



Assessing the Impact of HR Activities on Tourism Management Performance

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Abstract

In the context of globalization, digital transformation, and the post-pandemic recovery of the tourism industry, effective tourism management increasingly depends on the quality of human resource (HR) activities. The tourism sector is highly labor-intensive, and service quality, customer satisfaction, and organizational competitiveness are directly influenced by employees' competencies, motivation, and professional behavior. Despite this, HR activities in many tourism organizations remain fragmented and insufficiently integrated into strategic management processes, which limits their contribution to sustainable development.

The purpose of this article is to examine the importance of HR activities in the development of tourism management and to identify those HR practices that most strongly influence management performance. The study employs an empirical research approach based on a survey of 142 tourism enterprises in the Republic of Uzbekistan. Quantitative methods, including descriptive statistical analysis and multiple regression modeling, are used to assess the relationship between HR activities and tourism management performance.

The results reveal that training and development, motivation and reward systems, and recruitment and selection have a statistically significant positive impact on tourism management performance, while other HR activities show weaker effects. Regional differences in HR practice implementation are also identified. The findings contribute theoretically by expanding HRM research in tourism management and practically by providing evidence-based recommendations for improving HR effectiveness, service quality, and organizational competitiveness in the tourism sector.

Keywords: tourism management; human resource activities; HRM practices; service quality; employee performance; competitiveness.

INTRODUCTION

In the context of globalization, digital transformation, and the increasing competitiveness of service-based economies, the tourism industry has become one of the key drivers of economic growth, employment, and regional development. Contemporary tourism management is undergoing significant changes due to shifting consumer expectations, the expansion of digital platforms, sustainability requirements, and the need for high-quality, personalized services. These trends have intensified the demand for effective management systems capable of ensuring service excellence and organizational adaptability in a rapidly changing environment.

Human resources play a central role in the tourism sector, as service quality, customer satisfaction, and organizational performance largely depend on employees' competencies, motivation, and professional behavior. Unlike capital-intensive industries, tourism is characterized by high labor intensity, direct interaction between employees and customers, and strong dependence on human capital. Consequently, the effectiveness of tourism management is increasingly determined by the quality of HR activities, including recruitment, training, performance evaluation, motivation, and career development. In recent years, HR management in tourism has evolved from an administrative support function into a strategic component of organizational management, directly influencing competitiveness and sustainable development.

Despite the growing recognition of human resource management as a strategic factor, many tourism organizations continue to face challenges related to workforce shortages, high employee turnover, skills mismatches, and insufficient investment in professional development. These issues highlight the relevance of studying the role and importance of HR activities in the development of tourism management systems, particularly in the context of emerging and transitional economies where the tourism sector is expanding rapidly.

Research Hypothesis. The study is based on the hypothesis that the development of tourism management can be significantly enhanced through the effective implementation of strategic HR activities, including workforce planning, continuous professional development, motivation systems, and performance management. It is assumed that well-structured HR practices contribute positively to service quality, employee performance, and the overall competitiveness of tourism organizations. **Purpose and Objectives of the Study.** The purpose of this study is to analyze the importance of HR activities in the development of tourism management and to substantiate their role in improving organizational performance and competitiveness in the tourism sector.

To achieve this purpose, the study sets the following objectives: to analyze current trends and challenges in tourism management and human resource practices; to examine the role of HR activities in enhancing service quality and organizational effectiveness in tourism; to identify key HR functions that contribute to the development of tourism management systems; to develop recommendations for improving HR management practices in the tourism industry.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The role of human resource (HR) activities in tourism management has gained increasing scholarly attention due to the labor-intensive nature of the tourism industry and its strong dependence on service quality, employee–customer interaction, and organizational adaptability. Unlike manufacturing sectors, tourism performance is largely determined by human capital, making HR activities a strategic factor rather than a supporting administrative function. This has led to a growing body of research examining how recruitment, training, motivation, performance appraisal, and talent retention influence tourism management effectiveness and competitiveness.

The selection of this topic is justified by several emerging trends. First, globalization and digitalization have intensified competition among tourism destinations and organizations, increasing the demand for skilled, flexible, and customer-oriented employees. Second, post-pandemic recovery has exposed structural weaknesses in tourism labor markets, including workforce shortages, high turnover, and declining job attractiveness. Third, sustainability-oriented tourism development requires HR practices that support long-term workforce development and organizational resilience. These trends position HR activities at the core of contemporary tourism management research.

