

Migrant workers and Human Resource Development Practices in the Hotel Sector: A case of Cyprus

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Abstract

Purpose: This paper aims to investigate the human resource development (HRD) practices amongst migrant workers using a cross-national survey. The literature review has shown that there is a need to provide a comprehensive understanding of the significance of HRD in the hotel sector and its role in developing migrant workers skills. Moreover, hotels that have training and development opportunities tend to support their employees in training their people-to-people and other soft skills.

Design/methodology/approach: This study adopted a quantitative approach using a self-administered questionnaire, employing a purposive sampling strategy to target key participants (hotel managers/supervisor/owners) across Cyprus.

Findings: The findings show that most hotels only provide operational, informal level training to all their migrant workers. The key findings present a sector that currently does not plan for sustainable HRD practices and learning with casualisation being the dominant strategy to cope with changing demand for labour. Those few hotels that do have long-term HRD practices have seen an impact on their organisational performance as well as increased migrant workers skills.

Practical implications: In practice, Cypriot hotels need to focus their attention on their long-term strategic goals. The development of their migrant employees may help enhance organisational performance in the long-term. However, further research is needed to explore current perceptions amongst migrant workers and how they perceive their long-term role in the industry.

Originality/value: This paper contributes to the existing HRD literature since the training and development of migrant employees in Cypriot hotels have not been researched during the recession. HRD insights will enable policy makers and employers to improve current training infrastructure for migrant workers and add to the debate around the importance of HRD strategy in advancing organisational performance in such a transformational business environment.

Keywords: HRD, Immigrants, Hotel, Cyprus

Introduction

There has been growing interest in the issue of migrant workers in recent years in a range of international contexts (Bauder, 2006; Groutsis, 2003; Larsen et al., 2005; Rodriguez, 2004; Ryan, 2007) and the role of Human Resource Development (HRD) to maximise the organisational effectiveness through the development of effective training and learning systems (Sun and Cho, 2014; Boxall and Purcell, 2011; Meliou and Maroudas, 2011).

Despite the growing body of literature, there is lack of hotel-specific research upon HRD practices amongst migrant workers in Cyprus. Migrant workers form a substantial part of the hotel workforce addressing labour shortage and seasonal nature of employment (Taylor and Finley, 2010; Kim, 2009; Baum, 2007; Andriotis and Vaughan, 2004). During the current economic downturn, the sector has had to manage a number of financial and employment challenges including attracting, retaining and developing key skills (Barron, 2008). Hotels have had to address such challenges and satisfy the ever changing customer expectations (Duncan, Scott and Baum, 2013). In light of these challenges, high performance work systems and training activities could provide an effective and rapid response to market demands (Ulrich et al., 2007). The goal of this paper is to partially fill the gap in the existing hospitality literature using Cyprus as a case study. It seeks to explore how Cypriot hotels currently use HRD practices for migrant workers skills development as well as how HRD is approached from the strategic perspective.

This study wants to raise debates about current management HRD practices in developing migrant workers skills and capabilities, and how can HRD play a strategic role by enabling Cypriot hotels achieve their organisational goals. Successful hotel operations could utilise HRD practices as critical strategic tools to promote effective learning actions among employees and leverage their knowledge, skills, and abilities aiming to increase productivity

and performance (Clardy, 2008). The study represents an effort to build a foundation in understanding whether Cypriot hotels have shifted their HRD strategies to address current socio-economic challenges. It also brings to light how migrant employees skills could be developed to satisfy customer needs and the extent to which employers perceive HRD activities as a beneficial strategy towards organisational success.

HRD, organisational performance and the industry

HRD has attracted considerable attention from academics and practitioners aiming to understand its role in supporting organisational learning and performance. It is a multifaceted concept and its core feature cannot be captured by a single concept (Tharenou, Saks and Moore, 2007). On one hand, it is defined as the study of how individuals and groups in organizations change through learning (Truss, Mankin and Kelliher, 2012). Such definition highlights the organisational need to implement individual change through developing human potential and learning. On the other hand, HRD is considered as a process of improving an organisation's performance through the capabilities of its personnel (Swanson, 1987). It is the process of increasing learning capacity aiming to optimise human and organisational growth and effectiveness' (Chalofsky, 1992). HRD practices act as real sources of competitive leverage and enable organisations to develop the abilities of individuals to satisfy the current and future needs of the organisation (Armstrong, 2012). Planned and emergent learning becomes an acceptable form of organisational thinking and responsive to organisational strategy (Truss, Mankin and Kelliher, 2012). Some others argued that HRD is a catalyst for business performance (Davidson, McPhail and Barry, 2011; Kalargyrou and Woods, 2011; Saks and Moore, 2007).

