

Human Resource Management Practices in the Nepalese Hospitality Industry: A Case from Chitwan

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Abstract

This study examines human resource management (HRM) practices in Nepal's hospitality industry, focusing on selection/recruitment, training and development, information technology (IT) usage, and human capital. Using a descriptive and correlational design, data were collected from 101 employees in Chitwan-based hotels. Findings indicate positive perceptions of recruitment processes, emphasising candidate potential and teamwork, though interpersonal skills were undervalued. Training initiatives were well regarded, but training hours lagged industry standards. IT systems were seen as integrated but needed improvements in accessibility and updates. Human capital was highly rated for expertise but scored lower in innovation. Correlation analysis revealed strong links between effective recruitment, training, IT use, and human capital quality. The study underscores the need for refined HRM strategies to enhance workforce competency and organisational performance in Nepal's growing hospitality sector.

Keywords: hospitality industry, human capital, human resource management, training and development

INTRODUCTION

People are the focus of human resource management. The field of human capital management (HCM) is focused on gathering, evaluating, and reporting data that guides strategic, investment, and operational choices at the corporate and front-line management levels as well as value-adding people management (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Baron & Armstrong, 2007). Human resource management (HRM) is concerned with the 'people' dimension in management. Since every organisation is made-up of people, acquiring their services, developing their skills, motivating them to high levels of performance, and ensuring that they continue to maintain their commitment to the organisation are essential to achieving organisational objectives (DeCenzo & Robbins, 1993).

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[Guest \(1997\)](#) identified seven key elements of human resource management under HR practices: selection process, training, appraisal, rewards, job design, involvement, and status and security. Selection is the process of identifying individuals with the necessary qualifications and competencies to fill job positions within an organisation. Training is a learning process that applies knowledge and skills. Managers must be able to motivate employees, whether monetary or non-monetary, to achieve compensation, benefits, and rewards. Employees also expect status and security from the organisation. Overall, these elements are essential components of effective HR practices.

The World Travel and Tourism Council acknowledges the significance of overseeing a sizable workforce in nations' tourist industries ([Nickson, 2007](#)). Despite the enormous workforce, there are still concerns about the calibre of the work. Choosing to implement the hiring, training, and administration of a dedicated, capable, and well-managed, and driven workforce capable of producing high-quality outcomes presents difficulties for businesses and managers in the tourist sector ([Nickson, 2007](#)).

[Keep and Mayhew's \(1999\)](#) analysis of the skills issue in the hotel sector reveals several personnel issues, including low pay, shift patterns, unsocial hours, overrepresentation of women and ethnic minorities, lack of equal opportunity policies, seasonal, casualised work, inadequate career frameworks, dependence on unofficial hiring practices, absence of proof of effective personnel/HRM procedures, lack of trade unions, high employee turnover rates, and challenges in hiring and retaining staff.

Nepal is also one of the international hubs for tourists around the world. Tourism has been a backbone of the Nepalese economy. The gross value added in the accommodation and food service sector grew by 18.03 percent in fiscal year 2023-24 and estimated to grow to 21.84 percent in the fiscal year end of 2024-25 ([Ministry of Finance, 2024](#)). This growth is completely dependent on the performance of overall hospitality industry sector as well, and the hospitality industry also depends on quality services delivered by the human factors. The hospitality industry faces several HR challenges, including an underemphasis on interpersonal skills during hiring despite its people-centric nature, along with training programs that lack strategic, future-focused skill development. While HRMIS systems are functional, they require better accessibility and regular updates to maximise efficiency. Additionally, despite having skilled employees, innovation is stifled by a rigid work culture, and tech-driven recruitment lags due to a weak alignment between IT and hiring processes. Addressing these gaps is crucial for fostering a more dynamic and guest-focused workforce. Hence, in this backdrop, the paper tries to analyse the human resource management practices in the Nepalese hospitality industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

This section presents the literature review, covering both theoretical and empirical studies relevant to the paper. *Theoretical Review*

[Guest \(1997\)](#) identified seven key elements of human resource management that contribute to organisational effectiveness and employee satisfaction:

Selection Process – Identifying and hiring qualified individuals to fill organisational roles, ensuring the right talent is acquired.

Training – Enhancing employees' skills and knowledge through systematic development programs to improve competence and performance.

Appraisal – Evaluating employee performance to assess contributions, identify strengths, and facilitate improvement.

