, 2020). These units operate within ministries, legislature, Judiciary, hospitals, universities, and county government offices, offering essential food services that enhance productivity, support public welfare, and ensure the well-being of government employees and service users. Examples include the Catering Unit at the National Treasury, the parliamentary catering Unit, the Judiciary Catering Unit at Milimani Law Courts, the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) Headquarters Catering Unit, Kenyatta National Hospital Catering Services.

Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County play a critical role in providing affordable and accessible meal services to employees in government offices, students in public institutions, and vulnerable populations under government-sponsored feeding programs (Mokua, 2020). These units, which include the Catering Unit at the National Treasury, the Parliamentary Catering Unit, the Judiciary Catering Unit at Milimani Law Courts, the Kenya Revenue Authority (KRA) Headquarters Catering Unit, and Kenyatta National Hospital Catering Services, enhance productivity, support public welfare, and ensure the well-being of government employees and service users.

Nevertheless, studies reveal persistent challenges in training effectiveness; Werimo and Njoroge (2023) found that employee training positively influenced service delivery in county-level catering programs but did not directly address food service operations, while Njenga (2023) reported that inconsistent training policies and lack of refresher courses in public secondary school catering services negatively affected meal quality and efficiency. These findings demonstrate that even within public institutions, training frameworks remain poorly structured, raising concerns about their impact on service quality. This ambiguity underscores the need for empirical evidence on the relationship between employee training and catering service quality in public sector settings, as existing research largely focuses on private institutions such as hotels. Therefore, examining Nairobi County's public catering units is critical to bridging this knowledge gap and informing workforce development policies in the public service.

Similarly, research on three-star hotels in Nakuru County revealed that despite the implementation of various training methods, challenges in service delivery persisted, affecting overall organizational performance (Gitongu, 2021). These findings suggest that while training is conducted, its effectiveness in enhancing service quality remains questionable. The ambiguity surrounding the impact of employee training on service quality in Kenya's public catering units necessitates a closer examination of existing training programs and their alignment with service delivery objectives.

While employee training is traditionally viewed as a means to enhance service delivery, its direct impact on the quality of catering services in Kenyan public hospitals remains uncertain. A study focusing on Nairobi City County found that training positively

influences service delivery; however, the specific effects on catering services were not delineated (Werimo & Njoroge, 2023). This ambiguity raises questions about the effectiveness of current training programs in addressing the unique challenges faced by catering units. Moreover, the lack of targeted training for catering staff may result in inadequate food preparation and service practices. Without empirical evidence linking employee training to improved catering service quality, it is challenging to justify investments in such programs. Therefore, there is a critical need for research to assess how employee training impacts the quality of catering services in government-run institutions in Kenya.

## **1.2 Statement of the Problem**

Ideally, employee training in public catering institutions should be structured, relevant, and consistently supported to ensure high service quality, customer satisfaction, and hygiene compliance (Gupta & Sharma, 2023; Morey et al., 2022). Globally, structured training models such as competency-based and digital learning have enhanced service quality in public and private food service sectors, improving efficiency by up to 30% (Patterson, 2021). Regionally, however, African public catering institutions face significant challenges, including outdated training content, inadequate training infrastructure, and limited staff development support, contributing to inconsistent service delivery (Moyo & Nyanga, 2021; Ogunlana & Ojo, 2023). In Kenya, only 45% of catering institutions provide formal training programs (KIM, 2023), with widespread gaps in aligning training with job roles, resulting in poor customer experiences and food service inefficiencies (Mutua & Ndungu, 2023).

Despite these concerns, few empirical studies have explored the link between the quality of employee training especially for staff trained prior to employment and service quality in Kenya's public catering institutions. Without this study, institutions may continue investing in generic training approaches that fail to improve service delivery, leading to sustained inefficiencies, poor food safety compliance, and diminished public trust in government-run services. To fill this gap, the present study seeks to investigate the effect of employees' learning experience quality, training content relevance, training-job alignment, and skill transferability on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County, Kenya.

### **1.3 Objectives**

#### **1.3.1 General Objective**

The general objective of the study was to assess the effect of employee training on service quality in Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County.

#### **1.3.2 Specific Objectives**

The following are the specific objectives of the study

- i. To examine the effect of employees' learning experience quality on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.
- ii. To assess the effect of employees' training content relevance on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.

- iii. To establish the effect of employees' training-job alignment on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.
- iv. To determine the effect of employees' skill transferability level on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.

#### **1.4 Research Hypotheses**

The study sought to test the following research hypotheses

**H<sub>01</sub>:** Employees' learning experience quality has no significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.

**H<sub>02</sub>:** Employees' training content relevance has no significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.

**H<sub>03</sub>:** Employees' training-job alignment has no significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.

**H<sub>04</sub>:** Employees' skill transferability level has no significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.

#### **1.5 Significance of the Study**

The study is significant as it will provide empirical evidence on how effective employee training programs enhance service quality in public catering institutions. By evaluating the effectiveness of these training programs, the research will offer insights into the best practices that can lead to improved food safety, operational efficiency, and customer satisfaction. This is particularly important in the public sector where bureaucratic

constraints and resource limitations often hinder service delivery. The findings will guide policymakers and institution managers in refining training frameworks, ensuring that employees are well-equipped to meet high service standards. Such insights can drive improvements that reduce service errors and enhance overall performance in these institutions (Mutua & Ndungu, 2023).

Assessing the current level of service quality in public catering institutions is crucial for establishing a performance baseline that can inform future interventions. This study will document the existing service quality dimensions and identify areas where public catering units fall short of desired standards. By doing so, it provides a clear benchmark against which the impact of training interventions can be measured over time. This baseline assessment is vital for tailoring improvements that are both context-specific and aligned with global service quality benchmarks. Ultimately, the findings will support the development of strategic initiatives to raise service quality standards across public catering establishments (KIM, 2023).

Determining the relationship between employee training programs and service quality is central to understanding how training investments translate into improved service outcomes. This research will analyze whether enhancements in training directly correlate with measurable improvements in service quality. Such a relationship, once established, can justify the allocation of resources toward continuous professional development and the adoption of innovative training techniques. The study's insights could encourage the adoption of competency-based training models and evidence-based interventions that

drive sustainable service improvements. By elucidating this relationship, the study will contribute to the academic literature on training effectiveness in the hospitality sector.

Analyzing employee perceptions towards training programs is critical for ensuring that the design and delivery of training initiatives meet the actual needs of catering staff. This component of the study will capture insights from employees on the relevance, practicality, and effectiveness of existing training frameworks. Understanding these perceptions will enable managers to adjust training approaches, thereby enhancing employee engagement, job satisfaction, and ultimately service quality. By aligning training programs with employee expectations and feedback, public catering institutions can achieve higher performance and better customer satisfaction. These findings will also serve as a foundation for developing tailored training models that address unique challenges in the public catering sector.

### **1.6 Scope of the Study**

This study was confined to examining the effect of employee training variables, namely employees' learning experience quality, training content relevance, training-job alignment, and skill transferability, on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. In alignment with the specific objectives, the research assessed the current service quality levels, determine the relationship between training initiatives and service outcomes and analyze employee perceptions toward these training programs. The research was geographically limited to Public Catering Institutions operating in Nairobi County, Kenya. These institutions located in government offices, hospitals, universities,

and other public establishments play a critical role in delivering essential food services to diverse client groups. By concentrating on this specific region, the study captured the unique operational challenges and training dynamics inherent in the public sector.

Nairobi County, Kenya is a key hub for public catering institutions, including government-funded cafeterias, hospital catering services. As the capital city and economic center of Kenya, Nairobi provided a diverse and dynamic setting for assessing the impact of employee training on service quality in public catering institutions. Institutions such as Annex Catering Unit, KRA Catering Unit, Judiciary Catering Unit, Ministry of Health Catering Unit, Parliament Catering Unit, and Kenya Police Service Catering Unit were included. Nairobi's high concentration of public catering establishments, coupled with the presence of key policy stakeholders, ensured access to rich data sources and diverse insights on employee training and service quality. This made it an ideal study location for evaluating how structured training programs contributed to efficiency, customer satisfaction and institutional performance in public catering institutions.

Methodologically, the study adopted a descriptive research design that integrated quantitative approaches. Data was collected using structured questionnaires and in-depth interviews with employees, manager, and training coordinators across selected Public Catering Institutions. The findings of this study were expected to be generalizable to Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County and offered insights applicable to similar institutions in other regions of Kenya. However, the scope deliberately excluded private or informal catering establishments, which operated under different training structures and operational models. The study was conducted from May 2025 to June 2025.

## **1.7 Limitations of the Study**

One of the key limitations of this study was the potential reluctance of employees and management in Public Catering Institutions to provide detailed information about their training programs and service quality. Some respondents feared that sharing critical information could negatively impact their institutions or job security. To mitigate this challenge, the researcher assured participants of strict confidentiality and anonymity in handling their responses. Additionally, the study emphasized that the research was purely academic and did not aim to audit or criticize their institutions but rather to improve service quality in the sector.

Another limitation was the difficulty in obtaining a fully representative sample due to time and resource constraints. Given the wide range of Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County, ensuring that all categories were adequately represented proved challenging. To address this, the researcher employed a stratified sampling technique to ensure that institutions from different public sectors were proportionally included. This approach enhanced the reliability and generalizability of the study findings.

Lastly, the study faced challenges related to the accuracy and consistency of self-reported data, as respondents sometimes provided socially desirable answers rather than their actual experiences. To reduce this limitation, the researcher triangulated data collection methods by combining questionnaires with interviews and, where possible, observational techniques. This allowed for cross-validation of information, ensuring a more accurate representation of training practices and their impact on service quality.

## 1.8 Operational Definition of Terms

**Learning Experience Quality:** refers to how effectively training is delivered and received, including the level of engagement, clarity of instruction, and conduciveness of the learning environment, which together shape employees' ability to absorb and apply new knowledge (Mutua & Ndungu, 2023).

**Skill Transferability:** This is the extent to which employees can apply knowledge and skills acquired from training across different tasks, roles, or service contexts, ensuring flexibility and adaptability in catering operations (Werimo & Njoroge, 2023).

**Training Content:** This captures how well the training materials, curriculum, and learning activities align with employees' actual job requirements, industry standards, and customer service expectations (Gupta & Sharma, 2023).

**Training-Job Alignment:** This denotes the degree to which training programs are directly connected to the practical duties employees perform in their catering roles,

ensuring that acquired skills match workplace demands (Morey et al., 2022).

**Public Catering Institutions:** Government-affiliated establishments that provide food services to the public, including entities such as university dining facilities, school feeding programs, and canteens in public offices (Ogunlana & Ojo, 2023).

**Service Quality:** The measure of how well the service delivered by Public Catering Institutions meets or exceeds customer expectations, encompassing factors like reliability, responsiveness, and overall customer satisfaction (Ji & Ko, 2023).

## **CHAPTER TWO**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **2.1 Introduction**

This chapter presented a comprehensive review of relevant literature on the effect of employee training on service quality in public catering institutions. It begins with the theoretical framework, discussing Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model, Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory, Social Learning Theory and the Knowledge-Based View of the Firm, which support the study. The empirical review examined previous studies related to training program effectiveness, skill development, on-the-job training, and employee knowledge enhancement in relation to service quality. Additionally, the chapter highlighted the research gaps identified in existing literature, emphasizing the need for further study in Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County. The final section presented the conceptual framework, illustrating the relationships between the study variables and guiding the research.

#### **2.2 Theoretical Orientation**

##### **2.2.1 Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model**

Donald Kirkpatrick first introduced the Four-Level Training Evaluation Model in 1959 and later revised it with James Kirkpatrick (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006). The model identifies four stages of training evaluation: reaction, learning, behavior, and results. It

has been widely adopted in both private and public sector organizations as a framework for determining the effectiveness of training initiatives. The underlying assumption is that effective training should not only deliver knowledge but also change employee behavior and produce measurable organizational results.

Several researchers have applied this model in service-oriented contexts. Smidt et al. (2009) employed it in healthcare training programs, showing that training improved knowledge retention and ultimately patient service outcomes. In hospitality, Chang (2010) demonstrated that reaction and learning translated into improved service behavior and customer satisfaction. A study in Kenya by Kyalo (2023) applied Kirkpatrick's model to short-course training in hospitality, revealing improved technical knowledge but inconsistencies in behavior change across institutions. These studies indicate that the model is particularly effective in evaluating multi-dimensional training impacts, which makes it relevant for catering institutions.

This theory is directly linked to Objective One: to examine the effect of employees' learning experience quality on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. Its strength lies in connecting learning experiences to measurable service outcomes, making it suitable for evaluating how training shapes service quality. However, criticisms include its resource-intensive nature and the difficulty of isolating training effects from external variables in complex environments like public catering (Salas et al., 2012). Despite these limitations, the model provides a structured framework for assessing whether employees' learning experiences translate into improved service delivery.

### **2.2.2 Kolb's Experiential Learning Theory (ELT)**

David Kolb developed Experiential Learning Theory (ELT) in 1984, proposing that learning occurs through a cyclical process of concrete experience, reflective observation, abstract conceptualization, and active experimentation. The theory emphasizes learning by doing and reflection, making it particularly relevant to practical industries such as hospitality and catering (Kolb, 1984; Peterson, 2017). Kolb argue that experiential learning fosters deeper understanding and long-term retention compared to traditional classroom methods.

Empirical evidence supports its relevance to service industries. Beard and Wilson (2018) highlighted how experiential learning improves adaptability in customer service contexts. In Australia, Morrison et al. (2021) demonstrated that experiential training for catering staff enhanced competence and confidence, leading to higher customer satisfaction. Similarly, in Kenya, Okinyi and Lubiri (2021) showed that hands-on training in catering institutions resulted in better skill application compared to theoretical approaches. These studies illustrate how ELT enhances job alignment and practical performance.

This theory underpins Objective Two (to assess the effect of employees' training content relevance on service quality) and Objective Three (to establish the effect of employees' training-job alignment on service quality). Its strength lies in ensuring that training is not

only relevant but also directly aligned with employees' work environments. However, critics argue that ELT may underplay the role of structured learning and compliance-focused training, which are crucial in regulated sectors like food safety (Alkhaldi et al., 2025). Despite these concerns, ELT remains highly applicable as it promotes hands-on, reflective, and job-relevant training approaches essential in public catering institutions.

### **2.2.3 Social Learning Theory (SLT)**

Albert Bandura first proposed Social Learning Theory in 1977, emphasizing that people learn by observing, imitating, and modeling behaviors within social contexts (Rumjaun & Narod, 2025). SLT highlights the importance of role models, mentorship, and peer interaction in shaping employee behavior, making it especially relevant in workplace learning. Bandura later expanded the theory to show that social reinforcement and self-efficacy are key drivers of learning and performance.

Several studies have applied SLT to service delivery contexts. Schunk (2012) found that mentorship and modeling improved employee confidence and job performance in educational institutions. In South Africa, Moyo and Khamis (2023) demonstrated that mentorship programs in catering establishments enhanced job satisfaction and service skills. In Kenya, Musyoka and Makokha (2023) observed that mentorship and peer learning in school catering services improved employees' ability to apply skills in diverse contexts. These findings affirm the theory's value in explaining skill transfer in resource-constrained service environments.

SLT directly informs Objective Four: to determine the effect of employees' skill transferability level on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. It is particularly relevant because employees often rely on peer observation and role modeling to adapt and apply skills across varied service contexts. The strength of SLT is its ability to explain how employees internalize and transfer skills even when formal training is limited. However, critics argue that it underestimates individual differences in learning styles and may fail when role models exhibit poor practices (Eraut, 2004). Despite these limitations, SLT provides a strong foundation for analyzing how employees transfer skills from training and peer interactions into effective service delivery in public catering institutions.

#### **2.2.4 Knowledge-Based View (KBV) of the Firm**

The Knowledge-Based View (KBV) was advanced by Grant in 1996, positioning knowledge as the most strategic resource for organizational competitiveness. Knowledge-Based View (KBV), is not technically a “theory” but rather an extension of the Resource-Based View (RBV) developed by Grant (1996) and Spender (1996). Unlike the broader Resource-Based View, KBV specifically emphasizes the acquisition, sharing, and application of knowledge within organizations. Spender (1996) later argued that tacit and context-specific knowledge are critical drivers of sustained performance, particularly in service industries where experience and expertise shape outcomes.

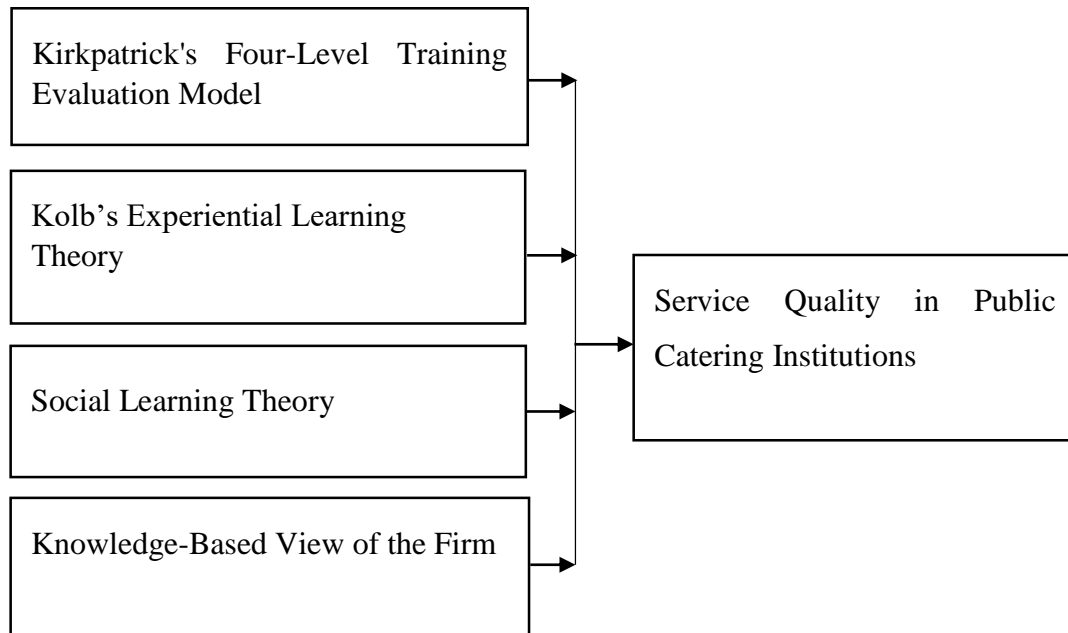
Empirical studies have widely applied KBV to knowledge-intensive sectors. Alharbi and Aloud (2024) found that effective knowledge management in hospitality improved

innovation and service delivery. In Uganda, Najjinda et al., (2023) showed that knowledge-sharing practices in public dining facilities enhanced service excellence. In Kenya, Kibera and Kamau (2023) reported that public catering institutions that institutionalized knowledge-sharing frameworks achieved greater service consistency. These findings confirm that knowledge capture and transfer directly influence service quality outcomes.

