Review

Employability skills as perceived by hotel employees: An overview

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Abstract: Background: The hotel industry is labor-intensive. Both technical and behavioral aspects of quality are considered to ensure service quality and customer satisfaction among the internal and external customers as a whole, creating a competitive advantage. **Significance:** Recruiting and selecting the right people is paramount to the success of the hospitality industry in the sense that the best delivery will be enhanced if proper procedures are used and the right people are selected who can handle their tasks to the best satisfaction of the customer. **Method:** The goal of the research was to explore the recruiting and selection practices/methods used in the hotel industry, as well as their employability. The study aims to explore the differences in the mix of recruitment and selection methods implemented in 4- and 5-star and different category hotels. As an enterprise, HRD comprises change, learning, and performance. **Results:** Based on the findings, it is imperative to invest in human resources as a capital asset to boost staff entities in terms of knowledge and capabilities, thereby contributing to better service quality and enhanced customer satisfaction. This would help fulfil the organizations' objectives. **Conclusion:** The study concludes that the selected candidates are being analyzed properly and effectively. It is very important to note that the results of this study cannot be generalized as it deals with a restricted clientele, and this could only add on variables and instances to form a common standpoint for the other hotel managers.

Keywords: recruitment; selection; service quality; human resource; employees

1. Introduction

The majority of personnel management is hands-on in the manufacturing and commercial sectors, compared to the service and hotel industries. The hotel industry is labor-intensive. Both technical and behavioral aspects of quality are considered to ensure service quality and customer satisfaction among internal and external customers as a whole, creating a competitive advantage.

The hotel industry's specific characteristics, such as high turnover, skill shortages, flexible employment patterns, low wages, heterogeneity in firm size, ownership, and service class/category, make human resource management more critical in a specific context for the achievement of organizational goals. Attracting and selecting the right people is the starting point for the achievement of these goals by effectively managing the organizational workforce.

The purpose of this study is to investigate the recruiting and selecting practices/methods utilized in the hotel sector, specifically in the hotel brand, and their success. The study intends to investigate the differences in the mix of recruitment and selection strategies used by 4- and 5-star hotels of various sizes. Furthermore, the findings are likely to help fill a gap in HRM literature about the recruiting and selection processes used in the hotel business.

Talent acquisition (TA) is defined as "a strategic approach to identifying, attracting, and onboarding top talent to meet dynamic business needs efficiently and

effectively". Recruiting and selection is a subset of TA that encompasses sourcing, screening, interviewing, assessing, selecting, and hiring. The process's primary goals are to recruit bright individuals to work for the business, to complete the entire cycle from planning to deployment as quickly as possible, to place the right people in the right places, and to ensure a pool of readily available talent. The process of discovering and encouraging potential applicants to apply for current or anticipated employment openings is known as recruitment. Selection, on the other hand, is the process of selecting people with the necessary qualities to fill positions in an organization. In recent years, recruitment and selection processes have changed dramatically. Retaining staff has been a difficult issue for all firms, and they are taking extra precautions when hiring new employees. This is where the efficiency of recruitment and selection comes into play. Recruitment is now a process that is strategically aligned.

There is a visible imbalance between skilled labor supply and demand in the hospitality industry. Employees in this industry must have a wide range of skill sets to carry out organizational activities and functions. Employers want employees who are quick learners, versatile, adaptive, and transformable. More importantly, work in an independent manner involving minimal supervision.

According to a McKinsey Global Institute analysis, a global shortfall of approximately 38 million high-skilled and 45 million middle-skilled professionals is projected by 2020. As a result, the necessity of obtaining these necessary abilities is undeniable at the international, national, and institutional levels.

Some of the major concerns are high staff turnover and skill gaps, where there is a mismatch between market demand and the present capabilities provided by organizations.

Recruitment challenges in the hospitality industry will continue to be a matter of concern in finding the suitable applicant, retaining the best people, and addressing the lack of quality hospitality training or education. The wage in hospitality is appealing. Work pressure is a little greater and has more underlying gaps.

Human resource management has made improvements to performance management, resulting in the elimination of certain flaws in performance management. In this day and age of fierce competition, the organization must prioritize labor and position its needs at the top of the company's priority list. Human resource management has been critical in eradicating the practice of treating employees like machines.

