

**The practice of HRM in relation to employee motivation
and job performance by HR managers in the hospitality
industry in Lao PDR**

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**A thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of Master of
Business**

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DECLARATION

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This Thesis entitled:

“The practice of HRM in relation to employee motivation and job performance by HR managers in the hospitality industry in Lao PDR”

is submitted in partial fulfilment for the requirements for the Unitec degree of Master of Business.

Candidate’s declaration

I confirm that:

- This Dissertation/Research study represents my own work;
- The contribution of supervisors and others to this work was consistent with the Unitec Regulations and Policies
- Research for this work has been conducted in accordance with the Unitec Research Ethics Committee Policy and Procedures, and has fulfilled any requirements set for this project by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee.

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ABSTRACT

In a hotel, which is a service business, it is crucial to identify the factors that increase business performance, profit and productivity. The study of HRM practices is one of a hotel's crucial management functions that allow the hotel business to maintain its competitive advantage and improve both employee performance and organizational effectiveness. In order to guarantee that the hotel organization has good quality management, it is vital to have effective HRM practices that result in a high level of productivity, a high level of service quality, effective and efficient resource exploitation, and improvement of employee performance.

Recently, the Lao government considered the tourism and hospitality industry as one of the top priority development sectors because the tourism industry has earned revenue from foreign countries and has greatly contributed to social and economic development in Lao PDR. Due to an increase in the importance of tourism and the support from the government, the hospitality business such as the hotels and restaurants grew significantly in 1995 and has increased dramatically compared to the other main sectors in the Lao economy. However, it seems that these businesses in Laos still underperform in HR development and training. Therefore they do not have the capability to operate effectively and efficiently. As a result, this can hinder a hospitality business and the tourism industry in Laos which is planned to grow considerably over coming years.

Therefore, in this research paper, the main research aim is to discover the approaches that the hotel industry should implement to improve employee job performance and help the hotel industry maintain its competitive advantage and sustain profitability in the increasingly competitive business environment in Laos. This research project will mainly focus on overall HRM functions such as (1) recruitment and selection, (2) employee training and development, (3) employee motivation and satisfaction, and (4) employee retention which are practised by HR managers in hotels in Laos.

With regard to methodology, this research applies mixed methods in order to better explore and experience the research problem. Findings from the research demonstrate that there are some weaknesses in relation to the current HRM practices in Lao hotels.

In the area of employee selection, most HR managers are not likely to recognize the importance of employee selection. In the area of employee training, even if most HR managers acknowledge the importance of training activities, half of the employees did not receive training and most of them still need more training. In the area of motivation and satisfaction factors, results from the questionnaire survey show that money, opportunity for growth and fairness are the most influential factors that motivate employees to work and satisfy them at workplace.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HR:	Human Resource
HRM:	Human Resource Management
KSA:	Knowledge, Skills, Ability
LAO PDR:	Lao People's Democratic Republic
OCB:	Organizational Citizenship Behaviour
P:	Participant
SHRM:	Strategic Human Resource Management
SMEs:	Small and Medium-sized Enterprises
UREC:	Unitec Research Ethics Committee

Chapter One: Introduction

1.1 Human resource as a key business competitiveness

Competitiveness of the organization increasingly and heavily relies on the knowledge, skills and abilities of its employees. Deb (2006) and Rao (2008) strongly assert that HR helps the organization establish a set of core competencies. This means employees are the main resources that help the organization perform its activities better than its rivals. In addition, employees help to distinguish the organization from its rivals by adding value to the organizational products and services; for example, delivering low cost for services, and providing high-quality products.

It is asserted by Rao (2008), Muncherji and Dhar (2009), and Snell and Bohlander (2012) that talents of employees, which are valuable, unique, rare, and difficult to imitate, can support the organization to achieve sustained competitive advantage over its competitors. Therefore, it is vital for the organization to have an effective HR management that can enable ordinary employees to deliver extraordinary and outstanding performance, and to take care of employees' ever-changing expectations. It is suggested by Rao (2008) and Nel et al. (2012) that in today's highly competitive markets, the organization should manage key resources such as employees, technology, and work processes efficiently in order to achieve cost effectiveness and deliver high quality goods and services.

1.2 Human resource as a driving force of business success, business sustainability and ongoing profitability

Organizations do not exist if there are no people or employees. The organizations employ all resources such as human, physical and financial resources to produce expected results (Rao, 2008). To have success, and maintain the success, every organisation demands extraordinary abilities and sustained efforts from its employees and people. Rao (2008) claims that when employees work to the best of their abilities and do their work with passion, enthusiasm and high commitment, the business will grow significantly and continuously. Rao (2008) also maintains that in general, every organisation has pretty much the same kind of resources such as land, buildings, materials, equipment, and finance to work with, but the only element that differentiates between business organizations is the HR factor.

If the business organization can use and exploit its human resource to the best potential advantage, there is nothing that can stop the organization achieving its goals and objectives. As Thomas J. Watson, the founder of IBM states, “you can get capital and erect buildings, but it takes people to build a business” (as cited in Snell & Bohlander, 2012, p. 1). Jack Welch, the former director of General Electric also believes that human resources are the backbone of the organization due to the fact that they develop and use technology, they contribute great ideas for product development and deliver superior customer services, they collect, analyse and distribute information, and they create and execute strategy (as cited in Rao, 2008). Rao (2008) concludes that when employees are motivated and inspired, they will be fully involved in organizational activities and work to their maximum potential. This can assist a company to achieve its goals and attain results rapidly, efficiently and effectively.

1.3 Employees’ job satisfaction

Employee satisfaction refers to “a pleasurable or positive emotional state resulting from the appraisal of one’s job or job experiences” (as cited in Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2010, p. 72). Grigoroudis and Siskos (2010) claim that employee satisfaction is one of the important drivers for organizational success. According to the study of Vroom (1964) and Bernhardt et al. (2000), there is a relationship between employee satisfaction and employee/organizational performance (as cited in Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2010). In addition, based on the research of Smith et al. (1983) and Organ (1988), there is a link between job satisfaction and organizational citizenship behaviour in which employees go beyond the requirements of their Job (as cited in Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2010).

Research has also revealed that a high level of employee satisfaction can result in the reduction of employee turnover rate and has a positive influence on organizational commitment (Nel et al., 2015; Nelson & Quick, 2012). Studies of Tornow and Wiley (1991), Tompkins (1992), and Schlesinger and Zomitsky (1991) have demonstrated that there is a relationship between employee satisfaction and customer satisfaction that is likely to result in customer loyalty and higher profitability (as cited in Grigoroudis & Siskos, 2010). Therefore, it is crucial for the organization to determine and identify the factors that increase and improve employee satisfaction at work in order to improve employee performance, increase employee commitment, reduce the turnover rate of employees, and increase the level of customer satisfaction (Nel et al., 2012).

1.4 Work motivation

Mackay (2006) and Nel et al. (2014) assert that identifying the key factors that motivate employees at work is necessary for the organization to recognize and understand the key motivational factors that influence their employees' behaviour and action can be taken to help the organization create appropriate and suitable strategies to motivate their employees to perform work at a high level. In addition, Stone (2013) claims that knowing how to motivate employees can help the organization to increase productivity and improve customer service and is one factor that creates a competitive advantage over competitors. Ahlstrom and Bruton (2010), and Nel et al. (2012) also emphasize that having the right motivation tool is crucial as it can increase employees' efforts to perform their task. The level of employees' effort has a great influence on the level of organizational performance and customer satisfaction. Adeniyi (2010) and Nel et al. (2015) conclude that there is a strong relationship between employee motivation and the level of their performance. Therefore, conducting research about the factors that motivate employees at work is necessary because knowing what employees need and desire at work helps organizations to develop the strategy that allows employees to satisfy their needs and increase their performance at the same time.

1.5 Human resource management in the hospitality industry

The hospitality industry refers to organizations that provide accommodation and food services for people when they travel away from their homes (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009). The hospitality industry is also known as a "people business". The people in this context refer to both employees who deliver the products and services, and to customers who consume them. Like any other business, hospitality organizations need employees with different kinds of knowledge, skills, and experience to provide a high quality of products and services that are needed by customers. In other words, hospitality business operations depend on a capable and service-oriented labour force (Nickson, 2013).

Hence, it is necessary for the hospitality industry to have effective HR functions such as job analysis, employee selection, training and development, compensation management and motivational schemes that are integrated or linked with its strategic plans or goals in order to improve organizational performance standards, deliver quality service to customers, and maintain its competitiveness in the pursuit of organizational success (Darwish, 2013; Holbeche, 2012).

1.6 The importance of employee selection in the organization.

The success of every organization depends on the ability and efficiency of employees in its organization. Thus, it is important for the organization to have a well-organized and effective selection process (Gupta, 2007). If the organization has a poor selection procedure, unsuitable applicants are hired and appointed. As a result, the efficiency of the organization will decrease because such persons might not be able to operate their work. In addition, they might leave their jobs. This can result in a waste of time and money that organization spent on their selection and training (Gupta, 2007). Gupta (2007) also claims that effective selection and placement of employees is vital for the organization because it helps it to improve the efficiency of its work operations.

According to the study by Gupta (2007), the effective and proper selection process helps the organization to select and hire the right people for the job which can bring about the improvement of the quality of organizational performance. Therefore, it is essential for the hotel business to put in extra effort and emphasis on improving the employee selection procedure in order to ensure that the organization hires the best qualified people who are able to help to achieve the organizational goals and attain high productivity in the organization.

1.7 The importance of employee training in the organization

Employee training is essential for the organization. Training and development of employees allows the organization to improve the ability and capacity of its employees to implement its business plan and strategy (Jackson, Schuler, & Werner, 2012). According to the study of Jackson et al. (2012), training helps new staff to learn the organizational values, and allows experienced staff to continually improve the quality of the product and services of the organization. “Improving the competence of the workforce is one way that training and development can create a competitive advantage” (Jackson et al., 2012, p. 270).

This means training activities help the employees perform their work at a higher level that can result in the success of the organization (Miller & Gordon, 2014; Nel et al., 2012). Besides, it is believed that training and development activities can bring about increased workforce productivity, and ultimately contribute to the improvement of organizational performance (Cassidy & Kreitner, 2010; Nel et al., 2012). Hence, it is vital for the hotel business to have training and development activities in place in order to improve capacity and the capability of employees and increase employee productivity, to ultimately sustain its competitive advantage.

1.8 Background of the main research problem and the primary study area

Since Lao People's Democratic Republic opened its country to foreign tourists in 1989, the tourism and hospitality industry has grown and developed quickly and has become one of the largest industries in Laos. In 1995, the Lao government considered the tourism and hospitality industry as one of the top priority development sectors because the tourism industry has earned revenue from foreign countries and has greatly contributed to social and economic development in Lao PDR (Yamauchi & Lee, 1999). Due to an increase in the importance of tourism and the support from the government, the hospitality business such as the hotels and restaurants grew significantly in 1995 and has increased dramatically comparing to other main sectors in the Lao economy.

The growth rate of hotels more than tripled between 1992 and 1997, and the amount of foreign investment in the hospitality industry has grown continuously (Yamauchi & Lee, 1999). However, when compared with regional and international competitors, the hospitality businesses, especially hotels and restaurants in Laos are still considered as small and medium sized enterprises (SMEs). Furthermore, it seems that these businesses in Laos still underperform in relation to HR development and training. They do not have the capability to operate effectively and efficiently. As a result, this might hinder the hospitality business and tourism industry in Laos that is planned to grow considerably over coming years (Sustainable Tourism Development Project In Lao PDR, 2009).

According to the information above, the number of hotels and restaurants is increasing considerably and the foreign investment rates are rising substantially. This contributes towards a higher level of competition in the hotel and service business in Laos. In addition to the pressure of an increasingly competitive market, it looks as if the hotels and catering organizations underperform, still deliver inadequate services, and provide limited facilities compared to the same business in the same region. This can have a negative impact on the tourism industry in Laos.

Therefore, the main research problem is: what approaches should the hotel industry take to improve employee job performance and help the industry maintain competitiveness and sustain profitability in the increasingly competitive business environment in Laos?

This research project will mainly focus on overall HRM functions such as (1) recruitment and selection, (2) employee training and development, (3) employee motivation and satisfaction, and (4) employee retention which are practised by HR managers in hotels in Laos.