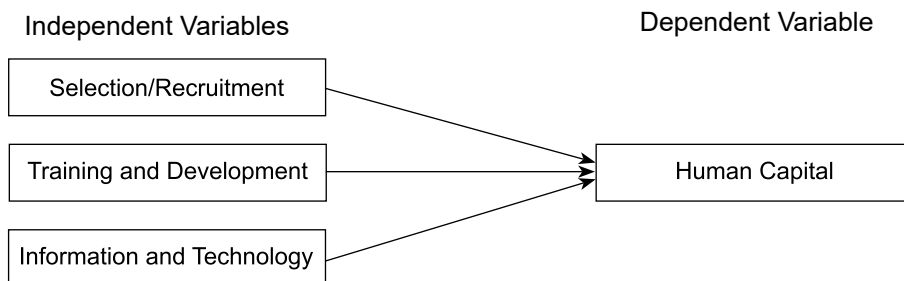
Rewards – Providing both financial (pay, benefits) and non-financial (recognition, career growth) incentives to motivate employees.

Job Design – Structuring roles to maximise productivity and job satisfaction, moving beyond specialisation to motivational approaches.

Involvement – Encouraging employee participation in decision-making to foster commitment and engagement.

Status and Security – Offering job stability, recognition, and a sense of belonging to enhance motivation and retention.

These practices collectively ensure a skilled, motivated, and satisfied workforce, driving organisational success ([Armstrong, 2014](#); [Guest, 1997](#)). Good HRM practices are those that contribute to one or more of the three C's: Competencies, Commitment



Note. Nieves and Quintana, 2016

Figure 1. *Theoretical Framework*

and Culture. They need to be identified and implemented cost- effectively, reviewing and revising them from time to time to enhance their effectiveness and appropriateness (Rao, 1999). HRM practices are not a set of discrete actions but rather a cohesive and holistic approach to organisational management.

According to Dhiman and Kumar (2015), HRM is considered the source of long-term competitive advantages for many businesses functioning in a global market, including those in the travel and hospitality sector. There is less data regarding the new theoretical and practical facets of human resource management (HRM), despite mounting evidence that informality characterises HRM practice in the hospitality sector. The theoretical framework for the paper is as follow:

Empirical Review

Al Hrouit and Mohamed (2014) examined the pro-social behaviour of employees in Malaysia's hospitality sector, focusing on the tourism industry's key characteristics, relationships between tourists, organisers, and local communities. It highlights how front-line staff's behaviour influences service quality, improving customer experiences and overall industry performance, and emphasises the importance of identifying, recruiting, and integrating skilled human resources.

Gaikwad et al. (2016) found that benefits like salaries, wages, and insurance schemes significantly impact talent retention and employee retention. Fringe benefits like accommodation and transportation also contribute positively. Hotels with good work-life balance, flexible hours, training opportunities, and a friendly work culture, along with proper grievance handling, also contribute to better retention.

Mohan and Arumugam (2016) emphasised the importance of transparent recruitment processes, downsizing policies, and recognition of outstanding performance. Open communication channels and conflict resolution mechanisms should be developed for all levels.

Nieves and Quintana (2016) explored the mediating role of human capital in the relationship between human resource management practices and innovation in Spanish hotels. They found that certain practices influence innovation through their influence on human capital. Recruitment and selection practices, however, do not enhance human capital levels but do determine innovation performance.

McGinley et al. (2017) stated that global hospitality industry faces high turnover rates and a labour shortage, making understanding employment perceptions crucial for managers. This research examines hotel employment perceptions among potential employees without prior experience. Perceptions of pay, promotion opportunities, work-to-life conflict, and workplace-induced isolation are proposed to significantly affect attitudes towards hotel employment, influencing intentions to apply and recommend.

[Dewantara et al. \(2018\)](#) research aimed to understand human resource practices in the South Sulawesi & Bali hospitality industry through interviews with HR practitioners. The study revealed that HR practices are implemented equally between managers and staff, including job designs, training, and development, and that specific distinctions apply to manager roles in decision-making and goal setting.

[Amonovna \(2019\)](#) identified compensation, overtime, work environment, and safety, which stem from ineffective HR functions and management's neglect of employee concerns. To address high turnover rates-a global hospitality challenge-HR managers must shift from reactive recruitment to strategic HR practices such as workforce planning, job analysis, performance management, fair compensation, training, and employee retention strategies. Implementing a structured HR system and convincing senior management of its importance are crucial for reducing labor shortages and improving overall hotel operations.

