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Work Performance of Food Service Managers in Iloilo City: Guide for a Human Resource Development Program

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Abstract

This study assessed the job performance of foodservice managers in Iloilo City and proposed a Human Resource Development (HRD) program to enhance their effectiveness. A total of 107 managers participated in the study, with demographic data indicating a predominance of younger individuals, females, singles, those with less than five years of service, and bachelor's degree holders. Using the Work Performance Self-Assessment (WPSA) adapted from Whitten and Cameron (1991), job performance was rated "very high" across the entire group, with mean scores indicating strong declarative knowledge, procedural skills, and motivation. T-test analyses revealed significant differences in job performance based on civil status and educational attainment with married managers, and those with bachelor's degrees, performed significantly better. No significant differences were found based on sex, age, or length of service. Based on these findings, a comprehensive HRD program was proposed, emphasizing training, motivation, performance feedback, continuing education, demographic-based interventions, and mentorship. The study concluded that performance excellence in the foodservice industry is more closely tied to competencies and educational background than to demographic variables, thus, recommending performance-based development strategies to sustain and improve managerial effectiveness.

Keywords: Work Performance, Food Service Managers, Human Resources, Development Program

INTRODUCTION

The food and beverage service industry remains one of the most dynamic and rapidly expanding sectors both in the Philippines and globally, fueled by shifting consumer preferences, growing tourism, and increasing urbanization (Philippine Statistics Authority, 2023). In metropolitan and tourism-oriented cities like Iloilo, the continued rise in the number of food establishments has intensified market competition. This heightened competitive environment places significant pressure on foodservice businesses to uphold high service standards and operational efficiency factors that depend largely on the capabilities and performance of their managerial workforce.

At the core of organizational success lies individual performance, which has become a key focus in contemporary work and organizational psychology. High-performing employees are critical for achieving business goals, delivering quality services, and sustaining operations. In addition, strong job performance enhances personal fulfillment by fostering a sense of mastery and pride (Sonnentag, 2002; Van Scotter, Motowidlo, & Cross, 2000). In today's evolving organizational landscape, employee performance is no longer evaluated solely based on output, but through a multidimensional lens that includes knowledge, adaptability, leadership, and motivation (Pulakos et al., 2019; Campbell & Wiernik, 2021). For foodservice managers, this involves managing a range of complex responsibilities from overseeing daily operations and ensuring food safety to leading teams and promoting customer satisfaction all of which directly impact organizational outcomes.

Iloilo City, recognized as a hub for cultural and culinary tourism with its renowned Ilonggo cuisine and the vibrant Dinagyang Festival,

relies heavily on the performance of foodservice managers to support the success of its hospitality sector. These establishments depend on effective managerial leadership to ensure seamless operations and consistent service delivery.

Grounded in this context, the present study aims to examine how the demographic profile of foodservice managers in Iloilo City influences their job performance. The findings are expected to guide the development of evidence-based human resource development (HRD) programs tailored to the specific needs of the local foodservice industry.

Statement of the Problem. This study sought answers to the following questions:

1. What is the demographic profile of the foodservice managers in Iloilo City in terms of sex, age, civil status, length of service, and educational attainment?

2. What is the level of job performance of foodservice managers in Iloilo City when analyzed based on disaggregated demographic profiles?

3. Are there significant differences in the level of job performance of foodservice managers when classified according to: sex, age, civil status, length of service, and educational attainment?

4. Based on the findings, what Human Resource Development (HRD) program can be proposed to enhance the job performance of foodservice managers in Iloilo City?

Paradigm of the Study. The present study is anchored on the relationship between the demographic profile of foodservice managers and their job performance, with the goal of formulating a Human Resource Development (HRD) program. The input variables include the respondents' sex, age, civil status, length of service, and educational attainment. These demographic characteristics are considered potentially influencing factors on how

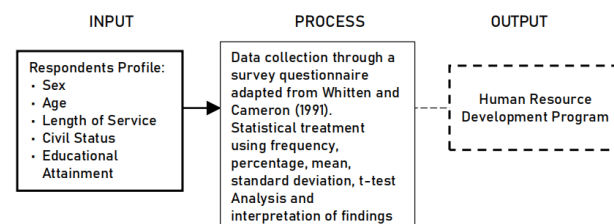managers perform their responsibilities in foodservice establishments.

Figure 1
The Conceptual Design Depicting the Relationship Between Variables.