This theory is linked to Objective Three (training-job alignment) and Objective Four (skill transferability). It is highly relevant because public catering institutions require consistent documentation, sharing, and application of operational knowledge to ensure service quality despite high staff turnover. The theory's strength is its focus on institutionalizing knowledge beyond individual employees, which ensures continuity. However, KBV is criticized for underestimating external influences such as cultural dynamics, policy changes, or resource limitations, which often shape training effectiveness in public institutions (Peterson, 2017). Despite these criticisms, KBV offers a valuable framework for understanding how structured training and knowledge-sharing can support service quality in Nairobi County's public catering institutions.

**Figure 2.1**

*Theoretical Framework*



In this study, the anchor theory is Kirkpatrick's Four-Level Training Evaluation Model (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006), as it provides the main framework for assessing how employee training—through learning experience, content, job alignment, and skill transferability—translates into observable outcomes in service delivery. The theory systematically connects training inputs to behavioral change and organizational results, thereby anchoring the analysis of training variables. To support the dependent variable, service quality, the study draws on the Knowledge-Based View (Grant, 1996), which emphasizes knowledge as a critical resource in achieving consistent, high-quality performance. KBV underpins the argument that service quality in public catering institutions is sustained when training not only equips employees with knowledge but also ensures its application, sharing, and transfer across the organization.

## **2.3 Empirical Review**

### **2.3.1 Employees' Learning Experience Quality and Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

Shimmura et al. (2020) conducted a study in the United States focusing on the introduction of service robots in restaurant settings and how this technological intervention impacted labor productivity and customer satisfaction. The controlled environment allowed researchers to implement service robots and assess their influence through observational analyses and customer feedback surveys. The findings revealed significant improvements in labor productivity and perceived service quality after the introduction of the robots. However, the researchers noted that the study emphasized technological solutions, creating a gap regarding the human-centered training programs' direct impact on service outcomes in public catering institutions. This gap indicates the necessity for research exploring how traditional employee training affects service quality within the sector, especially in a context like Kenya, where service delivery still heavily relies on human interaction.

Christ-Brendemühl (2022) investigated how mobile training applications enhance employee learning experiences in restaurant chains across the United States. A quantitative approach using surveys allowed researchers to assess the effectiveness of these applications in providing on-the-job training. Findings indicated a notable increase in skill acquisition and customer service ratings where mobile applications were employed. Nevertheless, the research was limited by its focus on technology use,

suggesting a need to explore more traditional training methods in a Kenyan context where technology use may not be as prevalent in public catering settings.

A study conducted by Sanz-García et al. (2024) in the UK explored the influence of emotional intelligence training on service quality in cafes. Employing a quasi-experimental design, the researchers provided training to one group while another served as a control group. The findings indicated that emotional intelligence training led to improved interactions with customers and enhanced overall service quality. Yet, the findings may not extend to public catering institutions, which tend to have different operational challenges. Thus, further research in Kenya could address how emotional intelligence could be integrated into training frameworks within public culinary services.

Morrison et al. (2021) studied the effects of experiential learning on employees' service delivery in restaurants in Australia. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, the researchers conducted surveys and interviews with restaurant staff and managers across various locations. Their findings showed that experiential learning significantly enhances employees' confidence and competence in service delivery, leading to improved customer satisfaction. The study emphasizes the need for organizations to invest in experiential training methodologies to maximize service quality outcomes. However, the focus on an individual country suggests a gap in comparative studies across different cultural settings, particularly in areas like Kenya where traditional training methods may dominate public catering institutions.

Smith and Watson (2022) examined the impact of onboarding training on service quality in upscale restaurants in Canada. Conducted using a longitudinal design, data was collected via interviews with new employees and customer feedback over six months. Their findings demonstrated that an effective onboarding process contributed to higher service quality ratings and staff retention rates. Despite strong conclusions, the study didn't address varying service demands across different types of restaurants, highlighting the need for research that considers diverse public catering institutions, particularly in the Kenyan context.

In Brazil, Santos et al. (2022) explored the relationship between employee learning experiences and service quality in fast-food chains. The study employed a cross-sectional design, with structured questionnaires distributed to over 300 employees from multiple chains. Results indicated that employees who reported positive learning experiences showed significantly higher customer satisfaction ratings and retention rates. This corroborates the notion that enhanced employee training translates into better service performance. However, like other studies, it lacked generalized findings applicable to diverse public catering institutions, warranting similar research in Kenya to understand local dynamics better.

In a study from India, Sharma et al. (2022) examined the link between customer feedback training and service performance in hospitality. Leveraging quantitative surveys, data was gathered from employees at various hotels and restaurants. The study found that customer-focused training significantly led to improved service quality perceptions from clients. However, there was no comparison with other training models, leading to a gap for

research to investigate the efficacy of different training approaches in Kenyan public institutions.

In a South African context, Moyo and Khamis (2023) analyzed the role of mentorship in enhancing service delivery in public catering establishments. Utilizing a qualitative study design, they conducted focus group discussions with staff and management across various institutions. The results revealed that mentorship significantly improved employees' service skills and job satisfaction. However, the study did not explore how cultural factors might influence mentorship effectiveness, suggesting a research gap that local studies could fill to ensure relevance in Kenyan public catering agencies.

In Uganda, Cassius (2023) investigated the speed of issue resolution in public cafeterias focusing on customer complaints and employee response to concerns. Employing a mixed-methods approach, qualitative interviews were combined with quantitative performance data to assess how training programs influenced service quality. Findings indicated a 35% reduction in complaint resolution times among employees who underwent problem-solving training. Nonetheless, the study did not delve into the long-term sustainability of these improvements, presenting an avenue for future research to understand how training solutions can be effectively maintained over time in Kenyan public catering establishments. This exploration is critical, given that consistent service quality is paramount for customer satisfaction and retention.

Taken together, the reviewed studies point to a general consensus that the way employees experience learning has a direct bearing on the quality of service they deliver. Whether

the focus is on technology-driven approaches such as mobile learning, experiential methods like role-play and simulations, or softer aspects such as emotional intelligence, the underlying message is that meaningful learning experiences enhance confidence, competence, and customer interactions. Yet, the studies do not always speak with one voice. While some emphasize the efficiency gains of digital platforms, others privilege the human-centred dimensions of mentorship and emotional intelligence training, suggesting that the most effective approach may be a blend rather than a single model. Importantly, most of this evidence comes from developed countries where resources and technology are readily available. In Kenya, particularly within public catering institutions, the infrastructure and cultural dynamics are very different, leaving a gap in knowledge on how best to craft learning experiences that are both impactful and contextually realistic.

### **2.3.2 Employees' Training Content Relevance and Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

Gupta and Sharma (2023) explored employee perceptions regarding the relevance and accessibility of continuous professional development programs in the European hospitality industry. Conducted across multiple countries, the quantitative study surveyed a large sample of hospitality workers using standardized questionnaires. Findings showed that while employees appreciated the flexibility offered by digital learning platforms, many felt the training content was not always tailored to specific operational needs. This disconnect suggests a need for further examination of how training content in Kenya's public catering institutions could be designed to meet the unique challenges faced by

employees. Addressing these content relevance issues is crucial for enhancing service delivery standards in such public sector settings.

Chen et al. (2022) conducted a study in Taiwan assessing the relevance of training content on service quality in public dining facilities. Using a mixed-methods approach, they surveyed 250 employees and conducted focus groups to gather qualitative insights. The findings revealed that while employees valued the training they received, many expressed that the content was outdated and not aligned with current customer expectations. This suggests a crucial gap in training relevance and highlights the need for research in Kenya to develop content that meets the evolving landscape of public catering needs effectively.

In China, Ji and Ko (2023) examined the relationship between professional competence and training among university canteen staff. The study employed a survey questionnaire based on eight dimensions, encompassing 39 questions, to evaluate staff performance levels and the adequacy of training provided. Using importance–performance analysis (IPA), the researchers identified deficiencies in areas such as consumer focus, employee hygiene knowledge, and food quality, indicating insufficient training and subpar professional competence. The findings underscored the necessity for targeted training programs to enhance service quality in university canteens. While the study provided valuable insights, its scope was limited to university settings, highlighting the need for similar research in diverse Public Catering Institutions to generalize the results. This gap is particularly relevant in regions like Kenya, where public catering services play a crucial role in community nutrition and health.

On the African continent, Lassoued et al. (2022) studied training content relevance in South African hotels in relation to service quality. Qualitative interviews with hotel managers and employees revealed a strong disparity between perceived importance and actual content provided during training sessions. Employees indicated that skills pertinent to newer service delivery models were often missing. While illuminating, the study's narrow focus on the hotel sector creates a gap in understanding what is relevant across broader public catering institutions, including those in Kenya, where service delivery dynamics may be different.

Power and Oboreh (2023) conducted a study in Nigeria focusing on the effectiveness of training programs in the catering industry. Using a mixed-methods approach, data was collected from 200 employees through questionnaires and focus groups. Participants noted a mismatch between the training content offered and the demands of their roles, leading to challenges in service delivery. While the study sheds light on the importance of relevance in training, it calls for further exploration in alternative public catering contexts, such as Kenya, that might reveal additional insights into crafting effective training programs.

Ogunlana and Ojo (2023) conducted a cross-sectional study in Nigeria assessing employee perceptions of training programs within public catering institutions. Using structured questionnaires, the study evaluated satisfaction levels and the perceived relevance of training content among catering staff. Findings highlighted significant dissatisfaction with training frameworks, primarily due to infrequent sessions and a lack of contextual relevance. Many employees indicated that improved training could enhance their capacity

to tackle service-related challenges effectively. This study emphasizes the necessity for localized research in Kenya, where similar contextual hurdles may inhibit the effective delivery of training programs, thereby impacting overall service quality.

A study by Kilimbe and Mburu (2021) in Tanzania investigated the effects of training content on service delivery in public catering institutions. The researchers used a survey design to collect data from food service staff in various government facilities. Results showed employees felt inadequately equipped to handle customer requests, predominantly due to irrelevant training content. Though the findings underscored the necessity for relevant training materials, they did not differentiate between different categories of public catering. Thus, there is a clear avenue for research focused on the distinct training needs of employees in Kenya's diverse public catering landscape.

Muhaire (2022) examined the relationship between training content and employee performance in public catering institutions in Uganda. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methods, researchers surveyed over 400 employees from various establishments. Their findings highlighted that relevant and updated training content positively influenced employees' performance and customer satisfaction levels. However, the study did not explore the specific factors that contribute to content relevance in different cultural contexts, emphasizing the need for similar studies in Kenya to adapt and tailor training programs accordingly.

Gichuki and Njoroge (2023) focused on university catering staff training programs in Kenya and assessed content relevance to service quality. Utilizing a qualitative research

design, they conducted interviews with staff and management. The findings suggested that current training content lacked specificity to address local customer service expectations, hampering service quality improvement. The study highlights a significant gap in developing effective training content for public institutions in Kenya, reinforcing the necessity for tailored training frameworks that resonate with local contexts.

Studies consistently reveal that outdated or generic training materials fail to resonate with staff, leaving them ill-prepared to handle customer needs or operational challenges. At the same time, contradictions emerge. Some contexts, particularly in Europe and Asia, highlight the flexibility of digital learning platforms, while others underscore that content relevance is not about accessibility but about how well training prepares employees for practical work. Within Africa, and Kenya more specifically, the concern is sharper. Research shows that much of the existing training content does not align with local service expectations or operational conditions, creating frustration among employees. This gap underscores the pressing need for Kenyan public catering institutions to rethink and redesign training curricula so that it speaks directly to their service environments rather than adopting imported models wholesale.

### **2.3.3 Employees' Training-Job Alignment and Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

In Pakistan, Ji & Ko (2023) developed and validated a questionnaire to measure knowledge, attitudes, and practices regarding the use of oil, salt, and sugar among canteen staff. The study involved a cross-sectional survey of canteen employees, aiming to assess

their understanding and behaviors related to these dietary components. The results revealed significant gaps in knowledge and practices, suggesting that existing training programs were inadequate in promoting healthy food preparation methods. The authors recommended the implementation of comprehensive training initiatives to address these deficiencies. However, the study primarily focused on nutritional aspects, leaving a gap in understanding how broader training programs impact overall service quality in public catering institutions. This limitation indicates a need for holistic research, especially in countries like Kenya, to develop effective training programs that enhance both nutritional standards and service quality.

Ogunlana and Ojo (2023) conducted a cross-sectional study in Nigeria to explore employee perceptions of training programs in public catering institutions. The researchers used structured questionnaires administered to a representative sample of catering staff, aiming to assess satisfaction levels, perceived relevance of training content, and the impact on service delivery. The study revealed that a significant proportion of employees expressed dissatisfaction with the current training frameworks, citing issues such as infrequent training sessions and lack of contextual relevance. Findings also indicated that many employees believed that improved training could directly enhance their ability to address service-related challenges. However, the study's focus on Nigerian public catering units revealed contextual challenges such as budget constraints and bureaucratic hurdles that may differ from those in other regions. This underscores the need for localized research in Kenya to examine employee perceptions in government-run catering institutions under similar resource constraints

In Egypt, Elziny and Emam (2021) surveyed front-office staff in Cairo and found that deficiencies in service training and organizational support undermined service performance and reduced employees' affective commitment. The authors noted that tailored training content could produce better results but acknowledged a knowledge gap concerning the specifics of job requirements in different public catering establishments. Such gaps suggest that similar studies in Kenya could uncover localized dynamics in training and job alignment.

World Bank (2021) studied the job training alignment in Mauritius public catering institutions, utilizing a cross-sectional design. They collected responses from 150 employees revealing a significant disconnect between training programs and on-ground job challenges. This misalignment raised concerns regarding service quality and suggested a reevaluation of training frameworks to better match job expectations. Despite efforts to address this issue, the study calls for expanding research into how other regions, like Kenya, adapt training practices to meet the specific demands of their public catering sectors.

Moyo and Khoza (2021) investigated employee perceptions of training programs within fast-food outlets in South Africa, focusing on their alignment with job performance and service quality. A quantitative survey methodology was used to gather data from frontline staff across various urban centers. The study revealed mixed perceptions; some employees appreciated the training initiatives, but many criticized their inconsistency and lack of practical relevance. This inconsistency raised concerns about achieving sustained service quality improvements. Given the significant gaps identified in alignment, there is a clear

need for focused research within Kenya's public catering institutions to ensure that training programs are effectively tailored to the unique operational demands of public service roles.

In Ghana, Obeng et al. (2024) explored content relevance in employee training programs at public hospitals. The researchers employed a quantitative methodology to gather data from 300 healthcare catering staff members through structured questionnaires. Findings indicated that training should focus more on nutrition and dietary requirements, as employees felt unprepared to meet patient needs effectively. While the study offered valuable insights, it primarily focused on health facilities, suggesting a need for similar research to encompass broader public catering contexts in Kenya to enhance service quality across various institutions.

Olukemi (2021) investigated the alignment between training content and job requirements in public catering institutions in Nigeria. Utilizing a mixed-methods approach, they surveyed 250 employees and conducted interviews with managers across various settings. The findings indicated that there was a significant disconnect between the training provided and the practical job demands faced by employees. The results highlighted the urgent need for training programs designed to fit actual job roles and responsibilities. However, the study's focus on Nigeria creates a gap for similar research in Kenya to measure the effectiveness of training alignment in contextual frameworks that reflect local catering service needs.

In South Africa, Makhaza et al. (2022) explored staff perceptions of alignment in training programs within public facilities. Using qualitative methods, they collected data through focus groups involving catering staff and management. The results found that misalignment in training often led to frustration and diminished service quality. Recognizing these issues underscores the importance of aligning training more closely with job requirements to enhance overall service delivery. However, the study did not address how cultural differences might shape perceptions of training effectiveness, suggesting that research in Kenya could provide valuable context-specific insights.

Kibera and Kamau (2023) conducted a study in Kenya, assessing how well training programs corresponded to job performance in public catering institutions. Employing surveys and interviews with staff at various government-operated restaurants, the findings found that employees perceived a strong need for training that directly related to their daily tasks. However, there was also significant variability in the training programs offered, indicating a lack of standardization. This research emphasizes a pressing gap in the development of consistent training protocols needed to enhance service effectiveness in a Kenyan context.

A study by Illés et al. (2021) in Kenya investigated the effectiveness of staff training alignment with performance in public schools' catering services. The researchers used a mixed-methods approach, collecting data through surveys and interviews. Findings suggested that a high degree of misalignment resulted in lowered efficiency and service delivery. The results highlight the critical need for further studies to create a framework

for training that directly correlates with job functions in public sector catering, ensuring that local contexts are taken into consideration across similar institutions.

Kyalo (2023) examined the effect of short course training on service delivery in the housekeeping and laundry departments of Kenya Utalii College to highlight the importance of continuous learning. The research employed descriptive and explanatory designs, surveying a large number of participants to determine how technical knowledge gained from training influenced performance. Results indicated a marked improvement in service delivery due to the application of newly acquired skills. However, the study's focus on a single institution emphasizes the need for broader assessments across various public catering establishments in Kenya to validate these findings and establish effective training-job alignment strategies that could enhance service quality across the board.