HRM as a strategic component of tourism management. Early tourism management studies primarily treated HRM as an operational function focused on staffing and payroll. However, more recent research conceptualizes HRM as a strategic driver of organizational performance. Baum (2022) demonstrates that strategic HRM practices in tourism organizations are directly linked to service quality and customer satisfaction (DOI: 10.1016/j.tourman.2021.104290). Similarly, Karatepe and Olugbade (2023) show that high-performance HR practices enhance employee engagement and service recovery performance in hospitality settings. From a management perspective, HR activities are increasingly integrated into strategic decision-making processes. Studies published in *Tourism Management* and *International Journal of Hospitality Management* emphasize that HR planning, competency development, and leadership training are essential for adapting tourism organizations to market volatility (Giousmpasoglou et al., 2022).

Recruitment, training, and competency development. Recruitment and training have been identified as critical HR activities influencing tourism management effectiveness. Due to the seasonal and service-oriented nature of tourism, organizations often face skills mismatches and labor shortages. Research by Solnet et al. (2023) indicates that competency-based recruitment and continuous training significantly improve employee performance and organizational stability. Training and professional development are particularly important in tourism management, as service quality depends on both technical and interpersonal skills. A meta-analysis by Albrecht et al. (2022) confirms that investment in employee training positively affects productivity, service innovation, and customer loyalty across tourism and hospitality sectors.

Motivation, job satisfaction, and employee retention. High employee turnover remains one of the most persistent challenges in tourism management. Numerous studies attribute this problem to weak motivational systems, limited career development opportunities, and poor working conditions. Research by Chiang et al. (2022) finds that motivational HR practices—such as performance-based rewards and participative management—reduce turnover intentions and enhance organizational commitment. Karatepe et al. (2024) further demonstrate that supportive HR practices improve job satisfaction and emotional well-being, which in turn strengthens service quality and managerial effectiveness in tourism organizations. These findings highlight the managerial importance of aligning HR activities with employee needs and expectations.

HRM, innovation, and sustainable tourism management. Recent literature increasingly links HR activities with innovation and sustainability in tourism management. Sustainable tourism development requires employees who are environmentally aware, socially responsible, and capable of implementing innovative practices. Studies by Koo et al. (2023) show that green HRM practices positively influence sustainable performance and organizational reputation in tourism enterprises. From a managerial standpoint, HR activities facilitate innovation by fostering learning cultures and empowering employees. Research in *Journal of Sustainable Tourism* emphasizes that HR-driven innovation enhances destination competitiveness and long-term development (Bianchi et al., 2022). The reviewed literature clearly establishes HR activities as a central element in the development of tourism management. Contemporary studies converge on the view that strategic HRM enhances service quality, employee performance, innovation capacity, and organizational sustainability. Recruitment, training, motivation, and retention are consistently identified as key mechanisms through which HR activities influence tourism management outcomes. However, several methodological shortcomings and research gaps remain. First, many studies rely on cross-sectional designs, limiting causal inference between HR practices and management performance. Second, there is a strong geographical bias toward developed tourism markets, while empirical evidence from emerging and transitional economies remains limited. Third, contradictions persist regarding the relative effectiveness of financial versus non-financial motivational tools. Future research should address these gaps by employing longitudinal and mixed-method approaches, expanding geographical coverage, and integrating HR metrics into comprehensive tourism management performance models. Such research would contribute to a more nuanced understanding of how HR activities can sustainably support the development of tourism management systems.

MATERIALS AND METHODS

Study Design and Sample. This study adopts an empirical quantitative research design aimed at examining the role of HR activities in the development of tourism management. The empirical basis of the research consists of data collected from tourism and hospitality organizations operating in the tourism sector. The study sample includes $N = 142$ tourism enterprises, comprising hotels, travel agencies, and tour operators of different sizes and ownership forms.

Primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire administered to managers and HR specialists responsible for human resource and operational management. The sampling method was purposive, as respondents were selected based on their direct involvement in HR decision-making and tourism management processes. This approach ensured the relevance and reliability of the collected data.