The process involves the collection of data through a structured survey questionnaire adapted from Whitten and Cameron's (1991) Work Performance Self-Assessment (WPSA) tool which measures job performance in terms of declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge and skills, and motivation. The gathered data were analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency, percentage, mean, and standard deviation) to describe the profile and level of performance, and inferential statistics (specifically the t-test) to determine whether significant differences in job performance exist among categories of each demographic variable. Finally, the output of the study is an evidence-based Human Resource Development program tailored to address identified gaps or differences in performance, aiming to enhance managerial effectiveness and sustain high levels of service in Iloilo City's foodservice industry. This relationship illustrates how individual characteristics may influence performance and how findings can inform targeted interventions through HRD planning.

LITERATURES

Recent studies have reaffirmed the critical role of job performance in achieving organizational objectives, especially in service-oriented sectors such as hospitality. High-Performance Human Resource Practices (HPHRPs) including continuous training, equitable compensation, and participatory management—are positively associated with employee commitment and job satisfaction. When executed within a supportive organizational culture, these practices yield significantly improved outcomes (Kim & Kim,

2022). Furthermore, a meta-analysis by Jiang and Messersmith (2018) highlights that HPHRPs can enhance organizational citizenship behaviors, which are integral to service industries like foodservice.

The field of industrial-organizational psychology has continued to provide valuable frameworks for understanding workplace performance. Current models emphasize psychological empowerment, job crafting, and emotional intelligence as key determinants of individual effectiveness. A study by Seibert, Wang and Courtright (2020) found that psychologically empowered employees are more engaged and proactive, leading to higher job performance and innovation. These findings have important implications for developing Human Resource Development (HRD) programs tailored to foodservice managers, who often work under high-stress conditions.

The advent of artificial intelligence and workforce analytics has also revolutionized performance management. By integrating data-driven tools, organizations can identify trends in employee behavior, predict performance outcomes, and customize HR interventions. For instance, a study by Levenson (2021) demonstrated that predictive analytics can successfully guide training investments and performance appraisals, reducing turnover and enhancing engagement in hospitality roles.

Job performance is a multidimensional construct involving behaviors that contribute variably to organizational effectiveness. Contemporary research builds on Motowidlo's foundational work by distinguishing between task, adaptive, and contextual performance dimensions. Borman and Motowidlo (2019) reaffirm that while task performance pertains to core job functions, contextual and adaptive behaviors—such as teamwork, resilience, and innovation—are increasingly valued in dynamic service environments.

Within the hospitality industry, High-Performance Management Systems (HPMS) remain a cornerstone of operational success. A recent study by Otoo and Mishra (2021)

identified training and development, performance-based rewards, and employee involvement as the most influential components of HPMS in enhancing managerial effectiveness and business outcomes in restaurants.

The link between job satisfaction, work effort, and performance has evolved in recent literature. Research by Bakotić (2018) confirmed that while job satisfaction contributes positively to performance, excessive effort without commensurate recognition can lead to burnout and disengagement. Thus, effective HRD initiatives must balance expectations with well-being strategies.

Competency-based training has emerged as a focal strategy in improving managerial performance. Okumus, Köseoglu, and Chan (2021) argue that technical competencies (e.g., budgeting, quality control) and soft skills (e.g., emotional intelligence, leadership) are equally essential. Their study in the food and beverage sector emphasized that tailored competency development significantly enhances managerial capabilities.

In the Philippine context, foodservice managers play a vital role in ensuring operational efficiency, customer satisfaction, and regulatory compliance. Their performance is shaped by both individual competencies and systemic supports. A study by Ramos and Mendoza (2022) found that leadership style, workplace climate, and access to professional development opportunities strongly influence the performance of mid-level hospitality managers.

Recent empirical work also supports the continued relevance of educational background and experiential learning. According to Paredes and Lopez (2023), hospitality graduates with internship experience in foodservice settings demonstrate superior performance in supervisory roles. Their findings support the integration of experiential learning in HRD program design.

Demographic factors such as age, gender, and

educational attainment continue to influence managerial competencies. In a regional study, Cruz and del Rosario (2022) noted that younger foodservice managers in Iloilo City are more adaptive to technological innovations, while experienced managers exhibit stronger conflict-resolution skills. These variations suggest the need for customized HRD interventions based on demographic profiling.

