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Employee Motivation of The Burger House and Crunchy Fried Chicken in Kathmandu Valley

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ABSTRACT

The aim of the study is to investigate the impact of employee motivation on retention restaurant business in Kathmandu valley. The study employs a descriptive and causal-comparative research design, which is well-suited for exploring the challenges associated with high turnover rates and employee dissatisfaction in the restaurant business. The population for this study comprises 923 employees working in restaurant business across Nepal, with a specific focus on 385 employees at The Burger House and Crunchy Fried Chicken. A purposive sampling technique is used to select participants from different job roles, including restaurant business agents, supervisors, and managers, ensuring a diverse and representative sample. Data collection involves Questionnaire sources, primarily through surveys conducted with the selected participants at restaurant business. The study's findings reveal significant relationships between employee motivations and various factors, including rewards, workload, career development opportunities, and work culture. Workload, while statistically significant, has a more modest effect on retention compared to the other variables. Additionally, the study emphasizes the importance of a positive work culture. Employees are more inclined to stay with an organization that promotes a supportive and inclusive work environment.

1. INTRODUCTION

Delivering high-quality service to customers is a central responsibility in the restaurant business, which forms a vital segment of the global hospitality sector. The ability of restaurants to provide excellent service is closely linked to the motivation of their employees. As Sharma

and Adhikari (2021) notes, guests tend to have more memorable and positive experiences when served by motivated staff. However, employee motivation continues to be a pressing issue, particularly in service industries such as restaurants, where job roles can vary from professional to unskilled positions. Maintaining employee motivation is crucial for retaining staff and ensuring service consistency, especially in a highly competitive market. As Smith and Johnson (2020) highlighted, without adequate motivation, employees may underperform or leave, contributing to high turnover rates a problem seen globally and locally. For instance, the Hotel and Catering Training Company in the UK estimated annual losses of £430 million due to turnover, with male employees quitting more than females (Bharath, 2023). Similarly, in Nepal, a study reported that over 41% of staff in selected restaurants either left or changed jobs due to dissatisfaction (Yousuf & Siddqui, 2019).

The motivation of restaurant staff significantly impacts organizational performance. As Sorn et al. (2023) noted, fostering employee engagement is essential for businesses striving to remain viable and competitive. Anderson and Black (2018) emphasized that work satisfaction positively correlates with performance, and Bharath (2023) further argued that motivated employees ensure consistent and high-quality service delivery. Motivation not only improves productivity but also enhances job satisfaction and customer service quality, factors critical to business success in the hospitality industry. Boston (2021) observed that the restaurant industry faces unique challenges in motivating staff due to factors such as low pay, long hours, and strenuous working environments.

In the context of Nepal, urban growth and changing consumer preferences have contributed to the rise of restaurants like The Burger House and Crunchy Fried Chicken (Shrestha et al., 2019). However, challenges in maintaining a motivated workforce persist, affecting service delivery and overall operational efficiency. Traditional motivation tools such as salary hikes and bonuses have shown limited long-term success. Hence, innovative approaches like AI-assisted operations and personalized career development plans have been suggested. AI can reduce routine workload and employee fatigue (Goet & Kharel, 2022), while career development initiatives can enhance employee loyalty and skill retention.

Further studies reveal that the absence of effective retention strategies can hinder organizations from preserving vital talent (Akther & Tariq, 2020). Strategic HR practices are therefore vital to aligning personal and organizational goals, improving retention, and enhancing overall employee engagement. Despite growing investment in Nepal's restaurant industry, challenges such as wage dissatisfaction and poor working conditions continue to lead to high staff turnover (Bhattarai & Shrestha, 2019). The localized lack of motivational studies specific to Nepal's restaurant context necessitates further research to address these issues.

Therefore, this study seeks to examine how innovative motivational strategies can enhance employee performance and retention in Kathmandu-based restaurant chains. By assessing the effectiveness of strategies such as gamification, mental health support, and employee

empowerment, the research aims to identify actionable recommendations that can foster a productive and committed workforce in Nepal's dynamic hospitality sector.

This study aims to examine employee motivation challenges in Nepalese restaurant industry, with a particular focus on Kathmandu Valley's fast-food sector. The study advocates for the incorporation of gamification in daily tasks, mental health support, autonomy, and tech-based solutions, which can together foster a more engaged and resilient workforce. Creating a work environment that acknowledges employee needs and aspirations is crucial in achieving organizational goals. Restaurants that invest in such motivational strategies are more likely to experience reduced turnover, improved service quality, and stronger market positioning.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW AND HYPOTHESES DEVELOPMENT

Motivate talent is critical for gaining a competitive advantage, and companies that invest in employee motivations strategies are more likely to succeed, according to Bhatta (2021) Global Human Capital Trends Report, which emphasizes the significance of employee motivations for organizations globally. According to Adhikari (2016), a number of issues, such as the evolving nature of work, rising demand for remote work, and fluctuating employee expectations, are making it harder to retain personnel. In order to overcome these obstacles, companies should prioritize employee motivations by providing competitive pay, benefits, and opportunities for career development. The report makes the case that keeping employees on board is crucial for both the success of the company and their well-being, as these companies are more likely to foster a positive work environment that values engagement, productivity, and employee motivation (Deloitte, 2021).