The performance management industry is changing dramatically. According to this hotel brand study, 50% of employers intend to change their approach to performance management within the next year and a half. 48% of these firms want to make significant changes to their performance management systems. This is happening because the corporation recognizes that its personnel evaluation systems are not just traditional but also, to some extent, antiquated.

Organizations feel that fundamental changes in firms' performance management techniques are essential if they are to develop a culture of high performance. This is also important if they wish to remain relevant in the thoughts of present and prospective employees.

Hotels are beginning to respond to major trends in the performance management domain in their drive to make significant adjustments to this domain.

Some of the main trends are listed below:

- ongoing evaluation rather than an annual appraisal—continual Kaizen;
- Employees should not be labeled—no biased feedback/ appraisal;
- the evaluation of performance as a motivator.

The level of skill the staff possesses determines the fit statement of an employee. With a dedicated workforce, it is not only possible to create quality service but also helps to beat the competition. Every hotel organization or unit has its own set of rules and policies of operation that determine the existence and retention of employees and customers. Therefore, performance is directly proportional to skill acquisition. Lack of venue for training is also a barrier to unproductivity and the deteriorated dedication level of employees. Hotel employees should be trained appropriately to provide excellent customer service. Human resources (HR) continue to be an essential determinant of hospitality and tourism offerings, with implications for destination competitiveness. Human resources are a hospitality company's initial point of contact with its consumers. It is imperative to invest in human resources as capital to boost staff entities in terms of knowledge and capabilities, thereby contributing to better service quality and enhanced customer satisfaction. This would help fulfill the organization's objectives.

2. Literature review

Helm et al. (2007) said that PMS is an important tool to improve an organization's performance; it facilitates the organization to achieve its goals and objectives. It can develop a performance-oriented culture within the organization. It helps the individual employee to have clarity about what exactly is expected from him, as there will be proper performance planning for each employee. PMS can also identify talented individuals for promotion, and it also establishes a linkage between pay and performance. It means various important HR decisions can be accurately taken with the help of PMS.

Bhattacharjee and Sengupta (2011) emphasized in their study that employees are the most crucial and valuable assets of an organization. If an organization wants to gain competitive advantages, it is very important to bridge the gap between the actual competence of human resources working in the organization and the desired competence expected from them. With the help of an established performance management system, the organization can bridge this gap between actual performance and expected performance.

Pradhan and Chaudhury (2012) found that the main objective of the performance management system is to align the individual and organizational goals in such a way as to give the best possible platform for the employees to perform with 100% efficiency, which will lead to organizational development, employee satisfaction, and increased employee retention.

According to Azizi Rostam (2020), performance management can be considered a set of measures and information that is done to increase the level of optimal use of

facilities and resources to achieve goals in economic ways with efficiency and effectiveness.

The study of Muhammad et al. (2021) contributes to the body of knowledge by providing information about the relationship and effects of performance management on employee performance.

Successful human resources should recognize the organization's manpower requirements. It involves identifying a possible workforce for current or projected vacancies. It is a connection that brings together individuals who have positions to fill on one hand and who are looking for work on the other. A successful recruitment campaign will attract a significant number of qualified candidates who will accept the job if it is provided. This process takes care of rejected and waitlisted candidates for job consideration. An effective recruiting campaign should create a platform for deserving and fit candidates. This will lower the cost of screening the rejected candidates.

According to IvyPanda (2021), Mintzberg opines that "human resource manpower is the best asset a company will have if well managed." This indicates that if organizations hire the appropriate people, they will see upward growth. Management should also motivate employees as much as possible through frequent training and incentive programs. In this aspect, **Figure 1** tries to guide with the different variables used in the HR policies.

3. Research methodology

For relevant information on a certain issue, the research process is scientific and systematic. It is a thorough investigation or inquiry, a review of any field of expertise. Research is a systematic endeavor to gather knowledge and skills that a researcher generates and employs in researching his research challenge, as well as the logic behind them. The method of writing or carrying out research is critical since it has a large impact on the conclusions reached at the end of the investigation.

A hotel brand was chosen at random for a sample of hospitality professionals. In January 2023, 30 employees responded to an email with a link to the survey, obtaining a 100% response rate. To enhance response rates, the survey was conducted for three weeks, and weekly reminders were given to sample members.