[Shah and Shrestha \(2022\)](#) investigated the role of human resource management strategies in the hotel sector. It also covers HRM procedures in hotels, customer satisfaction, and service quality. 315 management and staff members from various hotels in Nepal are taking part. The findings indicate a positive correlation between customer happiness, performance management, quality service delivery, and recruitment and training procedures. The findings, however, indicate that there is no connection between payment and providing high-quality services. According to this survey, Nepalese hospitality services must proactively improve their human resource strategy to have a greater impact on client satisfaction.

[Wang et al. \(2022\)](#) clarified the HRM research in the hospitality industry. The results of hospitality HRM study are useful in the context of the pandemic. Nonetheless, several topics merit consideration, including HRM practice innovation and external results (e.g., themes 6, customer, service, and implementation of technologies). When combined with the industrial features and environmental context, the post-pandemic era's new prospects for the growth of hospitality HRM outweigh its new difficulties.

[de Souza Meira et al. \(2023\)](#) revealed that knowledge sharing performed best in their hotels and that Brazilian managers viewed training as the most crucial human resources activity. When it came to performance ratings, English managers gave employment security the greatest priority. In terms of relevance and performance evaluations, Brazilian frontline employees gave intrinsic motivation the highest ranking, whilst English frontline employees gave it the highest ranking.

RESEARCH METHODS

The paper tries to assess the human resource management practices in the Nepalese hospitality industry. It followed the descriptive and correlation research design to analyse the data, and randomly collected the sample of 101 employees working

Table 1
Reliability Result

Construct	Initial Items	Dropped Items	Alpha's Value
Selection/Recruitment	5	1	0.821
Training and Development	5	Nil	0.795
Information Technology	5	Nil	0.779
Human Capital	5	Nil	0.817

Note. Field Survey, 2025

at the different types of hotels operating at Chitwan. The sample is determined as per the availability of human resources to respond for the paper from the hotels operating around the Sauraha, Patihani and Bharatpur. The paper followed a five-points Likert scale to get the opinions from the sampled respondents. The paper uses basic descriptive statistics such as mean, standard deviation and skewness to interpret the opinions forwarded by the respondents. The paper also runs correlation matrix to see the relationship among the factors of human resource management. The paper conducted a reliability test after the pilot study among the 50 respondents. The reliability result for the questionnaire has been tabulated as:

Table 1 presents the reliability analysis results for four constructs: Selection/Recruitment, Training and Development, Information Technology, and Human Capital. Each construct initially comprised five items. After reliability testing, one item was dropped from the Selection/Recruitment construct to improve internal consistency, resulting in a Cronbach's Alpha value of 0.821, indicating good reliability.

For the remaining three constructs-Training and Development ($\alpha = 0.795$), Information Technology ($\alpha = 0.779$), and Human Capital ($\alpha = 0.817$)-all five items were retained as their reliability coefficients were within the acceptable range. Cronbach's Alpha values above 0.7 suggest that the constructs possess satisfactory internal consistency, implying that the items within each construct reliably measure the same underlying concept.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

This part of the paper covers the analysis of data collected from the field.

Respondents' Profile

Table 2 illustrates the profile of the respondents. Table 2 reveals that among the age group large no of respondents are female. The highest number of respondents from 31 to 40 years age group. Respondents with SEE qualifications seen the highest in number. Finally, most of the respondents are working at medium-scale hotels.

Table 2
Respondents Profile

Sex		Age Group		Qualifications		Firm Size	
Male	39	Below 20	9	Below SEE	16	Small	31
Female	62	20-30	28	SEE	26	Medium	40
		31-40	41	SLC	25	Large	30
		41 and above	23	Bachelor	19		
				Master	15		
Total	101 (100.0)		101		101		101

Note. Field Survey, 2025

Opinions on Selection/Recruitment

The selection and recruitment is an initial stage of HRM practice for any organization. The opinions on selection/recruitment practices at the sample hotels are illustrated in Table 3:

Table 3
Opinions on Selection/Recruitment

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std. Error
Among the characteristics assessed in selection, a candidate's potential is very important.	3.98	0.94	-0.48	0.24
The ability to collaborate and work in a team is a candidate selection criterion.	3.88	0.84	0.02	0.24
The selection process for responsible positions involves extensive interviews, tests, and recruitment from various sources.	3.84	0.80	-0.43	0.24
Interpersonal skills are one of our candidate selection criteria.	3.74	0.82	-0.26	0.24
Overall Average	3.86			