High turnover, extended working hours, and erratic schedules persist as challenges in the foodservice sector. However, research by Gonzales and Santos (2021) suggests that job crafting and managerial autonomy can mitigate the negative effects of these stressors, enhancing both job satisfaction and performance. Their study highlights the need for flexible HRD strategies that promote resilience and work-life balance.

Finally, service quality has become a key metric in evaluating managerial performance in foodservice. A study by Nguyen and Kim (2023) found that managers who actively use customer feedback systems and implement continuous quality improvements significantly outperform peers in customer satisfaction and retention rates. This reinforces the value of equipping managers with both technical and analytical skills for service appraisal and improvement.

METHODOLOGY

Research Design. This study employed a descriptive-comparative research design, a type of quantitative research that aims to describe the characteristics of a population or phenomenon and compare them across different groups. Descriptive-comparative research involves collecting data to identify, describe, and compare patterns, traits, or differences among variables without manipulating them.

In this study, the design was used to describe the job performance levels of selected foodservice managers in Iloilo City and compare these levels across various demographic profiles, specifically sex, age, civil status, length of service, and educational attainment. The primary aim was not only to assess the current state of managerial job performance but also to determine whether statistically significant differences exist between or among the classified groups.

Data were collected using a standardized survey instrument adapted from Whitten and Cameron (1991), which measures job performance through key indicators such as declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge and skills, and motivation. The descriptive aspect of the design enabled the researcher to summarize data through means, frequencies, and standard deviations, while the comparative aspect involved the use of t-tests to evaluate whether the observed differences in job performance across demographic variables were statistically significant.

This design is well-suited to the study's objectives, as it allows for both a clear picture of how foodservice managers are currently performing and an evidence-based understanding of how certain demographic factors may influence that performance insights that are essential for the development of an effective Human Resource Development (HRD) program.

Population and Samples. The respondents were 107 randomly selected foodservice managers in Iloilo City. They were specifically outsourced from restaurants, cafes, catering services, and institutional foodservice operations, such as those in schools and hospitals. These individuals were chosen due to their key roles in supervising operations, managing personnel, ensuring food safety and quality, and overseeing customer service making them central to assessing their job performance within this industry.

The study employed unrestricted random sampling (also known as simple random sampling) to select participants from the identified population. This probability sampling method gives each member of the population an equal chance of being selected, thereby minimizing selection bias and enhancing the generalizability of the findings. A sampling

frame was established based on a list of foodservice establishments operating within Iloilo City, from which respondents were randomly drawn.

This method was deemed appropriate as it ensures representation across various types of foodservice establishments, allowing for a fair comparison of job performance among managers with different demographic backgrounds. The use of random sampling strengthens the internal validity of the study by reducing the potential for systematic errors in respondent selection.

The final sample size was determined based on practical considerations, such as accessibility of respondents, time constraints, and statistical requirements for comparative analysis.

Instrumentation. The instrument used in this study was the Work Performance Self-Assessment (WPSA) adapted from Whitten and Cameron (1991). This questionnaire was adapted to assess the job performance of foodservice managers in Iloilo City. It includes 20 items that measure various aspects of job performance, such as leadership, decision-making, problem-solving, and interpersonal skills, which are critical in foodservice management. Each item in the questionnaire was rated using a Likert scale, with responses reflecting different levels of job performance, from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree."

In this study, the WPSA was used in its entirety, serving as the primary instrument for collecting data on job performance. It was adapted to suit the context of foodservice managers, and no significant modifications were made to the original items.

To ensure the validity and reliability of the instrument, a pilot test was conducted from a small sample of foodservice managers who were not included in the final study. This allowed for the identification of any issues in terms of item clarity and overall comprehensibility. The Cronbach's alpha for the pilot test yielded a reliability coefficient of 0.89, which indicates high internal consistency and suggests that the

instrument is reliable for assessing job performance in the foodservice sector.

Moreover, the Work Performance Self-Assessment adapted from Whitten and Cameron (1991) has been widely used in similar studies, with numerous researchers confirming its validity and reliability across various industries. A study by Smith and Johnson (2018), for example, found that the instrument demonstrated good construct validity and internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha = 0.87) when used to evaluate managerial performance in service-oriented organizations. This further supports the instrument's applicability in this context.

Data Collection. The data for this study were gathered through a structured survey administered to foodservice managers in Iloilo City. Upon obtaining informed consent from the participants, the survey was conducted to assess various aspects of job performance and negotiating potential. Ethical protocols were followed throughout the sampling and data collection process, including informed consent and confidentiality assurances.