Employees play critical roles in ensuring that firms have a competitive advantage over competitors around the world for them to be sustained. Using a descriptive survey research design, the study will investigate the recruiting and selection strategies for employee performance in the real sector. The functions of recruiting, selection, and placement are critical in the hospitality management sector. This industry's success is dependent on human resources, as portrayed by Muller et al. (2009).

Analysis: Throughout this report, we may presume that the hotel launched the recruitment process for its employees.

Differences: To evaluate if the observed differences were statistically significant, conventional statistical methods were applied.
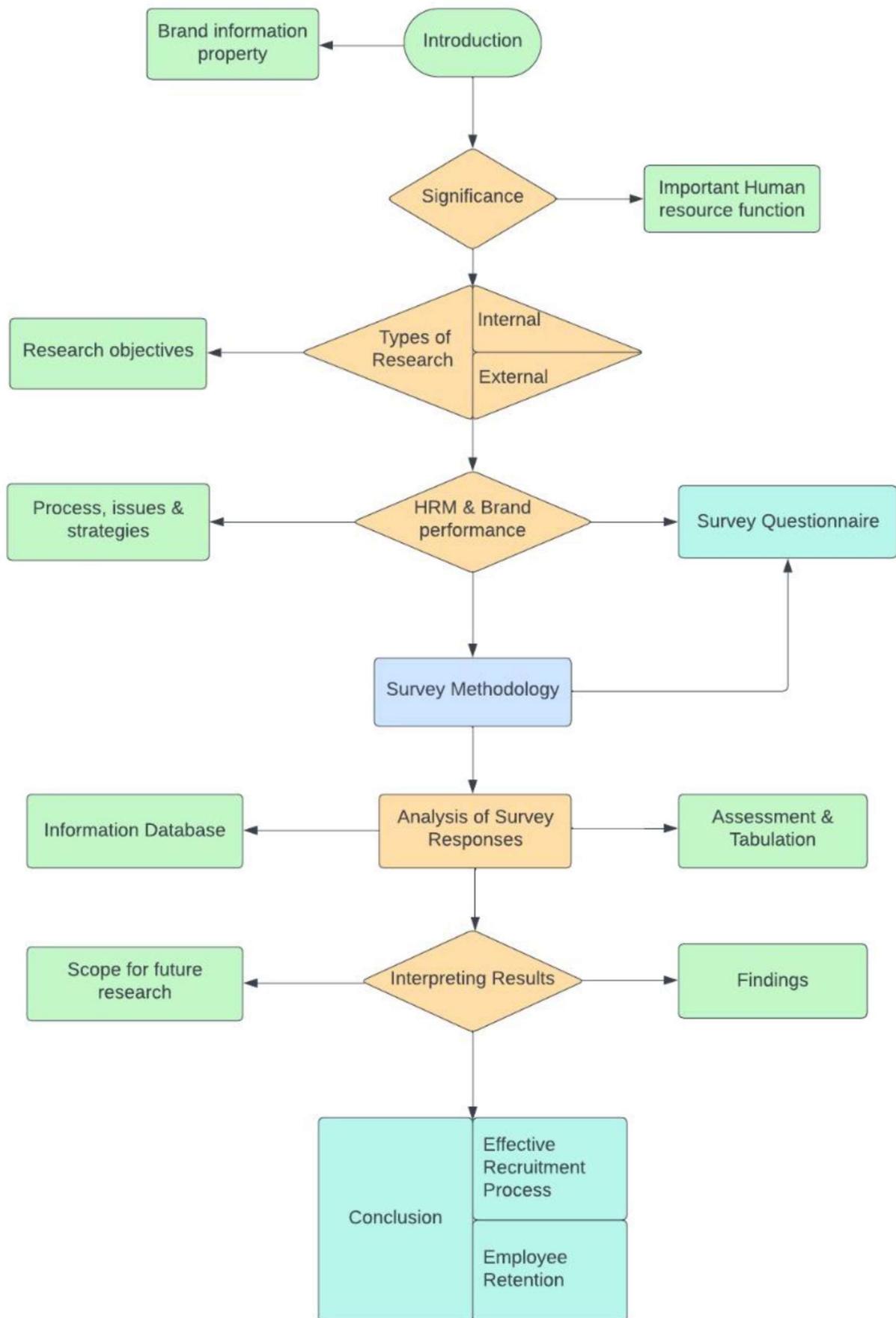
Figure 1. Conceptual framework/flowchart of variables.

