

Analysis of Operational Proficiency of Nagpur City's Hotel Industry Human Resources in the Pre and Post Pandemic Era.

¹Kamalnath Eknathrao Kamble, ²Dr. Nilendra Lokhande

¹Research Scholar

Dhanwate National College, Congress Nagar, Nagpur.

²Head-Department of Commerce, SNTD College of Arts & SCB College of Commerce & Science for women,
SNTD Women's University, Mumbai

Abstract

The COVID-19 pandemic has introduced a number of shifts in the global hospitality industry and has impacted the human resource operations and the productivity of the employees drastically. The current research paper researches the results of human resources operational capabilities in the hotel industry of Nagpur city before and after the pandemic. This paper will focus on the key factors such as workforce productivity, their skills flexibility, their job satisfaction, workforce restructuring, and the implementation of technology-based practices. The main data, received in surveys and interviews with the workers and HR managers of hotels, and the secondary data, obtained in the industry reports and academic literature, were compared and contrasted. It has been discovered that though the initial stage of the pandemic led to the low operational efficiency due to the decreased workforce, confusion, and financial constraints, the post-pandemic era has already brought significant alterations to the flexibility of employees, multi-skilling, and online competence. Besides, the analysis points out the alterations in the HR practices, which are the flexible work arrangements, increased opportunities to train, and increased attention given to health and safety measures. As these have evolved, job insecurity and stress for the employees are issues that are still present. The paper concludes by stating that the pandemic has been a transformational force in human resource management in the hotel industry that has introduced a stronger and technologically integrated workforce.

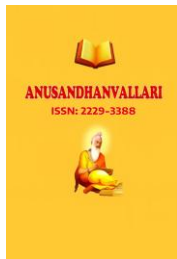
Keywords: Hospitality Industry, Human Resource Management, Operational Proficiency, COVID-19, Nagpur Hotels

Introduction:

Human resources in the hospitality industry is a highly dynamic and service-oriented industry, and the role played by it in ensuring efficiency in operations and consumer satisfaction is very significant. Quality of the services directly relates to employee performance and competence, as it determines the reputation of the organization and the ultimate success of the business. There has been steady growth of the hotel industry in the rapidly expanding urban areas like Nagpur due to the increase in business activity, tourism, and improved connectivity.

However, the COVID-19 outbreak that occurred in 2020 posed unprecedented challenges to the international hospitality sector. Hotels experienced a dramatic decrease in the number of guests, and the organizations were compelled to adopt the cost-reduction measures that involved staff downsizing, salary cuts, and the redistribution of operations. These shocks had a significant impact on the operating competence of human resources, leading to the alternation of employee roles, levels of productivity, and job security.

The hotel industry in Nagpur has gradually changed to recovery and adaptation with the post-pandemic world. Some aspects that organizations began to pay greater attention to also include flexibility, multi-skilling, digital transformation, and better health and safety measures. Human resource management practices have been



shifting to address new challenges, which are the well-being of employees, training on technologically driven and crisis preparedness training.

The proposed study involves the comparison and contrast of the operational competence of human resources in the hotel industry in Nagpur during the pre- and post-pandemic period. This paper will determine how the pandemic influences the working performance and workforce dynamics by examining the performance of the employees, their adaptability, skill development, and organizational support as the key variables. The hotel management, policymakers, and researchers are expected to find the findings of this study helpful in the formulation of improved HR strategies and sustainable growth of the hospitality industry.

Objectives of the Study:

- 1) To compare the efficiency of hotel employees during the pre-pandemic period.
- 2) To measure the effects of COVID-19 on HR performance and workforce structure.
- 3) To determine post-pandemic shifts in the productivity and flexibility of employees.
- 4) To determine new HR practices embraced by Nagpur hotels.
- 5) To recommend actions on operational proficiency improvement in the future.

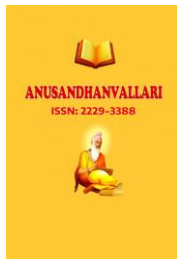
Research Methodology:

The study is a descriptive and analytical research work to explore the efficiency of the human resources in the hotel sector of Nagpur, pre- and post-COVID-19 pandemic. Primary and secondary data were utilized. The primary data was obtained based on structured questionnaires and interviews with 250 employees and 45 HR managers. The secondary information was obtained through reports and journals. The convenience sampling was used, and the analysis of the data was performed in terms of the percentage and comparative analysis techniques to measure changes.