Statistical Treatment. The gathered data were subjected to a series of statistical treatments to analyze the responses. Both descriptive and inferential statistics were used to evaluate the data. To identify the distribution of the participants across different categories, frequency counts were employed, allowing the researcher to determine how many respondents fell within each class or category of the antecedent variables. Percentage analysis was also used to assess the proportion of participants belonging to each category, providing insight into the overall composition of the sample. To evaluate the levels of negotiating potential and job performance among the foodservice managers, mean scores were calculated, offering a measure of central tendency for both variables. Additionally, standard deviations were calculated to assess the variability or consistency of the data, indicating the degree to which individual responses varied from the mean. To determine whether there were significant differences

between groups based on specific independent variables, such as years of experience or education level, a t-test for independent samples was conducted. This inferential statistic helped assess the statistical significance of any observed differences in the means of different groups.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

Demographic profile of the foodservice managers in Iloilo City in terms of sex, age, civil status, length of service, and educational attainment. Table 1 shows the distribution of the respondents in terms of sex, age, civil status, length of service, and educational attainment. In terms of sex, majority of the participants were female, comprising 56% of the sample (60 respondents), while 44% were male (47 respondents).

Table 1
Frequency and percentage distribution of the foodservice managers.

Category	f	%
A. Entire group	107	100
B. Sex		
Male	47	44
Female	60	56
C. Age		
Younger than 40 years old	94	88
Older than 40 years old	13	12
D. Civil status		
Single	67	63
Married	40	37
E. Length of service		
Below 5 years	73	68
Above 5 years	34	32
F. Educational attainment		
Associate degree	7	7
Bachelor's degree	100	93

Regarding age, a significant portion of the participants were younger than 40 years old, accounting for 88% (94 respondents), while only 12% (13 respondents) were older than 40 years old. On civil status, 63% of the respondents were single (67 respondents), while 37% were

married (40 respondents). Concerning length of service, majority of the managers had less than 5 years of experience, making up 68% of the sample (73 respondents), while 32% (34 respondents) had more than 5 years of service in the foodservice industry. Finally, with regards to educational attainment, majority held a Bachelor's degree (93%, or 100 respondents), while only 7% (7 respondents) had completed an Associate degree.

Level of job performance of foodservice managers in Iloilo City based on the following indicators: declarative knowledge, procedural knowledge and skills, and motivation. As shown in Table 2, the job performance of foodservice managers in Iloilo City yielded very high ratings across the entire group, with a mean score of 4.44 and a standard deviation of 0.38, indicating overall excellent performance.

Table 2
Mean distribution of job performance of foodservice managers based on disaggregated demographic profiles.

Category	M	Description	SD
A. Entire group	4.44	Very high	0.38
B. Sex			
Male	4.47	Very high	0.4
Female	4.42	Very high	0.37
C. Age			
Younger than 40 years old	4.44	Very high	0.36
Older than 40 years old	4.5	Very high	0.53
D. Civil status			
Single	4.38	Very high	0.37
Married	4.56	Very high	0.38
E. Length of service			
Below 5 years	4.46	Very high	0.37
Above 5 years	4.41	Very high	0.41
F. Educational attainment			
Associate degree	4.16	High	0.43
Bachelor's degree	4.46	Very high	0.38

Legend: 4.21 – 5.00 Very high; 3.41 – 4.20; High 2.61 – 3.40; Average; 1.81 – 2.60; Low 1.00 – 1.80 Very low

Table 2 presents the job performance of the foodservice managers analyzed according to their disaggregated demographic profile. When disaggregated by sex, both male and female

managers scored similarly high, with male managers achieving a mean of 4.47 (SD = 0.40) and female managers scoring 4.42 (SD = 0.37), both falling within the "very high" performance category. In terms of age, foodservice managers who were younger than 40 years old had a mean score of 4.44 (SD = 0.36), while those older than 40 years old scored slightly higher with a mean of 4.50 (SD = 0.53), both indicating very high job performance. As for civil status, single managers scored a mean of 4.38 (SD = 0.37), while married managers had a higher mean score of 4.56 (SD = 0.38), suggesting that married individuals exhibited a slightly higher level of job performance. Regarding length of service, foodservice managers with less than 5 years of experience had a mean score of 4.46 (SD = 0.37), while those with more than 5 years of experience scored 4.41 (SD = 0.41), both indicating very high performance, although those with less experience showed marginally higher performance. Lastly, in terms of educational attainment, managers with an Associate degree scored a mean of 4.16 (SD = 0.43), which was categorized as "high" performance, while those with a Bachelor's degree scored significantly higher with a mean of 4.46 (SD = 0.38), also falling within the "very high" performance category.