Sources of data: The information is gathered from both primary and secondary sources. Primary data is obtained using a structured questionnaire. A well-structured questionnaire has been produced and distributed to hotel personnel.

Secondary data: Secondary data is collected using published data within the firm as well as the online media.

Sample size: The total sample size is thirty.

4. Significance

At the moment, the most difficult challenge is recognizing talent in the hotel industry. A clear and refined recruiting policy is needed in today's global candidate short market to achieve organizational objectives and command a large market share in the current competitive market. Recruiting and selecting the appropriate personnel is critical to the success of the hospitality sector in the sense that proper procedures are followed and the right people are chosen to handle their responsibilities to the best satisfaction of the customer.

The main aim of the study is to identify, encourage, measure, evaluate, improve, and reward. The study involves all the formal and informal measures adopted by the hotel to increase individual and team effectiveness. Management and employees should be enabled continuously, e.g., by being practiced by SAP Company (n.d.) in Walldorf, Germany, to develop knowledge, skills, and capabilities for employee performance at work.

The scope of the study covers the following parts, as also emphasized by Becker et al. (2001):

- Job performance: considers meeting goals and developing mutually decided standards.
- Working relationships: This aspect focuses on maintaining professional relationships with co-workers, subordinates, and managers.
- The need for the study is that human resources are the real resources for any organization. All other resources in the organization are utilized by human resources, and so the fullest utilization of all resources depends on the employee performance of the organization. Today, the globalization of the world economy and several other factors are again generating changes in how organizations organize, manage, and use their human resources. Technology is also changing the nature of work. Knowledge-intensive techniques, industrial automation, and reengineering with optimum utilization of resources set the current working environment. To add to this, the personal lives of individual employees also affect their professional work, aims and ambitions, and decisions. Hence, managing employee performance continuously is becoming critical to the policies and planning of top management.

Performance management has attracted the attention of all organizations as the information provided by PMS can be utilized for making various important HR decisions related to human resource planning, recruitment and selection, training and development, compensation management, career planning, talent management, performance-based pay, etc., according to a study by Sims (2002).

5. Tabulation & data analysis

According to the data derived from the structured questionnaire, the analysis is as under.

As is shown in **Figure 2**, mostly the response came from the 25–40 age group, which is 57.1%, followed by the 18–25 age group, which is approximately 28.6%.
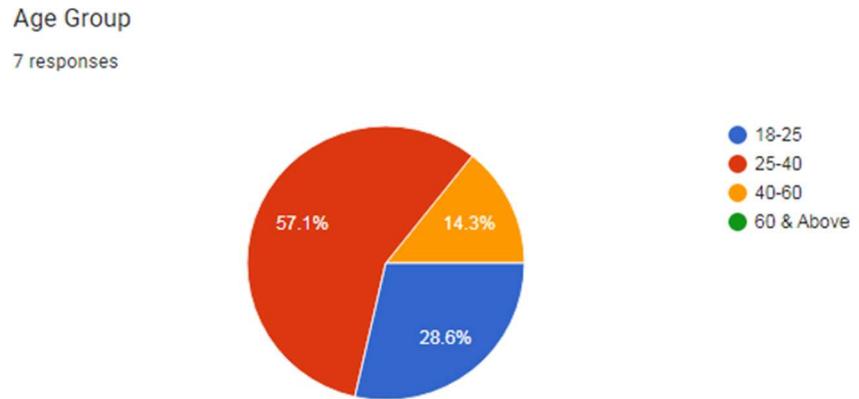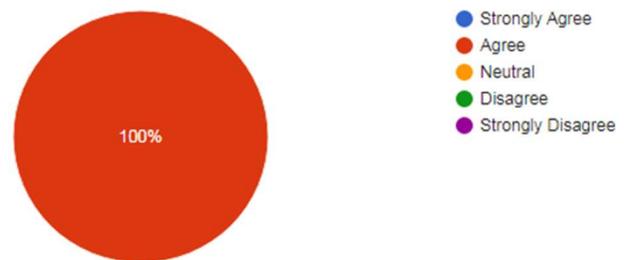

Figure 2. Age group of the respondents.

As is shown in **Figure 3**, 100% of respondents agreed that the performance management system is clearly defined in the organization.

Figure 3. Organization's performance management system.