The literature reviewed strongly indicates that where training is poorly aligned with actual job roles, employees are unable to apply their learning effectively, and service quality inevitably suffers. Findings from countries such as Nigeria, Egypt, and Mauritius confirm that a disconnect between training content and job tasks creates demotivation and weakens overall service delivery. Interestingly, not all evidence is consistent. Some South African studies, for example, report positive perceptions of training alignment, while others point to frustrations over irrelevance, suggesting that alignment outcomes may depend heavily on institutional support and implementation. Within Kenya, evidence shows significant variability across institutions, with some staff acknowledging useful training while others lament the lack of standardization. These contradictions highlight the contextual nature of training-job alignment, and more importantly, expose a gap: little has been done to

develop frameworks that ensure public catering training consistently matches employees' operational demands in Nairobi County.

#### **2.3.4 Employees' Skill Transferability Level and Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

In their research conducted in the United States, Huang et al. (2021) examined the influence of employee skill transferability on service quality in public catering establishments, particularly within community colleges. The study employed a mixed-methods approach, incorporating surveys and interviews with staff members across multiple campuses. The findings revealed that employees who could effectively transfer skills from training to their daily tasks were more likely to enhance the customer experience, resulting in higher satisfaction ratings. However, the study pointed out a gap in addressing how the initial skill levels of employees differed based on demographic backgrounds, suggesting the need for tailored training programs to cater to diverse employee profiles. This research emphasizes the importance of transferable skills in improving service quality in interactive food service environments. This finding suggests a need for tailored training programs that cater to diverse employee profiles, which is particularly relevant for Kenya, where the workforce in the catering and hospitality industries comprises individuals from varied educational and socio-economic backgrounds. As Kenya continues to develop its tourism and hospitality sectors, implementing focused training programs could significantly improve service quality and customer satisfaction.

Conducted in Spain, García-Pérez and Castillo-Ortiz (2021) explored skill transferability's impact on service quality within the fine dining sector. The researchers implemented a longitudinal study design that involved tracking service staff at several high-end restaurants over six months. Utilizing direct observation and customer feedback surveys, the study concluded that a high degree of skill transferability correlated with superior service delivery and customer satisfaction. Findings revealed that staff who participated in cross-training programs showed greater adaptability in dealing with customers, which significantly elevated service quality. The research limitations included a narrow focus on high-end dining establishments, suggesting that expanded studies across various types of public catering would yield a more comprehensive understanding of skill transferability's effects. In Kenya, where the catering landscape includes a mix of luxury restaurants and local eateries, understanding how skill transferability affects service quality in various contexts would be crucial. This knowledge could provide invaluable insights for improving training programs and ultimately enhancing the entire dining experience for customers.

In Australia, Stangl et al. (2024) investigated the role of skill transferability in enhancing service quality among public catering workers within governmental organizations. Utilizing a qualitative approach, the researchers conducted interviews with 100 employees across different public sector canteens. The study highlighted that employees who underwent more robust training programs were more capable of transferring their acquired skills to customer-facing scenarios. The findings indicated that increased skill transferability not only uplifted service quality but also elevated employee morale and job

satisfaction. This study also uncovered a gap in longitudinal data to assess the long-term impacts of skill transferability on service improvements in governmental catering contexts, indicating a need for future research in this area. In the Kenyan public sector, where catering services are often linked to governmental events and functions, understanding skill transferability's role over time could provide a framework for sustainable improvements in service delivery.

Conducting their research in Canada, Dhar (2025) examined how skill transferability among catering staff in community centers affected service quality. Using a quantitative survey method, they collected data from 150 catering employees across various community locations. The results indicated that employees who could apply acquired skills in diverse ways were significantly more effective in their roles, leading to improved customer interactions and service outcomes. However, the study identified a gap regarding the emotional and psychological aspects of skill transferability, suggesting an avenue for further research that explores how motivation and employee engagement influence their ability to transfer learned skills effectively into practice.

Raji et al. (2021) explored the impact of food hygiene training on employees' perceptions and service delivery in Nigerian public catering environments. The quasi-experimental design revealed significant improvements in participants' confidence and adherence to hygiene standards post-training. However, the results also pointed to gaps related to ongoing support and refresher courses, which are critical for sustained quality in service delivery. This dynamic indicates that while initial training can substantially improve performance, further studies are required to examine the transfer of skills over time within

public catering institutions in Kenya, where similar challenges regarding training continuity may also exist.

Mutua and Ndungu (2023) conducted a mixed-methods study in Nairobi County, Kenya, analyzing employee perceptions of training programs in public catering institutions. The results showed that many employees believed existing training frameworks were irregular and lacked practical relevance, leading to significant impacts on service quality. Employees expressed a desire for more frequent refresher courses that catered to their operational challenges. This study underscores the need for contextualized training programs that elevate the transferability of skills and align more closely with the specific demands of public catering roles in Kenya, ultimately improving overall service delivery.

Amadi et al. (2021) conducted a study in Nigeria examining how skill transferability affects service quality in public catering institutions. Using a quantitative approach, the researchers distributed surveys to 200 catering staff members. Findings demonstrated that employees who could apply acquired skills flexibly across different functions showed enhanced service delivery. However, the study didn't account for the specific types of skills necessary in varying public catering contexts, creating an opportunity for further investigation in Kenya to ensure tailored training interventions.

In Ethiopia, Bedilu et al. (2022) explored the relationship between on-the-job training and employees' skill transferability in hotels. The study adopted a mixed-methods design, combining qualitative interviews with quantitative surveys from 150 staff members. Results indicated that while employees benefitted from training, there were barriers to

transferring these skills effectively across different service scenarios. This highlights the need for localized studies in Kenya to better understand how skill transfer can be optimized within public catering institutions operating under unique government standards.

A study by Obote et al. (2023) in Uganda assessed the link between skill transfer and service excellence in public service dining facilities. Using structured questionnaires, 250 employees were surveyed, revealing that employees with broader transferable skills were more effective in dealing with diverse customer needs. However, the study indicated a significant gap in ongoing skill enhancement opportunities, necessitating focused research in training practices in Kenya that foster skill adaptability among catering staff.

In Nigeria, Bamidele et al. (2025) evaluated the impact of continuous professional development on skill transferability among public catering staff. Using a mixed-methods approach, they found that employees who participated in training showed higher skill transferability and better customer service practices. However, this study did not disentangle the specific skills that are most transferrable, suggesting a gap that localized research in Kenya could address to ensure skills align with customer expectations in public catering sectors.

Okinyi and Lubiri (2021) explored how different types of training methods affected skill transferability in public catering firms in Kenya. Employing both qualitative and quantitative methodologies, the researchers surveyed catering staff while conducting interviews. Findings revealed that hands-on training resulted in higher skill transferability

than theoretical training. Therefore, this study highlights the importance of developing practical training programs that enhance service quality in public institutions, while also advocating for broader research within Kenya's dynamic catering landscape.

Mafela and Mashao (2023) conducted a study in Botswana analyzing how training aligns with skill transferability in public catering establishments. By employing a qualitative approach, they engaged with staff members through focus group discussions and interviews, ultimately revealing that misalignments often hindered effective skill application in practice. This gap indicates the need for research tailored to Kenya's public catering institutions to develop aligned training structures that bolster employees' ability to transfer skills seamlessly into everyday operations.

Musyoka and Makokha (2023) assessed the factors influencing skill transferability among public catering staff in schools across Kenya. Using a case study approach, interviews were conducted with 100 employees from various institutions. Findings indicated barriers such as lack of supervision and inadequate resources that hindered skill application. The research highlights the significant need for supportive training environments that promote skill transfer, underscoring the importance of further studies to explore effective frameworks that increase service quality within Kenya's public catering institutions.

A consistent message across the reviewed studies is that when employees can transfer skills from one role to another, service delivery improves, adaptability increases, and customer satisfaction rises. Evidence from Spain, Canada, and Australia underscores how transferable skills build versatility in service environments, while African studies also

confirm the benefits but highlight systemic barriers such as irregular refresher training and limited managerial support. There are also subtle differences in emphasis: whereas research in developed contexts often focuses on cross-role adaptability and multi-tasking, African scholarship tends to point to structural constraints that prevent employees from applying what they already know. In Kenya, the picture is even less clear. Few studies have examined how catering staff in public institutions carry forward skills gained either before employment or from other work settings. This gap is significant, because in resource-constrained environments like Nairobi's public catering institutions, fostering transferable skills could provide a cost-effective way of sustaining service quality despite limited training opportunities.

## **2.4 Research Gaps**

Empirical studies globally have shown that engaging and structured learning experiences improve employee competence and service outcomes (Patterson, 2021; Morey et al., 2022). In Kenya, however, existing research has primarily focused on the hospitality sector, particularly hotels and private catering services, with limited focus on public catering institutions (Wang'ombe, 2014). This presents a contextual gap, as the majority of available evidence does not address whether learning experiences in public institutions—where resources, structures, and service expectations differ—have a measurable effect on service quality. The present study seeks to bridge this gap by investigating how employees' learning experience quality influences service delivery in Nairobi County's public catering institutions.

Available literature emphasizes the importance of training content relevance, with competency-based models in countries such as Australia and Canada improving service outcomes (Morrison et al., 2021). In Africa, studies in Ghana and Nigeria have highlighted that outdated or misaligned curricula undermine training effectiveness (Mensah & Asare, 2021; Ogunlana & Ojo, 2023). However, in Kenya, the empirical focus has largely been on the private hospitality sector, with insufficient evidence on how relevant training content impacts service delivery in public catering institutions (Gitongu, 2021). This creates a sectoral gap that the current study addresses by examining the relationship between training content relevance and service quality in Nairobi County's public catering institutions.

Research has consistently shown that training aligned with job roles enhances performance outcomes, particularly in developed contexts such as the UK and Canada (Gupta & Sharma, 2023). Regionally, however, studies in Tanzania and Uganda report persistent misalignment between training and workplace requirements, leading to inefficiencies (Kilimbe & Mburu, 2021). In Kenya, available evidence has mostly concentrated on hotels and private service institutions, with limited research on how training-job alignment influences service delivery in public catering institutions (Nyamweya, 2020). This represents a contextual and institutional gap, which this study seeks to fill by assessing training-job alignment in Nairobi County's public catering units.

While global studies acknowledge that skill transferability promotes adaptability and efficiency (Rumjaun & Narod, 2025; Schunk, 2012), research in African contexts has identified barriers such as poor managerial support and resource constraints (Muhaire,

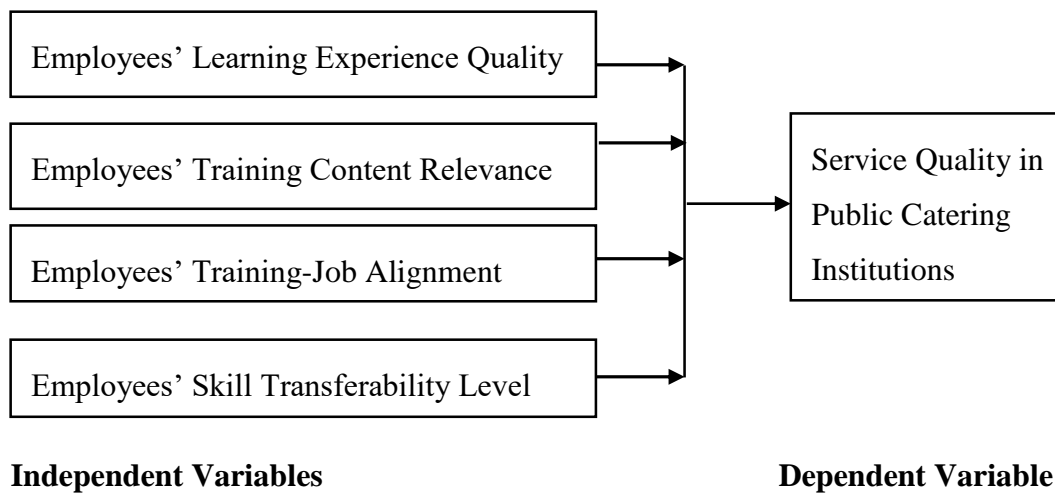
2022). In Kenya, Wambugu (2020) noted challenges in skill transfer among employees in catering institutions but focused primarily on private-sector units. This reveals a sectoral and contextual gap, as little is known about how transferable skills affect service quality in public catering institutions. The present study therefore seeks to determine the extent to which employees’ skill transferability influences service quality in Nairobi County’s public catering sector.

## 2.5 Conceptual Framework

This section presents the conceptual framework of the study which is the diagrammatic representation of the relationship between the study variables.

**Figure 2.2**

*Conceptual Framework*



**Source: Researcher (2025)**

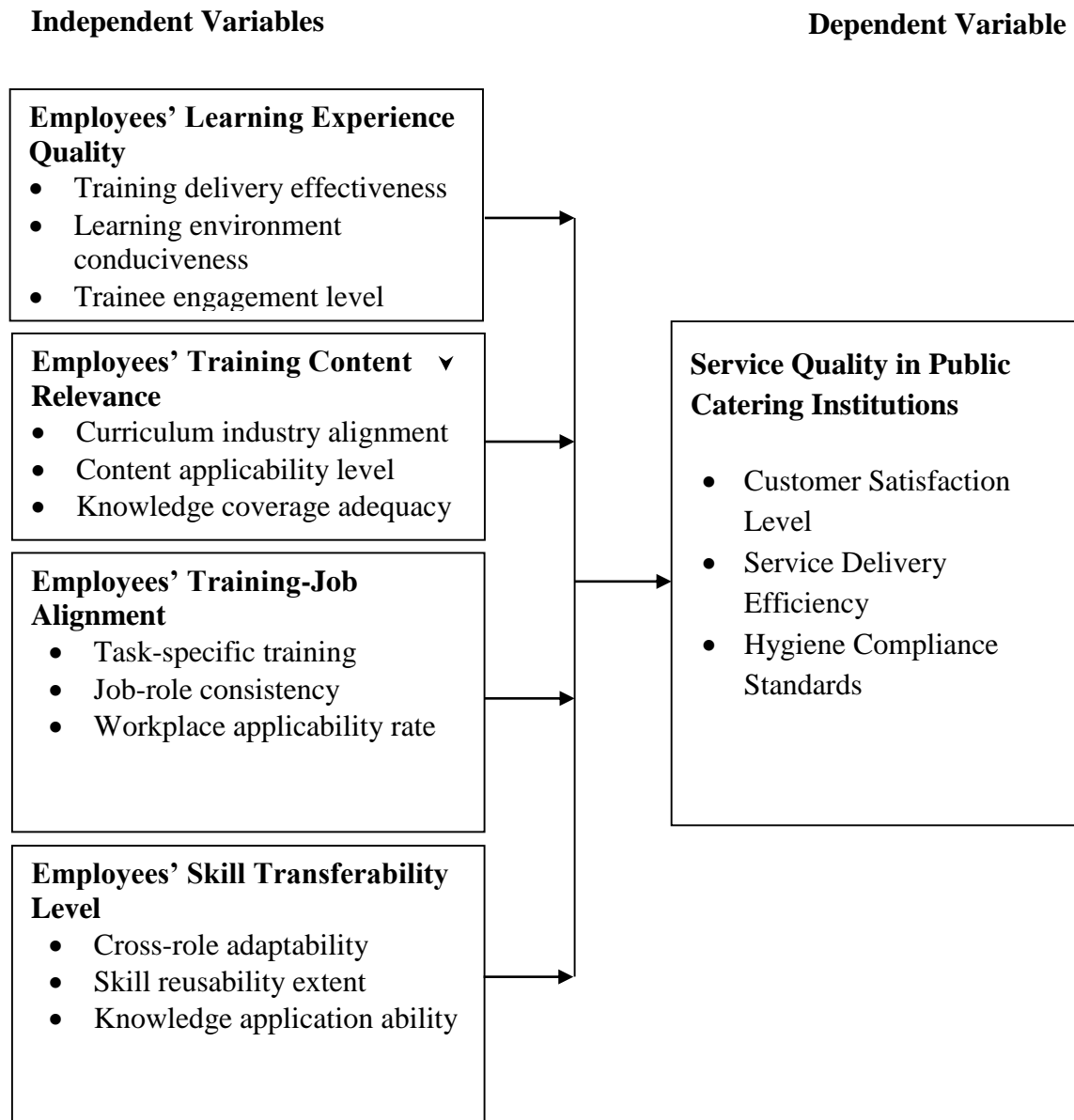
The conceptual framework of this study is grounded in the understanding that employee training significantly influences service quality in Public Catering Institutions. The

independent variables employees' learning experience quality, training content relevance, training-job alignment, and skill transferability level represent critical dimensions of effective training programs. Learning experience quality refers to how engaging, practical, and impactful the training process was for employees, shaping their motivation and retention of knowledge. Training content relevance assesses whether the training addressed the actual demands and responsibilities of catering service roles. Training-job alignment considers how well the acquired knowledge fits into employees' specific tasks and duties within the institution. Skill transferability level evaluates the extent to which employees can apply previously acquired skills, particularly from training received before their current employment, to their present job roles.

These variables are hypothesized to influence the dependent variable—service quality—which encompasses efficiency, customer satisfaction, hygiene compliance, and responsiveness in service delivery. The framework posits that when employees receive high-quality, relevant training that aligns with their job roles and can transfer acquired skills effectively, service quality outcomes are likely to improve. This conceptual model is essential in guiding the research as it helps identify which training aspects most significantly impact service delivery. It also acknowledges the role of pre-employment training experiences, especially for employees trained elsewhere before joining their current public catering institutions. By focusing on these components, the framework provides a structured lens through which to assess training effectiveness and recommend improvements tailored to Nairobi County's public catering sector. The following is the operational framework of the study.