Employee development upholds the social exchange theory that investment, in social and resource capital through managerial support, on HRD could provide a sense of attachment to the organisation. Therefore employees may perceive that learning and development activities are not a perfunctory actions (Masterson and Stamper, 2003). Such perceptions are essential to ascribe human-like attributes to their organisation and build a sense of obligation toward it (Glaveli and Karassavidou, 2011). Some other authors raised questions about the actual contribution of HRD to performance, especially at the firm level of analysis (Nguyen, Truong, and Buyens, 2010; Tharenou, Saks and Moore, 2007). This is partly because HRD has different dimensions resulting in controversy on the value of HRD in performance (Sun and Cho, 2014). Much emphasis paid on the quantitative dimensions of HRM where organisations consider the expenditure aspects of HRD activities.

However, such approach has been rejected as a significant predictor of firm performance (Castellanos and Martín, 2011). Given the prevailing scepticism on the quantitative benefits of HRD, activities that concentrate on qualitative dimensions, including social support, long-term investment, personal development, have been positively associated with firm performance (Sun and Cho, 2014; Glaveli and Karassavidou, 2011).

Hospitality industry faces key challenges in attracting and retaining employees due to the complex socio-economic environment. The industry has always found it hard to attract suitably motivated, trained and qualified employees who are able to deliver the service promise (Barron, 2008). It has traditionally experienced high turnover rates (Chikwe, 2009; Hinkin and Tracey, 2008) due to the negative image that prevails regarding working conditions and the low skills requirements (Riley, Ladkin and Szivas, 2002). High employee turnover negatively impacts the knowledge base and influences long-term competitiveness

(Hayes and Ninemeier, 2009). Part of the problem is the seasonal nature of much hospitality employment making the process of satisfying labour needs more challenging for businesses (Baum, 2008). Skills mobility has been seen as a strategic approach to add value to their organisations and satisfy customer needs. The world is now ‘on the move’ and organisations utilise the diverse mobilities of people and information to achieve organisational goals (Germann-Molz and Gibson, 2007).

Poor working condition, few opportunities for advancement and poor pay contributes towards the negative image that prevails regarding working life in the industry (Riley, Ladkin and Szivas, 2002). Motivating people to seek work in the industry, improve working conditions and offer competitive developmental opportunities can contribute toward developing effective human capital (Ladkin, 2011). Effective development opportunities provided is emphasised in adaptability, flexibility and continuous development of hospitality employees. This ensures that organisations can survive and compete in an ever competitive industry (Boxall and Purcell, 2011). It would also enable hospitality organisations to develop a variety of competences and skills enhancing productivity and profitability (Meliou and Maroudas, 2011; Baum, 2007). This supports the underlying premise that Failte Ireland’s (2005:66) ground-breaking strategic plan for HRD in Irish tourism is predicated upon the argument that good HRD practices should be “adopted because they deliver bottom line profitability”.

Migrant workers and HRD practices

Labour shortages have contributed towards the development of ineffective selection and development practices of new employees (Davidson, McPhail and Barry, 2011). Migrant labour (whether temporary or permanent) is becoming increasingly important for the economic sustainability of the sector (Pantelidis and Wrobel, 2008). According to the

International Labour Office (ILO) (2010:93) migrant workforce in the hotel, catering and tourism sectors “include daily commuters, seasonal workers and permanent immigrants”. The general trend is that migrant employees are mostly drawn into lower-paid informal or casual employment in the sector (Baum 2007; Janta et al., 2011). “Meeting labour market shortages and cost minimisation are often cited as reasons for employing migrant workers” (Janta et al., 2011:1007).