As is shown in **Figure 4**, 42% believe that the performance management system can be based on the skills of the person in the property.
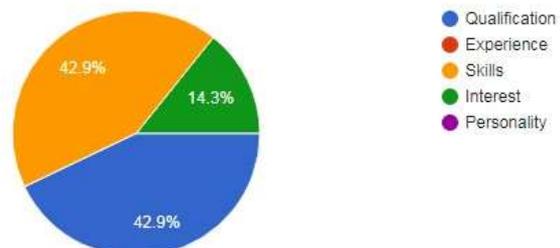
Figure 4. Individual positive factors of performance management system.

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As is shown in **Figure 5**, 57.1% of respondents believe that through management support, the performance management system can be improved.
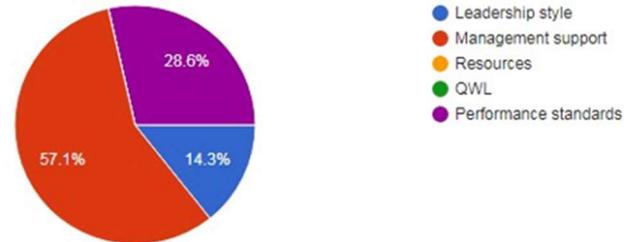
Figure 5. Organizational positive factors of performance management system.

As is shown in **Figure 6**, 100% of respondents agree that their formal feedback is given in their organization.
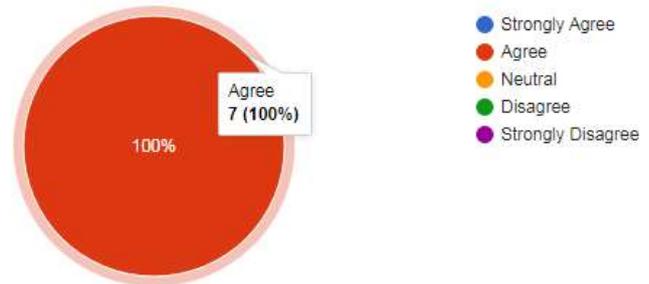
Figure 6. Formal performance feedback.

As is shown in **Figure 7**, 71.4% of employees say that their performance management system and performance appraisal system are satisfactory and 28.6% say it is neutral.
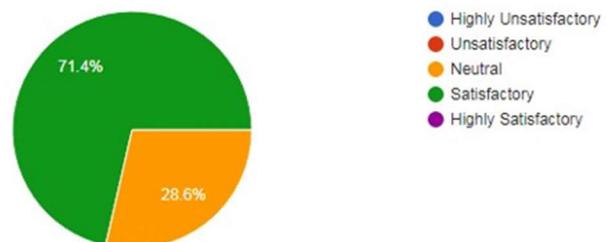
Figure 7. Performance appraisal system.

As is shown in **Figure 8**, 100% of respondents say that their company has a great future, and they would recommend the work culture and workplace to their family and friends as emphasized by Fatema (2018).

Figure 8. Recommend the current organization.

As is shown in **Figure 9**, 71.4% of respondents say that their performance management system helps them achieve meaningful goals, followed by 28.6% who say that it is neutral; they could not comment on any of the thoughts.
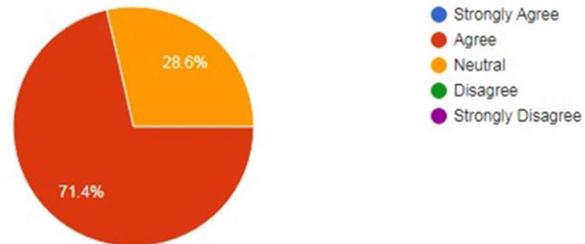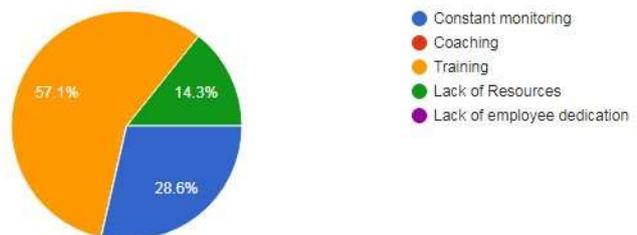

Figure 9. Goal oriented performance management system.