Note. Field Survey, 2025

Table 3 reveals that respondents generally have a positive view of an organisation's selection and recruitment practices, with an average mean score of 3.86 points on a 5-point scale. The highest mean score was for the importance of a candidate's potential, indicating strong agreement on this criterion. The importance of teamwork ability and comprehensive recruitment methods were also positively rated, indicating agreement on these factors. However, the item regarding interpersonal skills received the lowest mean score, suggesting that interpersonal skills may be perceived as less critical compared to potential and teamwork ability. The results

suggest that the organisation's selection and recruitment practices are perceived positively, with potential and teamwork ability being the most crucial factors.

Opinions on Training and Development

The opinions on training and development practices at the sample hotels are illustrated in Table 4:

Table 4
Opinions on Training and Development

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std. Error
The selection process for responsible positions involves extensive interviews, tests, and recruitment from various sources.	3.84	0.80	-0.43	0.24
Employees have multiple professional opportunities within the organisation.	3.81	0.73	-0.79	0.24
We allocate resources for our employees to attend courses and seminars.	3.78	0.74	-0.37	0.24
Employees receive broad training associated with their positions.	3.74	0.70	0.23	0.24
Training courses are conducted to enhance skills and abilities necessary for the company's future needs.	3.74	0.74	0.01	0.24
Our employees dedicate significantly more hours annually to training than the industry average.	3.62	0.72	0.05	0.24
Overall Average	3.76			

Note. Field Survey, 2025

Training and Development construct has an average mean score of 3.76 points, indicating positive perceptions of an organisation's training and development practices. The highest mean score is for the thoroughness of recruitment for key roles, while the item 'Employees have multiple professional opportunities within the organisation' has a high mean of 3.81 points. Other positive perceptions include resource allocation for seminars and courses, broad training associated with job positions, future-oriented training courses, and above-industry-average training hours. However, some respondents may perceive improvement in these areas. The standard deviations suggest a moderate spread in responses, suggesting some variability in opinions but a general trend towards agreement. Overall, the results suggest that while the organisation's training and development efforts are viewed positively, there may be room for improvement in training hours.

Opinions on Information Technology Uses

In the dynamic techno-based organizational environment, the use of information technology (IT) has been must for every types of organization. Hences, the hospitality sector also could not escape from it. The opinions on information technology uses at the sample hotels are presented in Table 5:

Table 5
Opinions on Information Technology Uses

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std. Error
Our HRMIS is integrated (they can interconnect appropriately).	3.89	0.84	-0.42	0.24
Our Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) is easy to use.	3.79	0.74	0.20	0.24
Our HRMIS is accessible to all employees.	3.69	0.69	0.49	0.24
Our HRMIS is appropriate to enable employees to exchange information and knowledge.	3.68	0.72	-0.10	0.24
Our HRMIS is relevant and updated as per the change in technology.	3.65	0.79	0.34	0.24
Overall Average	3.74			

Note. Field Survey, 2025

Respondents generally agree with the use and effectiveness of the Human Resource Management Information System (HRMIS) in their organisation. The highest mean score was for the system's integration capabilities, with a slight negative skewness. The system is also considered easy to use, with a mean of 3.79 points. However, some respondents may perceive accessibility limitations due to system reach or user restrictions. The HRMIS's ability to facilitate information and knowledge exchange and its relevance and updates aligned with technology changes received the lowest mean values, suggesting potential for improvement. The standard deviations (0.69 to 0.84) reflect moderate variability in responses, indicating that while opinions are generally positive, some differing views exist regarding system accessibility and technological adequacy. The results suggest that while the HRMIS is perceived as well-integrated and user-friendly, there is a perceived need for improving accessibility, relevance, and functionality to better support knowledge sharing and technological updates.