Immigrants have formed a substantial part of the hotel workforce in many countries including Cyprus, employed both in formal and informal jobs (Taylor and Finley, 2010; Kim, 2009; Baum, 2007; Andriotis and Vaughan, 2004). Inward migration, in Cyprus, has grown over the last two decades due to high demand of labour and skills (Joppe, 2012). In the year 2014 there were 99972 migrant workers in Cyprus, which accounted for 23.53 percent of the working population. From this figure, almost 65 percent were employed in service and hospitality industries across the island (Cyprus Statistical Agency, 2015). This is significantly higher than the total number of immigrants in 1998, which was 20700, accounting for 7.1 percent of the labour market. Moreover the unemployment rate in Cyprus was at 17.5 percent in December 2013 and reached a record high of 19.2 percent in 2014. How high unemployment rates will rise in the future will depend to a large degree on immigration. Nevertheless, if properly managed, immigration allows organisations to benefit from cultural diversity and alleviate shortages of unskilled labour (Janta et al., 2011).

Added to this, immigration and the experience of migrant workers are very complex. The nature of work and organisational policies and processes that is set for migrant employees vary from country to country (ILO, 2010). In Cyprus, the Human Resource Development Authority (HRDA) demands voluntary job specifications standards (including provisions for

initial qualifications, skills, career path, salary schemes, job description, etc.) across the industry. The HRDA of Cyprus is a semi-governmental organisation aiming to raise skills and quality across various sectors including hospitality. However, data are vague as to what extent hotels utilise available funds to improve skills and service quality.

Immigration has stimulated debate about its impact upon the form, quality and authenticity of interactive service delivery (Duncan et al., 2013). Research has shown that migrant employees in the hospitality industry are considered as a cheap and accessible source of, what is often seen to be, low-skilled labour (Pantelidis and Wrobel, 2008). On the other hand, there is the argument that many of the jobs available at present are low human capital accumulations resulting in less investment for personal and professional development (Witz, Warhurst and Nickson, 2003). This notion of less investment is debateable as there is a need for complex personal skills and high professionalism requirements in the hospitality industry (Baum, 2008). Warhurst and Nickson (2007) support this point as they argue that people-to-people and soft skills are essential requirements for hotel industry and business success.

As the demand for labour in the hotel industry continues to grow, employers will find it increasingly difficult to find enough employees (Joppe, 2012). This indicates that organisations need to develop effective systems to unlearn traditional ways of thinking and change individual capabilities (Watkins and Marsick, 1993) for long-term sustainability. In order to achieve that, organisations need to create the infrastructure where immigrants can learn continuously and can transform themselves. Watkins and Marsick (1993:117) support this thinking as they state, “human resource developers who are systematically and developmentally increasing the learning capacity of the organization are creating learning organizations”. In years where customer expectations have evolved and become more

complex, the lack of qualified personnel and poor HRD infrastructure could impact upon the service experience and therefore affect future hotel demand (Duncan et al., 2013). The paradox is that careers in the industry is not generally valorised or considered as a prestigious employment option for local workers (Joppe, 2011). This has therefore encouraged hotel employers to rely largely on migrant workers to justify the high demand of seasonal labour (Lucas & Mansfield, 2008).

As a consequence, the literature review has shown that there is a need for hotels to training and development opportunities to support migrant workers develop their people-to-people and other soft skills. This supports the theory of performance improvement where human competence is a “key function of worthy performance” (Gilbert, 1978:18) suggesting that “any accomplishment, a deficiency in performance always has, as its immediate cause, a deficiency in behaviour” (p.76). The hotel sector needs to make a shift of emphasis to intellectual capital by growing an interest in workplace learning which encompasses formal and informal learning. Success of hotel operations is dependent on staff quality and ability to provide developmental opportunities (Hai-Yan and Baum, 2006). By investing in human competences hotels can yield returns valued by both organisations and individuals in terms of their performance potential. This study aims to address two key research questions. First it seeks to identify the level of investment in HRD with regards to migrant employees and second to evaluate whether current HRD practices could lead to increased organisational performance. The following section present the key methodological tools used to address the research questions.

Methodology

The current research adopted a quantitative approach using a self-administered questionnaire to collect individual-level data on management HRD practices towards the migrant labour force. The aim was to explore any significant correlations that may exist between management HRD practices and migrant workers development. This was mainly undertaken as managers have an accurate gauge of the existing HRD practices of their hotels. The study employed a purposive sampling strategy (Bryman, 2008) to target experienced managers employed in the hotels. All members of the population participate in HRD at varying levels, as they have to deal with recruitment and training activities. A representative sample of various hotels was drawn from the Cyprus Hotel Association. This stratified approach was used for selection to ensure variability in terms of hotel size and clarification and appropriateness of the training provided. The study purposefully selected only three, four and five stars hotels across the Cypriot territory as such approach was used as a control variable in the analysis.