1.9 The research aim and objectives

The major aim of this research project is to identify and determine practical and suitable HRM for employee selection, employee training, job performance, employee motivation, and employee satisfaction to support the hotel industry in Laos, and enabling it to have a competitive advantage, attain goals and sustain business. However, in order to achieve the aforementioned aim, the key objectives of this research project are as follows:

1. To explore procedures that HR managers have employed to select the right employee to the right position in Laos.
2. To find out training programs that employees have received in order to develop their capacity on their work performance in hotels in Laos.
3. To identify factors that motivate hotel employees to perform at a high standard.
4. To determine factors that bring about a high level of job satisfaction among employees in order to engage employees to achieve organizational goals and reduce the rate of employee turnover in hotels in Laos.
5. To examine the influence of training on an employee's work performance in the Lao hotel industry.
6. To identify the impact of the financial incentives implemented by the organization on employee performance.
7. To determine the relationship between satisfaction of employees and the salary paid by the organization.

1.10 Research question

In order to address the research problem and fulfil the aim, the main research question of this project is: What are the practical and suitable HRM practices that would increase employee motivation and satisfaction and job performance in the hotel industry in Laos?

In addition, in order to achieve the aforementioned objectives and address the main research question, the sub-questions are formulated as follows:

1. What selection process should be applied in order to have the right employee for the right job?
2. What kind of training should the hotel industry in Laos provide in order to improve employee performance and their capacity with the job?
3. What are the key factors that the hotel industry in Laos should consider in order to motivate employees to higher levels of performance?
4. What are the main factors that affect job satisfaction in the workplace?
5. What is the influence of training on the employee's work performed in the organization?
6. What is the impact of the financial incentives implemented by the organization on employee performance?
7. Is there a positive relationship between satisfaction of employee and the organization's salary structure?

1.11 Hypothesis

This research project proposes three hypotheses as follows:

H₀₁ - There is no difference in the views of employees towards the importance of training in relation to work performance in the organization.

H₀₂ - The financial incentives provided by the organizations have no effect on employee performance.

H₀₃ - There is no relationship between employee satisfaction and the pay offered by the organization.

1.12 Research methodology

This study applies mixed methods (a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods) for obtaining data. In a quantitative method, a questionnaire has been developed to collect data from employees in the six hotels in order to seek to understand their opinion and experience about work satisfaction, motivation and training in the hotels in Laos. In a qualitative method, six HR managers from the six hotels have been interviewed in order to understand viewpoints of HR Managers in relation to the employee section and employee training in their organizations. Prior to the interview questions and survey questionnaires being used in this study, a pilot project was implemented in order to ensure that the questions were clear and

understandable. With regard to data analysis, text coding, content analysis, thematic analysis, narrative analysis, comparative analysis has been used to analyse qualitative data whereas SPSS software has been used to analyse quantitative data.

1.13 Limitations of the study

There are some limitations in relation to the research procedures in this study. With regard to the qualitative method, due to time constraints, the sample size seems to be too small; but it is still representative of the hotel industry in the capital city. A future study could include hotels in other parts of Laos as well. In total six participants were selected for this research which complies with the requirements for a 90 credit thesis at Unitec. The six participants were HR managers from 6 hotels, namely City Inn, Rashmi's Plaza Hotel, Best Western Vientiane Hotel, Lane Xang Hotel, Settha Palace Hotel, and Vientiane Golden Hotel. With regard to the quantitative method, the questionnaire survey included employees at all levels in the hotels. All the hotels that participated in this research study are located in the capital city of Laos. Furthermore, the sample size for a questionnaire survey is relatively small, which might reduce the accuracy, reliability and validity of the findings in this research. Thus, this research study might not represent the overall HRM practices in the hotel industry nationwide but is representative for the capital city of Laos.

1.14 Thesis overview

There are six chapters contained in this thesis. Chapter one introduces the importance of HRM practices in every organization. It also illustrates the influence of HR functions on the improvement of employee performance, employee satisfaction and motivation, and the success of the organization. Finally, it presents aims, objectives and the research questions of this thesis.

Chapter two covers the literature review associated with the effective HRM practices and its functions that contribute to the development of work performance, job satisfaction, and workplace motivation. It also presents various theories about employee selection procedure, training and development, job satisfaction and employee motivation that can be used as a guideline for the analysis of this research study.

Chapter three covers the methods and techniques applied to collect the data for this research study. It especially discusses some particular methods used in sample selection, data collection, and data analysis.

Chapter four reflects the data obtained from both the interviews and questionnaire survey. It also presents the findings generated by using many different approaches of data analysis.

Chapter five discusses the findings from data collection and analysis. It also shows the findings are supported by relevant literature which leads to the answer to the research objectives, research questions and hypotheses.

Chapter six presents the summary of this research study, and provides some significant recommendations about effective HRM practices to the Lao hotel industry. Limitations of this research and further research areas are also addressed in this chapter.

1.15 Conclusion

In this chapter, suitable HRM practices that could contribute to the effectiveness and efficiency of every organization including hotel industry, was introduced. In addition, it was illustrated that the hotel industry in Laos doesn't have an effective HR management which could hinder their business performances in the future. The aims and objectives as well as the main research question and hypotheses were offered. Therefore, this research points out how vital it is for the Lao hotel industry to seek suitable HRM practices in order to deliver effective HRM.

1.16 Chapter summary

Chapter one provides the correlation between HRM practices, organizational performance, job satisfaction, and employee motivation in the Lao hotel industry. Chapter one also presents the aim, objectives, and the research questions of this research study. The following chapter discusses the literature review in order to provide basic knowledge about effective HRM practices and have the right direction for the critical analysis in this thesis.

Chapter Two: Literature review

2.1 Introduction: The background and development of HRM in business organizations

Chapter One is the introductory chapter and covers the introduction and also gives an outline of the chapters in this thesis. In this chapter the literature review will cover all the research questions and aims of this study.

Looking back to the development of HR practices, in the early 1970s, there was only a department called personnel department which involved the workforce in the organization (Darwish, 2013). In the late 70s, the world economy changed steadily and organizations began to consider the labour force as an important resource for their business activities and operations. The concept of human resource management (HRM) began in the 1980s and this concept grew and developed over the next decade (McGuire & Jorgensen, 2010).

Over the last 30 years, HRM has attracted attention across many fields, due to its contribution to the effectiveness and efficiency of employee management (Nickson, 2013; Stredwick, 2005). It has been said that human resource (HR) is the crucial element in most organizations as it is a key driving factor in every business activity. Therefore an effective and efficient HR management plays a vital role in the success of every organization (Stredwick, 2005). However, in recent years, many scholars and researchers have developed a sophisticated and modern discipline of HRM which was called strategic human resource management (SHRM).

Delery and Shaw (2001) and Becker and Huselid (2006) point out the difference between traditional HRM and SHRM in two dimensions. SHRM has focused on the influence of all HR practices on organizational performance whereas traditional HRM has emphasized only the influence of individual practices on employee performance standards (Darwish, 2013).

In today's global economy, organizations are operating in a dynamic and fast changing environment. In order to maintain competitive advantage, achieve organizational strategic goals, and adapt and change to respond quickly to market needs and demands, it is vital for contemporary organizations to have HR professionals or HR managers who have sophisticated and advanced HRM skills and knowledge (Nel, Werner, Poisat, Du Plessis, & Sono, 2011). Ulrich (1997) also emphasizes that in order to add value to business

organizations, the HR professionals or HR managers should play roles as: (as cited in Nel et al., 2011).

1. Strategic partner: HR managers have to execute strategic HRM that is linked and aligned with the organizational strategies.
2. The administrative expert: HR managers have to ensure that every day HR activities are effective and add value to the core business of organizations.
3. Employee champion: An HR manager should have soft skills, should be able to approach HR, and can be a representative of the employee's voice in the management level.
4. Change agent: it is important for an HR manager to proactively participate in any actions and activities in order to be able to help the organization to replace the resistance of change with resolve, create plans with the result, and identify the main success factors for change.

2.2 The role of HR managers in employee work performance

Boxall and Purcell (2011) assert that HRM potentially contributes to employee work performance in the organization. Boxall and Purcell (2011) also state that the quality of employee work performance is reliant on a function of ability, motivation and opportunity. This means HR managers intervene to develop employee ability, motivation and opportunity in order to maximize work performance in the organization. The following is how HR managers contribute to the development of employee ability, motivation and opportunity in order to increase the level of employee performance (Wilton, 2011).

- Ability refers to each employee's attributes or competencies such as knowledge, skill, attitude, and behaviour that influence a person's capacity to perform a particular job role. In order to ensure that employees who are recruited or selected into the organizations are competent to perform the required jobs or are able to respond to the further development opportunities presented, HR managers should have an effective recruitment and selection procedure, and have learning and development programs in place (Wilton, 2011).
- Motivation refers to external and internal factors that influence employees to perform a particular task or job well. One of the roles of HR managers is to maximize the level of employee motivation. Wilton (2011) points out that it is necessary for HR managers to design jobs, implement practices, conduct

procedures, and create a work environment to stimulate and encourage employees to perform to their full potential in the way desired by the organization. Furthermore, HR managers should understand intrinsic and extrinsic factors such as the financial incentive, recognition, job satisfaction and achievement that motivate workers and unlock the power of discretionary effort in them. Besides, HR managers should pay attention to reconcile the mutual interests or mixed motives of companies and workers, and make sure both employers and employees have sufficient levels of the mutual relationship in order to maintain and sustain stability of work performance (Wilton, 2011).

- Opportunity refers to a chance to perform tasks and jobs well. This means the opportunity to perform effectively and efficiently is provided by the workplace environment which gives the necessary support for workers to reach their full potential (Wilton, 2011). Wilkinson, Bacon, Redman, and Snell (2009) assert that in addition to a supportive working environment, HR managers play key roles in providing employees greater opportunity (through empowerment, more autonomy, greater involvement and high commitment) to contribute to organisational decision-making. Pravin (2010), Wilton (2011), and Wilkinson et al. (2009) also claim that opportunity under empowerment and high-commitment can lead to organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) in which employees go beyond normal job requirements. This can result in outstanding work performance and effective functioning of the organization.

In conclusion, in order to have high work performance in the organization, HR managers should ensure that the organization has an effective HRM system that aims to hire people with the right skills and knowledge for the right positions, and develop employee skills and knowledge required by the organization. Moreover, as satisfaction and commitment can result in excellent firm performance, HR managers should implement and enact HR activities and practices that bring about job satisfaction and employee commitment to the organizations and its goals (Wilton, 2011).

2.3 Human resource management

HRM refers to all those activities including recruiting, designing work for, training and developing, appraising and rewarding, guiding, and motivating employees in the organization. In other words, HRM is the framework of strategies, policies, procedures and

practices for managing the relationship between employers and employees (Wilton, 2011). Ian Beardwell and Len Hoden (1997) assert that HR management is the same as strategic managerial functions. This is because it focuses on the management of employees in order to reach and attain the business's organizational goals (as cited in Boella & Goss-Turner, 2012). Dowling, Festing, and Engle (2008) and Storey (2007) also point out that in order to reach the business goals and objectives, as well as to provide employee satisfaction, human resource management and HR policies should link with the organizational strategies (as cited in Boella & Goss-Turner, 2012). In addition, Storey (2007) states that it is important for the organization to utilize a multidisciplinary approach in HR management in order to gain a sustained competitive advantage through effective deployment of a fully committed and capable labour force (as cited in Boella & Goss-Turner, 2012).

Storey (2007) points out that there are two approaches ('hard' and 'soft' in characteristic) to HRM in the organization. The hard approach to HRM, which is also known as the 'Michigan' style, focuses on a business-oriented style. This means the hard approach only emphasizes the attainment of organizational objectives and goals through productivity and efficiency in the exploitation of human resources. On the other hand, the soft approach to HRM, also called as 'Harvard' style, focuses much more on the attainment of goals of mutual advantage to both employees and business organizations. This means the soft approach mainly focuses on motivation and commitment of employees, shared values and employee involvement (as cited in Boella & Goss-Turner, 2012). Thus, it is clear that either or both of those approaches to HRM are practised widely by different organizations. However, employers or the organization in different business sectors significantly vary their people-management strategies (Nickson, 2013).