As is shown in **Figure 10**, 57.1% of respondents say that training is a barrier to effective performance, followed by 14.3% who say lack of resources, and 28.6% say that barriers are through constant monitoring.
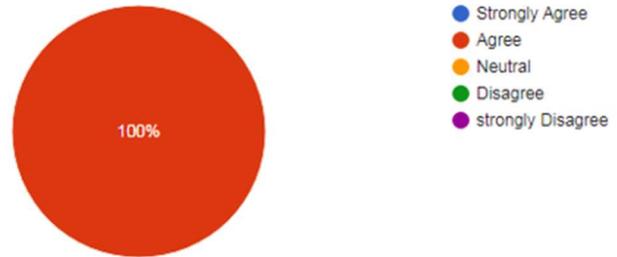

Figure 10. Barriers of effective performance.

As is shown in **Figure 11**, 100% of respondents agree that PMS implemented in their organization creates a participative environment as also concluded in a study by Kumar and Nirmala (2015).

9. PMS implemented in the organization creates a participative environment

7 responses

Figure 11. Participative nature of performance management system.

As is shown in **Figure 12**, 71.4% of people agree that their job responsibilities are clearly defined, whereas 14.3% have a neutral approach to them, and a mix of 14.3% strongly agree with the given statement.

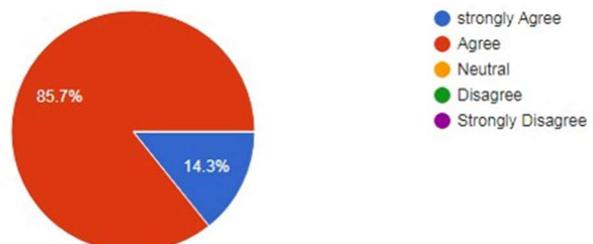10. The job responsibilities are clearly defined

7 responses
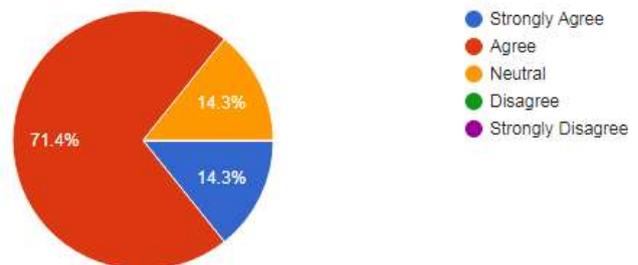
Figure 12. Job responsibilities defined.

As is shown in **Figure 13**, 85.7% of respondents agree that their performance and their achievements are rewarded in time, followed by 14.3% who strongly agree.

11. The excellence in performance and achievement of results are rewarded in time

7 responses

Figure 13. Rewarding nature of performance management system.

As is shown in **Figure 14**, 85.7% of respondents say that their company policies are good in terms of business needs and a positive work environment, followed by 14.3% saying they are very good.

12. How would you rate your companies policies and procedures are periodically reviewed to meet with the business needs and creates create a positive work environment?
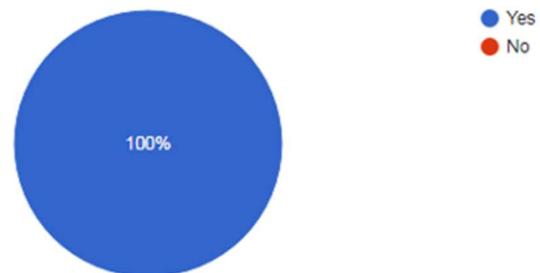
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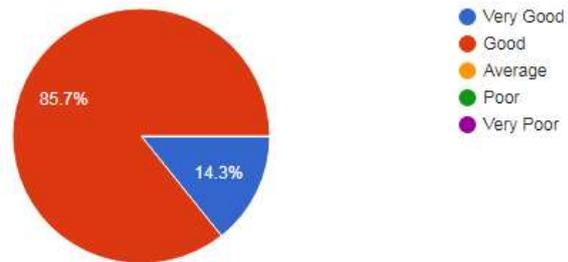
Figure 14. Review nature of organization's performance management system.

As is shown in **Figure 15**, 100% of respondents agree that steps are taken to improve performance management by the organization.

13. Are any steps taken to improve the performance if not upto the mark?

7 responses

Figure 15. Existence of improvement steps in performance management system.

As is shown in **Figure 16**, 100% of people agreed that their job description clearly defines the KRA on which performance is rated.