Operational Proficiency of Nagpur City's Hotel Industries Human Resource in the Pre and Post Pandemic Era:

The hospitality business in Nagpur, which is a fast-growing commercial city in Maharashtra, is largely reliant on human resources to provide quality services in addition to efficiency in its operations. The number of days spent in a hotel before COVID-19 was predictable, the job descriptions were clear, the staffing level was sufficient, and the traditional HR operations were based on customer service and regular training events. The environment where the employees worked was highly departmentalized, and the efficiency of operations was quite reasonable since it had a standard workflow and job security. But the pandemic impacted the industry in the worst way possible, resulting in lockdowns, low occupancy, and financial restrictions. Hotels had to reduce the number of them, make reductions in salaries, and reform. This added to workloads, job insecurity, and mental strains on the workers and hence had negative effects on their performance and productivity in the overall running of the business.

The hotel industry in Nagpur is the business that is slowly starting to reshape and recover in the aftermath of the pandemic and has a chance to adjust to new work needs. The practices of human resources have been made to be flexible, multi-skilled, and technologically incorporated. Employees are now left with a lot of tasks to do, and it makes them more adaptable and effective. The use of digital solutions like contactless services, online booking, and online payments has also led to the operations being quite efficient. The hotels have also developed better training systems, which are premised on health and safety issues, hygiene, and technical expertise. Although the current operational competence is better than it was at the time of the pandemic, other issues, including work insecurity and work pressure, still impact the employees. All in all, the



pandemic has served as an agent of change and has created a more competent and flexible workforce in the hotel industry in Nagpur, though long-term growth will rely on the efficacy of the employees versus their health.

Pre-Pandemic Scenario:

The hotel business in Nagpur was passing through a safe and organized condition prior to the COVID-19 outbreak, where the workforce management was characterized by a stable workforce, the presence of well-established jobs, and moderate staff turnover. It was departmentalized as it had employees who had particular roles within the department, such as front office, housekeeping, and food and beverage services in the department, hence an easy flow of operations. The level of operational expertise during this period was very good, as was the level of standardized operations and focus on quality of service. It was also characterized by little technological use, and the majority of the operations were manually operated and traditional areas. A conventional training strategy was largely applied, and human resources practices were applied to a large extent, focusing on customer service training and little in terms of crisis preparedness.

The COVID-19 pandemic caused tremendous impacts on human resource management in hotels. The issues facing the industry included decreased workforce, wages, and job security and augmented mental pressure on the workers. Hotels were also running with low occupancy rates in operation, and this has led to the requirement of shift-based staffing and multiple roles of employees. Respondent, HR departments have begun employing cost-cutting, temporary layoffs, and decreasing training activities, which were simultaneously ruining the morale and performance of the employees.

The hotel industry in Nagpur has transformed a lot in the post-pandemic period. It has seen a shift in the workforce to a less but better-skilled workforce where contractual employment and more emphasis on flexibility are taken into account. This has contributed to the operational proficiency owing to added flexibility, faster service delivery, and multi-skilled staff. This change has not been left out by technology, and the hotels are also embracing contactless check-in and check-out, online booking, and alternative ways of making payments to ease their operation. The HR practices have also developed to offer online training programs, hardline health and safety measures, and employee wellness programs in a more contemporary and solid fashion of managing the workforce.

Table 1: Employee Productivity

Productivity Level	Pre-Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents	Post-Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents
High	60%	150	45%	113
Moderate	30%	75	40%	100
Low	10%	25	15%	37

Table 2: Job Security Perception (n = 250)

Level of Job Security	Pre-Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents	Post-Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents
High	70%	175	35%	88
Moderate	20%	50	40%	100
Low	10%	25	25%	62

Table 3: Skill Adaptability

Adaptability Level	Pre-Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents	Post Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents
High	25%	62	55%	138
Moderate	50%	125	30%	75
Low	25%	63	15%	37

Table 4: Technology Adoption

Technology Level	Pre-Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents	Post-Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents
High	20%	50	65%	163
Moderate	40%	100	25%	62
Low	40%	100	10%	25