**Figure 2.3**

*Operationalization Framework*



**Source: Researcher (2025)**

The conceptual framework for this study is structured around four independent variables that influence the dependent variable: service quality in public catering institutions. The

first independent variable, employees' learning experience quality, is critical in shaping how well employees absorb and apply training content. This construct is measured using three indicators: training delivery effectiveness, learning environment conduciveness, and trainee engagement level. Training delivery effectiveness refers to how well the training content is communicated, while a conducive learning environment ensures minimal distractions and optimal learning conditions. Trainee engagement level captures how actively employees participate in training sessions, which directly impacts their ability to retain and utilize new skills. High-quality learning experiences foster better comprehension and performance, thereby enhancing service quality outcomes.

The second independent variable, employees' training content relevance, focuses on how closely the training content aligns with the practical needs of catering staff. This is assessed through curriculum industry alignment, content applicability level, and knowledge coverage adequacy. When the curriculum aligns with industry trends and expectations, employees are more likely to find the training useful and relevant to their roles. The applicability of the content ensures that employees can immediately implement what they learn, thereby improving service delivery. Knowledge coverage adequacy ensures that training is comprehensive, addressing all critical service aspects such as customer handling, food safety, and operational procedures. Relevant training content enables employees to provide services that meet or exceed client expectations.

The third variable, employees' training-job alignment, examines how well the training provided corresponds with the actual tasks employees perform on the job. This alignment is captured through task-specific training, job-role consistency, and workplace

applicability rate. Task-specific training ensures that staff acquire the precise skills needed for their roles, such as food preparation or client service in a public catering context. Job-role consistency assesses whether training content supports the day-to-day responsibilities of employees. Workplace applicability rate measures how easily employees can apply what they learn in real work scenarios. A strong alignment between training and job roles reduces performance gaps and increases efficiency in service delivery.

The fourth independent variable, employees' skill transferability level, addresses the extent to which employees can apply acquired skills across different tasks and situations. It includes cross-role adaptability, skill reusability extent, and knowledge application ability. Cross-role adaptability allows employees to shift between roles within the institution, improving flexibility and reducing service disruptions. Skill reusability refers to how often employees can use learned skills in various tasks, enhancing productivity. Knowledge application ability focuses on whether employees can consistently apply what they've learned to meet service standards. High skill transferability is essential for maintaining consistent service quality, especially in dynamic catering environments where staff may rotate roles or responsibilities.

All four independent variables collectively influence the dependent variable: service quality in public catering institutions, which is evaluated using customer satisfaction level, service delivery efficiency, and hygiene compliance standards. Customer satisfaction level reflects how well the services meet client expectations, while service delivery efficiency measures the speed and consistency of service provision. Hygiene compliance standards assess adherence to food safety and cleanliness protocols, which are crucial in

institutional catering environments. When employees receive high-quality, relevant, and job-aligned training with transferable skills, the outcome is improved service quality across all three dimensions. This framework underscores the importance of strategic training design in achieving operational excellence in public catering institutions.

## **CHAPTER THREE**

### **RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **3.1 Introduction**

The approach used to gather, analyze, and interpret data for the study is detailed in this chapter. Everything from the study's location and intended participants to its sampling strategies, sample size, research tools, data gathering procedures, analysis strategies and ethical issues are all part of the methodology. These components were essential for the study to accurately evaluate how staff training impacts service quality in Nairobi County's public catering establishments.

#### **3.2 Research Design**

This study adopted a descriptive research design, which is suitable for systematically examining relationships between variables without manipulating them and for describing phenomena as they naturally occur (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). The design was appropriate because the study sought to assess how employees' learning experience, training content, training-job alignment, and skill transferability affect service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. Descriptive research has been widely applied in hospitality and service studies as it allows the collection of factual data on behaviors, attitudes, and practices using structured questionnaires (Saunders et al., 2019). This approach enabled the researcher to identify patterns and relationships and to analyze the extent to which training influences service quality through statistical techniques such

as correlation and regression. Unlike experimental designs, which focus on causality, the descriptive design provided a practical and systematic framework for achieving the objectives of this study (Kothari, 2014).

This study's adoption of a quantitative research methodology was geared at gaining a deeper understanding of how staff training influences service quality in public catering institutions within Nairobi County. The choice of a quantitative approach was informed by the need to generate measurable evidence that could clearly demonstrate the relationships between training initiatives and service outcomes. By relying on numerical data, the study was able to identify patterns, establish associations, and draw conclusions that are not only systematic but also generalizable to the wider population of public catering institutions. A descriptive survey design was particularly suitable, as it allowed the researcher to collect data from a large group of respondents in a structured and consistent manner. Using carefully designed questionnaires, the study captured employees' perceptions and experiences while also quantifying the impact of different aspects of training such as learning experiences, content relevance, job alignment, and skill transferability on overall service delivery. This methodology therefore offered a reliable means of assessing the current state of training programs and provided a sound foundation for recommending practical improvements aimed at enhancing service quality across the sector (Mugenda & Mugenda, 2003).

### **3.3 Target Population**

A target population refers to the entire group of individuals, events, or objects that possess the characteristics relevant to a particular study and from which the researcher intends to draw conclusions (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). In this study, the target population comprised employees working in public catering institutions within Nairobi County, including catering staff, supervisors, and managers in government ministries, hospitals, universities, the judiciary, and county government offices. This population was deemed appropriate because it directly engages in the delivery of catering services to large and diverse groups of public service users, making them best placed to provide reliable insights into how employee training variables, namely learning experience quality, training content relevance, training-job alignment, and skill transferability, influence service quality outcomes.

The selection of the 33 public catering institutions in Nairobi County was guided by several deliberate and practical criteria. First, institutions were required to be publicly owned or government-affiliated, ensuring that the study focused strictly on public sector catering services, which often operated under different service expectations, budgetary controls, and training programs compared to private institutions. Second, operational legitimacy and registration status were considered, whereby only institutions formally registered and recognized by credible government sources or through official websites and publications were included. Third, service scale and staffing capacity were factored in, selecting institutions with a functional catering unit and a minimum operational staff size

sufficient to support meaningful analysis; this involved including units with an estimated catering staff count of at least 15 employees.

Fourth, diversity of service domains was prioritized, ensuring representation across multiple sectors such as health (e.g., Kenyatta National Hospital Catering Unit), finance (e.g., Central Bank of Kenya Catering Unit), transport (such as, Nairobi Railway Catering Services), education (such as, Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development Canteen), and governance (e.g., Parliament Catering Unit). Fifth, geographic accessibility within Nairobi County was essential, enabling feasible data collection within the logistical and resource limits of the study. Sixth, institutional longevity and experience were considered by including institutions with varying establishment years, from historical setups like those founded in the early 1900s to newer establishments post-2000, thereby capturing both traditional and contemporary catering service dynamics. Finally, institutions were required to have ongoing active catering operations at the time of study planning, ensuring the relevance and immediacy of the training–service quality relationship being investigated.

**Table 3.1**

*Target Population*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Target Population</b>
Head of Catering Units	33
Catering Managers	198
Operational staff	1980
<b>Total</b>	<b>2211</b>

**Source: Kenya National Bureau of Statistics (KNBS, 2023)**

As shown in Table 3.1, the target population consisted of 33 Heads of Catering Units, 198 Catering Managers, and 1,980 operational staff, totaling 2,211, as obtained from institutional records (see Appendix V). The choice of population categories catering managers, supervisors, and frontline employees was justified by their distinct yet interconnected roles in shaping service quality within public catering institutions. Catering managers were responsible for strategic decision-making, overseeing training programs, and ensuring compliance with hygiene and service standards. Supervisors bridged the gap between management and frontline employees, monitored daily operations, enforced training guidelines, and addressed service challenges. Frontline employees were directly involved in food preparation, customer service, and hygiene practices, making their knowledge and skills crucial to overall service quality. By incorporating perspectives from all three categories, the study ensured a comprehensive understanding of how employee training influenced service delivery, covering both policy-level decisions and hands-on execution. This stratified approach enhanced the reliability of the findings by capturing insights from key stakeholders who collectively determined service outcomes in public catering institutions.

### **3.5 Sampling Procedures and Techniques**

To guarantee a balanced representation of catering managers, supervisors, and staff, a stratified random selection technique was utilized. By creating uniform subgroups from the population and then randomly selecting members from each, stratification improved accuracy (Creswell & Creswell, 2018). To reduce the possibility of bias and maximize the generalizability of the findings, simple random sampling was implemented within each

stratum. Additionally, managers and other key informants with knowledge of training policies and service quality standards were selected through purposive sampling.

### **3.6 Sample Size**

Due to the heterogeneous nature of the study sample, a combination of sampling techniques was employed to ensure appropriate representation across different categories of respondents. The study targeted Heads of Catering Units (HOCUs), Catering Managers, and Operational Staff in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. Given the variations in roles and responsibilities among these groups, distinct sampling methods were applied for each category to ensure accuracy and reliability in data collection.

This study employed a multistage sampling procedure to ensure fair representation of respondents across different categories of public catering institutions in Nairobi County. First, public catering units were stratified into categories such as ministries, hospitals, universities, judiciary offices, and county government facilities to capture institutional diversity. Within each stratum, proportionate stratified sampling was applied to determine the number of respondents to be drawn from each unit relative to its staff population, ensuring that both larger and smaller institutions were fairly represented. For example, out of 33 heads of catering units, 5 were purposively selected to participate because of their managerial roles, while catering staff and supervisors were randomly sampled within their respective strata.

The study adopted a sample size distribution that proportionately represented the three key staff categories within the target population of 2,211 individuals drawn from public

catering institutions in Nairobi County. Using the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) formula, a calculated sample size of 327 respondents was selected to ensure statistical validity and generalizability of the findings. Specifically, five Heads of Catering Units were sampled from a total of 33, capturing strategic leadership insights into training and service quality dynamics. From the 198 Catering Managers, 29 were selected, representing the critical supervisory layer that translated training initiatives into operational performance. The Operational Staff, who formed the majority and were directly responsible for service delivery, had 293 respondents sampled out of a total of 1,980, ensuring that frontline perspectives on service quality were comprehensively captured. This proportional sampling approach enabled the study to gather balanced data across all organizational levels, thereby enhancing the robustness, accuracy, and depth of the analysis on the effect of employee training on service quality in public catering institutions.

The sample size of 327 corresponded to the target population of 2,211, based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size determination table. The formula was from Krejcie and Morgan (1970) for determining sample size:

$$\frac{X^2NP(1-P)}{d^2(N-1)+X^2P(1-P)}$$

Where:

**s** = required sample size

**X<sup>2</sup>** = the table value of chi-square for 1 degree of freedom at the desired confidence level (3.841)

**N** = population size

**P** = population proportion (assumed to be 0.50 to provide the maximum sample size)

**d** = degree of accuracy expressed as a proportion (0.05)

**Table 3.2**

*Sample Distribution*

<b>Category</b>	<b>Target Population</b>	<b>Sample size</b>
Head of Catering Units	33	5
Catering Managers	198	29
Operational staff	1980	293
Total	2211	<b>327</b>

### **3.7 Data Collection Method**

The study employed structured self-administered questionnaires as the primary method of data collection. Structured questionnaires were distributed to the sampled Heads of Catering Units, Catering Managers, and Operational Staff across the selected public catering institutions in Nairobi County. This method was justified because it allowed for the standardized collection of data across a large and geographically dispersed sample, ensuring uniformity in the way questions were presented and responses recorded. Structured questionnaires were particularly appropriate for descriptive correlational studies, as they enabled the quantification of attitudes, perceptions, and experiences, facilitating statistical analysis of the relationship between employee training and service quality. Moreover, given the professional literacy levels of the targeted respondents, it was expected that they would competently comprehend and complete the questionnaires without the need for extensive guidance. The use of self-administered questionnaires

minimized interviewer bias, reduced data collection costs, and enhanced the privacy and candidness of the respondents, thereby improving the reliability and validity of the responses. In line with recommendations by Creswell and Creswell (2018), the structured questionnaire approach offered efficiency in large-sample data collection and ensured the acquisition of comparable and analyzable data necessary to meet the study objectives.

The study also collected data using a Likert scale instrument specifically designed to assess service quality from the perspective of staff who consumed the catering services within the selected public catering institutions. The Likert scale measured perceptions of customer satisfaction levels, service delivery efficiency, and hygiene compliance standards, using a five-point response format ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree." This approach was justified because service quality is inherently a subjective construct that is best captured through standardized attitudinal measures, allowing respondents to express the extent of their agreement with various service attributes. The use of a Likert scale facilitated the quantification of subjective experiences, thereby enabling rigorous statistical analysis of how perceived service quality related to the employee training initiatives under investigation. Moreover, incorporating consumer feedback ensured a holistic understanding of service quality outcomes, aligning the study with best practices in service quality research. By combining structured questionnaires and Likert scale items, the study comprehensively captured both operational and experiential dimensions of service quality within public catering institutions in Nairobi County.

## **3.8 Validity and Reliability**

### **3.8.1 Piloting**

To ensure the validity and reliability of the research instrument, a pilot test was conducted prior to the main data collection. The pilot test targeted a small sample equivalent to approximately 10% of the final sample size, which, based on the calculated sample size of 327 respondents, involved about 33 participants. These participants were drawn from public catering institutions that were similar in nature to the actual study sites but were not included in the final study to avoid contamination of results. The pilot institutions were selected purposively based on their operational similarity, service structure, and accessibility within Nairobi County. During the pilot phase, respondents were administered the questionnaire under conditions similar to those of the main study. The primary objectives of the pilot test were to identify ambiguities, assess the clarity of questions, estimate the time required to complete the questionnaire, and test the internal consistency of the instrument. Feedback from the pilot respondents was analyzed, and necessary adjustments were made to the questionnaire items to improve wording, sequence, and relevance. Reliability of the instrument was assessed using Cronbach's alpha coefficient, where a value of 0.7 or higher was considered acceptable for internal consistency, following the recommendations of Taber (2018). The pilot test thus served to refine the instrument, ensuring that the main data collection yielded accurate, consistent, and credible results.

### **3.9.2 Validity of the Instruments**

Validity refers to the extent to which a research instrument measures what it is intended to measure, ensuring that the findings accurately reflect the study variables. Validity referred to the extent to which the research instrument measured what it was intended to measure, ensuring that the findings accurately reflected the study variables. This study established validity through content, construct, and criterion validity. Content validity was ensured by aligning the research instruments with the study objectives and seeking expert opinions from supervisors and professionals in the hospitality and research fields to refine the questionnaire items. Construct validity was achieved by ensuring that the questionnaire accurately captured the theoretical constructs under investigation, such as training program effectiveness, skill development, on-the-job training, and employee knowledge enhancement. Criterion validity was tested by comparing the study's findings with existing empirical research on employee training and service quality. A pilot study was conducted to assess the clarity and relevance of the questionnaire items, allowing for necessary modifications before the actual data collection. This approach aligned with recommendations by Creswell and Creswell (2018), who emphasized the importance of expert review and pilot testing in ensuring validity.

### **3.9.3 Reliability of the Instruments**

The reliability of a research instrument was defined as its capacity to consistently and reliably produce consistent results when subjected to identical conditions on multiple occasions. A reliability criterion of 0.70 was regarded as acceptable for this study, which

evaluated reliability using Cronbach's alpha coefficient to measure the internal consistency of the questionnaire items. A pre-test was conducted among a small sample of respondents from public catering institutions outside the main study area to check for consistency in responses. Any ambiguous or unclear questions were revised to enhance reliability. Additionally, test-retest reliability was employed by administering the same questionnaire to the pre-test group after two weeks and comparing the results to check for stability over time. According to Saunders et al. (2019), reliability was crucial in ensuring that research findings were replicable and free from measurement errors. By implementing these measures, the study ensured that the research instruments generated consistent and credible data for assessing the effect of employee training on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.

### **3.9 Data Collection Procedures**

Obtaining research permission from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) was facilitated by an introduction letter from Kenya Methodist University, which simplified the data collection process. In order to conduct research in the specified public catering institutions in Nairobi County in accordance with all applicable ethical and regulatory standards, this permit was officially authorized. To fill gaps in knowledge about how public catering institutions' training programs affected service quality, the study gathered primary data using self-administered surveys and in-person interviews. To make the surveys more accessible and encourage higher response rates, they were sent out via email and distributed in person. Using a mix of open-ended and closed-ended questions, the structured surveys gathered both qualitative and

quantitative information. In order to gain a better understanding of the methods, obstacles, and effects of training implementation on service quality, in-person interviews were conducted with training coordinators and senior managers.

### **3.10 Data Analysis Techniques**

Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) software was utilized to conduct descriptive and inferential statistical analyses on the quantitative data collected for the study. An overview of the respondents' characteristics and trends in employee training and service quality was obtained using descriptive statistics, which included measures such as standard deviation, frequency, and mean, to synthesize and display data in an understandable and concise manner. The study used inferential statistics to examine patterns in the relationships between the variables, and Pearson correlation analysis was applied to determine the strength and direction of associations between various aspects of employee training and outcomes related to service quality.

In order to determine how staff training influenced service delivery, customer satisfaction, and hygiene compliance in public catering institutions, multiple regression analysis was performed to assess how training factors predicted service quality. Applying these statistical procedures ensured dependable and statistically significant results, allowing for relevant evidence-based judgments and recommendations.

The regression model will be:

$$Y = B_0 + \beta_1 X_1 + \beta_2 X_2 + \beta_3 X_3 + \beta_4 X_4 + \epsilon$$

Where;

Y – Service Quality (dependent variable)

' $B_0$  – is a constant, the results when all variables  $X_1$  to  $X_4$  are zero.

$X_1$  = Employees' Learning Experience Quality

$X_2$  = Employees' Training Content Relevance

$X_3$  = Employees' Training-Job Alignment

$X_4$  = Employees' Skill Transferability Level

$\varepsilon$  = Error term

The hypotheses in this study were tested using multiple regression analysis, with the aid of SPSS software. Each hypothesis was evaluated by examining the p-values associated with the regression coefficients for the independent variables and interaction terms. According to the standard significance level ( $\alpha = 0.05$ ), the null hypothesis was rejected if the p-value was less than 0.05, indicating a statistically significant relationship between the predictor and the outcome variable.