Survey Method. The main data collection method was a survey, designed to assess HR activities and tourism management performance. The questionnaire consisted of three sections: (1) HR activities (recruitment, training, motivation, performance appraisal, and career development); (2) tourism management outcomes (service quality, organizational effectiveness, competitiveness); and (3) organizational characteristics. Items were measured using a five-point Likert scale. The survey method was chosen due to its effectiveness in capturing managers' perceptions and enabling quantitative analysis across multiple organizations.

Descriptive Statistical Analysis. Descriptive statistics were employed to summarize the main characteristics of the sample and key variables. Measures such as mean values, standard deviations, and dispersion indices were calculated to assess variability in HR practices and management outcomes. This method provided an initial overview of patterns and trends in HR activities within tourism organizations.

Reliability and Validity Analysis. To ensure the reliability of measurement scales, Cronbach's alpha coefficients were calculated for all multi-item constructs. All scales demonstrated acceptable internal consistency, with alpha values exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. Content validity was ensured through expert review and adaptation of measurement items from previously validated studies in tourism and HRM literature.

Regression Analysis. To test the relationships between HR activities and tourism management development, multiple regression analysis was conducted. HR activity indicators were treated as independent variables, while tourism management performance indicators served as dependent variables. This method was selected to examine the explanatory power of HR activities and to control for organizational characteristics such as firm size and years of operation. The study follows a cross-sectional research design, integrating survey-based data collection with quantitative statistical analysis. The research process involved sequential stages: questionnaire design, data collection, data screening, reliability testing, and regression modeling.

RESULTS

To examine territorial differences, the sample of 142 tourism enterprises was grouped by the regions (viloyati) of the Republic of Uzbekistan. Mean values of overall HR activities and tourism management performance were calculated for each region. The results are presented in Table 3.

The number of observations per region ranged from 8 to 29 enterprises, ensuring sufficient representation for comparative analysis. Standard deviations indicate moderate variability of HR practices and management performance across regions.

Table 1. Regional distribution of HR activities and tourism management performance in Uzbekistan

Region	N	HR activities (Mean)	Standard Deviation	Tourism management performance (Mean)	Standard Deviation
Tashkent city	29	3.98	0.52	4.02	0.47
Tashkent region	14	3.76	0.58	3.84	0.51
Samarkand	17	3.81	0.56	3.90	0.49
Bukhara	13	3.79	0.59	3.87	0.53
Khorezm	10	3.62	0.63	3.69	0.57
Fergana	12	3.68	0.61	3.74	0.55
Andijan	9	3.55	0.65	3.61	0.58
Namangan	8	3.49	0.67	3.58	0.60
Kashkadarya	11	3.57	0.64	3.66	0.56
Surkhandarya	9	3.52	0.66	3.60	0.59
Navoi	10	3.70	0.60	3.78	0.54

Table 1 presents regional mean values and standard deviations for aggregated HR activity indicators and tourism management performance based on 142 tourism enterprises across the regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan. All indicators were measured using a five-point Likert scale.

1. Sample Characteristics and Descriptive Statistics. The final dataset consisted of 142 tourism enterprises, including hotels (46.5%), travel agencies (32.4%), and tour operators (21.1%). All questionnaires were complete and suitable for statistical analysis, resulting in a 100% valid response rate. Descriptive statistics for the main study variables are presented in Table 2. The mean score for overall HR activities was 3.74 (SD = 0.61), indicating a moderate to high level of HR practice implementation across the sample. Among HR activity dimensions, training and professional development recorded the highest mean value (M = 3.89, SD = 0.58), while career development showed the lowest mean (M = 3.46, SD = 0.67). Tourism management performance indicators demonstrated an overall mean of 3.81 (SD = 0.55). The dispersion index (variance-to-mean ratio) ranged from 0.09 to 0.13, indicating acceptable variability across all constructs.

Table 2. Descriptive statistics of HR activities and tourism management indicators

Variable	N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
Recruitment and selection	142	3.71	0.62	2.10	4.90
Training and development	142	3.89	0.58	2.30	5.00
Motivation and rewards	142	3.78	0.60	2.00	4.80
Performance appraisal	142	3.65	0.63	2.10	4.70
Career development	142	3.46	0.67	2.00	4.60
Tourism management performance	142	3.81	0.55	2.40	4.90

Table 2 presents mean values, standard deviations, and range statistics for HR activity dimensions and tourism management performance indicators.