The intricacy of employee motives cannot be resolved by promotions and salary increases alone (Yousuf & Siddqui, 2019). A variety of tangible and intangible factors influence employees' motivation and desire to remain in their jobs, and employers need to consider these factors. Work-life balance, job security, perks, leadership, business culture, and opportunities for personal growth are a few examples of these components (Yousuf & Siddqui, 2019). Organizations must develop and implement a thorough employee motivations strategy in order to create a positive work environment that encourages employee engagement, loyalty, and satisfaction. The strategy should also be customized to the individual needs of the employees, which may differ depending on the organization's policies, budget, business type, and job roles. By providing competitive pay packages, flexible work hours, and employee-friendly rules, practical considerations like job security and benefits may be addressed.

Work Culture (WCR)

Several studies affirm that work culture plays a pivotal role in shaping employee motivations. Sorn et al. (2023) emphasized that beyond competitive pay, a pleasant work environment significantly influences retention. Similarly, Bharath (2023) discovered that a positive work atmosphere and acknowledgment are equally vital as pay for motivating employees in South Indian insurance companies. Kumar and Rao (2020) concluded that workplace safety, comfort, and resource availability enhance job satisfaction and motivation, suggesting that

environmental factors are as crucial as financial incentives. Ghimire and Khanal (2018) explored organizational culture in Nepali insurance companies and found that transparency, trust, and supportive communication positively influenced job satisfaction and employee motivations. Likewise, Anderson and Black (2018) indicated that strong team dynamics foster a supportive environment, thus elevating morale and motivation.

H₁: There is significant impact of rewards on employee motivation of restaurant business in Kathmandu valley.

Workload (WLD)

Workload was found to have a direct negative impact on employee motivations and retention. Chaudhary et al. (2023) established that high workload and stress significantly lower job satisfaction and increase employees' intention to leave. Similarly, Musalem et al. (2023) demonstrated that reduced client wait times and manageable workload levels alleviate stress and enhance employee satisfaction and retention. Boston (2021) supported this by stating that managing workplace stress and maintaining high morale are critical components of a successful retention strategy. Bhattarai and Shrestha (2019) also found that stress management practices such as wellness programs and counseling improved job satisfaction and reduced turnover. These studies jointly suggest that a manageable workload and proactive stress reduction are essential for sustaining employee motivations.

H₂: There is significant impact of workload on employee motivation of restaurant business in Kathmandu valley.

Career Development Opportunity (CDO)

Opportunities for growth and professional advancement are key motivators for employees. Smith and Johnson (2020) used a longitudinal approach to show that career paths and development opportunities directly enhance job satisfaction and retention. Bharath (2023) similarly reported that career advancement is a core motivator in addition to monetary incentives. Sharma and Acharya (2020) and Rijal and Poudel (2018) both highlighted career progression as one of the most valued attributes among employees in Nepali insurance companies, with training and development programs significantly reducing attrition. Lu et al. (2019) further noted that work-life balance, which is often linked with professional development flexibility, positively affects motivation. These findings strongly support the integration of structured growth opportunities into human resource strategies.

H₃: There is significant impact of work culture on employee motivation of restaurant business in Kathmandu valley.

Reward (REW)

Reward systems, including monetary and non-monetary recognition, are crucial for motivating employees. Sharma and Adhikari (2021) showed that recognition programs markedly increased job satisfaction and decreased attrition, with valued employees showing

greater loyalty. Patel and Desai (2021) also affirmed that recognition and appreciation increase the likelihood of employees staying with the organization. Joshi and Rathi (2021) found that transformational leadership – often tied to emotional support and recognition – was more effective than transactional reward-based models in enhancing motivation. Sorn et al. (2023) reiterated that competitive pay is foundational, but must be complemented with cultural and interpersonal rewards. Gupta and Verma (2019) further asserted that job security, a long-term form of reward, significantly impacts employee satisfaction and motivation.

H₄: There is significant impact of career development opportunity on employee motivation of restaurant business in Kathmandu valley.