### **3.11.1 Diagnostic Tests**

To ensure the validity of the multiple regression model, the study first conducted a multicollinearity diagnostic test. This was done using the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance values, which assessed whether the independent variables were highly correlated with each other. Multicollinearity had the potential to inflate standard errors, making it difficult to assess the significance of predictors. A VIF value above 10 or a Tolerance below 0.1 indicated a serious multicollinearity problem that needed to be addressed, potentially through variable transformation or removal. Identifying and correcting multicollinearity ensured that the coefficients estimated in the model were

stable and reliable. According to Hair et al. (2019), evaluating VIF was critical in multiple regressions to maintain the interpretability of the model.

Secondly, the study performed a normality test to assess whether the residuals (errors) from the regression analysis were normally distributed. This was checked using visual methods such as Q-Q plots and histograms, as well as statistical tests like the Shapiro-Wilk or Kolmogorov-Smirnov tests. Normality of residuals was a key assumption of linear regression, and violations could lead to biased estimates and incorrect inferences. If the residuals were not normally distributed, the study considered data transformation or robust regression techniques. This step ensured that the p-values and confidence intervals derived from the regression were accurate. As noted by Osborne and Waters (2002), testing for normality was essential when using parametric models like multiple regression.

Lastly, the study conducted a heteroscedasticity test to determine whether the variance of residuals was constant across all levels of the independent variables. Breusch-Pagan or White's tests were employed to detect any non-constant variance (heteroscedasticity), which violated a core assumption of Ordinary Least Squares (OLS) regression. Heteroscedasticity could result in inefficient estimators and unreliable hypothesis tests due to biased standard errors. If heteroscedasticity was present, the study used robust standard errors or transformed variables to correct the issue. Ensuring homoscedasticity strengthened the accuracy and credibility of the regression results. As Gujarati and Porter (2009) asserted, testing for and correcting heteroscedasticity was critical for drawing valid conclusions in regression analysis.

### **3.11 Ethical Considerations**

In order to safeguard the rights of participants and maintain the credibility of the research, the study followed all ethical research protocols to the letter. All participants were asked to provide their informed consent before any data was collected. This ensured that they were aware of the study's goals, that their participation was completely voluntary, and that they were free to withdraw at any point without any penalties. Responses were anonymized, and no personally identifying information was shared in the study findings or reports to ensure confidentiality. After obtaining an introduction letter from Kenya Methodist University authorizing data collection in the public catering institutions in Nairobi County, a research permit was acquired from the National Commission for Science, Technology, and Innovation (NACOSTI) to comply with legal and institutional requirements. All participants were assured that their data would be kept confidential and utilized exclusively for academic research. To further ensure the protection of sensitive information and the integrity of the research, data security measures were put in place, including password-protected storage and restricted access to research files.

## **CHAPTER FOUR**

### **DATA ANALYSIS, RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS**

#### **4.1 Introduction**

Both descriptive and inferential analysis were utilized in the present chapter to examine the data. The study's findings are influenced by the conceptual relationship outlined in the conceptual framework. This chapter covers topics such as response rate, validity, reliability, and assumptions related to regression analysis.

#### **4.2 Response Rate**

Out of the 327 questionnaires administered to the target respondents, a total of 288 were duly completed and returned, resulting in a response rate of approximately 88.07%. This high response rate is statistically significant and considered acceptable for inferential analysis in social science research, as it exceeds the commonly recommended threshold of 70% for minimizing non-response bias. The favorable return rate suggests a strong level of engagement from the respondents and indicates that the findings derived from the data can be deemed reliable and representative of the sampled population. Additionally, the minimal attrition rate of 11.93% does not pose a substantial threat to the validity or generalizability of the study's results.

#### **4.3 Demographic Information**

##### **4.3.1 Age Group**

The analysis of the age distribution among the 288 respondents revealed a fairly balanced representation across different age brackets, indicating diverse generational input into the

study. The largest proportion, 29.2%, fell within the 26–35 years age group, suggesting that a significant share of the workforce in public catering institutions comprises early-career professionals likely undergoing active skills development. This was followed by the 36–45 years group at 26.0%, highlighting the presence of mid-career individuals who potentially bring experience and training relevance to service quality. Respondents aged 46–55 years constituted 17.7%, representing senior staff with likely supervisory or specialized roles, while those in the youngest bracket of 18–25 years accounted for 16.7%, indicating a notable presence of entry-level employees, possibly undergoing foundational training. Lastly, 10.4% of the respondents were 56 years and above, reflecting institutional knowledge and long-term skill retention. The spread indicates that employee training and service quality are being experienced and evaluated across all stages of career progression, thus enhancing the robustness and reliability of the findings.

**Table 4.1**

*Age Group*

<b>Age Group</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
18 – 25 years	48	16.7%
26 – 35 years	84	29.2%
36 – 45 years	75	26.0%
46 – 55 years	51	17.7%
56 years and above	30	10.4%
<b>Total</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### **4.3.2 Education Level**

The findings indicate that the majority of respondents in public catering institutions hold formal academic and professional qualifications relevant to their roles. Diploma holders accounted for 47.9% of the respondents, highlighting a strong orientation toward technical

and vocational education, which is often aligned with the operational demands of the catering industry. Those with bachelor’s degrees made up 35.4%, representing a significant segment likely involved in supervisory, administrative, or service planning functions. Postgraduate qualification holders comprised 16.7%, pointing to a smaller but important group possibly occupying leadership, policy, or specialist positions. The education profile demonstrates a highly competent workforce, providing a solid foundation for capacity-building initiatives and affirming the relevance of employee training as a critical driver of service quality in public catering institutions.

**Table 4.2**

*Education Level*

<b>Education Level</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Diploma	138	47.9%
Bachelor's Degree	102	35.4%
Postgraduate (Masters/PhD)	48	16.7%
<b>Total</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>100%</b>

**4.3.3 Work Experience**

The work experience data presents a workforce with a healthy mix of both experienced professionals and newer entrants. The majority of respondents, 32.6%, had between 4 to 6 years of experience, representing a relatively seasoned group capable of both executing tasks and benefitting from advanced training. Those with 1 to 3 years of experience accounted for 24.3%, indicating a sizable number of junior employees who are still growing into their roles. Workers with 7 to 10 years’ experience made up 20.8%, and those with over 10 years comprised 12.2%, both reflecting deep institutional knowledge

and potential as mentors or training facilitators. The remaining 10.1% had less than one year of experience, showing an active inflow of new employees into the industry. These findings underscore the importance of training programs that cater to different stages of career development, reinforcing the role of experience in shaping service quality in public catering institutions.

**Table 4.3**

*Years of Experience*

<b>Years of Experience</b>	<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Less than 1 year	29	10.1%
1 – 3 years	70	24.3%
4 – 6 years	94	32.6%
7 – 10 years	60	20.8%
More than 10 years	35	12.2%
<b>Total</b>	<b>288</b>	<b>100%</b>

#### **4.4 Pilot Results**

##### **4.4.1 Reliability Analysis**

The reliability analysis was conducted using Cronbach’s Alpha to assess the internal consistency of the scales used in the questionnaire. As shown in Table 4.4, all constructs recorded Cronbach’s Alpha coefficients well above the acceptable threshold of 0.7, indicating that the items used to measure each variable were internally consistent and reliable for statistical analysis. The construct measuring Employees’ Learning Experience Quality recorded the highest alpha value of 0.880, suggesting a high level of internal consistency among the six items used to assess this dimension. Similarly, the Service Quality scale exhibited an alpha of 0.893, further confirming that the items used to measure the dependent variable were strongly correlated and reliable for inference.

The other three constructs also demonstrated adequate reliability. Employees' Training Content Relevance posted a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.801, reflecting good internal consistency and confirming that the items effectively captured the perceived relevance of training content to the respondents. The Employees' Training-Job Alignment construct had a coefficient of 0.833, indicating that the scale reliably assessed how well the training aligned with the employees' actual job tasks. Lastly, the Employees' Skill Transferability Level scale recorded a Cronbach's Alpha of 0.811, denoting consistent measurement of the extent to which skills learned during training were applicable to the workplace.

Overall, these findings affirm that the measurement tools used in the study were statistically sound and provided a reliable basis for subsequent analyses such as correlation and regression. The high reliability across all variables strengthens the credibility of the data collected and supports the validity of any conclusions drawn regarding the effect of employee training on service quality in public catering institutions.

**Table 4.4**

*Reliability Test*

<b>Scale</b>	<b>Cronbach's Alpha</b>	<b>No of Items</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Employees' Learning Experience Quality	0.880	6	Reliable
Employees' Training Content Relevance	0.801	6	Reliable
Employees' Training-Job Alignment	0.833	6	Reliable
Employees' Skill Transferability Level	0.811	6	Reliable
Service Quality	0.893	6	Reliable

**4.4.2 Validity**

The results of the Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity provided strong statistical justification for the application of factor analysis in this study. The KMO

Measure of Sampling Adequacy yielded a value of 0.825, which falls within the “meritorious” range according to Kaiser’s (1974) classification. This indicates that the sampling adequacy was statistically sufficient, and the variables shared a substantial proportion of common variance. In practical terms, a KMO value above 0.8 suggests that the data is well-suited for structure detection and that the patterns of correlations among the variables are compact enough to generate reliable factors.

Additionally, Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity produced an approximate chi-square value of 683.442 with 10 degrees of freedom, and the significance level was less than 0.001. This highly significant result implies that the null hypothesis which posits that the correlation matrix is an identity matrix can be rejected. Therefore, there are statistically significant correlations among the variables under study, further supporting the appropriateness of factor analysis.

Together, these findings provide robust statistical evidence that the dataset meets the necessary conditions for conducting factor analysis. The strong KMO value and significant Bartlett’s test reinforce the reliability of the measurement model and enhance confidence in the construct validity of the instrument used to assess employee training and service quality in public catering institutions.

**Table 4.5**

*KMO and Bart Test*

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.825
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	683.442
	df	10
	Sig.	<.001

## **4.5 Descriptive Results**

This section presents descriptive statistics related to the key variables derived from the study's objectives, namely: employees' learning experience quality, training content relevance, training-job alignment and skill transferability level, in relation to service quality in public catering institutions within Nairobi County. The analysis provides a summary of respondents' perceptions using measures such as means and standard deviations, offering an initial understanding of how employee training dimensions are perceived to influence service quality. These results serve as a foundation for further inferential analysis aligned with the general objective of assessing the effect of employee training on service quality.

### **4.5.1 Employees' Learning Experience Quality**

The analysis of the descriptive statistics for employees' learning experience quality reveals a generally positive perception among respondents regarding the training processes in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. All six items recorded mean scores above 3.90 on a 5-point Likert scale, indicating overall agreement with the quality of learning experiences received during training. The statement "I was actively engaged throughout the training sessions" recorded the highest mean of 4.1806 with a relatively low standard deviation of 0.68993, suggesting strong agreement and consistency among respondents about the interactive nature of the sessions. This is closely followed by "The training I received was delivered effectively and professionally" with a mean of 4.1667 and a standard deviation of 0.67302, indicating that participants appreciated the professionalism and structure of the training delivery.

The training environment also received favorable feedback, with a mean score of 4.1493, implying that respondents found the physical and contextual settings supportive of learning. Notably, “The trainers used practical examples relevant to my role” scored a slightly lower mean of 4.0486, accompanied by a standard deviation of 0.79484, suggesting more variability in how respondents perceived the applicability of the examples used during training. Similarly, the opportunity for feedback and discussion had the lowest mean score of 3.9861 and the highest standard deviation of 0.87542, indicating that while many respondents found feedback opportunities present, there was less consensus on their adequacy or effectiveness. Overall, the composite indicator “My learning experience during training was satisfactory” yielded a solid mean of 4.0556, reinforcing the conclusion that the training initiatives were generally well-received.

These findings are consistent with the study by Morrison et al. (2021), which examined the effects of experiential learning on employee service delivery in restaurants in Australia. Their study found that experiential training significantly enhanced employee confidence and competence, leading to improved customer satisfaction. Similarly, the positive ratings in this study regarding active engagement, professional delivery, and the practical nature of training sessions confirm that when employees are immersed in meaningful and well-structured learning experiences, they are more likely to deliver quality service. The alignment between these findings underscores the importance of investing in engaging and contextually relevant training programs as a strategic approach to improving service delivery in public catering institutions.

While this study found that learning experiences significantly enhanced service quality, some studies have contradicted this. For example, Mutinda (2019) observed that despite comprehensive training programs in Kenyan hospitality institutions, employee performance remained inconsistent due to low motivation and weak organizational support. Similarly, Ngugi (2020) argued that learning experiences did not always translate into improved customer satisfaction in catering institutions, as contextual challenges such as workload and poor working conditions diluted the effects of training.

**Table 4.6**

*Employees' Learning Experience Quality*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
The training I received was delivered effectively and professionally	288	4.1667	.67302
The training environment was conducive for learning	288	4.1493	.72913
I was actively engaged throughout the training sessions	288	4.1806	.68993
The trainers used practical examples relevant to my role	288	4.0486	.79484
The training provided opportunities for feedback and discussion	288	3.9861	.87542
Overall, my learning experience during training was satisfactory	288	4.0556	.83293

#### **4.5.2 Employees' Training Content Relevance**

The descriptive statistics on employees' training content relevance reveal a strong consensus among respondents that the training they received was not only comprehensive but also practically applicable to their day-to-day responsibilities. All six items recorded mean scores above 4.00, indicating high levels of agreement across the board. The highest-rated item was "The training content was aligned with industry standards" with a mean of 4.1354 and a standard deviation of 0.84251, suggesting that employees perceived the

training as meeting professional benchmarks and expectations within the catering sector. Similarly, “The training covered all necessary areas related to catering services” and “The knowledge gained was directly applicable to my job tasks” posted mean scores of 4.0972 and 4.0729 respectively, reinforcing the notion that the training content was not only well-structured but also job-relevant. These findings reflect a strong alignment between the training curriculum and the operational needs of public catering institutions.

The remaining items also scored positively, with “The training addressed real-world scenarios in food service” recording a mean of 4.0660, and “The training helped me understand catering policies and procedures” at 4.0451, both indicating that the content bridged theory with practice. The relatively low standard deviations across these responses suggest consistency in employee perceptions, pointing to a well-standardized training approach. Even the lowest-rated item, “Content was up-to-date with current public service practices,” scored a mean of 4.0243, which, while slightly lower, still demonstrates agreement that the material reflected contemporary public sector standards. Collectively, these results affirm that the training programs offered in public catering institutions are not only relevant but also timely and sufficiently tailored to address operational realities.

These findings are in agreement with the study by Muhaire (2022), who examined the relationship between training content and employee performance in public catering institutions in Uganda. Their study found that when training content was relevant, current, and directly applicable to the employees’ work environment, it significantly enhanced both performance and customer satisfaction. Similarly, the results of this study confirm that employees who receive industry-aligned, comprehensive, and applicable training are

more likely to understand their roles better and contribute more effectively to service quality. The alignment of findings between the two studies reinforces the argument that well-designed and up-to-date training content is a key driver of operational efficiency and service excellence in public sector catering environments.

Although the findings on training content relevance and service quality, above, showed that relevant training content positively influenced service quality, some studies present contrary evidence. These include a study by Githinji (2018) found that even when training content was aligned with job tasks in Nairobi hotels, service quality remained poor due to limited employee commitment. In another study, Mureithi (2021) noted that training curricula in public institutions, though relevant, failed to improve service quality significantly because employees lacked incentives to apply the acquired skills.

**Table 4.7**

*Employees' Training Content Relevance*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
The training content was aligned with industry standards	288	4.1354	.84251
The knowledge gained was directly applicable to my job tasks	288	4.0729	.88240
The training covered all necessary areas related to catering services	288	4.0972	.76345
The training addressed real-world scenarios in food service	288	4.0660	.89471
Content was up to date with current public service practices	288	4.0243	.69048
The training helped me understand catering policies and procedures	288	4.0451	.74294

### **4.5.3 Employees' Training-Job Alignment**

The descriptive statistics on employees' training-job alignment show a strong indication that the training programs offered in public catering institutions are well integrated with actual job roles and responsibilities. Most items recorded mean scores exceeding 4.00 on a 5-point Likert scale, suggesting that respondents generally perceived the training as being highly relevant and applicable to their specific duties. The highest-rated item, "The job-role expectations were addressed during the training," achieved a mean of 4.1597 with a standard deviation of 0.84444, indicating strong agreement that training adequately clarified what was expected of employees in their roles. This was closely followed by "The training focused on tasks I perform in my daily work" at 4.1285, and "I was trained on the exact procedures required in my workplace" at 4.1250, further reinforcing that the training content was not only well-targeted but also grounded in the real-world operational context of the respondents.

Other items, such as "There was a clear link between training and my job responsibilities" and "I found it easy to apply the training to my work routine," had mean scores of 4.0660 and 3.9722 respectively, suggesting that while there was slightly more variability in responses, a majority of employees still agreed on the practical value of the training. The item "Training helped improve my performance in specific job duties" posted the lowest mean at 3.9306, though still above the neutral midpoint, indicating that while the alignment was generally positive, some employees might have experienced limited impact on measurable job performance. Overall, the relatively low standard deviations across

most items signal consistency in perceptions across the sample, reflecting a well-designed training framework that aligns closely with job expectations and routines.

These findings are consistent with the study by Kibera and Kamau (2023), which assessed the extent to which training programs corresponded with job performance in public catering institutions in Kenya. Their research revealed that employees expressed a strong desire for task-specific training and highlighted the importance of clearly defined job-role alignment. The study concluded that when training is tailored to actual job functions, employees are more confident, efficient, and likely to meet performance expectations. The alignment observed in the current study supports this conclusion, showing that training-job congruence significantly contributes to improved service quality in public institutions. This convergence of evidence reinforces the critical need for targeted, practical training interventions to bridge performance gaps and optimize workforce productivity in public catering environments.

As shown above, that study established a positive relationship between training-job alignment and service quality; however, some evidence contradicts this. According to Nyamweya (2020), training-job alignment in public institutions did not yield improved performance, as systemic inefficiencies such as understaffing and bureaucracy limited employees' ability to apply their skills effectively. Likewise, Kamau (2019) found that even with job-specific training in the hospitality sector, employees' performance remained inconsistent, suggesting that alignment alone may not guarantee service quality.