Opinions on Human Capital

The opinions on human capital at the sample hotels are illustrated in Table 6:

Human Capital construct analysis shows an average mean score of 3.80 points,

Table 6
Opinions on Human Capital

Items	Mean	Std. Deviation	Skewness	Std. Error
Our employees are experts in their jobs and functions.	3.87	0.73	-0.42	0.24
Our employees are creative and bright.	3.81	0.74	-0.42	0.24
Our employees are widely considered the best in our industry.	3.81	0.76	0.19	0.24
Our employees are highly skilled.	3.80	0.68	-0.13	0.24
Our employees develop new ideas and knowledge.	3.69	0.80	0.25	0.24
Overall Average	3.80			

Note. Field Survey, 2025

indicating that respondents generally agree with positive statements about the organisation's human capital quality. The highest mean score was 'Our employees are experts in their jobs and functions,' indicating that most respondents perceive the organisation's employees as highly competent and proficient in their roles. The items 'Our employees are creative and bright' and 'Our employees are widely considered the best in our industry' also received high ratings, although the latter shows a slight positive skewness. The perception of high skill levels among employees remains strong, with minimal skewness, indicating consistency in agreement among respondents regarding workforce competency. However, the lowest mean score was 'Our employees develop new ideas and knowledge,' suggesting that creativity and innovation may not be as prominent as other qualities like expertise and skills, highlighting a possible area for organisational development. The standard deviations reflect moderate variability in responses, indicating a generally shared but not unanimous positive view of the organisation's human capital.

Correlation Coefficient Results

The table below illustrates the relationship among the selected variables of human resources management practices in the hospitality industry:

The correlation analysis reveals strong and significant relationships between four constructs: Selection and Recruitment, Training and Development, Information Technology, and Human Capital. Effective selection and recruitment practices are closely associated with better training and development activities within an organisation. A moderate positive correlation is observed between Selection and

Table 7
Correlation Coefficient

Constructs	Selection and Recruitment	Training and Development	Information Technology	Human Capital
Selection and Recruitment	1			
Training and Development	+0.687** (0.000)	1		
Information Technology	+0.285** (0.004)	+0.558** (0.000)	1	
Human Capital	+0.427** (0.000)	+0.597** (0.000)	+0.632** (0.000)	1

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

Recruitment and Human Capital, suggesting that better recruitment and selection practices may contribute to the development of valuable human capital. A weak but significant positive correlation is observed between Selection and Recruitment and Information Technology, suggesting a lesser but still meaningful relationship between these areas. Training and Development is strongly positively correlated with Human Capital and moderately correlated with Information Technology, suggesting that training initiatives enhance human capital and go together with the effective use of information technology. Advanced HRMIS systems and related technologies significantly contribute to the quality and development of human capital. Overall, the correlations suggest that all constructs are interrelated, with particularly strong linkages between Training and Development, Human Capital, and Information Technology.

CONCLUSION AND IMPLICATIONS

The study provides valuable insights into human resource management (HRM) practices in the hospitality industry of Chitwan, Nepal, focusing on four key constructs: Selection/Recruitment, Training and Development, Information Technology (IT), and Human Capital. The findings suggest that while HRM practices are generally perceived positively, there are areas for improvement to enhance workforce efficiency and organisational performance.

The survey found that candidate potential, teamwork ability, and comprehensive selection processes are crucial factors in recruitment. However, interpersonal skills were rated lower, suggesting a gap in hiring assessment. Employees acknowledged professional growth opportunities and resource allocation for training, but training hours were slightly below industry expectations. The HR Management Information System was rated positively for integration but faced challenges in accessibility, knowledge exchange, and technological updates.

The correlation analysis revealed a strong link between Selection/Recruitment and Training & Development, indicating that better hiring leads to more effective training. Training & Development significantly correlates with Human Capital, reinforcing that skill enhancement directly improves workforce quality. IT usage has a moderate but meaningful relationship with both Human Capital and T&D, suggesting that digital tools support employee development.

Implications: The study's findings highlight the interconnectedness of effective HRM practices in the hospitality industry, demonstrating that robust selection processes, targeted training, and advanced IT systems collectively enhance human capital. Practically, the findings suggest that hospitality industries in Chitwan should prioritise interpersonal skills in recruitment, expand training hours, and upgrade HRMIS accessibility to foster innovation and efficiency. The strong correlations between training, technology, and human capital underscore the need for holistic HR strategies, offering valuable insights for Nepalese hospitality managers. The management needs to conduct training and development programs that update and boost the capacity of the HR. The interconnection among the variables of HRM practices shows the importance of each function in enhancing the overall performance of the hospitality sector. The management could not undermine any of the HRM practices, stating this or that, which directly erodes the overall performance of the organisation, as well as the image of the organisation. This research bridges theory and practice by affirming that synergistic HR investments yield a competitive workforce.

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Conflict of interest

The authors declared having no conflict of interest in this research.

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