The survey was distributed at the beginning of the tourist season when hotels are likely to recruit additional staff members. The completed questionnaires were collected from 210 of the 321 participants representing an overall response rate of 65.4 percent. The survey targeted only hotel owners, divisional managers and/or supervisors dealing with recruitment and development activities. The majority of respondents were male (n = 195) and the female managers (n = 15). Almost half of the participants (49.6 percent) were between the age of 28 to 36. The rest were 33.4 percent 37 to 45 years old and 17.0 percent 46 and above.

All participants claimed that they employ migrant workers in their hotels across different departments. The vast majority of migrant workers (88.9 percent) are employed on seasonal contracts with the remaining (11.1 percent) on a permanent basis. Further to that all

participants argued that hotels offered training activities for immigrants on their appointment. The results showed no significant differences with regards to the participants' age and gender.

The variables under investigation in this study were divided into two categories: 1) training related variables and 2) training related outcomes. The training related variable was developed to measure the HRD provision and activities. This would examine the factors involved in recruiting migrant employees and current HRD practices in these organisations. The training related outcomes examine the HRD impact and outcome on performance, service and quality. This survey was firstly piloted with a small number of hotel managers before being distributed to all respondents. The SPSS software was used to descriptively analyse the data.

We sought written approval before distributing the questionnaires. The research maintained an ethical dimension and ensured that all data collected was kept confidential and the anonymity of the organisations and the individuals was guaranteed. In order to ensure the latter, the data was stored separately from the completed questionnaires. All participants were made fully aware about any limits to confidentiality and anonymity through the informed consent statement prior completing the survey.

Results

Training related variables

Results revealed a number of training variables with regards to the training format, training delivery practices and HRD strategy. Hotels offer standard training activities for all employees including migrant workers which covers quality and technical related skills

development. Perceived access to training shows a strong relationship between skills and quality development training activities ($n= 122$), with less focus on a comprehensive training development programme (combined skills, quality and technical development activities), and the remaining offered standard quality training on products and services provision. None of the participants offered any professional courses to their migrant workforce. Interestingly, the results revealed strong relationship exist between training format and training delivery practices. The vast majority of participants (94.3 percent) argued that on-the-job-training have been widely used as a training format offering informal training activities to migrant workers. Only 5.7 percent of participants provided off-the-job training opportunities to migrant workers.

The findings bring to the forefront that training activities are less strategic and focus more on induction activities and operational issues. Perceived training frequency shows that no follow-up training was offered. This means that there was no focus on continuously developing migrant workers skills and abilities. The vast majority of respondents (91.0 percent) argued that they have not offered any additional training opportunities necessary to evaluate the training outcome. Time and customer demands were stated as critical factors for the lack of continuous training activities.

The results also show a significant negative relationship between training practices and HRD strategy. The majority of participants (93.3 percent) have not established any formal HRD strategies to inform employee development and strategy success. The benefits of establishing HRD strategy was not significantly related to migrant workers development, with casualisation being the dominant strategy to cope with changing demand for labour and services.

Training related outcomes

The study revealed a number of training outcomes including individual performance, quality and skills development. The vast majority of them rated migrant workers skills quality, customer services improvement and organisational performance as being low to very low. Table 1 shows that the existing training activities were not significant enough to have an impact on organisational performance, skills improvement and customer services. This provides support to the current arguments that poor HRD infrastructure could impact upon the service experience and affect future hotel patronage demand.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Skills Improvement	210	1.0	5.0	2.195	1.0871
Customer services	210	1.0	5.0	2.824	.9547
Organisational performance	210	1.0	5.0	2.200	.9870

Positive responses to HRD strategy were significantly related to skills development as organisational performance has become stronger due to high performing training activities, providing an effective and rapid response to market demands. Table 2 shows the significant differences in the organisation satisfaction on skills, services and organisational performance. Hotel classification had a significant contribution with the training type and frequency, and formal HRD practices, as all hotels (mainly five star hotels) offered follow up, technical skills training opportunities, and established a good HRD strategy. Obviously, five star hotels capacity to invest in HRD activities and customer services might contributed towards the improved organisational performance.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean	Std. Deviation
Organisational performance	12	2.0	5.0	3.583	.7930
Skills improvement	12	2.0	5.0	3.167	.8348
Customer services	12	2.0	5.0	3.000	.7385

The diverse nature of the workforce reinforces the need to revisit HRD practices aiming at improving product quality and services. The study findings confirmed evidence that there is not an adequate local labour force to cover the needs in the hotel sector making the use of migrant workers as an attractive, alternative option. Data from the survey also showed that the vast majority of managers expressed their concerns about current labour skills shortage indicating that migrant workers are employed due to cost and seasonality related factors. Interestingly, results shows that hotels looking into labour cost reduction and adopt a less strategic approach to HRD due to the nature of work and skills.