2.4 Human resource planning

Professor John Genward (2004) defines human resource planning as "a strategy for the acquisition (recruitment/selection), utilization (deployment), improvement (training and development) and preservation (pay and rewards) of an organization's human resources" (as cited in Armstrong, 2006, p. 76). According to the aforementioned definition, Armstrong (2006) concludes that human resource (HR) planning is about having the right people with the right numbers in the right place at the right time. Furthermore, Armstrong (2006) claims that HR planning is a method of selecting, developing, motivating, paying, retaining employees in the organization, so poor human resource planning can hinder a company

operations thus placing them in a position where they are unable to compete effectively against competitors in the market (Deb, 2006).

Besides, Randhawa (2007) claims that accurate and effective HR planning can help the company to reduce its operational cost. Buhler (2002) also asserts that the company might not be able to afford to be overstaffed or understaffed as this will drive up extra costs to the company. For example, if the company has more employees than are needed, this will incur extra cost because the company is paying for employees who are not being challenged to their full capacity and capability. On the contrary, if the company is understaffed, this will reduce the level of productivity and quality standards as there are insufficient numbers of workers available to undertake some work or perform the work effectively (Erasmus, Swanepoel, & Schenk, 2005).

Human resource (HR) planning is known as organizational process used to identify how labour will be employed in the company (Buhler, 2002; Deb, 2006). In addition, Buhler (2002) and Deb (2006) define human resource planning as the process that forecasts the supply and demand of suitable human resources for the company. Human resource (HR) planning includes all dimensions of the employment function such as employee selection, employee training, employee compensation, employee advancement, and job design. In turn, these functions can help to support the organization to increase its performance in the future (Armstrong, 2006; Buhler, 2002; Deb, 2006). Buhler (2002), Bhattacharyya (2009), and Armstrong (2006) further emphasize that by projecting the company's human resource needs, the company can identify suitable people and they can be hired, promoted, or trained. Consequently, the right workers will be in the right job at the right time. This will help the company in achieving its objectives in the future.

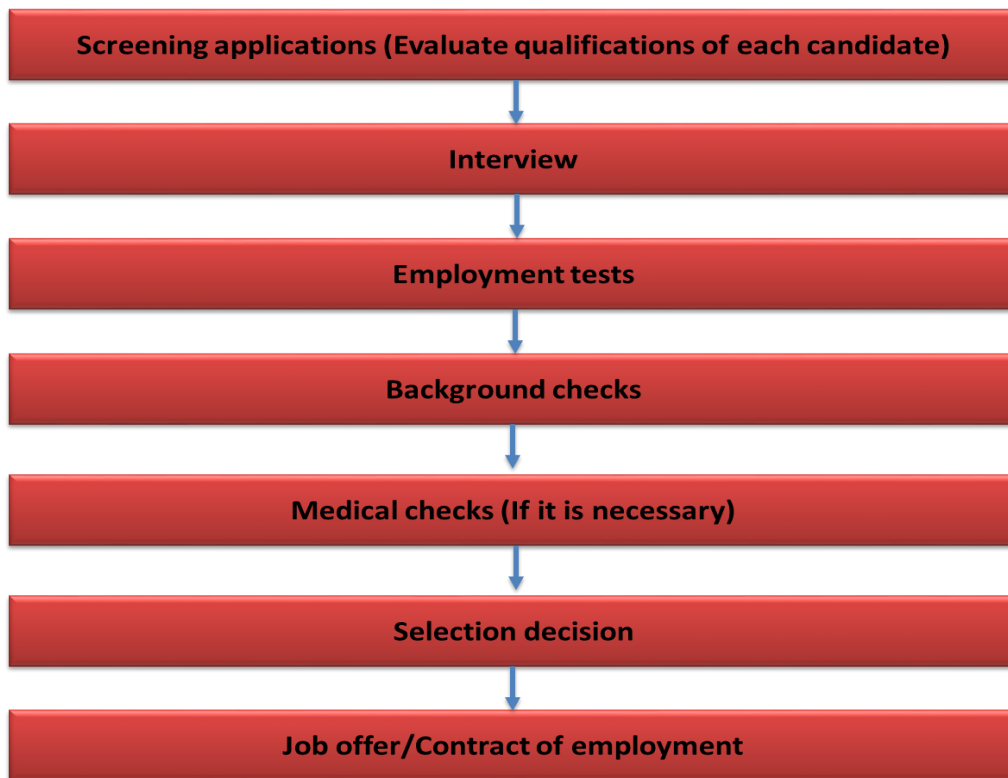
Therefore, in terms of the hotel industry, it is necessary to have effective and accurate human resource planning by implementing an effective employee selection process, and providing adequate necessary training for employees in order to increase organizational performance and meet business objectives which results in gaining a competitive advantage over competitors in the marketplace (Rees & Smith, 2014; Tesone & Pizam, 2008).

2.5 Employee selection

In this section of the literature review, the researcher covers selection of employees as this is the first research objective of this study. Selection is the activity of gathering and evaluating information about a candidate in order to offer employment. The employment can be either a first position for a new worker or a different position for a current worker (Gatewood, Feild, & Barrick, 2010). Employee selection is vital to every company. As asserted by Gatewood et al. (2010), a company is only as good as the workers it selects or hires. Tesone (2008) also states that if a hotel organization has an effective employee selection process, its quality of service might be improved. Moreover, Azanza (2004) and Brown (2011) point out that if the company cannot attract or hire talented and skilled workers, the company might fail to meet its strategic goals and objectives. Brown (2011) and Gatewood et al. (2010) conclude that this means the level of the organizational performance relies on its ability to select a qualified labour force through an effective selection process.

Besides, Brown (2011) points out that the quality of employees makes a difference in how a company competes with competitors in the market, so the quality of the selection process is one of the critical factors of the company's success. Du Plessis, Sumphonphakdy, Oldfield, and Botha (2013) also point out that if the company has an ineffective hiring or selecting process, the company is taking two risks. The first one is the risk of selecting and hiring workers who are not qualified or up to the job. This can lead to a low level of work performance. The second one is the risk of losing good candidates or applicants. Missing out on talented and skilled workers can result in losing competitive advantage in the market. Thus, it is important for the organization to spend time ensuring that the right decisions are made in selecting and hiring the new employees rather than dealing with the problems after poor hires. In order to have an effective selection process, There are four steps in the selection process that organization should consider, namely (1) screening applications and resumes, (2) interviewing, (3) undertaking testing of the candidates, (4) conducting background investigations, and (5) making a decision whether to hire or not (Armstrong, 2010; Buhler, 2002; Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009; Nel et al., 2011).

Figure 1: The Steps in the selection process



Adapted from: Nel, Du Plessis, Werner, Poisat & Sono (2011)

2.5.1 Screening applications and resumes

The employment application form is typically used as a selection tool. This form can help the company to identify basic selection criteria, which includes education and experience of candidates (Nel et al., 2011). Even if applicants have their own resumes, most companies still want applicants to complete a company application form. This is because this form can provide exact information that the company wants and the format that the company prefers (Buhler, 2002; Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009). In addition, it is a good idea to have applicants take their information from their resumes and rewrite their information on the application forms again because resumes usually include exaggerated information (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009)

In the screening process, the information obtained from the application form and resume such as qualifications, competencies, and experiences of candidates will be reviewed, evaluated and checked in order to determine which candidates are appropriated or suitable for the position (Gatewood et al., 2010; Nel et al., 2011). More importantly, it is essential for an HR manager or recruiter to fully understand the job

description and the job specification. This is because a job description which includes responsibilities and duties expected to be fulfilled, and job specification which details knowledge, skills, competencies and abilities can help the HR manager, or recruiter, to maximize the probability that the screening procedure will remain job-related (Gatewood et al., 2010).

2.5.2 Interviewing

The interview is one of the most important in the selection procedure in most organizations. It is a process of finding the applicant who matches with the requirements of the job. However, the interview is often ineffective. This is because it is conducted by the interviewer who is untrained, makes many errors and has no objectivity. Therefore, in order to improve the validity of the interview, the interviewers should be trained regarding questions to ask, how to structure the interview, and where to undertake the meeting (Armstrong, 2009; Wilton, 2011).

The validity of the interview can be improved by using a structured method in which questions are organized and prepared in advance and used to question all candidates for the same job. By using the same range of questions, the interviewer can compare or judge answers across similar measures (Mukherjee, 2012). Apart from that, in order to have an effective interview, the objective elements should be prepared beforehand. For example, the interview room should be selected carefully to provide necessary privacy and to avoid unnecessary interruption (Armstrong, 2009; Wilton, 2011). Furthermore, before the interview day, the interviewer has to review and reread the applicant's resume, application, interview questions, the job description, and job specifications. This can help the interviewer understand and remember skills and competencies required for the job, as well as the candidates' skills and competencies, when the actual meeting begins (Armstrong, 2009; Mukherjee, 2012; Wilton, 2011).

In some organizations, a realistic job preview is also included in the interview process such as the overall objective of the position and its responsibilities. This is because the organization realizes that presenting only positive aspects of the job can lead to rapid turnover in the position, so giving a realistic job preview, which includes the negative and positive aspects, can make sure that the appropriate applicant is selected and hired (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009; Wilton, 2011).

The interviewer also needs to be aware of any errors that might cloud his or her objective in the selection process such as personal biases and first impressions. Personal biases can lead to an unfavourable reaction to a candidate, whereas first impressions might result in a wrong judgment. Finally, the interviewers should avoid asking any illegal questions such as age, race, religion, and sex. Otherwise, this may result in discrimination (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Wilton, 2011).

2.5.3 Undertaking testing of the candidates

Employment testing is being utilized to help the selection process. As the cost of making hiring mistakes is high, many companies invest in testing candidates in order to minimize the cost and improve the selection process (Arthur, 2012). However, the company has to ensure that the candidates' testing in the selection process reflects criteria that are necessary for successful performance of the job. This means all tests that are employed in the selection activity must be job-related. For instance, a typing test should not be administered to screen out candidates for a job driving a van if there is no typing performed on the job. There are many types of applicant testing processes such as ability tests, honesty tests, personality tests, and medical examinations (Armstrong, 2009; Banfield & Kay, 2008; Nel et al., 2011; Wilton, 2011).

Firstly, ability tests indicate what the candidates are able to do and what they have the potential to do, so it is important for hotels to have ability tests in order to have insightful information about what knowledge the candidate currently possesses. Ability tests also measure the applicant's capacity required in the new job. In addition, ability tests will help the hotels to determine how the applicant does the actual work that is performed on the job. Besides, ability tests allow the hotels to identify whether a candidate has the ability to learn a given job quickly or not (Rao, 2008).

Secondly, honesty tests are popularly used in sensitive jobs in industries including security, pharmaceuticals, and the government. The hotels should have this test as it helps hotels to measure the honesty of the candidates and prevent hiring dishonest people. Hiring dishonest people can result in theft and illegal acts that destroy the reputation of the organization (Shivarudrappa, Ramachandra, & Gopalakrishna, 2010).

Thirdly, personality tests are typically used by many organizations. This is because personality can be a predictor of job performance, and the organization also has to

recognize the importance of the individual-job-organization fit (Arthur, 2012; Shivarudrappa et al., 2010). Most organizations realize that matching the individual with the job is not enough. In terms of hospitality industry, the fit with the organizational culture is vital because selecting the participant who is the best fit to the organizational culture can result in an increase in organizational productivity and the improvement of organizational performance (Rao, 2008). If the hotel industry doesn't hire people who fit well with the cultural and structural characteristics of its organization, those people will likely be unhappy working in the organization and are likely to leave their job as soon as they have another opportunity that matches their desires for a particular work environment (Lussier & Hendon, 2013). However, Rao (2008) also suggests that in order to have effective personality tests, the organization should have a validated instrument, and it must be a job-related test.

Finally, some jobs require a medical test to guarantee that the candidates can meet the physical requirements of the position. However, the organization has to make sure that medical tests are job-related and do not unfairly discriminate. In terms of the hotel industry, this medical test should take place at the end of the selection process in order to make sure that the candidate is healthy and is able to perform a job on a regular basis. In addition, medical tests help the hotel industry to prevent hiring alcoholics, drug addicts, or people who have a mental illness, which can easily result in criminal behaviour (Andrews, 2009; Shivarudrappa et al., 2010).