3. RESEARCH METHODS

This study employed a descriptive and causal comparative research design to examine the status and determinants of employee motivation in the restaurant industry, particularly focusing on Burger House and Crunchy Fried Chicken in Kathmandu Valley. The descriptive approach enabled a thorough understanding of the current challenges, such as high turnover, job dissatisfaction, and limited career advancement opportunities. The causal comparative facilitated the evaluation of the relationship between motivation and its contributing factors using statistical tools like correlation and regression analysis. The primary data was gathered through a structured questionnaire distributed to 393 employees via Google Forms, out of which 385 valid responses were received and analyzed. The questionnaire contained closed-ended questions to capture quantitative data on job satisfaction, motivational drivers, and turnover intentions, alongside limited qualitative feedback on employees' lived experiences. Purposive sampling was applied to select respondents across different job roles ranging from service agents to supervisors and managers to ensure diverse perspectives within the restaurant business context. The study also incorporated input from the human resources department to enhance the validity and depth of the data collected.

To support the quantitative analysis, several statistical techniques were applied. Descriptive statistics such as arithmetic mean and standard deviation helped summarize the central tendencies and variation in employee responses. The arithmetic mean was calculated by summing all the data points and dividing by the number of observations, giving a central value that represented the general trend of the responses. Standard deviation measured the dispersion of responses around the mean, reflecting the consistency or variability of employee sentiments. Furthermore, correlation coefficients were used to examine the strength and direction of relationships between variables such as perception, preference, and satisfaction. These were evaluated using Pearson's formula, with correlation values ranging from -1 to +1 to indicate negative or positive relationships. Additionally, regression analysis was employed to determine the impact of independent variables (such as compensation, work environment, and career development) on the dependent variable (employee motivation). Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) was used to assess differences in motivational levels across demographic groups like gender or job role. This comprehensive methodological approach allowed the study to not only identify existing motivation levels but also to understand how various

organizational and personal factors influence employee engagement and performance within Nepal's growing fast-food restaurant sector.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Correlation Analysis between variables was studied to find relations among them. Pearson's Correlation analysis is used to determine the relation between various independent and dependent variables associated with the research. It measures the linear correlation between any two variables.

Table 1

Correlation Analysis

	ERT	REW	WLD	CDO	WCR
ERT	1				
REW	.614**	1			
WLD	.514**	.680**	1		
CDO	.548**	.672**	.680**	1	
WCR	.410**	.635**	.509**	.591**	1

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

Table 1 presents correlation coefficients between Employee motivations (ERT) and the four leadership styles: Reward (REW), Workload (WLD), Career development opportunity (CDO), and Work culture (WCR). These correlation coefficients indicate the strength and direction of the relationships between these variables. Starting with the correlation between ERT and REW, it is noted as .614. This indicates a positive correlation of moderate strength between Employee motivations and reward. The correlation being significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed) suggests that there is significant relationship between Employee motivations and reward.

Moving to the correlation between ERT and WLD, it is noted as .514, indicating a positive correlation of moderate strength between Employee motivations and workload. Again, the significance level suggests that there is significant relationship between Employee motivations and workload. Next, the correlation between ERT and CDO is noted as .548, suggesting a positive correlation of moderate strength between Employee motivations and Career development opportunity. The significance level indicates that there is significant relationship between Employee motivations and Career development opportunity. Lastly, the correlation between ERT and WCR is noted as .410, indicating a positive correlation of

moderate strength between Employee motivations and work culture. The significance level suggests that there is significant relationship between Employee motivations and work culture.

Table 2

Regression Analysis

Model	Beta	t- value	p-value
(Constant)	.965	3.605	.000
Reward	.459	4.233	.000
Workload	.169	2.286	.023
Career development opportunity	.211	2.271	.025
Work culture	.271	3.587	.000
R square	0.694		
F value	25.337		
P value	0.000		

Table 2 presents the regression analysis conducted to predict Employee motivations (ERT) based on several predictors: Work culture (WCR), Workload (WLD), Career development opportunity (CDO), and Reward (REW). The table provides information on the overall fit of the regression model and the contribution of the predictors. In this case, R Square is .694, meaning that approximately 69.4% of the variance in Employee motivations can be accounted for by the predictors included in the model. In this case, the F value is 25.733, indicating that the regression model is statistically significant. The p-value associated with the F statistic is .000, indicating that the regression model is highly statistically significant.

The constant value ($\beta = 0.965$, $t = 3.605$, $p = 0.000$) indicates the baseline level of employee motivation when all other independent variables are held at zero. This is statistically significant, as the p-value is less than 0.05, meaning the constant term contributes meaningfully to the regression model. Among the independent variables, reward has the highest standardized beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.459$), suggesting it is the most influential predictor of employee motivation. The corresponding t-value (4.233) and p-value (0.000) further confirm that the effect of rewards (such as salaries, bonuses, and recognition) on motivation is strong and statistically significant.