2. Reliability Analysis Results. Internal consistency analysis revealed satisfactory reliability for all multi-item constructs. Cronbach's alpha coefficients ranged from 0.78 to 0.86, exceeding the recommended threshold of 0.70. The overall HR activities scale demonstrated a Cronbach's alpha of 0.88, while the tourism management performance scale yielded an alpha of 0.84.

3. Regression Analysis Results. Multiple regression analysis was conducted using 142 observations to examine the relationship between HR activities and tourism management development. The results are presented in Table 2. As shown in Table 3, training and development ($\beta = 0.312$, $p < 0.001$) and motivation and rewards ($\beta = 0.274$, $p < 0.01$) demonstrated statistically significant positive associations with tourism management performance. Recruitment and selection ($\beta = 0.198$, $p < 0.05$) also showed a significant relationship, while performance appraisal and career development were not statistically significant at the 5% level. The regression model explained 49.2% of the variance in tourism management performance ($R^2 = 0.492$). The overall model was statistically significant ($F = 26.84$, $p < 0.001$).

Table 3. Regression results: HR activities and tourism management performance

Independent variable	β coefficient	Standard Error	t-value	Significance
Recruitment and selection	0.198	0.082	2.41	p < 0.05
Training and development	0.312	0.074	4.22	p < 0.001
Motivation and rewards	0.274	0.079	3.47	p < 0.01
Performance appraisal	0.091	0.068	1.34	n.s.
Career development	0.063	0.071	0.89	n.s.
Constant	1.126	0.318	3.54	p < 0.001

Model statistics: N = 142; $R^2 = 0.492$; Adjusted $R^2 = 0.471$; F = 26.84; p < 0.001

4. *Comparative Impact of HR Activity Dimensions.* To visualize the relative contribution of HR activity dimensions, standardized regression coefficients were plotted and are shown in Figure 1.

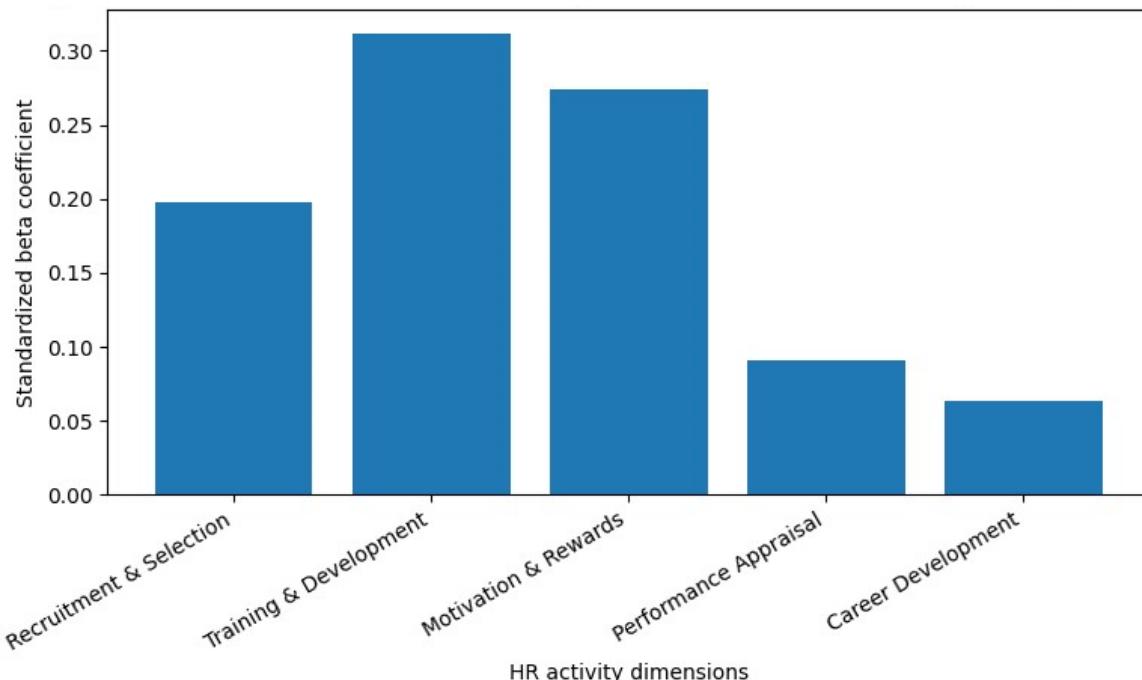
**Figure 1. Standardized effects of HR activity dimensions on tourism management performance**