2.5.4 Conducting background investigations

Background investigations are also an important component in finalizing the candidate's overall picture for an employee to work in the hospitality industry because a child molester will not be suitable to employ. The main purpose of background investigations is to prove the accuracy of factual information provided by a candidate or to have more additional information in relation to behaviour, character, integrity, criminal records, or legal pending cases, by contacting the previous employers or people who are known to a candidate (Armstrong, 2009; Banfield & Kay, 2008; Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009; Nel et al., 2011; Wilton, 2011). Background investigations are typically made by confidential email or by telephone call. Even if background investigations are critical in the employee selection process, they should be undertaken carefully to avoid legal issues as background investigations have various legal

sensitivities (Armstrong, 2009; Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009; Wilton, 2011). Thus, it is important to obtain a letter from the candidate giving permission to conduct background investigations. Effective background investigations help the hotel organization to guard against negligent hiring which might harm the organization in the future (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009).

2.5.5 Making a decision whether to hire or not

The hiring decision is the final step in the selection procedure. Depending on the hotel organization and its procedure, a single person or a committee can make the hiring decision. In this step, all information that has been collected during all the selection process should be compared such as the qualification required for the position, the qualification possessed by the candidate, candidate's personal character, candidate's physical health, and pre-work references. In addition, the hiring decision should include the salary level decision. For example, should they be hired at the highest level for their qualification? Is an overqualified candidate going to be hired? (Armstrong, 2009; Wilton, 2011)

In the final hiring decision, either a clinical or a statistical method might be used. The clinical approach considers an overall view of all the information collected and then the decision-makers make their choices. Different decision-makers might likely choose different applicants because personal biases might influence the decision in this method. On the other hand, the statistical method is more objective in the decision-making procedure by measuring and comparing the applicant's score on each selection tool used, and then summing up the total scores from each applicant. Employing the statistical method can result in more agreement among different decision-makers (Armstrong, 2009; Wilton, 2011).

The hotels should ensure that the decision process be as fair as possible in order to avoid complaints of discrimination and ensure that the decision process is carefully and legally conducted. The documentation is vital throughout the selection procedure as the hotels should be able to give reasons why an applicant was or was not selected. The hiring decision is an important step in the selection procedure. This is because it is time to ensure that the best suitable applicants are selected, or hired, for the job and this applicant can contribute to organizational competitive advantage (Armstrong, 2009; Wilton, 2011).

The job offer might be performed by a telephone call, or sending an email. In addition, it is vital to communicate the decision with honesty and respect to those candidates who are not successful. It is good public relations (Armstrong, 2009).

2.6 Training improving employee performance

Training is defined as “the process of developing a staff member’s knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to perform tasks required for a position” (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009, p. 172). Training and development can influence organizational performance. This means training can improve employee performance, which directly improves organizational performance in the hospitality industry (Aksu, 2005; Boella & Goss-Turner, 2012). The second aim of this study is to look at relevant training programs that employees should receive in order to develop their capacity of their work performance. If the organization does not have an effective training and development program, the organization will fall behind in terms of the skill sets and knowledge required for competitive advantage. In order to have an ability to compete in a highly competitive market, the organization requires many talented workers (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009).

In addition, Hayes and Ninemeier (2009) point out that only by continually upgrading the skills of employees it can help the organization to achieve and maintain its competitive advantage. Training and development is a big challenge that every organization should address. Besides, Loedolff, Erasmus, Van, Mda, and Nel (2013) claim that the rapid changes in advanced technology in today’s workplace alter the way in which work is performed. In order to keep up with advanced skills employees need to perform jobs successfully and effectively, the organizations need to retrain their employees Nel et al. (2012).

Training is an investment in the labour force which helps to position itself for achievement in the future in any hospitality organisation. The main purpose of the training is to provide the workforce with the necessary skills and knowledge required to perform a job effectively and successfully (Nel et al., 2012). When job responsibilities are changed and jobs are restructured, skills and abilities needed to perform them will change as well. The organization should pay more attention to these changes and provide the necessary training and retraining of its workers. Job training is an ongoing process that prevents obsolescent human resource in the organization and increase organizational productivity (Noe, Hollenbeck, Gerhart, & Wright, 2014).

Different organizations have different reasons why they provide training to their employees such as (1) improving productivity (training can help employees increase their level of performance on their present assignment), (2) improving quality (training can help to reduce operational mistakes), (3) helping an organization fulfil its future personnel needs, (4) improving health and safety (proper training can help to prevent work accidents), (5) obsolescence prevention (training can help employees to adapt themselves to technological changes), and (5) personal growth (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009; Noe et al., 2014; Randhawa, 2007). However, no matter what their reasons, training can benefit the company if it is linked to the company's needs and if it motivates workers. Thus, in order to ensure that the training benefits the company and before considering available training options, a needs analysis/assessment should be performed. There are three elements of the needs assessment, namely (1) organizational analysis, (2) employee analysis, and (3) task analysis (Buhler, 2002; Nel et al., 2011; Noe et al., 2014).

Organizational analysis is known as a process for identifying the appropriateness of training by analysing the characteristics of the organization. Organization analysis looks at the training the organization needs, resources available for training, and management support for training (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009; Noe et al., 2014). Training needs may vary depending on the organizational strategy. For example, the company may focus on growing or shrinking its personnel. It may seek to serve a broad customer base or only focus on specific needs of a particular group of customers. A company that focuses on serving a niche market may need to continuously update its labour force on a specialized skill set (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009; Noe et al., 2014).

Apart from training needs in the organization, a person who plans a training activity should consider whether the company has the budget and time for training. Furthermore, a person who plans a training program should check whether the company support training or not. Even if the training fits an organizational strategy and budget, the training cannot be available if the company is not willing to support the investment in training activities (Hayes & Ninemeier, 2009; Noe et al., 2014). However, most managers are likely to accept the training if the training shows that it can solve current problems or lead to substantial improvement, relative to its cost. Thus, a person who plans training should submit training proposals with specific goals, budgets, timetables, and approaches for measuring success (Noe et al., 2014).

Employee analysis refers to a process of identifying individuals' needs and readiness for training. In an employee analysis process, there are three things that a person who plans the training activity must determine. Firstly, determine whether performances result from lack of skill, ability, or knowledge. If yes, training is appropriate; if no, any other resolutions are more relevant. Secondly, identify an employee who needs training. Finally, determine whether these employees are ready for training (Du Plessis, Frederick, & Maritz, 2013). In short, only skill and ability can be influenced by training. Thus, before planning and implementing training activities, it is vital to be sure that any performance problems result from lack of knowledge and skills. Otherwise, the training budget will be wasted as the training provided by the organization is unlikely to have much influence on work performance. Besides, the employee who is selected for training should not only require additional skills and knowledge, but also should be willing and able to learn when the organizations provide training (Du Plessis, Frederick, et al., 2013).

Task analysis is known as a process of determining and evaluating tasks, skills, and knowledge that training should focus on. Typically, task analysis is performed along with the person analysis because understanding performance problems normally require knowledge about the tasks and work environment as well as the employee (Noe et al., 2014). Before conducting a task analysis, conditions in which tasks are performed should be identified first. The conditions consist of the equipment and environment of the job, deadlines, safety concerns, and performance standards. These observations can create the foundation for a description of work activities or the tasks needed by the jobs.

For example, a person who performs task analysis should interview employees and their supervisors in order to prepare and organize a list of tasks performed in his/her job. Then, the analyst should show the list of tasks to employees, supervisors, other subject-matter professionals and ask them to rate the importance, frequency, and difficulty of the list of the tasks in questionnaires (Noe et al., 2014). For example, 0 = the least importance to 5 = the most importance. The information obtained from these questionnaires is the foundation for determining which tasks should be focused on in the training. Normally, training is really needed for tasks that are frequency, important, and difficult. In addition, the analyst should determine skills, knowledge, and abilities needed to perform each task successfully (Noe et al., 2014).

These three pieces of the needs assessment (organization analysis, employee analysis, and task analysis) represent a whole picture of the training needed. By linking the organization needs, what the job itself requires, and the employee needs, the final training can be determined and identified. After the needs assessment is performed, the objectives of training should be established. The expected outcomes from the training programme should be clearly identified and presented (Nel et al., 2011; Noe et al., 2014).

2.7 Employee motivation increasing employee performance

Factors that motivate hotel employees to perform at high standard levels are discussed in the literature in this section and is the third aim of this study. Employee motivation is not a new topic in HRM. Employee motivation has been defined by prominent scholars in various fields and many of them give different definitions to employee motivation. However, many of these definitions have similar ideas and notions. From the studies of the economy, psychology, and human resources, motivation refers to reasons or factors that encourage, or make people behave in a particular way (Armstrong, 2009; Bratton & Gold, 2012; Nelson & Quick, 2012).

From this viewpoint, an individual can be affected by many different drivers such as a desire for an object, or basic needs like food and water. In addition, state of being may be one of those reasons that motivates an individual to a certain way or do a certain thing. Besides, motivation also refers to the intrinsic and extrinsic elements that influence an individual to act in certain ways or take certain actions (Adair, 2009; Nahavandi, Denhardt, Denhardt, & Aristigueta, 2014; Nel et al., 2011; Pinder, 2014). Motivation is a force (either intrinsic or extrinsic) that makes people do what they do. This means individual motivation is influenced by both internal factors (including personal needs and expectations) and external factors (organizational reward and compensation) (Nel et al., 2011; Nelson & Quick, 2012).

In the context of HRM, motivation is critical to the organizational performance as asserted by Bjerke, Ind, and De Paoli (2007) and Nel et al. (2011) that the organization can motivate their employees to work harder and be involved in achieving organizational goals. Motivating employees is about using different significant factors to influence them in the manner that makes them feel motivated to perform their tasks with their best effort, boost their productivity levels, or carry out their tasks at a high standard (Goncharuk & Monat, 2009). In order to effectively motivate employees, the organization should first help their employees to identify their interests with the organization (Goncharuk & Monat, 2009). This means after the organization helps their staff to identify factors that make them work with the

organization, the organization uses those factors to make their employees feel motivated to work harder and undertake their tasks with their best effort (Antikainen, Mäkipää, & Ahonen, 2010; Goncharuk & Monat, 2009).

Nel et al. (2011) also suggest that in order to have motivated employees who perform work with his/her best effort, managers or HR managers should select and employ an individual whose values fit with the job and the organizational culture. In addition, Ghuman (2010) claims that organizations should develop alignment and congruence between its objectives and employee needs in order to ensure that employees are committed to or are voluntarily involved in achieving organizational strategic objectives and goals.

Prominent scholars in different fields have developed many motivation models, and all of those motivation models aim to identify and explain forces and drives that can also be employed to motivate people in the hospitality industry (Beardwell & Claydon, 2007). There are many reasons why organizations continually focus on motivating employees. The first reason is motivated employees tend to work with their best effort and do more than is required of them. This can help the organization to increase its productivity (Beardwell & Claydon, 2007).

The second reason is motivated employees are likely to work effectively, get work done on time to a high quality and within budget. This can help the organization minimize its operational cost and its labour cost and in turn increase its profitability (Ghuman, 2010; Pinder, 2014). The third reason is that the level of staff turnover may to some extent be reduced if the staff is motivated to perform their tasks. Another reason why the organization puts more effort into motivating employees is that an organization with a motivated workforce introduces change earlier than the organization where its employees are demotivated (Ghuman, 2010; Nahavandi et al., 2014)

From a general perspective, each individual can be motivated. However, each individual is not motivated or influenced by “the same things, at the same time, for the same reasons, or with the same intensity” (Nel et al., 2011, p. 290). Thus, it is important for every HR manager or hotel management to learn and understand the various motivational theories and know how to apply them in different situations and conditions (Nel et al., 2011). Furthermore, in human resource management terms, there are many different motivation models that the hospitality industry and HR managers who work in the hotel industry should know, understand and apply, namely Maslow’s Need Hierarchy theory, Herzberg’s two-factor theory, Theory X and

Theory Y, Alderfer's ERG theory, McClelland's three-need theory, and intrinsic and extrinsic of motivation in order to able to motivate hotel employees to do their jobs and enjoy their work (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Nahavandi et al., 2014; Nel et al., 2011; Nelson & Quick, 2012; Podmoroff, 2005). Besides, a better understanding of all forms of employee motivation can help hotel managements enhance and implement motivation of employees more effectively and then effective employee motivation will help to boost employee performance and improve service quality directly and indirectly (Øgaard, Marnburg, & Larsen, 2008).