Workload has a beta value of 0.169, t-value of 2.286, and p-value of 0.023, indicating a moderate and statistically significant impact on motivation. This suggests that manageable workloads contribute positively to employee motivation, though not as strongly as reward or work culture. Career development opportunity also shows a positive and significant relationship with motivation ($\beta = 0.211$, $t = 2.271$, $p = 0.025$), implying that employees are more motivated when they perceive opportunities for growth and advancement. Work culture ($\beta = 0.271$, $t =$

3.587, $p = 0.000$) has a statistically significant impact as well, highlighting the importance of a supportive, inclusive, and collaborative work environment in enhancing motivation.

The regression analysis highlights reward (REW) as the most influential factor affecting employee motivation, consistent with findings from Sorn et al. (2023) and Patel and Desai (2021). These scholars emphasized the significance of compensation and recognition in enhancing employees' commitment and performance. The strong beta value for reward reflects that when employees perceive they are fairly rewarded, both financially and through non-monetary acknowledgment, their motivation and likelihood of retention increase substantially. The moderate positive correlation observed between rewards and retention supports this, indicating that motivated employees are not only more productive but also more likely to remain within the organization. This underscores the importance of structured reward systems that go beyond salaries to include appreciation, bonuses, and other forms of recognition.

Workload (WLD), though showing a lower beta coefficient, remains statistically significant, suggesting that it moderately affects motivation. This aligns with Chaudhary, Nasir, and Rahman (2023), who observed that while excessive workload can lead to burnout and dissatisfaction, a balanced and manageable workload contributes positively to motivation. The positive correlation here indicates that employees can find motivation in challenging tasks as long as they are achievable and not overwhelming. Career development opportunities (CDO) also demonstrated a moderate influence, reinforcing insights from Smith and Johnson (2020) that career progression, skill enhancement, and personal development are vital motivators. When employees see a clear path to advancement, they tend to be more engaged and loyal. Lastly, work culture (WCR), though it showed the weakest correlation among the variables, still holds a statistically significant role in motivation. This echoes the views of Sharma and Acharya (2020) and Joshi and Rathi (2021), who argue that a supportive, inclusive, and collaborative work environment fosters job satisfaction. While WCR has a smaller effect than REW or CDO, its contribution to retention and motivation is undeniable. These results together illustrate that while reward remains the most critical determinant of employee motivation, other factors such as workload balance, growth opportunities, and a positive workplace culture also play meaningful roles in sustaining a motivated and committed workforce.

5. CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The findings of this study reveal that rewards are the most influential factor in driving employee motivation within the restaurant business, particularly in the context of The Burger House and Crunchy Fried Chicken in Kathmandu Valley. When employees feel fairly compensated and recognized for their contributions through financial incentives, bonuses, or non-monetary recognition they are more likely to remain committed and satisfied in their roles. This indicates the urgent need for these organizations to revise and strengthen their compensation systems to align with employee expectations. Career development opportunities also play a significant role in enhancing motivation. Employees who perceive clear pathways for professional growth, such as training programs, promotions, and skill

development initiatives, are more engaged and loyal. Hence, investments in learning and development can serve as a strategic tool for improving retention. In addition, the study underscores the importance of cultivating a positive work culture, where team cohesion, respectful management practices, and value alignment foster job satisfaction and reduce turnover. Although workload was found to have a comparatively lower influence on motivation, it still remains an essential factor; ensuring balanced tasks and adequate support can prevent burnout and reinforce overall job satisfaction. In conclusion, The Burger House and Crunchy Fried Chicken should adopt a comprehensive employee motivation strategy one that integrates competitive rewards, career growth opportunities, positive workplace culture, and workload management to build a stable, committed, and high-performing workforce. Such an integrated approach is likely to improve employee retention, service delivery, and organizational success.

Managers must ensure compensation packages including salaries, bonuses, and recognition systems are competitive and meet employee expectations to boost motivation. Career development programs such as skill-building workshops, mentorships, and clear promotion pathways should be implemented to enhance employee engagement and reduce attrition. Creating a supportive and inclusive workplace culture is vital. Managers should focus on enhancing team dynamics, encouraging participatory management, and ensuring value congruence between employees and the organization. While not the most critical factor, managing workload effectively by balancing responsibilities and preventing burnout is still essential to maintaining motivation. Establishing clear, consistent communication channels will help address employee concerns promptly and foster trust and transparency. Future studies should delve deeper into identifying which specific types of rewards (monetary and non-monetary) are most effective in the restaurant context. Research should examine the impact of various career development approaches including on-the-job training, certification programs, and job rotation on employee motivation. Studies exploring the components of a positive work culture, such as leadership behavior, peer support, and organizational justice, would be valuable in refining motivational strategies.

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