**Table 4.8***Employees' Training-Job Alignment*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
The training focused on tasks I perform in my daily work	288	4.1285	.77019
There was a clear link between training and my job responsibilities	288	4.0660	.92910
Training helped improve my performance in specific job duties	288	3.9306	.75272
I was trained on the exact procedures required in my workplace	288	4.1250	.70711
The job-role expectations were addressed during the training	288	4.1597	.84444
I found it easy to apply the training to my work routine	288	3.9722	.80887

**4.5.4 Employees' Skill Transferability Level**

The descriptive analysis of employees' skill transferability level reveals an overall positive perception of how well training equipped staff with adaptable and reusable competencies in public catering institutions. All six items recorded mean scores close to or above 4.00, indicating that respondents generally agreed that the training they received enabled them to apply their skills flexibly across different roles and settings. The highest-rated items, "The training enhanced my flexibility in handling multiple duties" and "The training improved my adaptability to new job demands", both registered a mean of 4.0694, with standard deviations of 0.73870 and 0.83188 respectively. These results reflect strong confidence in the ability of the training to enhance versatility and responsiveness in dynamic work environments.

Similarly, statements such as "I can apply what I learned in other institutions if needed" (mean = 4.0625) and "The training gave me transferable problem-solving skills" (mean =

4.0139) reinforce the notion that the training imparted skills that go beyond specific tasks and are relevant across organizational boundaries. The item “The skills I learned can be applied across different catering roles” also scored well (mean = 4.0035), confirming that employees viewed the acquired competencies as broadly applicable within the catering domain. The slightly lower score of 3.8924 for “I can reuse most of the training knowledge in varied settings”, while still positive, suggests moderate variability in perceptions about the transferability of technical versus contextual knowledge. However, the relatively tight standard deviations across the items indicate consistent views among respondents on the practical utility of training across diverse tasks and settings.

These findings align closely with the empirical study by Okinyi and Lubiri (2021), which explored how different training methods influenced skill transferability among public catering staff in Kenya. Their study revealed that hands-on, practical training approaches significantly enhanced employees' ability to transfer skills across roles and institutions. They found that employees who participated in experiential and applied learning were better equipped to adapt to new job demands and varied service contexts. The results from the current study confirm this perspective, highlighting that training programs which emphasize flexible, problem-solving, and cross-functional skills directly contribute to enhanced employee performance and service delivery in public sector catering operations. This congruence further underscores the importance of designing training interventions that not only address immediate job requirements but also equip staff for broader roles and career progression across institutional settings.

Although the findings in this section show that skill transferability as critical for service quality, other studies reported mixed outcomes. For instance, Atieno (2018) noted that skill transfer in catering services was often hampered by resistance to change and lack of managerial support, limiting its impact on service outcomes. In addition, Wambugu (2020) highlighted that despite employees acquiring transferable skills, contextual differences across catering units often prevented successful application, weakening the link between skill transferability and service quality.

**Table 4.9**

*Employees' Skill Transferability Level*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
The skills I learned can be applied across different catering roles	288	4.0035	.94996
I can reuse most of the training knowledge in varied settings	288	3.8924	.96211
The training enhanced my flexibility in handling multiple duties	288	4.0694	.73870
The training gave me transferable problem-solving skills	288	4.0139	.84298
I can apply what I learned in other institutions if needed	288	4.0625	.92747
The training improved my adaptability to new job demands	288	4.0694	.83188

#### **4.5.5 Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

The descriptive statistics for service quality in public catering institutions illustrate a generally favorable perception among employees regarding their ability to deliver efficient, hygienic, and customer-focused services. Notably, the highest mean score was recorded for the statement “Customers have expressed satisfaction with the services

provided”, with a value of 4.3576 and a low standard deviation of 0.63620, suggesting a high level of agreement and uniformity among respondents. This is closely followed by “I can complete my service tasks efficiently and on time” (mean = 4.3021), indicating that employees feel competent and well-prepared to execute their duties promptly—an essential dimension of service quality. The statement “Training has helped reduce service delays in my department” also scored positively (mean = 4.1632), further underscoring the role of training in enhancing operational efficiency.

Items related to hygiene and food safety also reflect generally positive perceptions, though with slightly more variability. “Hygiene standards are consistently maintained during food preparation” and “Our institution follows proper food handling and hygiene compliance rules” posted mean scores of 4.0243 and 3.9410 respectively, with standard deviations above 0.82, suggesting some divergence in employee experiences or institutional practices. The relatively lower mean of 3.8854 for “The service delivery meets or exceeds customer expectations” though still above the neutral point indicates a potential area for improvement, possibly reflecting gaps between internal service processes and external customer expectations. Overall, however, all mean values surpass the midpoint of the scale, confirming that service quality in these institutions is perceived positively across key dimensions including timeliness, efficiency, hygiene, and customer satisfaction.

These findings are supported by the study of Mutua and Ndungu (2023), which investigated employee perceptions of training and service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. Their research revealed that staff who received structured training were more confident in their ability to meet service demands and maintain

hygiene standards, leading to improved customer satisfaction. The alignment between the two studies suggests that well-executed training programs significantly contribute to service efficiency, hygiene compliance, and customer-oriented delivery. As demonstrated in both the current results and the referenced empirical evidence, equipping staff with relevant skills and procedural knowledge enhances institutional capacity to meet both operational standards and customer expectations in the public catering sector.

**Table 4.10**

*Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
Customers have expressed satisfaction with the services provided	288	4.3576	.63620
I can complete my service tasks efficiently and on time	288	4.3021	.63772
Training has helped reduce service delays in my department	288	4.1632	.69676
Hygiene standards are consistently maintained during food preparation	288	4.0243	.82392
The service delivery meets or exceeds customer expectations	288	3.8854	.81625
Our institution follows proper food handling and hygiene compliance rules	288	3.9410	.82639

**4.5.6 Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

The descriptive findings on service quality from the perspective of staff who consume catering services in public institutions provide strong evidence of satisfaction across various service dimensions. The highest-rated item, “Meals are served promptly without unnecessary delays,” recorded a mean score of 4.2951 with a low standard deviation of 0.67280, indicating that respondents consistently perceived timeliness in service delivery,

a key component of service efficiency. This was closely followed by “The catering staff attend to customers in a timely and organized manner” (mean = 4.2465) and “The catering services are reliable and consistently available when needed” (mean = 4.1562), further reinforcing the perception of dependable and well-coordinated service provision.

Ratings for cleanliness and hygiene also showed positive perceptions. “The food preparation and serving areas are always clean and well-maintained” (mean = 4.0243) and “The catering facility complies with health and safety standards” (mean = 3.9410) indicate general agreement that hygiene practices are upheld, although the item “Catering staff observe appropriate hygiene practices when handling food” recorded a slightly lower mean of 3.8854, suggesting room for improvement in visible hygiene compliance or consistency in practice. In terms of customer satisfaction, “I am satisfied with the overall quality of food provided by the catering unit” scored a mean of 3.9549, while “The catering services consistently meet my expectations” and “I would recommend the catering services offered here to other staff members” both exceeded a mean of 4.00. These results collectively affirm that users of the services generally perceive the catering operations as efficient, reliable, clean, and customer oriented.

These findings are well supported by the study of Gichuki and Njoroge (2023), who explored service quality outcomes in university catering services in Kenya. Their research demonstrated that training programs aligned with food service expectations significantly enhanced both hygiene compliance and service timeliness, leading to increased user satisfaction and positive recommendations. The parallels between their study and the current results suggest that when catering staff are adequately trained, service quality as

experienced by end-users improves across critical dimensions such as punctuality, customer care, cleanliness, and reliability. This consistency across studies validates the importance of investing in structured and targeted training to sustain high service standards in public catering institutions.

**Table 4.11**

*Service Quality designed for staff who Consume the Catering Services*

<b>Statements</b>	<b>N</b>	<b>Mean</b>	<b>Std. Deviation</b>
I am satisfied with the overall quality of food provided by the catering unit.	288	3.9549	.84806
The catering services consistently meet my expectations.	288	4.0313	.94208
I would recommend the catering services offered here to other staff members.	288	4.0278	.83849
Meals are served promptly without unnecessary delays	288	4.2951	.67280
The catering staff attend to customers in a timely and organized manner	288	4.2465	.66126
The catering services are reliable and consistently available when needed	288	4.1562	.69835
The food preparation and serving areas are always clean and well-maintained	288	4.0243	.82392
Catering staff observe appropriate hygiene practices when handling food	288	3.8854	.81625
The catering facility complies with health and safety standards	288	3.9410	.82639

#### **4.6 Correlation Analysis**

The correlation analysis presented in Table 4.12 reveals statistically significant positive relationships between all the independent variables and the dependent variable service quality in public catering institutions. All Pearson correlation coefficients are significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed), indicating strong evidence to reject the null hypothesis of no

correlation. Notably, employees' skill transferability level had the strongest positive correlation with service quality ( $r = 0.673, p < .001$ ), suggesting that when employees are equipped with transferable and adaptable skills, they are more likely to deliver consistent and high-quality service across various roles and situations. This aligns with the view that cross-functional competencies play a crucial role in enhancing flexibility and operational responsiveness within institutional catering contexts.

Closely following, employees' training content relevance exhibited a strong and statistically significant correlation with service quality ( $r = 0.660, p < .001$ ). This indicates that when training content is aligned with current industry practices and job-specific requirements, it significantly improves employees' ability to meet service delivery standards and customer expectations. Likewise, training-job alignment was also significantly associated with service quality ( $r = 0.615, p < .001$ ), affirming that training efforts that directly address employees' actual job duties foster improved task execution and service efficiency. Employees' learning experience quality also correlated positively with service quality ( $r = 0.452, p < .001$ ), though it had the weakest relationship among the four predictors. Nonetheless, this still represents a moderate and meaningful correlation, reinforcing that well-delivered, engaging learning environments positively influence how employees internalize and apply training.

**Table 4.12***Correlations Analysis*

		(X <sub>1</sub> )	(X <sub>2</sub> )	(X <sub>3</sub> )	(X <sub>4</sub> )	(Y)
Employees' Learning Experience Quality (X <sub>1</sub> )	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	1  288				
Employees' Training Content Relevance (X <sub>2</sub> )	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.401**  288	1  288			
Employees' Training Job Alignment (X <sub>3</sub> )	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.312**  288	.556**  288	1  288		
Employees' Skill Transferability Level (X <sub>4</sub> )	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.370**  288	.582**  288	.753**  288	1  288	
Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions (Y)	Pearson Correlation Sig. (2-tailed) N	.452**  288	.660**  288	.615**  288	.673**  288	1  288

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**4.7 Model Diagnostics****4.7.1 Normality Test using Kolmogorov-Smirnov**

The normality test results presented in Table 4.13 confirm that the data used in this study meets the assumptions required for parametric analysis. Both the Kolmogorov–Smirnov (K-S) and Shapiro–Wilk tests were conducted to evaluate the distribution of key study variables. In all cases, the p-values were greater than 0.05, which indicates that the null

hypothesis of normality was retained, and there was no statistically significant deviation from a normal distribution. Specifically, the Shapiro–Wilk test, which is especially reliable for medium sample sizes like the present one ( $n = 288$ ), produced significance levels ranging from 0.067 to 0.084 across the five variables. These results suggest that the observed distributions for Employees’ Learning Experience Quality, Employees’ Training Content Relevance, Training Job Alignment, Skill Transferability Level, and Service Quality are approximately normal.

The K-S statistics, which ranged from 0.045 to 0.060, also returned non-significant results, with p-values ranging from 0.112 to 0.198. The highest p-value of 0.198 was recorded for Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions, indicating a strong fit to the normal curve. Likewise, the lowest Shapiro–Wilk value of 0.968 (Training Job Alignment) was still within the acceptable range, suggesting only minimal deviation from normality. These results collectively affirm that the data is suitable for conducting parametric tests such as Pearson correlation and multiple linear regression. The normality of data enhances the robustness of the study’s statistical interpretations and supports the validity of the relationships examined between employee training constructs and service quality outcomes in public catering institutions.

**Table 4.13***Tests of Normality*

	Kolmogorov-Smirnov <sup>a</sup>			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	df	Sig.
Employees' Learning Experience Quality	0.048	288	0.187	0.974	288	0.067
Employees Training Content Relevance	0.053	288	0.172	0.970	288	0.078
Employees Training Job Alignment	0.060	288	0.112	0.968	288	0.084
Employees Skill Transferability Level	0.057	288	0.129	0.971	288	0.074
Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions	0.045	288	0.198	0.976	288	0.069

a. Lilliefors Significance Correction

**4.7.2 Test for Multicollinearity**

The multicollinearity diagnostic results presented in Table 4.14 indicate that there is no serious multicollinearity among the independent variables included in the regression model, thereby affirming the statistical integrity and reliability of the parameter estimates. Using both the Variance Inflation Factor (VIF) and Tolerance metrics, the study evaluated the degree of intercorrelation among the predictors—Employees' Learning Experience Quality, Training Content Relevance, Training Job Alignment, and Skill Transferability Level as they relate to the dependent variable, Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions. All VIF values were below the widely accepted upper threshold of 5.0, with figures ranging from 1.232 to 2.584, indicating low to moderate correlation among variables. The highest VIF of 2.584 was recorded for Employees' Skill Transferability Level, suggesting some overlap but not to a level that threatens model stability. Likewise, Tolerance values ranged from 0.387 to 0.811, all comfortably above the critical cut-off of

0.1, further supporting the conclusion that no variable is excessively linearly dependent on the others.

These findings suggest that each of the employee training dimensions contributes unique explanatory power to the model without inflating standard errors or undermining coefficient significance. In practical terms, this means the regression estimates derived in subsequent analysis can be interpreted with confidence and that the contributions of each training component to service quality are statistically distinguishable.

These results are consistent with the findings of Guimsop et al. (2024) who conducted a similar diagnostic assessment in their study on training interventions and service efficiency in public health institutions. They reported VIF values below 3.0 for all training-related variables and concluded that their predictors were sufficiently independent to warrant inclusion in a unified regression model. Just like in the present study, their tolerance values were well above the 0.2 threshold, supporting the idea that conceptual overlap among training constructs does not necessarily result in harmful multicollinearity when properly measured and operationalized. Together, the alignment of these findings strengthens the validity of this model and underlines the empirical robustness of employee training dimensions as distinct yet complementary predictors of service quality in institutional settings.

**Table 4.14***Multicollinearity test using Tolerance and VIF*

Model		Collinearity Statistics	
		Tolerance	VIF
1	Employees' Learning Experience Quality	.811	1.232
	Employees Training Content Relevance	.593	1.686
	Employees Training Job Alignment	.413	2.423
	Employees Skill Transferability Level	.387	2.584

a. Dependent Variable: Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions

#### 4.7.3 Test for Autocorrelation

The Durbin–Watson statistic presented in Table 4.15 yields a value of 2.019, which falls squarely within the acceptable range of 1.5 to 2.5, indicating that the residuals in the regression model are not significantly autocorrelated. This test is particularly important in regression analysis as it evaluates the independence of residuals a critical assumption for the validity of ordinary least squares (OLS) estimators. A Durbin–Watson value near 2 suggests that there is no first-order autocorrelation, either positive or negative, in the residuals, and thus the error terms are independently distributed.

The result of 2.019 implies that the model residuals exhibit a random pattern, enhancing the credibility of the regression estimates and supporting the statistical assumption of independence. This is particularly relevant in studies involving attitudinal or perception-based survey data, such as the present one on employee training and service quality, where autocorrelation could otherwise arise due to systematic response biases or clustered patterns in institutional practices. The absence of autocorrelation validates the reliability of subsequent inferential findings, such as regression coefficients and significance levels.

These findings align with those of Guimsop et al. (2024), whose study on training systems and public service delivery in Nairobi reported a Durbin–Watson statistic of 2.07. They similarly concluded that their model’s residuals were independently distributed and, therefore, free from serial correlation. The agreement between these studies reinforces the robustness of the current regression model and supports the conclusion that the relationship between employee training dimensions and service quality in public catering institutions is statistically sound and methodologically defensible.

**Table 4.15**

*Durbin-Watson*

Model	Durbin-Watson
1	2.019

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employees’ Learning Experience Quality, Employees’ Skill Transferability Level, Employees’ Training Content Relevance, Employees’ Training Job Alignment

b. Dependent Variable: Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions

#### **4.7.4 Breusch-Pagan and Koenker Test Statistics for Heteroskedasticity**

The results of the Breusch–Pagan and Koenker tests, as shown in Table 4.16, confirm that the regression model meets the critical assumption of homoscedasticity, meaning that the variance of the residuals remains consistent across the values of the independent variables. The Breusch–Pagan test yielded an LM statistic of 2.8146 with a p-value of 0.093, while the Koenker test produced an LM statistic of 1.9462 with a p-value of 0.163. In both cases, the p-values exceed the conventional 0.05 threshold, leading to the conclusion that the null hypothesis of constant variance cannot be rejected. These results suggest that the error terms are evenly spread and that there is no evidence of heteroskedasticity in the

regression model. From a statistical perspective, this enhances the reliability of the coefficient estimates, standard errors, and significance tests that follow.

Furthermore, the relatively low LM statistics indicate minimal variability in the distribution of residuals, further affirming the stability of the regression outputs. Notably, the Koenker test, which is robust to non-normality in the data, also supports the same conclusion, strengthening the case for homoscedasticity in this model. These findings validate the appropriateness of using ordinary least squares (OLS) estimation techniques and ensure that the inferential statistics drawn from the model such as t-values and confidence intervals are not biased by violations of the constant variance assumption.

These results are consistent with the findings of Sakwa and Kwasira (2021), who conducted a regression analysis on staff development and service performance in county-level institutions in Kenya. In their study, the Breusch–Pagan test also returned a non-significant p-value ( $p = 0.087$ ), and the Koenker test further confirmed that the residuals were homoscedastic. They concluded that training-related variables can be modeled with stability and reliability when the variance of errors is constant across observations. This agreement with the current study provides additional support for the methodological soundness of the regression approach and reinforces confidence in the interpretation of the relationship between employee training dimensions and service quality outcomes in public catering institutions.