2.7.1 Maslow's Need Hierarchy.

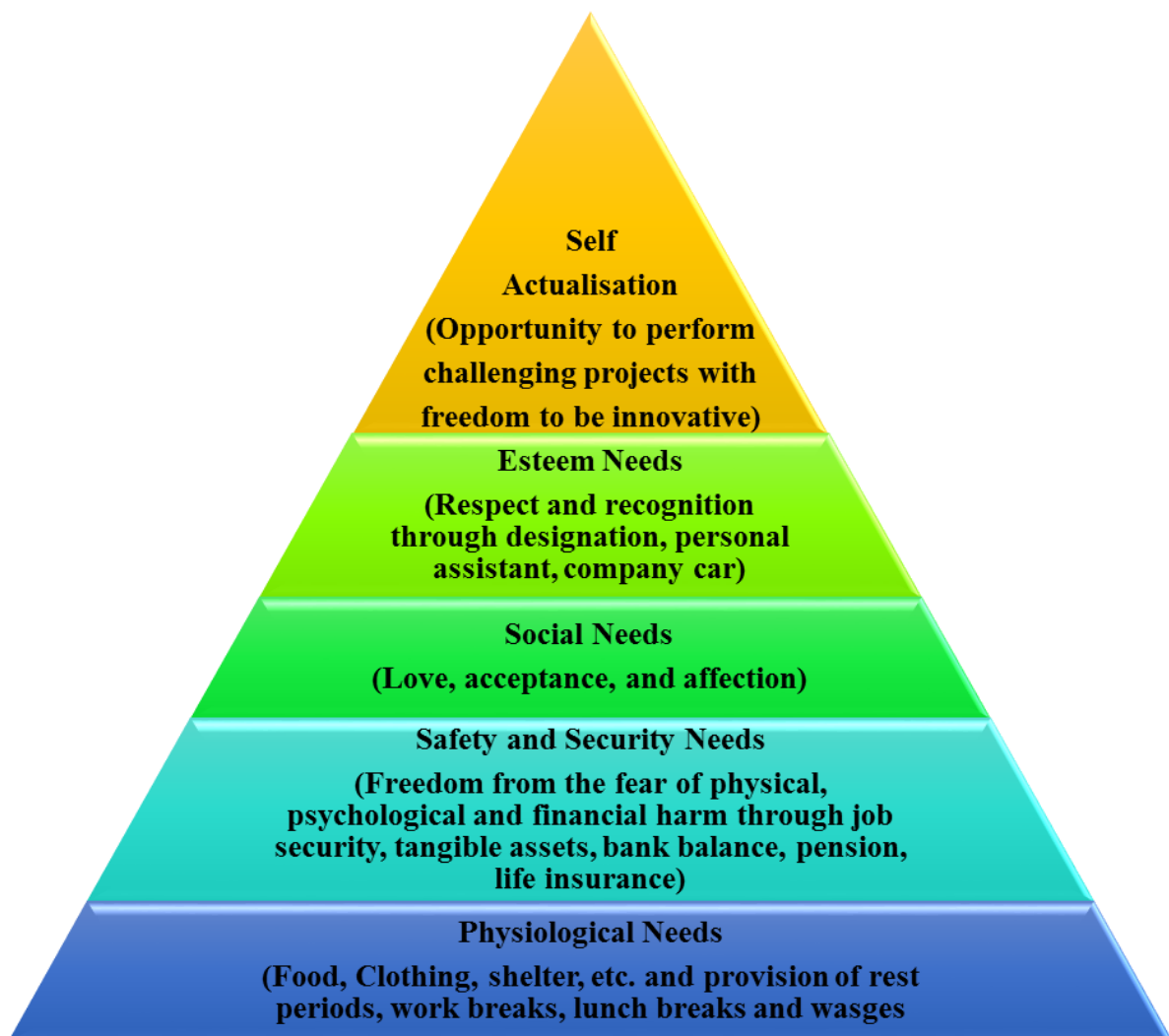
Psychologist, Abraham Maslow, is a developer of Maslow's hierarchy of needs. A Maslow theory of motivation does not only put emphasis on physical needs and economic necessity, but also focuses on interpersonal and psychological needs and thus is also relevant in the hospitality industry (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Nelson & Quick, 2012). The principal of Maslow's theory of motivation is an hierarchy of five level needs in relation to importance for survival (Nel et al., 2011). Maslow mainly focuses on internal needs which are "physiological needs, safety and security needs, love (social) needs, esteem needs, and self-actualization needs" (see Figure 2) (Nel et al., 2011 pp. 290-291). Maslow believes that the lowest level, which is the most basic needs should be met and satisfied first before the next higher needs happen and become motivated factors of behaviour and action (as cited in Nel et al., 2011).

Physiological needs refer to the needs for survival or the basic needs (For instance, the need for food, water, shelter, clothing, warmth, and sleep). If these needs are not met or satisfied, human nature will be driven and guided to satisfying them (Ghuman, 2010; Nel et al., 2011). Once the physiological needs are met, people begin to look for safety needs in order to ensure that they are secure from any dangers. This means when people have enough source of food and water, they will need a safe place to live, a job security, a means of earning income. These needs can be satisfied by insurance, fixed assets, stable job and salary (Ghuman, 2010; Nelson & Quick, 2012). Then, when people begin feeling secure or safe in the present and the future, social needs which include friendship, love, affection, and acceptance, emerge. These needs can be satisfied by acceptance, recognition and love by other people (Nel et al., 2011).

The next level of needs in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is esteem. Once the need of being accepted and loved by others is satisfied, people desire to be respected and held

in high esteem by themselves and others. These needs are satisfied by achieving a high position, achieving prestige in a workplace and society, achieving something important, or using premium name-brand products (Ghuman, 2010). The highest level of needs in Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs is self-actualisation. These needs are about freedom. After all four aforementioned needs are satisfied, people need to be free to do what they wish to do in their lives, or become what they desire to be (Armstrong & Taylor, 2014; Ghuman, 2010). Maslow describes self-actualization needs as the desire of a person to increase his/her capacity, achieve what he/she thinks it is important and fulfil his/her dream (Nel et al., 2011).

Figure 2: Maslow's hierarchy of needs



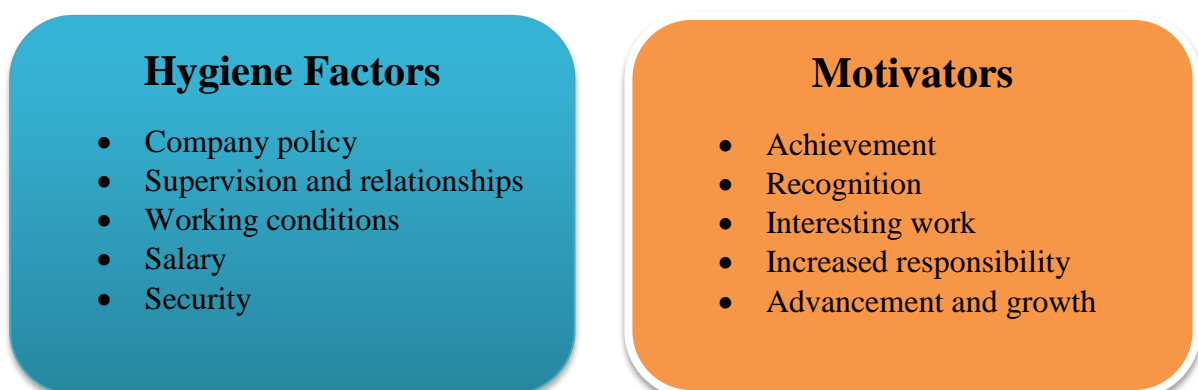
Adapted from: Nel, Werner, Poisat, Du Plessis & Sono (2011).

2.7.2 Herzberg's two-factor motivation theory

Herzberg's two-factor motivation is developed by a well-known management theorist, Frederick Herzberg. The model of Herzberg's two-factor motivation focuses on differentiating hygiene factors and motivation factors in the work environment (see Figure 3) (Nelson & Quick, 2012). Herzberg believes that both hygiene factors and motivation factors contribute to the behaviour of staff in the workplace. Hygiene factors consist of organizational regulation and policy, working conditions, job security, status, salary and particular types of employee benefits, interpersonal relationships with co-workers and supervisors, quality of supervision (Nel et al., 2011). According to Herzberg's study, if hygiene factors are not adequate, employees will feel dissatisfied with work; however, even if the hygiene factors are adequate, the employees are just simply not dissatisfied. They just only feel neutral about their work (as cited in Nel et al., 2011).

Motivation factors which consist of the sense of achievement, opportunity for getting recognition/promotion, opportunity for growth (learning and developing), challenging and meaningful job (for example, job enrichment), and taking over new responsibilities can influence job satisfaction (Nel et al., 2011). Based on Herzberg's study, the presence of motivation factors gives employee satisfaction, but the absence of them does not result in dissatisfaction. On the other hand, the absence of hygiene factors results in dissatisfaction, but their presence does not satisfy employees (Ghuman, 2010).

Figure 3: Herzberg's two-factor motivation theory



Adapted from: Nel, Werner, Poisat, Du Plessis & Sono (2011).

Herzberg also points out that being not dissatisfied is not the same as being satisfied, and being not satisfied is not the same being dissatisfied (as cited in Nel et al., 2011). Nel et al. (2011) and asserts that a dissatisfied worker cannot be motivated and inspired. Thus it is necessary for organisations to focus on hygiene factors prior to introducing and implementing motivators into the jobs. Therefore, it can be concluded that the combination of both hygiene factors and motivation factors in the workplace can influence employee motivation (Chaudhuri, 2010).

When comparing Maslow’s hierarchy of needs theory and Herzberg’s two-factor theory, there are similarities between the two theories. The hygiene factors are equivalent to the lower level needs (the physiological, safety, and social needs) whereas motivation factors are equivalent of higher order needs (esteem needs and self-actualization) of Maslow’s hierarchy of needs model (see Figure 4) (Nel et al., 2011).

Figure 4: Comparing Maslow (Hierarchy of Needs) and Herzberg (Motivation-Hygiene)

Maslow (Hierarchy of Needs)	Herzberg (Motivation – Hygiene)
Self-Actualization	Motivators
Esteem	
Social, Safety, Physiological	Hygiene

Adapted from: Nel, Werner, Poisat, Du Plessis & Sono (2011).

2.7.3 McGregor’s theory X, theory Y

Theory X and Theory Y have been developed by Professor Douglas McGregor. There are two opposite perceptions about how people think about employee’s behaviour at work (Singh, 2010). In theory X, workers are viewed as (1) lazy people, (2) people who lack of ambition and are resistant to change, and (3) people who are self-centered and prefer to be directed and controlled, so that the role of managers is to command and control them (Jain, 2005). In addition, Theory X assumes the key factors of employee motivation are monetary and job security (Lauby, 2005).

On the contrary, in theory Y, workers are viewed as (1) people who are dedicated and want to be successful, (2) people who seek responsibility, and (3) people who are self-

directed and are committed to organizational objectives, so the role of managers is to create a working environment in order to develop the potential in workers and help them to be able to release that potential towards common objectives (Jain, 2005). Moreover, theory Y assumes that primary factors of employee motivation are high esteem and self-actualization (Lauby, 2005).

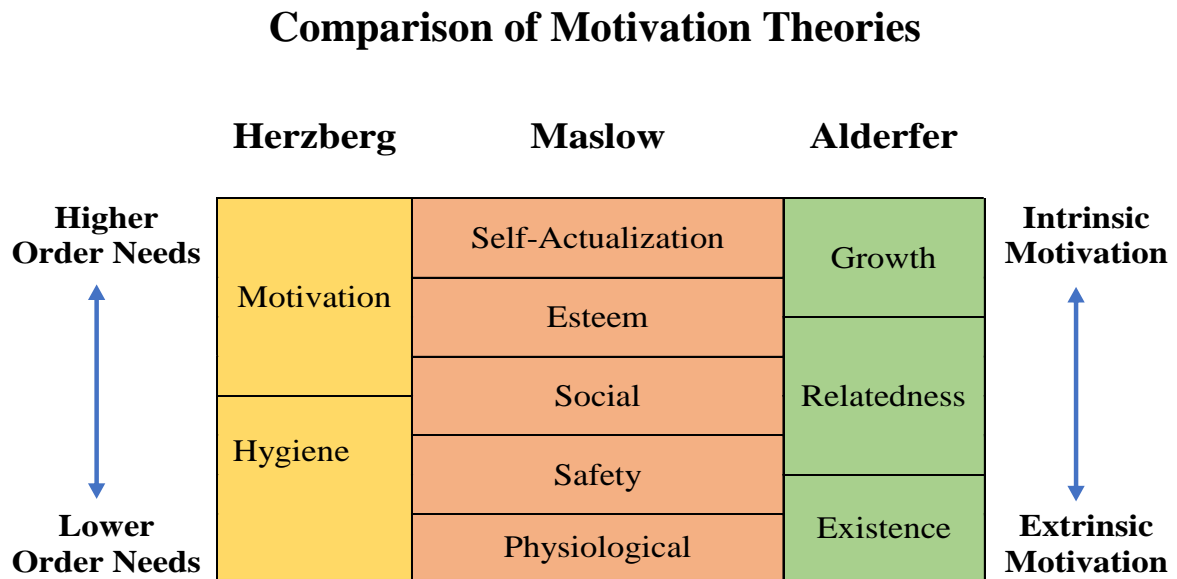
Mills, Helms Mills, Forshaw, and Bratton (2007) state that theory X supports the lower level needs of Maslow's theory in which employees prefer only money for their living. On the other hand theory Y supports the higher level needs which include self-esteem and self-actualization. Under theory X and theory Y, in order to motivate employees, management should focus on employment benefit, delegate authority, promote employee empowerment, and maximize job responsibilities (Elkin, Jackson, & Inkson, 2008).