However, the vast majority of participants expressed their dissatisfaction with customer services and skills development amongst migrant workers. This ambiguity raises question about the current HRD practices and how hotels approach customer services. De-skilling within the workplace and the poor training process are inherent problems in skills development in the industry. The data supports such arguments as most participants were not satisfied with the training outcome and the impact upon migrant workers skills.

Discussion and conclusion

This study creates a review of HRD practices of migrant workers within Cyprus hotel sector. First it seeks to identify the level of investment in HRD with regards to migrant workers. Results revealed that while opportunities exist there are significant shortcomings in the model adopted. The study suggests that migrant workers development exists, supporting the literature and the works of Bai (2001), and Cannon and Gustafson (2002). However there is also suggestion that, what is in existence is at a superficial level and is there to do no more than fill the role of the job. While many commentators may suggest that this is right from an organisational perspective as it meets the immediate need (Nguyen, Truong, and Buyens, 2010; Tharenou, Saks and Moore, 2007), it does little to support the long term development of either the individual or the organisation. Training and development is a perfunctory action amongst hotels as current practices fail to build a sense of obligation toward it (Glaveli and Karassavidou, 2011).

Despite the importance of migrant labour skills in the industry, well established ineffective training practices has become an acceptable form of learning thinking and response to current and future needs of the organisations (Truss, Mankin and Kelliher, 2012). In parts this may be down to external factors which dictate the economic conditions facing the industry, which result in the poor skills and conditions of migrant workers. However the short termism approach of the sector also dictates 'what they get'. The failure to retain staff who are of the calibre the organisation prefers may be the result of lack of formalised strategic training and development. This, in turn, leads to lack of job satisfaction amongst migrant workers, as the long-term learning culture is not embedded in the hotels. The results also show that hotels seek informal, short training methods to increasing HRD capacity without optimizing human effectiveness. This is not surprising as current literature support the argument that migrant

workers is a cheap and accessible source of skills with low human capital accumulations resulting in less investment for personal and professional development (Baum, 2008; Pantelidis and Wrobel, 2008; Witz, Warhurst and Nickson, 2003). Cost, time and the nature of the sectors create a learning culture which cannot accommodate any 'fresh HRD thinking'.

The study also aims to evaluate whether current HRD practices could lead to increased organisational performance amongst migrant workers. Results revealed that while the training may be happening at operational level, with informal actions, there is nothing to suggest that it is having an impact at strategic level. Hayes and Ninemeier (2009) highlight that the existing training and development that takes place does not lead to improvements in competitiveness, and the current research conducted supports this. However Davidson et al (2011) propose that HRD, when implemented correctly, is potentially a catalyst for improving performance.

Theoretical perspectives suggest that the way to improve both individual and organisational performance, within labour intensive organisations, is through effective training and development. Arguably this leads to increased personal skills, organisational commitment and higher performance levels, which are seen through improved efficiency and effectiveness (Davidson, McPhail and Barry, 2011; Kalargyrou and Woods, 2011; Saks and Moore, 2007). Individual performance is of particular significance to the hotel sector where the performance of individuals is crucial to aspects of the organisation, and in particular around quality and service provided to their customers. While the underpinning purpose of HRD must be to improve organisational performance a secondary factor is to help with attracting and retaining high quality staff. This may not be the case for the hotel sector in Cyprus.