Table 5: Employee Stress Levels

Stress Level	Pre-Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents	Post-Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents
High	15%	38	50%	125
Moderate	35%	87	30%	75
Low	50%	125	20%	50

Table 6: HR Manager Responses (n = 45)

HR Strategy Adopted	Percentage (%)	No. of Respondents
Workforce Reduction	60%	27
Salary Cuts	55%	25
Multi-skilling Training	70%	32
Digital Transformation	65%	29
Employee Wellness Programs	50%	23

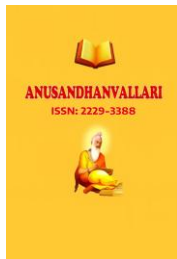
Table 7: Overall Operational Proficiency

Level of Proficiency	Pre-Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents	Post Pandemic (%)	No. of Respondents
High	65%	163	50%	125
Moderate	25%	62	35%	88
Low	10%	25	15%	37

Findings of the Study:

There is a high signal that there is a change in the operational competence of the human resources in the hotel industry in Nagpur during the pre-COVID-19 era and during the post-COVID-19 era, according to the findings of the study, which were received as a result of the interviews with 250 workers and 45 human resource managers. The productivity of the employees has fallen during the post-pandemic period since high-productivity employees have dropped to 113 (45%), as compared to 150 (60%), while moderate and low-level employees have also risen. Similarly, this has also affected job security, and employed workers who had perceived that there was high job security came down to 88 (35) when compared to 175 (70%), which is a sign of greater uncertainty and instability in terms of employment.

Nevertheless, the study demonstrates a positive shift in the flexibility of employees, with very flexible employees increasing to 138 (55%), a contrast to 62 (25%), indicating that there is increased flexibility and multi-skilling amongst the employees. It can also be seen that the number of employees who report high



technology usage is also increasing, and 50 (20%) and 163 (65) indicate a significant increase in the number of people who report high usage, which reflects the high transition towards digital operations. Concurrently, the stress levels of the employees have shot up drastically as the proportion of employees who are stressed and those who have a high proportion of stress has been rising between 38 (15%) and 125 (50%) and is pointing to an increase in workload and stress.

On the HR aspect, the data shows that the primary approaches to cost-cutting, which were applied during the pandemic, were workforce reduction (27 respondents) and salary reduction (25 respondents). On the contrary, the post-pandemic suggests strategic orientation at multi-skilling training (32 respondents), digital transformation (29 respondents), and employee wellness programs (23 respondents). Overall, the current level of operational proficiency stands at 125 (50%) out of 163 (65%) employees who indicated a high level of proficiency before the pandemic and high levels of proficiency at this point, which is lower than the levels before the pandemic, implying that despite the slow recovery owing to the adaptability and technology, the industry is yet to regain its efficiency levels before the pandemic.

Discussion:

The outcomes of the research can provide a detailed analysis of the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on human resources' functioning competence in the hotel industry in Nagpur. The fact that the productivity of the workers and job security worsened considerably in the post-pandemic world proves that the direct impact of the crisis was mostly negative. An increase in the workload, role ambiguity, and psychological pressure on the employees might be evaluated as the cause of a decrease in the high productivity levels and an increment in moderate and low levels. Similarly, the perceived job security has been dramatically scaled down, which points to the insecurity of the period of layoffs, salary reduction, and restructuring.

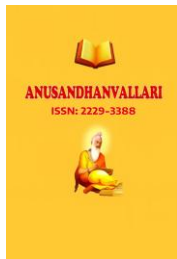
At the same time, the research also refers to the high level of flexibility and professional development of the employees. The advancement of a highly flexible workforce suggests that the pandemic forced workers to be more flexible and able to execute diverse tasks. This multi-skilling change has positively changed in regard to operational efficiency as well as being an example of a greater working force. The increase in the use of technologies also supports this change since the adoption of digital technology (contactless services, online booking, and automated processes) by the hotels has allowed maintaining high efficiency and safety.