2.7.4 Alderfer's ERG Theory

Existence-Relatedness-Growth (ERG) model has been developed by theorist, Clayton Alderfer (Jain, 2005). The ERG model focuses on three categories of primary needs which are (1) existence, (2) relatedness, and (3) growth (Nelson & Quick, 2012). Existence needs pay attention to the basic needs for material existence which are physiological needs and safety needs. These needs can be satisfied by financial incentives or money earned from work so that they can purchase food, clothing, and shelter (Jain, 2005). Relatedness needs focus on social needs in which people desire to create and maintain interpersonal relationships. This need can be satisfied by acceptance and affection from co-workers and superiors (Jain, 2005; Pattanayak, 2005). The third group is growth needs. These needs centre upon the high level of needs which are self-esteem and self-actualisation. These needs can be satisfied by personal development (Singh, 2010).

There are relationships between Alderfer ERG theory, Maslow hierarchical needs theory, and Herzberg's two-factor motivation theory (see Figure 5). However, unlike Maslow and Herzberg theory, Alderfer has not seen existence, relatedness, and growth needs as being a hierarchy (Singh, 2010). In Alderfer's ERG theory, the more one needs can occur at the same time (Nelson & Quick, 2012). In addition, the ERG theory contents that it is not necessary that a lower level of needs must be fulfilled before a higher level of needs are activated (Farmer, Smith, & Yellowley, 2013; Jain, 2005).

Figure 5: Relationship of three models



Adapted from: Farmer et al. (2013), Perkins and Arvinen-Muondo (2013), and Champoux (2010)

2.7.5 McClelland’s three-need theory (achievement motivation theory)

The achievement motivation has been developed by David McClelland and his associates at Harvard University. McClelland asserts that human needs are not hierarchical. People might change their needs even though one of their needs is not yet met or satisfied (as cited in Vecchio, 2006). McClelland believes that people will feel motivated if they have three needs namely: achievement need, power need, and affiliation need (as cited in Singh, 2010). McClelland points out that people who are achievement-motivated seem to concentrate on personal achievement and value challenging work and that they have the potential to be successful. McClelland suggests that managers who would like to motivate achievement-oriented workers should establish challenging, realistic, achievable objectives and give immediate recommendations about their work performance (as cited in Singh, 2010).

People who are power-motivated have a compelling desire to have authority to influence over others, and see almost every situation as a chance to control others or nominate others (Jain, 2005; Singh, 2010). There are two kinds of power need which are personal power need and institutional power need. A worker with personal power need is not good to be a manager as he/she uses the efforts of employees for his/her

own advantages and benefits whereas a worker with institutional power need becomes a great manager as s/he can organize or coordinate the efforts of other workers to accomplish company's long-term goals (Jain, 2005; Singh, 2010).

People who are affiliation-motivated have a need for good relationships and friendships with others, and like a cooperative working environment rather than a competitive one (Jain, 2005; Singh, 2010). McClelland suggests that managers who would like to motivate affiliation-oriented workers should create a friendly, harmonious, and supportive workplace for them in order to support them to achieve organizational goals, and at the same time meet their affiliation needs by working with other workers (as cited in Singh, 2010). The McClelland's three-need theory highlights that employees who do not have the appropriate needs can develop and increase needs through training and learning (as cited in Mills et al., 2007).

2.7.6 Equity theory and Expectancy Theory

In equity theory, people are motivated to work by a sense of fair relationships. There are two assumptions in equity theory. The first assumption is that employees compare their contributions (inputs) with outcomes (rewards). Inputs consist of employee's previous training and experience, employee's knowledge and skills, employee's qualifications, and level of workload (Jain, 2005; Singh, 2010). Outcomes consist of employment benefits, pay, status, recognition and promotion. The second assumption is employees will compare their inputs and outputs, and then decide if a certain exchange is satisfactory or not. Equity will occur if they feel that their inputs are equal to those of other individuals (Jain, 2005; Singh, 2010). Elkin et al. (2008) claim that in order to ensure fairness in a workplace, it is important for management to regularly monitor the difference in rewards both inside and outside the organization. Vecchio (2006) further suggests that top management should speak with employees in order to evaluate their reactions or feelings of fairness in the organization.

Expectancy theory is one of the most popular theories that focuses on how people think and why they behave in a certain way in their workplace (Duke, 2010). In addition, the expectancy theory centres upon understanding the relation between effort, performance, and outcomes (rewards) which means that if individuals work hard, they will achieve improved performance which results in good rewards. In the expectancy theory model, there are three important components to be focused on which are expectancy (factors

that identify the motivation), instrumentality (the relation between performance and reward) and valence (individuals have preferences for different outcomes or incentives). These components can be formulated in an equation as $expectancy \times instrumentality \times valence = Motivation$ (Jain, 2005; Singh, 2010). Elkin et al. (2008) state that in order to achieve high motivation, these three elements should be at a high level.

2.7.7 Intrinsic and extrinsic motivation

Many scholars claim that an individual is motivated to do what they do by extrinsic and intrinsic factors. This means an individual can be motivated or driven by forces within an individual or forces outside an individual. The difference between extrinsic and intrinsic motivation has been discussed broadly in the literature (Fottler, Khatri, & Savage, 2010).

Many researchers point out that motivation can be generated from inside the individual. This is known as intrinsic motivation (Gerson, 2006). For example, if an individual has a strong desire to achieve some goals or do something in order to accomplish such desire or goals, an individual has to act in some particular way to help him/her reach such desired goals (Ardichvili, Page, & Wentling, 2003; Lin, 2007). Rao (2004) adds that intrinsic motivation arises or stems from desire for accomplishment and achievement. The intrinsic motivation is the form of self-actualization in which a person needs to accomplish something worthwhile. In other words, it is a self-generated or self-motivated and is free from financial rewards.

A person is doing the task or the job for the self-satisfaction that he/she receives from successfully accomplishing the tasks (Gerson, 2006; Haines, Saba, & Choquette, 2008). Some of the intrinsic motivation factors are professional growth, status, power, recognition, high esteem, praise, and challenges (Rao, 2004). Besides, Özbilgin, Groutsis, and Harvey (2014) claim intrinsic motivation can be derived from the job itself; for example, how interesting, meaningful, challenge, autonomous, and varied it is.

Apart from intrinsic motivation, many scholars assert that motivation can also stem from outside the person and influences their behaviour and actions (Martin, 2010; Quigley & Tymon Jr, 2006). This is known as extrinsic motivation (Cruz, Pérez, &

Cantero, 2009; Gerson, 2006). When applying the idea of extrinsic motivators to a working context, it is clearly seen that this kind of factor influences most employees to come to work as the employees think that their work as the main source of income (Neely, 2007; Pullins, Haugtvedt, Dickson, Fine, & Lewicki, 2000). Haines et al. (2008) add that if there is not any incentive or not any financial reward, employees are likely to feel that the jobs are not worth doing. Besides, Armstrong (2009), Rao (2004), and Wilton (2010) point out that extrinsic motivation can be derived from any kind of financial rewards such as higher pay, promotions, bonuses, retirement pay, paid vacation, health and medical insurance.

Frey and Osterloh (2002) and Matsumura, Kijima, Nakano, and Takahashi (2003) suggest that the organization should try to create a link between intrinsic and extrinsic motivation. This is because only providing employee rewards and standard employment benefit packages cannot motivate employees to devote their best effort and produce a good performance in the long run. This notion is also supported by Iyer and Ravindran (2009) that employees will work with their best effort only if financial incentive, rewards, professional growth, and recognition are presented and offered, but when the organization decides to cut those offers, the employees are likely to stop performing at the high level. Kominis and Emmanuel (2005) and James (2005) conclude that if the organizations would like to increase and maintain the level of employee performance in the long run, intrinsic and extrinsic factors have to be combined. Kominis and Emmanuel (2005) and James (2005) also claim that if the organization is able to identify the interests and welfare of employees and employ them to motivate the employees to work with their best effort, the organization will see a higher level of employee performance and greater productivity.

2.7.8 Employee motivation in hospitality industry

There are numerous scholars and researchers have been interested in employee motivation in the hospitality industry such as restaurants, nightclubs, hotels, and travel businesses for many years (Paswan, Pelton, & True, 2005). The performance of employees in hotel organizations can be judged or measured by their attentiveness, their friendliness, their appearances, their attitudes, and the way they carry out and perform their assigned tasks. St-Onge, Morin, Bellehumeur, and Dupuis (2009) add that the good performance in hotel organizations should create a high level of customer

satisfaction. As a result, customer will go back and use the hotel goods and services again. Watson (2008) states that the success of the hotel organizations relies on how well they manage and motivate their employees who conduct tasks on their behalf. However, Pegg (2009) points out that there are many factors that make it difficult to motivate employees in hotel organizations. The first factor is that the pay in hotel organizations is the minimum wage rate or the hotel organizations only pay what is required by the labour law to employees. This may not meet or satisfy the basic needs of many front-line employees (Schyns, van Veldhoven, & Wood, 2009). The second factor is many hotel organizations, particularly small and medium sized hotels seem to hire employees of a certain age. Some of the hotels prefer to hire younger employees over the older one, while some of them prefer to hire older staff over the younger ones. This can make the employees who are in an unfavourable age group not perform at their best efforts because they think that they are not being fairly and equally treated (Josten & Schalk, 2010).

2.7.9 Employee empowerment as motivators in hotel organization

Employee empowerment can result in employee motivation. In other words, employee motivation is the outcome of employee empowerment (Speegle, 2009). This is because employee empowerment provides employees job autonomy, allows employees to make autonomous decisions, and give staff intrinsic satisfaction which in turn, motivates them to work harder in the job and put all of their efforts into organizational goal achievement (Pravin, 2010).

According to the study of Casas-Arce and Martínez-Jerez (2009), employee motivation is usually used as the key strategy to motivate employees in hotel organizations and it appears that employee empowerment is normally employed to motivate employees in hotel organizations. For example, employees, especially front-line staff spend the greatest amount of their time dealing and contacting directly with customers. The level of customer satisfaction can be improved by empowering employees to deal with client requests and solve client problems promptly without relying on supervision, help and support from supervisors or managers all the time (Boudrias, Gaudreau, Savoie, & Morin, 2009). Allowing employees to make independent decisions in some situations can help employees feel involved in the organizational tasks (Bryman et al., 2005). In addition, Özbilgin et al. (2014) state that it is vital for staff to have authority and

autonomy that enable them to be involved in decision-making as this will improve their motivation to continue to work for the company, fulfil responsibilities and complete tasks in the workplace.

2.8 Job satisfaction influencing employee turnover rate, employee performance and organizational citizenship behaviour

This section covers literature with regard to the fourth objective of this study, factors that bring about a high level of job satisfaction in order to engage employees in organizational goals and reduce the rate of employee turnover in hotels in Laos. Job satisfaction is defined as “the attitudes and feelings people have about their work. Positive and favourable attitudes towards the job indicate job satisfaction. Negative and unfavourable attitudes towards the job indicate job dissatisfaction” (Armstrong, 2006, p. 264). Typically, morale is also known as job satisfaction. Morale occurs when employees feel their needs are satisfied or when they feel they achieve something that have importance and value recognition in the workplace (Armstrong, 2009). Morale or job satisfaction declines when there is more demanding and stressful work, fewer relationships with top management, and insufficient compensation and other rewards (Mathis & Jackson, 2011). Wicker (2011) also points out that job satisfaction brings pleasant feelings that normally results in a positive work attitude and a greater level of performance. Based on the study of Wicker (2011) and Ekerman (2006), a satisfied employee seems to be more flexible, innovative, creative, and loyal.