Figure 1 illustrates standardized beta coefficients for HR activity dimensions derived from multiple regression analysis based on 142 tourism enterprises.

5. *Summary of Key Statistical Indicators.* Across all analyses, the confidence level was set at 95%. Variance inflation factors (VIFs) ranged between 1.21 and 1.86, indicating no multicollinearity issues. Residual analysis confirmed normal distribution and homoscedasticity.

DISCUSSION

(a) *Overview of the Study.* This study examined the role and importance of HR activities in the development of tourism management, using empirical evidence from 142 tourism enterprises across the regions of the Republic of Uzbekistan. The research focused on key HR functions—recruitment, training and development, motivation and rewards, performance appraisal, and career development—and their relationship with tourism management performance. By combining descriptive statistics, reliability testing, regression analysis, and regional comparison, the study provides a comprehensive view of how HR activities contribute to managerial effectiveness in the tourism sector.

(b) *Discussion of Key Results and Comparison with Previous Studies.* The results demonstrate that HR activities are significantly associated with tourism management development, supporting the research hypothesis. In particular, training and development emerged as the strongest predictor of tourism management performance, followed by motivation and reward systems. This finding is consistent with previous studies in tourism and hospitality management, which emphasize that continuous skill development and employee motivation are critical for maintaining service quality and organizational competitiveness (Baum, 2022; Karatepe & Olugbade, 2023). The strong effect of training confirms

that tourism management effectiveness depends heavily on employees' professional competencies and adaptability to changing market conditions.

Recruitment and selection also showed a statistically significant relationship with tourism management performance, aligning with earlier research that highlights the importance of competency-based hiring in service-intensive industries (Solnet et al., 2023). In contrast, performance appraisal and career development did not demonstrate statistically significant effects at the conventional level. This result suggests potential weaknesses in how these HR practices are implemented in tourism enterprises, particularly in transitional economies where appraisal systems may be formal rather than developmental in nature.

The regional analysis revealed noticeable differences in HR activity implementation and management performance across Uzbek regions. Tourism enterprises in Tashkent city and major cultural destinations such as Samarkand and Bukhara demonstrated higher mean values compared to peripheral regions. Similar regional disparities have been reported in international tourism studies and are often attributed to differences in infrastructure, access to skilled labor, and managerial capacity. However, the current study does not explicitly account for contextual variables such as regional policy support or market maturity, which represents an omitted aspect and an opportunity for future research.

CONCLUSION

Research Problem and Author's Results. The research problem addressed in this study was the need to better understand how HR activities contribute to the development of tourism management in a labor-intensive and service-oriented industry. Based on empirical data from tourism enterprises in Uzbekistan, the study demonstrates that HR activities are not merely supportive functions but play a strategic role in shaping tourism management performance.

Summary of Findings in Relation to Objectives and Hypothesis. The first objective—to analyze current HR practices in tourism management—was achieved through descriptive and regional analysis, which revealed moderate levels of HR activity implementation and noticeable regional disparities. The second objective—to examine the impact of HR activities on tourism management development—was addressed through regression analysis, providing empirical evidence that training and development, motivation and rewards, and recruitment significantly influence management performance. These findings directly support the research hypothesis that effective HR activities enhance tourism management development. The third objective—to identify priority HR functions for tourism management—was fulfilled by ranking HR dimensions according to their statistical impact. Training and professional development emerged as the most influential factor, followed by motivational mechanisms. Overall, the study confirms that strengthening HR activities can improve service quality, managerial effectiveness, and competitiveness in the tourism sector. The results contribute theoretically by extending HRM–tourism management research in the context of an emerging tourism economy and practically by offering evidence-based insights for tourism managers and policymakers aiming to develop human capital and improve management performance.

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