The study suggests that participants consider migrant workers' skills as between low and very low, which would suggest an issue with their recruitment and selection strategy. Perhaps there is a link between the use of migrant casual labour and the poor state of the economy, however it remains to be considered whether attempts to recruit staff on a permanent basis with better training and development within the role would lead to better quality staff being recruited. Individuals who may be looking for a career (or at least a job with some prospects) may be more likely to apply for jobs where training and development provides them with qualifications and transferrable skills. This approach for career development may also involve off the job training. There is however an element of risk associated with improving the skills and qualifications of staff, particularly in a sector which is notorious for poor working conditions, long hours and low pay. In the long term the organisation may risk losing their staffs as improved education and qualifications will potentially lead these employees to look for better roles elsewhere. This is consistent with the ideas of Urry (2007) who highlights issues associated with mobility. Further to that issues associated with labour turnover, poor quality and working conditions could have been effectively addressed through HRD planning (Chikwe, 2009; Barron, 2008; Hinkin and Tracey, 2008). The study shows that traditional training practices no longer appears fit for purpose as it is unlikely to provide strategic solutions for which assimilates the business environment and organisational needs. Hotels with formal, long-term HRD strategy have seen an improved performance and better satisfaction with skills development and quality improvement. The following section provides a number of practical implications that hotels can adopt to support staff retention (both local and migrant workers) through job enrichment and enhancement.

Implications for practice and future research

This paper highlights the potential issues which face the hotel sector in Cyprus, however the issues identified will not be necessarily specific to Cyprus. The hospitality industry (and more specifically the hotel sector) around the world has a common 'bad press'. HRD could be utilised to address key challenges and improve the industry's reputation and working conditions. This is a longstanding argument as some authors expressed concerns as to how the industry manages HRD practices (Barron, 2008; Chikwe, 2009; Hinkin and Tracey, 2008; Riley, Ladkin and Szivas, 2002). Drawing on more general HRD literature, the study reinforces the need for hotels to shift their thinking by developing a more proactive and strategic approach to HRD aiming to develop effective learning systems. The benefits of HRD have been widely recognised and this study shows that small number of hotels, which did invest in the long-term migrant workers skills, saw a positive improvement in overall organisational performance. Immigrants have formed a substantial part of the hospitality industry, indicating the need to change current mentality around low human capital accumulations and poor investment for personal and professional development.

While many of the big operators have been able to negate some of the issues with better training and development opportunities, much of the sector is rife with poor working conditions, long hours and poor pay. Current training approach seems to be more applicable to address hotel future needs, however it lacks adaptability, flexibility and strategic thinking that is essential for effective HRD strategy. This study maps out the key areas that stakeholders (for example, policy makers and employers) could consider when designing and developing HRD policies and facilitate the transition into a satisfying employment conditions in the industry.

It is also important for hotels to consider how they can create paths which will allow individual employees including migrant workers to see the job as a long term prospect as opposed to a short term financial solution. Perhaps this can be done through cooperating with each other to provide better quality training and development, which may lead to improved performance and effective working practices. Local providers can then be sourced to provide off the job training for the benefit of the sector within communities whereby groups of hotels working together may be able to improve each other and provide a collective competitive advantage. High HRD investment could lead to increased performance at individual and organisational level.

While this study highlights the issues and perhaps some potential contributing solutions, future research may allow the opportunity to develop the common needs of independent and small hotels which can be developed into effective training package to address skills related issues. Local agreements may then be devised to help hotels and support the common agreements. This paper should be seen as a thought challenge for new direction of HRD thinking amongst hotels. Understanding of the strategic role of HRD in performance, quality and skills development in this changing environment is essential. Key stakeholders could be able to solve long-standing employment problems in hospitality and enable hotels to produce capable migrant workers with individual characteristics that are causally related to performance and understanding of the current business needs. The study's empirical data could be extended into other vocational industries in order to add to the richness of the data around the effectiveness of HRD practices towards skills development and organisational performance.

Building on this, future empirical research studies would be able to explore perceptions among the two spectrums of HRD process (employers and employees) as well as to examine the effectiveness of existing HRD national policies in developing encouraging training activities amongst migrant workers. Further research is also needed to explore current perceptions amongst migrant workers and how they perceive their role in the industry. Such data are essential to develop more effective HRD system and eliminate the effects of low human capital accumulation upon organisational performance.

This study has a number of limitations that should be acknowledged. The study is limited in that the research participants might not be representative of the diverse nature of hotel sector across Cyprus. The study is also limited in its scope to participants' future behaviour and actions. Given the fact that hospitality industry is itself in a state of transition, this may have a dampening effect upon HRD planning and investment. Limitations of time and space for collecting the data should be considered. Despite these constraints, every effort was made by the researchers to ensure the quality of the data collected and analysed.

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