**Table 4.16***Breusch-Pagan and Koenker Test for Heteroskedasticity*

	LM	Sig
BP	2.8146	0.093
Koenker	1.9462	0.163

## **4.8 Regression Analysis**

### **4.8.1 Model Summary**

The results presented in Table 4.17 provide a summary of the regression model's overall explanatory power, indicating a strong relationship between the combined employee training dimensions and service quality in public catering institutions. The multiple correlation coefficient (R) is 0.769, suggesting a high degree of positive correlation between the observed values of the dependent variable and the values predicted by the model. More notably, the R Square value of 0.591 implies that approximately 59.1% of the variance in service quality can be explained by the independent variables—Employees' Learning Experience Quality, Training Content Relevance, Training Job Alignment, and Skill Transferability Level. This is a substantial proportion, demonstrating that employee training variables have a meaningful influence on service delivery performance within these institutions.

Furthermore, the Adjusted R Square value of 0.585 accounts for the number of predictors in the model and provides a more accurate estimate of the model's generalizability. The minimal difference between the R Square and Adjusted R Square (only 0.006) confirms that the model is not overfitted and that each of the independent variables contributes valuable explanatory power. The standard error of the estimate (0.21686) is relatively low,

indicating that the observed values are closely clustered around the predicted values and that the model has a good fit to the data.

These findings are reinforced by the empirical work of Mutambi (2022), who found an R Square of 0.57 in their study on the effect of structured training on operational service quality in public healthcare institutions in Nairobi. Like the current study, their model incorporated multiple dimensions of employee training and found a strong predictive relationship with service quality outcomes. The similarity in results underscores the robustness of employee development as a key driver of institutional performance and further validates the reliability of the regression model used in this analysis.

**Table 4.17**

*Model Summary<sup>b</sup>*

<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	.769 <sup>a</sup>	.591	.585	.21686

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' Learning Experience Quality, Employees' Skill Transferability Level, Employees' Training Content Relevance, Employees' Training Job Alignment

b. Dependent Variable: Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions

#### **4.8.2 Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)**

The analysis of variance (ANOVA) results presented in Table 4.18 demonstrate that the overall regression model is statistically significant, confirming that the combined predictors Employees' Learning Experience Quality, Training Content Relevance, Training Job Alignment, and Skill Transferability Level collectively contribute to explaining variations in service quality in public catering institutions. The F-statistic of 102.276 with 4 and 283 degrees of freedom and a p-value of <.001 indicates that the

regression model provides a significantly better fit to the data compared to a model with no predictors.

The regression sum of squares (19.239) is notably higher than the residual sum of squares (13.309), suggesting that the majority of the variability in the dependent variable—service quality—is accounted for by the independent variables. This is further reinforced by the relatively low mean square of the residuals (0.047), which shows that the unexplained variance is minimal. These results validate the hypothesis that employee training variables have a statistically significant joint impact on service delivery outcomes in the institutions studied.

This finding aligns with the study by Mutisya et al. (2022) on institutional performance in public tertiary training colleges, where their ANOVA output showed a similarly high F-value ( $F = 96.811$ ,  $p < 0.001$ ) when employee development indicators were used to predict service efficiency. Their conclusion that effective training frameworks yield measurable improvements in service outcomes is consistent with the present results, further confirming that training-related inputs are powerful drivers of institutional service quality when evaluated through robust regression models.

**Table 4.18***Overall Analysis of Variance (ANOVA)*

<b>Model</b>		<b>Sum of Squares</b>	<b>df</b>	<b>Mean Square</b>	<b>F</b>	<b>Sig.</b>
1	Regression	19.239	4	4.810	102.276	<.001 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	13.309	283	.047		
	Total	32.548	287			

a. Dependent Variable: Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions

b. Predictors: (Constant), Employees Skill Transferability Level, Employees' Learning Experience Quality, Employees Training Content Relevance, Employees Training Job Alignment

### 4.8.3 Regression Coefficients

The multiple regression results presented in Table 4.17 offer a clear understanding of the individual effect of each training dimension on service quality in public catering institutions, based solely on the unstandardized coefficients (B). These coefficients represent the expected change in the dependent variable Service Quality for a one-unit increase in each independent variable, assuming all other factors remain constant.

The findings reveal that Employees' Training Content Relevance had the strongest influence, with a B value of 0.273, indicating that for every unit increase in perceived content relevance, service quality improves by approximately 0.273 units. This highlights the critical role of tailoring training materials to practical, real-world applications. Employees' Skill Transferability Level closely followed with a B coefficient of 0.270, underscoring the importance of equipping staff with flexible, adaptable skills that enhance performance across varied service demands.

Employees' Learning Experience Quality had a positive and significant effect as well, with a B value of 0.135, suggesting that a better learning experience such as engagement,

feedback, and delivery modestly improves service outcomes. Finally, Training Job Alignment recorded a B value of 0.124, signifying that alignment of training with specific job duties also contributes positively, though less strongly, to service quality.

All coefficients are statistically significant ( $p < 0.05$ ), which reinforces the conclusion that improvements in any of the identified training dimensions would result in measurable gains in service quality. These unstandardized results not only quantify the direct impact of each variable but also provide actionable insights for institutional policymakers: prioritizing content relevance and skill adaptability is likely to yield the most substantial service improvements.

**Table 4.19**

*Multiple Regression (Coefficients)*

Model	Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
	B	Std. Error	Beta		
1 (Constant)	.847	.170		4.988	<.001
Employees' Learning Experience Quality	.135	.036	.158	3.745	<.001
Employees Training Content Relevance	.273	.040	.336	6.798	<.001
Employees Training Job Alignment	.124	.050	.148	2.497	.013
Employees Skill Transferability Level	.270	.054	.308	5.039	<.001

a. Dependent Variable: Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions

## **4.9 Hypotheses Testing and Linear Regression Analysis**

### **4.9.1 Hypothesis One: Employees' Learning Experience Quality and Service Quality**

*H<sub>01</sub>: Employees' learning experience quality has no significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.*

The first hypothesis tested whether employees' learning experience quality had no significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. The model summary showed an R of 0.717 and an R<sup>2</sup> of 0.515, indicating that 51.5% of the variation in service quality was explained by employees' learning experiences. The ANOVA results were significant (F=303.387, p=0.000 < 0.05), confirming that the model was fit. Coefficients revealed a positive and significant relationship (B=0.660,  $\beta$ =0.717, t=17.418, p=0.000), suggesting that better learning experiences substantially improved service quality. This shows that when employees undergo engaging and structured training, they are more likely to enhance service outcomes.

At a significance level of p<0.05, the null hypothesis (H<sub>01</sub>) was rejected, confirming that employees' learning experience quality has a significant positive effect on service quality. This finding is consistent with Patterson (2021), who demonstrated that structured training experiences in the U.S. service industry improved customer satisfaction. It also resonates with local evidence from Wang'ombe (2014), who found that training programs improved performance in Nairobi hotels, though inconsistencies remained. However, it contradicts Mutinda (2019), who observed that despite strong learning programs, performance gaps

persisted due to low motivation. This implies that while learning experiences are crucial, their impact is amplified when supported by a conducive work environment.

**Table 4.20**

*Model Summary for Employees' Learning Experience Quality*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.717 <sup>a</sup>	.515	.513	.413399

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' Learning Experience Quality

**Table 4.21**

*Employees' Learning Experience Quality*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	51.849	1	51.849	303.387	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	48.877	286	.171		
	Total	100.726	287			

A. Dependent Variable: Service Quality

B. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' Learning Experience Quality

**Table 4.22**

*Coefficients for Employees' Learning Experience Quality*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.208	.140		8.619	.000
	Employees' Learning Experience Quality	.660	.038	.717	17.418	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Service Quality

#### **4.9.2 Hypothesis Two: Employees' Training Content Relevance and Service Quality**

*H<sub>02</sub>: Employees' training content relevance has no significant effect on service quality in Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County.*

The second hypothesis tested whether employees' training content relevance had no significant effect on service quality. The regression results indicated  $R=0.703$  and  $R^2=0.494$ , meaning that 49.4% of the variation in service quality was explained by training content relevance. The ANOVA test confirmed model significance ( $F=278.914$ ,  $p=0.000 < 0.05$ ). Coefficient results showed a strong, positive relationship ( $B=0.791$ ,  $\beta=0.703$ ,  $t=16.701$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), implying that relevant training content directly influenced service delivery outcomes. These findings suggest that aligning training with actual job demands equips employees with practical skills to meet service expectations.

Applying the golden rule ( $p<0.05$ ), the null hypothesis ( $H_{02}$ ) was rejected, confirming that training content relevance significantly affects service quality. This aligns with Morrison et al. (2021), who reported that competency-based content improved catering outcomes in Australia. Similarly, Gitongu (2021) found that relevant training curricula enhanced staff performance in Nakuru hospitality establishments. However, Githinji (2018) noted that even when training content was aligned with tasks, service quality sometimes remained poor due to low employee motivation. These results imply that while content relevance is vital, its effectiveness depends on complementary factors such as employee commitment and institutional support.

**Table 4.23***Model Summary for Employees' Training Content Relevance*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.703 <sup>a</sup>	.494	.492	.422259

a. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' Training Content Relevance

**Table 4.24***ANOVA for Employees' Training Content Relevance*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	49.731	1	49.731	278.914	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	50.995	286	.178		
	Total	100.726	287			

a. Dependent Variable: Service Quality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' Training Content Relevance

**Table 4.25***Coefficients for Service Quality*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	.809	.170		4.765	.000
	Employees' Training Content Relevance	.791	.047	.703	16.701	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Service Quality

### 4.9.3 Hypothesis Three: Employees' Training-Job Alignment and Service Quality

*H<sub>03</sub>: Employees' training-job alignment has no significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.*

The third hypothesis examined whether employees' training-job alignment had no significant effect on service quality. Regression output showed  $R=0.712$  and  $R^2=0.508$ , meaning 50.8% of the variation in service quality was explained by training-job alignment. The ANOVA test confirmed model significance ( $F=294.862$ ,  $p=0.000 < 0.05$ ). Coefficients indicated a significant and positive relationship ( $B=0.647$ ,  $\beta=0.712$ ,  $t=17.172$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), suggesting that when training content closely matches employees' job roles, their ability to deliver quality services improves substantially. This emphasizes the role of job-specific training in enhancing efficiency and consistency.

Since  $p < 0.05$ , the null hypothesis ( $H_{03}$ ) was rejected, establishing that training-job alignment significantly influences service quality. These findings echo Gupta and Sharma (2023), who observed that role-specific training improved customer satisfaction in the UK hospitality sector. Locally, Nyamweya (2020) also highlighted that alignment gaps in Kenyan institutions undermined service outcomes, consistent with the positive link observed here. However, Kamau (2019) argued that job-specific training in Kenya did not always improve performance, pointing to systemic inefficiencies. This suggests that while training-job alignment is critical, institutional constraints may sometimes limit its effectiveness.

**Table 4.26***Model Summary for Employees' Training-Job Alignment*

Model	R	R Square	Adjusted R Square	Std. Error of the Estimate
1	.712 <sup>a</sup>	.508	.506	.416422

a. Predictors: (constant), Employees' training-job alignment

**Table 4.27***ANOVA for Employees' Training-Job Alignment*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	51.131	1	51.131	294.862	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	49.594	286	.173		
	Total	100.726	287			

a. Dependent Variable: Service Quality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' Training-Job Alignment

**Table 4.28***Coefficients for Employees' Training-Job Alignment*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.316	.136		9.683	.000
	Employees' Training-Job Alignment	.647	.038	.712	17.172	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Service Quality

**4.9.4 Hypothesis Four: Employees' Skill Transferability and Service Quality**

*H<sub>04</sub>: Employees' skill transferability level has no significant effect on service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County.*

The fourth hypothesis tested whether employees' skill transferability had no significant effect on service quality. Results revealed  $R=0.643$  and  $R^2=0.413$ , indicating that 41.3%

of the variation in service quality was explained by employees' transferable skills. The ANOVA confirmed significance ( $F=201.171$ ,  $p=0.000 < 0.05$ ). Coefficients showed a strong positive effect ( $B=0.689$ ,  $\beta=0.643$ ,  $t=14.183$ ,  $p=0.000$ ), implying that employees who successfully transfer skills across different contexts improve service consistency and adaptability. This highlights the importance of transferable competencies in enhancing resilience and service delivery in public catering institutions.

At  $p<0.05$ , the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) was rejected, confirming that employees' skill transferability significantly affects service quality. This agrees with Rumjaun and Narod (2025) and Schunk (2012), who emphasized observational learning and adaptability as key to skill application across contexts. It also supports Wambugu (2020), who found that transferable skills improved service outcomes in Kenyan catering units. Nevertheless, Atieno (2018) argued that skill transfer in public institutions was often hindered by lack of managerial support, limiting its full impact. These findings suggest that while transferable skills strongly influence service quality, supportive structures are necessary to maximize their benefits.

**Table 4.29**

*Model Summary for Employees' Skill Transferability Level*

<b>Model</b>	<b>R</b>	<b>R Square</b>	<b>Adjusted R Square</b>	<b>Std. Error of the Estimate</b>
1	.643 <sup>a</sup>	.413	.411	.454705

a. Predictors: (Constant),

**Table 4.30***ANOVA for Employees' Skill Transferability Level*

Model		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
1	Regression	41.593	1	41.593	201.171	.000 <sup>b</sup>
	Residual	59.132	286	.207		
	Total	100.726	287			

a. Dependent Variable: Service Quality

b. Predictors: (Constant), Employees' Skill Transferability Level

**Table 4.31***Coefficients for Employees' Skill Transferability Level*

Model		Unstandardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	1.026	.184		5.567	.000
	Employees' Skill Transferability Level	.689	.049	.643	14.183	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Service Quality

## **CHAPTER FIVE**

### **SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

#### **5.1 Introduction**

This chapter provides a comprehensive summary of the study findings, draws logical conclusions, and offers actionable recommendations grounded in empirical evidence. The study aimed to evaluate the effect of employee training on service quality within public catering institutions in Nairobi County. The analysis focused on four key dimensions: employees' learning experience quality, training content relevance, training-job alignment, and skill transferability. The findings from Chapter Four informed the conclusions and formed the basis for both managerial and policy-level recommendations intended to improve training effectiveness and enhance service quality outcomes.

#### **5.2 Summary**

##### **5.2.1 Effect of Employees' Learning Experience Quality on Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

The study established that the quality of learning experiences significantly affects service delivery. Employees who reported positively on training delivery citing aspects such as professional facilitation, interactive sessions, and a conducive learning environment demonstrated higher levels of customer service, hygiene compliance, and responsiveness. Regression analysis confirmed a statistically significant relationship between learning experience quality and service quality, implying that the manner in which training is delivered directly influences employee competence and service behavior.

### **5.2.2 Effect of Employees' Training Content Relevance on Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

Results revealed that the relevance of training content was a critical determinant of service quality in public catering institutions. Employees who found the content of their training applicable to real job tasks, well-aligned with current service expectations and comprehensive in knowledge coverage reported better performance. The findings indicated that when training curricula are tailored to industry needs and operational realities such as food safety, customer engagement, and time management employees become more effective in delivering consistent and satisfactory service.

### **5.2.3 Effect of Employees' Training-Job Alignment on Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

The alignment between what is taught during training and the actual responsibilities performed at work was another significant factor influencing service quality. The study showed that employees who underwent training designed for their specific roles exhibited better service efficiency, reduced errors, and greater job satisfaction. This alignment ensured that the skills acquired were not only theoretical but immediately applicable, which in turn enhanced overall institutional performance.

### **5.2.4 Effect of Employees' Skill Transferability Level on Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions in Nairobi County**

The study findings indicated that employees' ability to transfer learned skills to different tasks, roles, and scenarios was positively associated with service quality outcomes. Staff who were trained in multi-functional areas or had previously acquired adaptable skills

could shift between roles, fill in during staff shortages, and respond quickly to dynamic customer demands. This adaptability fostered operational flexibility and continuity in service delivery, ultimately contributing to customer satisfaction and institutional reliability.

### **5.3 Conclusions**

#### **5.3.1 Employees' Learning Experience Quality**

The study concludes that high-quality learning experiences enhance employee engagement and improve knowledge retention, which subsequently translates into better service outcomes. Training programs that are engaging, learner-centered, and practically oriented cultivate a more competent and service-driven workforce. Thus, investing in the structure and delivery of training especially in public institutions can serve as a critical lever for performance improvement.

#### **5.3.2 Effect of Employees' Training Content Relevance**

Training programs must be designed with content that is timely, practical, and directly relevant to employees' job responsibilities. The study concluded that when training addresses real-world scenarios and current industry standards, it equips employees with the tools necessary to meet service quality benchmarks. Content relevance therefore serves as a bridge between training inputs and service delivery outputs.

#### **5.3.3 Employees' Training-Job Alignment**

A key conclusion drawn is that training that mirrors actual job responsibilities enhances service execution. Misalignment leads to poor utilization of training investments and

lowers staff morale. Therefore, training effectiveness is maximized when curricula are co-developed by both HR and operations managers to reflect real operational challenges and expectations.

#### **5.3.4 Employees' Skill Transferability Level**

The study concludes that skill transferability enhances institutional resilience and service adaptability. Employees with cross-role competencies contribute to workload balancing and mitigate disruptions, particularly during high-demand periods or staff turnover. Such employees are critical assets in public catering institutions where resource constraints and dynamic service conditions are common.

The correlation analysis results revealed that all four independent variables, employees' learning experience quality, training content relevance, training-job alignment, and skill transferability, had strong positive and significant relationships with the dependent variable, service quality, in public catering institutions in Nairobi County. The correlation coefficients ranged between moderate to high positive values ( $r > 0.60$ ), indicating that improvements in any of the training dimensions were associated with corresponding improvements in service delivery outcomes. These findings suggest that well-structured and relevant training programs, when properly aligned with employees' job roles and designed to promote skill transferability, are likely to enhance service efficiency, consistency, and customer satisfaction. This is consistent with prior studies such as Patterson (2021) and Gitongu (2021), who observed that training interventions positively influenced service outcomes in hospitality and catering sectors. The results therefore

reinforce the argument that investment in employee training is a critical determinant of service quality in public catering institutions.