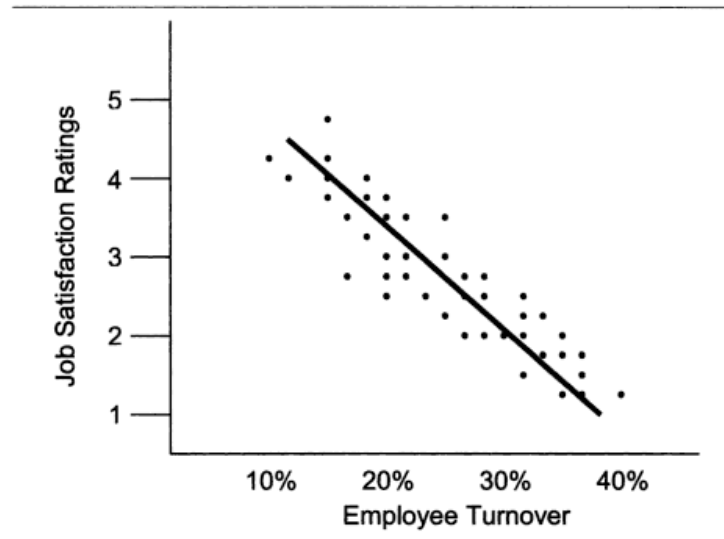
2.8.1 Consequence of job satisfaction

There are relationships among job satisfaction, employee turnover rate, the level of work performance, employee absenteeism and organizational citizenship behaviour (Chandan, 2009; Mishra, 2009; Robbins, Odendaal, & Roodt, 2007; Saiyadain, 2003).

Phillips (2005) claims that there is a relationship between job satisfaction and organizational commitment. Organizational commitment refers to the level in which workers believe in and accept organizational strategic goals and would like to stay with the organization. Mathis and Jackson (2011) add that “employee job satisfaction influences organizational commitment, which in turn affects employee retention and employee turnover” (p. 54). For workers to stay with the company, they need to feel satisfied with their work and committed to the company (Özbilgin et al., 2014). The

figure 6 illustrates the relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover (Phillips, 2005).

Figure 6: The relationship between job satisfaction and employee turnover



Source: Phillips, J. J. (2005). *Investing in your company's human capital*. New York, NY: AMACOM

Apart from the employee satisfaction-turnover association, there is a relationship between job satisfaction and employee performance. Saiyadain (2003) and Robbins et al. (2007) assert that it is clear that satisfied or happy employees are more motivated and productive than dissatisfied employees. It appears that satisfaction results in devoting more effort by workers and consequently contributes to higher levels of work performance. In addition, based on the study of Robbins et al. (2007), it appears that companies with more satisfied workforces seem to be more effective than companies with less satisfied or unhappy workforces.

Besides, Dutt (2008) and Robbins et al. (2007) claim that there is link between employee satisfaction and employee absenteeism. Workers who are dissatisfied seem to be absent from work, but workers who are happy with work and think their work is important tend to be less absent. Another study by Saiyadain (2003) and Robbins et al. (2007) shows that there is an association between job satisfaction and employee's organisational citizenship behaviour (OCB). It is logical to say that happy or satisfied workers are likely to talk positively about the company, protect the company's resources, help and support other employees when needed, and go beyond the expectations from the their job requirements (Nelson & Quick, 2012).

2.8.2 Factors influencing job satisfaction in the workplace

There are several factors that affect job satisfaction in the workplace. The first factor that influences job satisfaction is the reward system. Du Plessis, Toh, and Chen (2013) and Armstrong (2009) claim that there is a relation between job satisfaction and the organisational reward system. Du Plessis (as cited in Nel et al., 2015) and Macky and Wilson (2013) also emphasize that reward schemes such as pay, benefits, promotions and other financial benefits greatly contribute to job satisfaction in the workplace. Moreover, job satisfaction improves when pay and promotion are seen as fair and reasonable. This means equal pay for equal work and fairness in promotion are satisfying forces (Mishra, 2009). Besides, Macky and Wilson (2013) and Mishra (2009) state that if workers are allowed to select the type of benefits they prefer within a total benefit plan package, both benefit satisfaction and job satisfaction will greatly increase.

The second factor that influences job satisfaction is the work itself. The nature of work leads to the feeling of satisfaction. Autonomy, flexibility, and discretion of job can heavily contribute to job satisfaction (Chandan, 2009). On the contrary, role and task ambiguity, confusing guidelines, and limited and unclear understanding of the job can result in job dissatisfaction (Mishra, 2009). The next factor that affects job satisfaction is supervisory behaviour. Job satisfaction appears to be higher if workers believe and feel that their immediate supervisors or their bosses are competent, treat them with respect, dignity, and courtesy (Macky & Wilson, 2013). Mishra (2009) also believes employees feel satisfied when their supervisors or bosses provide constructive advice to them, interest in their welfare, listen to their opinions, are friendly, and are willing to help and support them.

Another factor that influences satisfaction is working conditions (Mishra, 2009). Mishra (2009) points out that good working conditions are necessary as they can result in physical comfort. Mishra (2009) and Chandan (2009) also emphasize that the factors that contribute to the degree of job satisfaction are a clean and tidy workplace, safety in the workplace, air conditioning, heating system, lighting, level of noise, tools and equipment for work performance. On the other hand, Mishra (2009) and Chandan (2009) believe that a dark, noisy, and overcrowded workplace, high temperature and poor air quality, long working hours and insecurity in the workplace can significantly increase the level of job dissatisfaction.

In conclusion, Job satisfaction can derive from job autonomy, opportunities for personal and professional growth through training and promotion, clear responsibility for tasks, good pay and benefits, performance recognition, working conditions, supervision, and good relationship with managers and co-workers (Mathis & Jackson, 2011; Özbilgin et al., 2014).

2.9 Conclusion

It is concluded that the components of HRM such as employee selection, employee training, employee motivation, and employee satisfaction practices could lead to effectiveness of organizational performance including hotel business. Thus, it is important that the Lao hotel industry has effective employee selection practices in place, conducts employee training periodically, uses suitable tools in order to motivate employees, and creates terms and conditions that satisfy employees in order to keep skilful and experienced employees in their organizations.

2.10 Chapter summary

This chapter covers literature and theories that directly relate to the research. The first section of the chapter gives an overview of HRM theories to clarify the definition of HRM and its important role in an organization. The second section of the chapter presents the theory of the importance of employee selection in an organization and illustrates the process of employee selection that an organization should consider. The third section of the chapter discusses the great contribution of employee training to the improvement of employee performance in the workplace. The fourth section presents the theory of work motivation and some of the factors that increase work motivation. This section also discusses the importance of motivation in the workplace in relation to employee productivity and employee performance in the organization. The final section in the chapter presents the employee satisfaction theory and discusses the importance of employee satisfaction in the organization. Furthermore, some factors that lead to high satisfaction of employees at work are also discussed in this section.

The next chapter is all about the different research methods and the reason why the specific research methodology was used by the researcher.

Chapter Three: Research methodology

3.1 Introduction

The previous chapter covers the literature review in support of the aims and research questions of this study. This chapter outlines the methods used to collect and analyse the raw data, and discusses the reasons why the researcher uses only particular methods. This research study adopts mixed methods for data collection and analysis. Thus, in the first section of the chapter, the research paradigms which are basic knowledge and philosophy behind all research methods are presented and explored. Then, the chapter underlines difference between quantitative and qualitative research methods as well as pinpoints the reason why both methods are applied in this research study.

Next, the chapter presents some different sources of data collection, and underlines some crucial methods used in the data collection process, which include questionnaires, interview, sample selection, and a pilot study. The chapter also outlines and describes some useful approaches, or tools, to analyze and examine the raw data that are derived from the questionnaires and interviews. In the final section, ethical issues and considerations in this research study are explored and discussed.

3.2 Research methodology

Methodology is not just a matter of research design, but it is also the sense of using suitable/appropriate techniques or approaches such as interviews, focus groups, surveys, questionnaires, observations, and other techniques in the correct way. A methodology is much more to do with how well a researcher argues from analyses of their data to draw and defend their conclusions (Bellamy & Perri, 2012).

Crouch and Pearce (2012) point out that in order to avoid the research methodology that is characterized by false starts, dead ends, and new directions, it is vital for the researcher to start with a sense of purpose. For example, when the researcher knows where to go, the decisions about how to go there - which in research are known as methodological decisions - will come about naturally. Crouch and Pearce (2012) also describe methodology as a map for the research journey. Besides, Crouch and Pearce (2012) suggest that it seems highly useful to start thinking about methodology early in a research project. This is because good methodological choices can result in a successful research project. Based on the study of Saunders, Lewis, and Thornhill (2009), the selection of a methodology for a research

primarily relies on the type of research questions and the research objectives. In addition, in order to choose a suitable methodology for a research project, the researcher has to understand two main research paradigms that are (1) positivism/epistemology and (2) constructivism/ontology (Du Plessis & Frederick, 2010; Wahyuni, 2012).

Two paradigms provide different viewpoints about how research should be conducted. Traditionally, the positivists assume that the existence of a set of universal laws is out there to be discovered and found (Unitec, 2014a). This position is sometimes known as the scientific method, positivist research, or quantitative research. Positivists mainly pay attention to the involvement of large samples, and directly focus on observation and measurement of the objective reality that exists 'out there'. In addition, positivists actively seek associations and causality, formulate the theory, and then collect data to test the theory. Besides, positivists break phenomena into the simplest parts and measure them objectively and empirically (Creswell, 2013b; Unitec, 2014a).

On the contrary, the constructivists focus on taking a holistic notion and seeking to gain a deep understanding of the lived experiences of the people (Unitec, 2014a). Constructivists believe that people experience the physical and social world in different ways, so there is no disputed answer (Unitec, 2014a). This position is sometimes known as qualitative research. Constructivists also claim that external reality that exists outside is independent of their interpretations, and individual interpretations are deeply embedded in a multiple contextual web which is not able to be readily generalized to fixed settings. In addition, they posit that there is not only one objective reality, but there are multiple realities that are socially formulated by people from within their own contextual interpretations. Besides, Constructivists observe phenomena by active interaction in order to minimize the distance between the researcher and participants (Unitec, 2014a).

Thus, the research methods in this study will be influenced by these two research paradigms (positivism and constructivism) as Briggs, Coleman, and Morrison (2012) and Adams, Khan, Raeside, and White (2007) assert that positivism (Ontology) and constructivism (epistemology) are the basic knowledge and philosophy behind all research methods.

3.3 Business research method

“Business research is the application of the scientific method in searching for the truth about business phenomena. These activities include defining business opportunities and problems, gathering and evaluating alternative courses of action, and monitoring

employee and organizational performance” (Zikmund, Babin, Carr, & Griffin, 2012, p. 5).

This means the research is the process of collecting, analysing and interpreting information and data in order to seek to understand a particular issue or phenomena. Furthermore, the business research is a vital tool for providing grounded information for good decision-making (Collis & Hussey, 2014; Williams, 2007). Without information or data, decision-making involving both business tactics and strategies will not produce good results as asserted by Zikmund et al. (2012) that the main goal of business research is to provide accurate and precise information that minimizes the uncertainty in managerial decision-making. Zikmund et al. (2012) also believe that before developing innovation in the form of new products, making improvements in existing products and services, or enhancing development in employee relationships, business has to conduct research to collect relevant information which is used in strategic decision-making. Besides, Zikmund et al. (2012) point out that business research is a process that consists of developing ideas and theory, defining problems, finding and collecting information, analysing data, and corroborating and communicating the findings and their implications.

Therefore, this research project is mainly designed to investigate and identify how HRM and its components help hotels in Laos to have a competitive advantage, attain their goals and sustain their business, and maintain their ongoing profitability.

In order to have effective and accurate data, the researcher will evaluate and weigh which research methods are highly suitable for data collection depending on the business problem and its objectives (Ghuri & Grønhaug, 2005; Zikmund et al., 2012). Typically, there are two methods for collecting data. The first method is a quantitative data collection and the second method is a qualitative data collection. However, this research project adopts both methods which are also known as the mixed method.