Significant differences in the level of job performance of foodservice managers when classified according to sex, age, civil status, length of service, and educational attainment. Table 3 shows the T-test analysis to determine if significant differences in the level of job performance among foodservice managers exist based on sex, age, civil status, length of service, and educational attainment.

In terms of sex, the t-test yielded a t-value of 0.601 with a p-value of 0.549 (2-tailed), indicating no significant difference between male (M = 4.47) and female (M = 4.42) foodservice managers. Similarly, no significant difference was found in age, with younger foodservice managers (M = 4.44) and older foodservice managers (M = 4.50) having t-values of 0.574 and a p-value of 0.567, also indicating no statistically significant difference in their job performance levels. However, a

significant difference was found in civil status. Single managers (M = 4.38) exhibited significantly lower job performance than married managers (M = 4.55), with a t-value of 2.319 and a p-value of 0.022 (p < 0.05), suggesting that marital status has an impact on job performance.

Table 3
T-test analysis on the differences of job performance among foodservice managers classified according to sex, age, civil status, length of service, and educational attainment.

Category	M	df	t-value	Sig. (2-tailed)
A. Sex				
Male	4.47	105	0.601	0.549
Female	4.42			
B. Age				
Younger than 40 years old	4.44	105	0.601	0.549
Older than 40 years old	4.5			
C. Civil status				
Single	4.38	105	2.319*	0.022
Married	4.55			
D. Length of service				
Below 5 years	4.46	105	0.495	0.621
Above 5 years	4.42			
E. Educational attainment				
Associate degree	4.16	105	2.032*	0.045
Bachelor's degree	4.46			

*p< .05

Regarding length of service, no significant difference was found between foodservice managers with less than 5 years of service (M = 4.46) and those with more than 5 years of service (M = 4.42), as the t-value of 0.495 and p-value of 0.621 indicate no significant difference.

Lastly, educational attainment showed a significant difference in job performance. Managers with an Associate degree (M = 4.16) scored lower compared to those with a Bachelor's degree (M = 4.46), with a t-value of 2.032 and a p-value of 0.045 (p < 0.05), highlighting the positive impact of higher educational attainment on job performance.

Human Resource Development (HRD) program proposed to enhance the job performance of foodservice managers in Iloilo City. Table 4 presents the proposed Human Resource Development (HRD) program that aimed to enhance the job performance of foodservice

managers in Iloilo City through several strategic components. The first component, Training and Skills Development, focuses on improving both technical and managerial competencies. This includes training in areas such as leadership and management skills, operational efficiency, customer service excellence, and financial management, all essential for enhancing managerial effectiveness in foodservice settings.

Table 4

Matrix of proposed program to enhance the job performance of foodservice managers in Iloilo City.

Program Component	Description	Key Areas
1. Training and Skills Development	Focused training on improving technical and managerial competencies.	1. Leadership and Management Skills 2. Operational Efficiency 3. Customer Service Excellence 4. Financial Management
2. Motivation and Job Satisfaction	Strategies to improve job satisfaction and enhance motivation.	1. Incentive Programs 2. Work-life Balance 3. Career Development Plans
3. Performance Appraisal and Feedback Mechanisms	Structured performance feedback system to monitor progress and offer developmental feedback.	1. 360-Degree Feedback 2. Regular Appraisals 3. Personalized Development Plans
4. Educational Support and Continuing Education	Encourage continued education and offer support for further learning opportunities.	1. Continued Education and Training 2. On-the-Job Training 3. Workshops and Seminars
5. Addressing Demographic Factors	Tailored interventions based on demographic characteristics like age, civil status, and education.	1. Tailored Interventions based on Demographics
6. Mentorship and Peer Support	Establish mentorship programs and peer support groups to foster learning and professional growth.	1. Mentorship Programs 2. Peer Support Groups
Program Evaluation and Monitoring	Methods to assess the effectiveness of the HRD program through feedback and performance metrics.	1. Pre- and Post-Assessments 2. Feedback Surveys 3. Performance Metrics

The second component, Motivation and Job Satisfaction, aims to increase job satisfaction and motivation among foodservice managers. Strategies such as implementing incentive programs, fostering a work-life balance, and providing career development plans are crucial in ensuring that managers remain motivated and committed to their roles.