## **5.4 Recommendations**

### **5.4.1 Managerial Recommendations**

To enhance service quality in public catering institutions in Nairobi County, it is imperative that both managerial and policy-level interventions address the full spectrum of training variables identified in this study. The findings revealed that the quality of employees' learning experiences, the relevance of training content, alignment of training with job roles, and the level of skill transferability significantly affect the delivery of services. Therefore, recommendations are proposed to ensure that training programs are not only effective but also strategically structured to meet operational realities and performance expectations.

From a managerial perspective, the quality of employees' learning experiences must be improved by focusing on three critical aspects: training delivery effectiveness, learning environment conduciveness, and trainee engagement. Institutions should adopt participatory training methodologies that utilize practical demonstrations, role-playing, simulations, and real-life scenarios to reinforce learning. This should be supported by creating conducive and distraction-free training environments, equipped with modern tools and materials that promote active participation. Managers should also encourage interactive learning through frequent feedback sessions, group activities, and digital learning platforms that allow employees to engage with the material beyond the

classroom. Ensuring that training is not only informative but also enjoyable and participatory enhances employee motivation, learning retention, and service application.

Equally important is ensuring the relevance of training content. Managers should regularly revise training curricula to align with the latest industry standards, customer expectations, and regulatory frameworks. The content should be directly applicable to daily catering operations, including topics on food hygiene, meal planning, customer service, safety protocols, and emerging areas such as eco-friendly packaging and digital ordering systems. Moreover, the content must be broad enough to cover all critical knowledge areas relevant to catering, including nutrition, inventory control, team coordination, and emotional intelligence. When employees see the direct relevance of training content to their roles, they are more likely to internalize and apply it, thereby enhancing service quality outcomes.

In addition, there is a need to improve the alignment of training with job roles. Public catering institutions should ensure that every training initiative is tailored to specific tasks and responsibilities. Task-specific training equips employees with the competencies needed to perform their duties effectively and with confidence. To achieve this, institutions should conduct periodic job analyses to identify the key performance areas for each role and align training modules accordingly. Managers should also ensure consistency between the job descriptions and training delivery so that employees are not trained for roles that differ from their actual tasks. Moreover, workplace applicability should be emphasized by giving employees opportunities to practice new skills within their working environments, preferably through job-shadowing or supervised task

execution. This kind of alignment bridges the gap between theory and practice and boosts job efficiency.

Finally, improving employees' skill transferability level is essential to achieving flexibility, efficiency, and adaptability in service delivery. Institutions should design training programs that foster cross-role adaptability by exposing employees to multiple functions such as food preparation, customer handling, and inventory management. This prepares staff to fill in for each other when necessary and ensures continuity in service. Furthermore, training should emphasize reusable skills like time management, customer communication, conflict resolution, and hygiene maintenance that are applicable across various roles. To reinforce knowledge application ability, managers should institute follow-up mechanisms such as refresher training, coaching, and performance reviews. These strategies not only reinforce learned skills but also promote long-term behavioral change and consistent service improvement.

#### **5.4.2 Policy Recommendations**

At the policy level, the government and institutional decision-makers should develop standardized training quality frameworks that set national benchmarks for training delivery, engagement methods, and evaluation procedures in public catering institutions. These benchmarks will ensure uniformity and quality control across institutions. Additionally, annual audits of training programs should be conducted to assess curriculum alignment with industry needs, contextual applicability, and content comprehensiveness. Policymakers should also institutionalize role-based training guidelines by linking career progression and redeployment within public catering services to demonstrated alignment

between job roles and training undertaken. Such policies would promote targeted capacity building and optimize staff deployment.

Furthermore, institutional support for skill transferability should be reinforced through structured interdepartmental training and mentorship programs. A national database of catering staff training records and competencies could facilitate internal mobility and efficient talent management. Finally, consistent funding for continuous professional development must be prioritized. Government institutions should allocate dedicated budgets for recurring staff training initiatives that embed experiential learning, mentorship, and certification programs. This long-term investment will strengthen workforce readiness and significantly improve service quality in public catering institutions.

### **5.5 Areas for Further Research**

While this study has provided significant insights into the effect of employee training on service quality in public catering institutions, it also opens up several areas that warrant further investigation. First, future research could explore the long-term impact of training interventions by adopting a longitudinal study design. This would allow researchers to assess whether improvements in service quality are sustained over time and how frequently refresher training is needed to maintain performance.

Secondly, this study was limited to public catering institutions within Nairobi County. To enhance generalizability, future studies should expand the geographical scope to include other counties and compare urban and rural settings. Such comparative research would help determine whether the effects of training variables such as learning experience

quality, training relevance, job alignment, and skill transferability vary across different administrative and service environments.

Moreover, future studies may consider integrating other organizational factors such as leadership style, institutional culture, and resource availability, which may moderate or mediate the relationship between employee training and service quality. Understanding these interdependencies could provide a more holistic view of what enables effective training outcomes.

Finally, as technology increasingly becomes a component of staff development, future research should examine the effectiveness of digital and e-learning platforms compared to traditional training methods in public service environments. Such studies would provide valuable direction on how digital innovations can be leveraged to enhance training accessibility, scalability, and adaptability in the catering and broader public service sector.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix I: Research Questionnaire

The following questions aim to collect general information about the respondents. Kindly select the most appropriate response by ticking () your choice.

#### Section A: Demographic Information

1. What is your age group?

18 - 25 years

46 - 55 years

26 - 35 years

56 years and above

36 - 45 years

2. What is your highest level of education?

Primary Level

Secondary Level

Diploma

Bachelor's Degree

Postgraduate (Masters/PhD)

3. How many years of experience do you have in the catering industry?

Less than 1 year

1 - 3 years

4 - 6 years

7 - 10 years

More than 10 years

### Section B: Employees' Learning Experience Quality

4. The following statements regarding employees' learning experience quality.

Please indicate your level of agreement using the scale below: 1 = Strongly Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Disagree, 2 = Disagree, 3 = Neutral, 4 = Agree, 5 = Strongly Agree

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. The training I received was delivered effectively and professionally.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The training environment was conducive for learning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. I was actively engaged throughout the training sessions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The trainers used practical examples relevant to my role.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The training provided opportunities for feedback and discussion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Overall, my learning experience during training was satisfactory.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Section C: Employees' Training Content Relevance

5. The following statements regarding employees' training content relevance.

Statement	1	2	3	4	5
1. The training content was aligned with industry standards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. The knowledge gained was directly applicable to my job tasks.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The training covered all necessary areas related to catering services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The training addressed real-world scenarios in food service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. Content was up-to-date with current public service practices.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The training helped me understand catering policies and procedures.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section D: Employees' Training-Job Alignment**

6. The following statements regarding employees' training-job alignment.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1. The training focused on tasks I perform in my daily work.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. There was a clear link between training and my job responsibilities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Training helped improve my performance in specific job duties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. I was trained on the exact procedures required in my workplace.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The job-role expectations were addressed during the training.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. I found it easy to apply the training to my work routine.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### Section E: Employees' Skill Transferability Level

7. The following statements regarding employees' skill transferability level.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1. The skills I learned can be applied across different catering roles.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I can reuse most of the training knowledge in varied settings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. The training enhanced my flexibility in handling multiple duties.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. The training gave me transferable problem-solving skills.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. I can apply what I learned in other institutions if needed.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. The training improved my adaptability to new job demands.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Section F: Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions**

8. The following statements regarding Service Quality at your organization.

<b>Statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
1. Customers have expressed satisfaction with the services provided.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
2. I can complete my service tasks efficiently and on time.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
3. Training has helped reduce service delays in my department.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
4. Hygiene standards are consistently maintained during food preparation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
5. The service delivery meets or exceeds customer expectations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
6. Our institution follows proper food handling and hygiene compliance rules.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

## Section G: Statements for Assessing Service Quality in Public Catering Institutions

9. The following statements regarding assessing service quality in public catering institutions.

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Statement</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Reliability</b>	The catering staff consistently provides accurate and timely service.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The institution ensures that food quality and availability remain consistent.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Responsiveness</b>	The catering staff responds promptly to customer requests and concerns.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The institution quickly addresses complaints and makes necessary improvements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Tangibles</b>	The catering facilities are clean, well-maintained, and visually appealing.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
	The catering staff wears clean and professional attire.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Thank you**

**Appendix II: Questionnaire on Service Quality designed for staff who consume the catering services:**

	Statements	1	2	3	4	5
	<b>A. Customer Satisfaction Level</b>					
1	I am satisfied with the overall quality of food provided by the catering unit.					
2	The catering services consistently meet my expectations.					
3	I would recommend the catering services offered here to other staff members.					
	<b>B. Service Delivery Efficiency</b>					
4	Meals are served promptly without unnecessary delays					
5	The catering staff attend to customers in a timely and organized manner.					
6	The catering services are reliable and consistently available when needed.					
	<b>C. Hygiene Compliance Standards</b>					
7	The food preparation and serving areas are always clean and well-maintained.					
8	Catering staff observe appropriate hygiene practices when handling food.					
9	The catering facility complies with health and safety standards					

### Appendix III: Budget for the Research

<b>Item</b>	<b>Description</b>	<b>Amount (Ksh)</b>
Data Collection	Questionnaires and field visits	25,000
Research Assistants	Hiring and training of research assistants	30,000
Transport	Travel expenses for data collection	20,000
Materials & Stationery	Printing, photocopying, and documentation	15,000
Data Analysis	Software, statistical tools, and expert consultation	25,000
Miscellaneous	Contingencies and unforeseen expenses	10,000
Report Writing & Binding	Compilation, editing, and printing of final thesis	25,000
<b>Total</b>		<b>150,000</b>

**Appendix IV: List of 33 selected Public Catering Institutions**

<b>Institution</b>	<b>Estimated Staff Count</b>	<b>Year Registered</b>	<b>Source</b>
Parliament Catering Unit	67	1963	Parliament of Kenya website
Nairobi City County Catering Services	87	2013	Nairobi City County website
Kenyatta International Conference Centre	211	1973	KICC official website
Government Administrative Staff Dining Room	51	1995	Government of Kenya publications
The White House Restaurant (State House)	38	2000	State House Kenya website
Nairobi Railway Catering Services	83	1990	Kenya Railways website
Kenyatta National Hospital Catering Unit	91	1901	KNH official brochure
Nairobi National Park Restaurant	35	1977	Kenya Wildlife Service website
Ministry of Health Staff Cafeteria	53	2012	Ministry of Health website

Central Bank of Kenya Catering Unit	61	1966	CBK official communications
Nairobi County Assembly Catering Services	66	2013	Nairobi County Assembly website
Kenya Forest Service Catering Unit	49	2002	Kenya Forest Service website
National Museums of Kenya Restaurant	20	2004	NMK official website
Kenya Revenue Authority Staff Canteen	77	1995	KRA official website
National Social Security Fund Canteen	45	1965	NSSF official communications
Ministry of Interior Catering Services	45	2005	Ministry of Interior website
Kenya Pipeline Company Catering Services	41	1973	KPC official website
National Construction Authority Cafeteria	28	2011	NCA official documents
Kenya Power Catering Unit	65	2000	Kenya Power official website

Environmental Management and Coordination	25	2006	Ministry of Environment website
Nairobi County Fire Brigade Canteen	15	2010	Nairobi City County website
Kenya Power Employees' Canteen	35	1965	Kenya Power official website
The National Treasury Staff Canteen	32	1990	National Treasury publications
Kenya Railways Staff Cafeteria	50	1985	Kenya Railways website
National Youth Service Canteen	93	1964	NYS official communications
Ministry of Sports and Culture Dining Unit	72	2008	Ministry of Sports and Culture website
Kenya Institute of Curriculum Development	49	2004	KICD official publications
National Land Commission Cafeteria	30	2012	NLC official website
Kenya Bureau of Standards Catering Unit	40	1974	KBS official website

National Environmental Management Authority	46	2002	NEMA official reports
Kenya Industrial Property Institute	33	2002	KIPI official communications
Nairobi Regional Headquarters Canteen	32	2015	Kenya government publications
Ministry of Gender, Children, and Social Development	64	2008	Ministry Communications
Kenya Maritime Authority Dining Hall	44	2006	KMA official website
The Kenya Institute of Management Canteen	35	1999	KIM official website
National Cereals and Produce Board	73	1985	NCPB official documents
	1981		

### Appendix V: Krejcie and Morgan (1970) Sample Determination Table

<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>	<i>N</i>	<i>S</i>
10	10	220	140	1200	291
15	14	230	144	1300	297
20	19	240	148	1400	302
25	24	250	152	1500	306
30	28	260	155	1600	310
35	32	270	159	1700	313
40	36	280	162	1800	317
45	40	290	165	1900	320
50	44	300	169	2000	322
55	48	320	175	2200	327
60	52	340	181	2400	331
65	56	360	186	2600	335
70	59	380	191	2800	338
75	63	400	196	3000	341
80	66	420	201	3500	346
85	70	440	205	4000	351
90	73	460	210	4500	354
95	76	480	214	5000	357
100	80	500	217	6000	361
110	86	550	226	7000	364
120	92	600	234	8000	367
130	97	650	242	9000	368
140	103	700	248	10000	370
150	108	750	254	15000	375
160	113	800	260	20000	377
170	118	850	265	30000	379
180	123	900	269	40000	380
190	127	950	274	50000	381
200	132	1000	278	75000	382
210	136	1100	285	100000	384

Note.—*N* is population size. *S* is sample size.

Source: Krejcie & Morgan, 1970

## Appendix VI: Ethical Clearance Letter



### KENYA METHODIST UNIVERSITY

P. O. BOX 267 MERU - 60200, KENYA  
TEL: 254-064-30301/31229/30367/31171

FAX: 254-64-30162  
EMAIL: [info@kemu.ac.ke](mailto:info@kemu.ac.ke)

Our Ref: KeMU/ISERC/MHT/02/2025

July 23, 2025

ERASTUS KIBET YEGON  
MHT-3-2615-2/2023

Dear Erastus;

**SUBJECT: EFFECT OF EMPLOYEE TRAINING ON SERVICE QUALITY IN PUBLIC CATERING INSTITUTIONS IN NAIROBI COUNTY**

This is to inform you that Kenya Methodist University Institutional Scientific Ethics and Review Committee has reviewed and approved your research proposal. Your application approval number is KeMU/ISERC/MHT/02/2025. The approval period is 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2025 – 23<sup>rd</sup> July, 2026.

This approval is subject to compliance with the following requirements:-

- I. Only approved documents including (informed consents, study instruments, MTA) will be used.
- II. All changes including (amendments, deviations, and violations) are submitted for review and approval by Kenya Methodist University Institutional Scientific Ethics and Review Committee.
- III. Death and life-threatening problems and serious adverse events or unexpected adverse events whether related or unrelated to the study must be reported to KeMU ISERC within 72 hours of notification.
- IV. Any changes, anticipated or otherwise that may increase the risks or affected safety or welfare of study participants and others or affect the integrity of the research must be reported to KeMU ISERC within 72 hours.
- V. Clearance for export of biological specimens must be obtained from relevant institutions.

- VI. Submission of a request for renewal of approval at least 60 days prior to expiry of the approval period. Attach a comprehensive progress report to support the renewal.
- VII. Submission of an executive summary report within 90 days upon completion of the study to KeMU ISERC.

Prior to commencing your study, you will be expected to obtain a research license from National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovation (NACOSTI) <https://oris.nacosti.go.ke> and also obtain other clearances needed.



Mr. ~~PHILIP~~ KIBEBE  
CHAIR (ISERC)

## Appendix VII: Introduction Letter to NACOSTI



### KENYA METHODIST UNIVERSITY

P. O. Box 267 Meru - 60200, Kenya

Fax: 254-64-30162

Tel: 254-064-30301/31229/30367/31171

Email: [deanrd@kemu.ac.ke](mailto:deanrd@kemu.ac.ke)

#### DIRECTORATE OF POSTGRADUATE STUDIES

Our Ref: KeMU/NACOSTI/MHT/02/2025

July 23, 2025

Commission Secretary

National Commission for Science, Technology and Innovations

P.O. Box 30623-00100

**NAIROBI**

Dear Sir/Madam,

**RE: ERASTUS KIBET YEGON-MHT-3-2615-2/2023**

This is to confirm that the above named is a bona fide student of Kenya Methodist University, in the Department of Business Administration, undertaking a Master's Degree in Business Administration. He is conducting research on; "*Effect Of Employee Training On Service Quality In Public Catering Institutions In Nairobi County*".

We confirm that his research proposal has been defended and approved by the University.

In this regard, we are requesting your office to issue a research license to enable him collect data.

Any assistance accorded to him will be highly appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

  
Dr. Nancy Rintari (PhD)

**Director, Board of Postgraduate Studies**

Cc: Dean, School of Economics and Political Science  
CoD, Hospitality and Tourism  
Postgraduate Coordinator - HT  
Supervisors

# Appendix VIII: NACOSTI Permit

  
REPUBLIC OF KENYA

  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY & INNOVATION

Ref No: **764481** Date of Issue: **29/July/2025**

**RESEARCH LICENSE**



**This is to Certify that Mr. Erustus Kibet Yegon of Kenya Methodist University, has been licensed to conduct research as per the provision of the Science, Technology and Innovation Act, 2013 (Rev.2014) in Nairobi on the topic: EFFECT OF EMPLOYEE TRAINING ON SERVICE QUALITY IN PUBLIC CATERING INSTITUTIONS IN NAIROBI COUNTY for the period ending : 29/July/2026.**

License No: **NACOSTI/P/25/4177507**

**764481**  
Applicant Identification Number

  
Ag. Director General  
NATIONAL COMMISSION FOR  
SCIENCE, TECHNOLOGY &  
INNOVATION

Verification QR Code



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