However, the stress levels of employees have also been high because of the work demands and the changing work conditions. The reason why mental health and work-life balance issues should be addressed in organizations is the fact that the number of employees experiencing stress is quite high. The crisis-related focus on the methods of minimizing expenses and survival among the HRs and the post-pandemic transition to training, digital transformation, and employee wellness projects allows highlighting a more strategic and long-term focus on human resource management.

Overall, the discussion suggests that although the initial consequence of the pandemic was that it caused the disruption of operational proficiency, it also brought a number of beneficial transformations, such as the increase in adaptability, technological advancement, and improved HR practices. Nonetheless, in order to realize long-term growth and productivity, the hotels must create a balance between productivity improvement and employee health and job security to ensure a healthy and positive working environment in the future.

Conclusion:

The research on the examination of operational competence in human resources within the hotel sector in Nagpur city helps to realize the significant effect of COVID-19 on the performance of the workforce and on the management practices. The industry worked in the pre-pandemic time with a stable environment, clearly defined roles, and high productivity with traditional HR practices. But due to the pandemic, the workforce was reduced, the level of job security was diminished, the stress of the employees increased, and operational



efficiency decreased temporarily. However, these difficulties do not exclude the fact that the post-pandemic stage has proven a drastic shift in human resource relations of the hotel industry. Employees have been made flexible, multi-skilled, and able to cope with various duties. The fast use of technology and digital tools has increased the efficiency of operations and simplified service delivery. The HR practices have also changed to emphasize training, flexibility, health and safety, and the well-being of the employees. On the whole, although operational proficiency dropped in the first week of the pandemic, there was a slow rise in the recovery phase, indicating a more resilient and effective workforce. The paper concludes with the idea that the pandemic served as a driver of change, which increased the pace of modernization and skills acquisition in the industry. To achieve sustainable growth, the hotel organizations in Nagpur will have to invest further in employee training, technology, and favorable HR practices that are both efficient and employee-friendly and secure.

References:

- [1] Chauhan, S., & Umale, N. (2024). Impact of off-season on hotel room operations in Nagpur city. *International Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research*, 11(12), c41-c52.
- [2] Gupta, S., & Kumar, R. (2025). Impact of COVID-19 on operational efficiency of Indian hotel and restaurant sector. *Journal of Management and Public Policy*, 16(1). <https://discovery.researcher.life/article/impact-of-covid-19-on-operational-efficiency-of-indian-hotel-and-restaurant-sector/3b2gYk9v>
- [3] Jain, R., & Jain, S. (2021). Impact of coronavirus pandemic on hospitality industry with special reference to India. *International Journal of Advanced Research*, 9(06), 274-278. <https://www.journalijar.com/article/37528/impact-of-coronavirus-pandemic-on-hospitality-industry-with-special-reference-to-india>
- [4] Sawant, A. (2020). A study of HR practices in hotel industry. Scribd. <https://www.scribd.com/document/847031878/submission-ready-today>
- [5] Kumar, P., & Singh, A. (2023). Human resource practices in Indian hotels: A comparative study of employees' perception during COVID-19. *Hospitality & Tourism Review*. <http://publishingindia.com/downloads/6617.pdf>
- [6] Boella, M. J., & Goss-Turner, S. (2019). *Human resource management in the hospitality industry: A guide to best practice* (10th ed.). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9780429441400>
- [7] Mehta, V., & Sharma, K. (2022). Effects of COVID-19 on hotel industry: A case study of major Indian cities. *Journal of Hospitality Management*.
- [8] Shrestha, B., & Dhungana, P. (2023). Impact of COVID-19 on the employees of hotel industry: A psychological and economic perspective. *Journal of Tourism & Adventure*, 6(1), 72-88. <https://www.semanticscholar.org/paper/Impact-of-COVID-19-on-the-Employees-of-Hotel-Shrestha-Bhattarai/cd5ecbc64d7a430846ccf39f94>
- [9] Sigala, M. (2021). Post-pandemic business challenges in hospitality sector: Technology integration and digital transformation. *International Journal of Food and Multimedia Research*. <https://www.ijfmr.com/research-paper.php?id=16953>
- [10] Chand, M. (2010). The impact of HRM practices on service quality, customer satisfaction and performance in the Indian hotel industry. *The International Journal of Human Resource Management*, 21(4), 551-566. <https://www.scribd.com/document/513077741/cat-3-research-paper-1>