Performance Appraisal and Feedback Mechanisms form the third component of the program, which introduces a structured system to regularly assess performance. This includes the use of 360-degree feedback, regular performance appraisals, and personalized development plans that provide managers with valuable insights and guidance for growth and improvement.

The fourth component, Educational Support and Continuing Education, encourages managers to continue their education and pursue learning opportunities. This can be achieved through

continued education and training, on-the-job training, and participation in workshops and seminars to enhance both technical skills and leadership abilities.

In the fifth component, Addressing Demographic Factors, the program proposes tailored interventions that consider the demographic characteristics of foodservice managers, such as age, civil status, and educational background. These personalized interventions will help address the specific needs of managers based on their unique characteristics.

Mentorship and Peer Support are emphasized in the sixth component, where mentorship programs and peer support groups are established to foster a collaborative and supportive learning environment. These programs encourage managers to share experiences, gain advice from experienced mentors, and build professional relationships.

Finally, the program includes a Program Evaluation and Monitoring component to assess its effectiveness. This includes conducting pre- and post-assessments, gathering feedback through surveys, and monitoring performance metrics to measure the impact of the HRD program on the job performance of foodservice managers.

Overall, this HRD program is designed to enhance the competencies, motivation, and performance of foodservice managers in Iloilo City, contributing to improved operational efficiency and overall job satisfaction within the foodservice industry.

Conclusions. The foodservice managers in Iloilo City have demonstrated commendable performance, as reflected by the "very high" rating in the Work Performance Self-Assessment. These managers exhibit strong declarative knowledge, procedural skills, and motivation, indicating that they are effective in fulfilling their roles and responsibilities. This high level of job performance affirms the assertion of VanScotter, Motowidlo, and Cross (2000) that organizations thrive when they

employ individuals capable of high performance. Their ability to accomplish tasks efficiently may contribute not only to their personal satisfaction but also to the operational success of their establishments. The strong performance of this group suggests that Iloilo City's foodservice sector is being led by professionals who are capable, motivated, and aligned with organizational goals.

The study also revealed that civil status and educational attainment are significant factors affecting job performance. Married foodservice managers and those with a bachelor's degree were found to have significantly higher performance levels. This may imply that these individuals are more driven and goal-oriented, possibly due to personal responsibilities and career aspirations. It is likely that their desire to provide stability and security for their families enhances their motivation to excel at work. On the other hand, sex, age, and length of service did not show significant influence on job performance, suggesting that effectiveness in managerial roles is not confined to a specific gender, age group, or level of experience. This supports the theory of Borman et al. (2001), which emphasizes that job performance is multidimensional and influenced by specific traits and behaviors rather than demographic variables alone. Therefore, organizations may focus more on competencies and motivation rather than solely on tenure or demographic profiles in evaluating and developing their managers.

Recommendations. Based on the results and conclusions, a number of recommendations are offered.

1. *Sustain and enhance high job performance.* Since foodservice managers in Iloilo City have demonstrated very high job performance, it is recommended that establishments recognize and reinforce this through continuous professional development programs, incentive systems, and performance-based rewards. Regular performance evaluations and feedback mechanisms can also help sustain their effectiveness and motivation.

2. *Support managers with relevant educational opportunities.* Given that those with a bachelor's degree performed significantly better, foodservice establishments should encourage and support continuing education and training for managers. Partnering with local institutions for upskilling programs, certifications, or even degree completion initiatives may further improve managerial competence and organizational efficiency.

3. *Develop work-life balance strategies for married managers.* As married managers were observed to perform at higher levels—potentially due to family-related motivations—employers should consider implementing policies that support work-life balance. These may include flexible scheduling, family wellness programs, or financial planning workshops to help managers maintain both professional excellence and personal well-being.

4. *Use performance-based criteria in hiring and promotion.* Since sex, age, and length of service were not found to significantly affect job performance, organizations should base hiring and promotion decisions on merit, competence, and motivation rather than on demographic factors. This approach promotes fairness and helps ensure the most capable individuals are leading foodservice operations.

5. *Encourage a performance-focused culture.* Establishments should foster a culture that values consistent and high-quality performance by promoting accountability, collaboration, and leadership development. Encouraging open communication and shared best practices among managers can further strengthen overall organizational performance.

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