14. Does your Job Description clearly define KRA's on which your performance is rated?
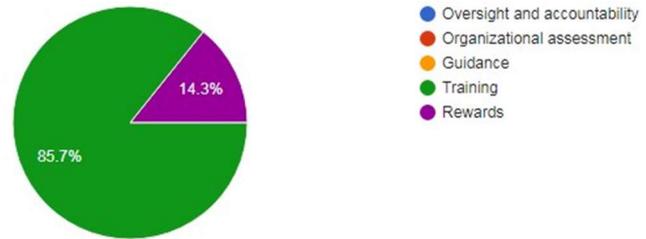
7 responses

Figure 16. Job description defined.

As is shown in **Figure 17**, 85.7% of respondents say that the performance can be improved with the training factor, and 14.3% say by the reward systems.
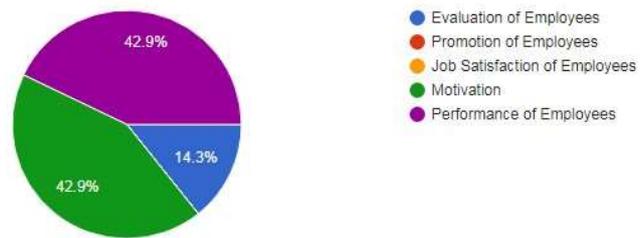

Figure 17. Improvement entities in performance management system.

As is shown in **Figure 18**, both 42.9% say that the performance of employees and motivation are performance appraisals. and the rest, 14.3%, say it is an evaluation of employees.

Figure 18. Performance appraisal defined by employees.

As shown in **Figure 19,** there are some feedbacks and suggestions in the given questionnaire.

Figure 19. Suggestions of improvement for management by employees.

6. Limitation

The analysis indicates that the majority reported that the outcomes of the research were difficult to generalize. The limitations include a sample drawn from only one or

specific contexts, a limited or small sample size, a cross-sectional or snapshot approach to data collection, self-selection bias or a convenience sampling approach, a lack of empirical research, a lack of more specific variables, and exploratory or ongoing research.

Future research can address the limitations, including a small sample size, limited empirical research, exploratory analysis, and a lack of suitable variables.

The limited extent of empirical research can be dealt with by using quantitative analysis to understand the turnover intention of talent using structured equation modeling. Moreover, as this research is based on a comprehensive review of the available literature on performance management, it can be said to have overcome the issue of identifying the most suitable variables.

The review indicates that none of the studies has systematically examined the variables of performance management based on the prior literature in the field concerned. Similarly, the design of the research model developed to evaluate how performance management influences employee commitment is based entirely on the random selection of variables, including the moderator (i.e., company type), with no theoretical underpinning, as concluded by Bratton and Gold (2007).

7. Findings and scope

The findings from the analysis are listed as follows:

- The company was proficient in hiring through portals.
- The mode of recommendation of an employee does well in any industry, especially hospitality, which authenticates the durability of the person.
- The recruitment process followed is customized to suit, but cross-analysis with other companies deems changes, improvements, and alterations in the interest of the company as a whole.
- The cost-benefit relationship is found to be acceptable for hiring employees.
- The selected candidates are being analyzed properly and effectively. It is very important to note that the results of this study cannot be generalized as it deals with a restricted clientele, and this could only add on variables and instances to form a common standpoint with the other hotel managers.
- The future scope could address internal and external recruitment as explained in his book by Pulakos (2004), intention to stay, and growth plans with the team for their survival and sustainable existence. The study could extend to two properties of the same chain or different hotels altogether. This kind of research could have a long-term impact.

8. Conclusion

The current pattern of the recruitment process being followed was studied, and a review was drawn accordingly. While the questionnaires to the hotel employees did the needful, other related information was sought from journals and articles available online.

More than mere hiring, it is an uphill task to ensure those selected stay at work, are happy, and continue to do so, as confirmed to us by the HR manager and HR office of the company.

The emphasis is on training, re-training, and upskilling. HR is no longer a back-of-the-house job; it has raised its standards to be the frontline manager, and it is all about talent acquisition.

Best fit and suitability are two important features of any recruit. This is the crux of planning policies for any company when they are varied, skilled, talented, and heterogeneous in nature.

Conflict of interest: The authors declare no conflict of interest.

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