3.3.1 Quantitative research methods

The quantitative research approach is “explaining phenomena by collecting numerical data that are analysed using mathematically based methods (in particular statistics)” (Muijs, 2010, p. 1). This means a quantitative research approach is usually used to gather numerical data from physical and social activities such as actions and conversations, and then employs statistical measurements, mathematical models, and computational techniques to analyse those numerical data directly relating to the

phenomena (Given, 2008; Grinnell, 2012; Muijs, 2010). Furthermore, Bryman (2012) asserts that quantitative research methods are grounded on a deductive theory in which the researcher tests and measures hypotheses against the existing theories. Frangos (2009), Grinnell (2012), Given (2008), and Cooper and Schindler (2014) also emphasize that the main objective of quantitative research methods is to utilize theories, hypotheses and mathematical models to systematically investigate, understand and explain complex phenomena. In the deductive paradigm, the researcher conducts the research from a general to a specific context (Unitec, 2014b). From this it can be concluded that the quantitative research approach is designed to be used in research in which the research objectives and the research questions are clearly identified (Venkatesh, Brown, & Bala, 2013).

A conclusive research approach is usually employed in quantitative research methods. The conclusive research approach involves the use of statistical tests, large sample sizes and highly structured techniques. The conclusive research approach usually employs questionnaires with closed-ended questions for data collection and uses SPSS software for data analysis (Nargundkar, 2008). Furthermore, the conclusive research approach mainly focuses on the results of findings which are conclusive, and not tentative.

There are two research models in the conclusive research which are descriptive research and causal research (Unitec, 2014b). Descriptive research aims at seeking to fully understand a particular phenomenon (Anastas, 2012; Sheppard, 2004). Kuhn (1970) also states that descriptive research primarily focuses on increasing the accuracy and the scope in which the facts are clearly known (as cited in Anastas, 2012). However, there is a limitation of the descriptive research approach. As the results of this kind of this research approach are based on a particular point of view, there is a lack of rigorous experiment or lack of causal argument.

In contrast to descriptive research approach that places emphasis on describing who, where, what, when, and how, a causal research approach highly focuses on answering the question “why”. Causal research is formulated to examine or determine the cause and effect relationship of an event as Neuman (2011) and VanderStoep and Johnson (2009) point out that causal research which is also known as experimental research is designed to determine and test cause and effect relationships through observing the influence of the independent variables on the dependent variables.

Hence, Kemp and Lewis (2007) summarize that quantitative research methods are used to address the objectives of both descriptive and causal research via numerical data collection and statistical data analysis. Furthermore, Taylor (2005) and Teddlie and Tashakkori (2009) emphasize that the primary purpose of utilizing quantitative research methods is to prevent invalid and unstructured descriptions in gathering data. Besides, Marshall, Moncrief, Rudd, and Lee (2012) add that as under quantitative research approaches the data are collected or analyzed from a big targeted group or sample that are representative of a population, the results are valid and reliable.

The advantage of using quantitative research methods is that the data or the findings from the sample under the research area are accurate and precise. This is because the data is collected from a large sample that reflects the overall population. Another benefit of quantitative research methods is the statistical programs and mathematical software are employed to analyse data. This results in more statistical reliability and validity (Bennett & Elman, 2006; VanderStoep & Johnson, 2009). Besides, quantitative research is a low-cost method as it uses questionnaires to collect or gather data and information (Mukherji & Albon, 2009).

However, in spite of many advantages, there are some drawbacks to using quantitative research methods. Firstly, the findings from quantitative research methods seem to be fairly superficial because the study includes too many participants or the researchers might be overwhelmed by too much information that cannot be analysed correctly (VanderStoep & Johnson, 2009). Furthermore, this type of research approach is limited to provide in-depth data relating to participants feelings and thoughts, and this method fails to examine and understand participants' interaction (Covington, 2008; VanderStoep & Johnson, 2009). Besides, there are some criticisms of using quantitative research approaches for collecting and analyzing the data as stated by Bryman (2012) that there is less precision and accuracy in measuring and preceding the data, and the methods in this research are rigid and static.

After exploring the advantages and disadvantages of quantitative research methods, the researcher decides to use this research approach in this study. This is because this research method allows large samples to be involved or engaged. In addition, the objectives of this research are to identify the factors that motivate and satisfy employees and find out the reward system that is suitable for hospitality organizations

in Laos. Therefore, conducting a survey questionnaire method for collecting data from a large number of workers in hospitality organizations in Laos is necessary. It is stated by Zikmund et al. (2012) that having vast amounts of data and information from many participants and employing a scientific and statistical programme to measure and analyse the research data can lead to valid and reliable results that can answer the research problem and the research question.

3.3.2 Qualitative research methods

Qualitative research methods are clearly different from quantitative research methods. This is because qualitative research methods mostly focus on collecting words, pictures, and objects rather than numbers. Cohen, Manion, and Morrison (2013) and Cho and Trent (2006) point out that unstructured or semi-structured techniques such as in-depth individual interviews, media analysis, focus groups, and observations are typical data collection methods in qualitative research. In addition, the data from qualitative research such as words, pictures, and objects are frequently analysed without the use of statistics.

Unlike quantitative research methods that heavily rely on statistical measurement, qualitative research methods are employed to explore and discover ideas of participants. Also, this kind of research method allows the researcher to get deep insights into the interpretation of a particular situation (Unitec, 2014b). Walsham (2006) and Johnson and Christensen (2010) emphasize that unlike quantitative research methods, which are applied when the research objectives are clearly identified, the qualitative research approach is mostly conducted when the research topic is little known, when the research objectives are unclear and ambiguous, or when the researcher wants to explore or study more about the phenomena. This means rather than testing and measuring the hypothesis and specific research questions, a qualitative research approach is commonly employed to obtain a new theory by giving great insights into a particular phenomenon.

The qualitative research approach is also known as exploratory research because it is employed to obtain an understanding of fundamental reasons, motivations, intentions, attitudes, and behaviours (Babbie & Rubin, 2012; Cohen et al., 2013). In exploratory research projects, the researcher usually applies a qualitative research approach for data collection. This is because exploratory research mostly puts emphasis on obtaining in-

depth knowledge of a certain situation, developing testable hypotheses, producing effective solutions for the complex problems, and formulating new concepts for further study (Unitec, 2014b). Neuman (2011) adds that the researcher can evaluate and examine the larger content of the creation, distribution and reception of qualitative research as the outputs from qualitative research consist of the interaction and interpretation of the participants. Under this kind of research approach, the data are collected through in-depth and extensive interviews and observation in a small target group or focus groups (Bryman, 2012; Sutherland & Canwell, 2008).

Besides, Neuman (2011) asserts that a qualitative research approach formulates and develops the coherent theory which can be causal, non-causal, and mostly inductive. Zikmund et al. (2012) also emphasize that even if a qualitative research approach is less structured than a quantitative research approach, it can provide deeper and greater understandings about phenomena than quantitative research approaches do. This kind of research approach also helps the researcher to clarify the research problems which can be transferred to the clear and precise research objectives.

One of the advantages of a qualitative research approach is a dynamic and flexible research design. The qualitative research methods allow the researcher to modify the research design or research procedures at any time when more observations are collected (Babbie & Rubin, 2012). Another advantage is this research method allows the researcher to obtain insights into underlying problems which helps to generate and develop ideas and hypotheses for further potential quantitative research (Babbie & Rubin, 2012; Neergaard & Ulhøi, 2007). In spite of some great strengths, there are some weaknesses of using the qualitative research approach. Firstly, it lacks generalizability and reliability as its great depth and details usually obtain from small numbers of participants or a small sample that cannot be considered as representative (Elo & Kyngäs, 2008; Shi, 2008). Shi (2008) also states that another weakness of the qualitative research approach is that it requires the researcher to have a basic knowledge of the research topic or subject in order to conduct extensive interviews and detailed observations.

In addition to the quantitative research methods, the qualitative research methods are also employed in this research project. This is because this research study also determines the in-depth information on current systems that HR managers have

implemented in order to select the right employees for the right positions, improve employee capacity and engagement, motivate employees to work, and retain employees in hospitality organizations. Moreover, it is important for the researcher to explore an HR manager's understandings about HRM practices and to discover the HRM problems and issues that are confronted by them.

3.4 Method of data collection

The task of data collection starts after a research problem has been identified and the research design has been planned (Aggarwal & Jain, 2008; Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011). While choosing which data collection method to be used in the research study, the researcher should understand two types of data which are primary and secondary. In addition, the researcher has to decide which kind of data he/she is going use for his/her study because the methods of collecting and obtaining primary and secondary data are different (Aggarwal & Jain, 2008; Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011).

3.4.1 Primary data

Primary data are those that are collected afresh, for the first time, and from the beginning to end. Primary data are also known as original data collected from the source of origin and in the process of investigation. There are several ways to obtain this kind of data such as observation method, interview method, through questionnaires, and through schedules (Kothari, 2011; Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011). However, according to the aim and the objectives of this research, the researcher uses only survey questionnaires and semi-structured interview for collecting primary data.

Babbie and Rubin (2011) point out that survey questionnaires allow the researcher to generate accurate findings and deliver concrete results such as through questionnaires, the data are collected from large samples and are analysed by using a statistical analysis program. In addition to questionnaires, Mitchell and Jolley (2012) claim that the semi-structure interview helps the researcher to know how respondents answer a series of standard questions and also allows the researcher to expand on or ask additional questions in order to have more answers in greater depth. Besides, Cargan (2007) believes that the semi-structured interview helps the researcher to avoid misinterpretation as the researcher is able to clarify the meanings of the answers from respondents.

3.4.2 Secondary data

Secondary data are defined as the data that have already been gathered and analysed by some other scholars or researchers (Bajpai, 2011). In other words, secondary data are those that already have been collected by other researchers or scholars and that already have been processed through the statistical analysis (Aggarwal & Jain, 2008; Kothari, 2011; Mooi & Sarstedt, 2011). Secondary data usually comes in a wide range of forms, including research articles, various publications, journals, books, annual reports, magazines, and newspapers (Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). Zikmund et al. (2012) point out that secondary data is vital for the researcher when the primary data (data that the researchers have collected by themselves through their own questionnaires, interviews, and so on) cannot be obtained. Besides, Zikmund et al. (2012) assert that the secondary data collection does not only provide background information about the research area but sometimes also provides actual data to answer the research questions.

Therefore, according to the aim and objectives of this research project, secondary data relating to HRM in hospitality will be collected widely as suggested by Smith (2008) and Sreejesh, Mohapatra, and Anusree (2013) that the researcher should collect and analyse secondary data in order to have basic knowledge about the research area, identify and clarify research problems, and be able to obtain answers to the research questions.

3.4.3 Data collection

The main data for this research project is gathered in Lao PDR which is the home country of the researcher. As the majority of Lao people speak Lao as an official language and not many people speak English, the research instruments such as the questionnaire and the interview transcripts are prepared in both English and Lao.

Both quantitative and qualitative research methods (also known as the mixed research methods) are employed for data collection in this research study. Mixed research methods are the approaches that integrate both quantitative methods (designed to collect numerical information) and qualitative methods (designed to collect words or narrative information) for collecting and analysing data, combining the findings, and drawing conclusions in one single research study (Borrego, Douglas, & Amelink, 2009; Teddlie & Tashakkori, 2009). The main reason why mixed research methods are

employed and applied in this research project is the researcher wants to gain a deep and better understanding of HRM practices and its roles in relation to employee motivation, retention, and performance in hospitality organizations in Laos as stated Borrego et al. (2009) and Creswell and Clark (2011) that mixed methods allow the researcher to achieve in-depth understanding of phenomena and have breadth and depth of corroboration.

There are several approaches of collecting data in mixed research methods such as (1) indirect and direct observation methods, (2) structured, semi-structured, and unstructured interview methods, (3) through questionnaires, (5) through schedules, and other methods (Kothari, 2011; Kumar, 2014). However, in order to have sufficient evidence and detailed information to support the main objectives in this research project, the researcher utilizes only both self-administered questionnaires and semi-structured interview methods for data collection.

3.4.3.1 Self-administered questionnaire

The first method of data collection is employing self-administered or self-completion questionnaires (see **Appendix 1**) to explore opinion and experience about employee training, work satisfaction and motivation of employees in the six selected hotels in Laos. In the self-completion questionnaire, many of the questions are designed and developed for employees in hospitality organizations. Participants are randomly selected. They can be any employees from any level, such as chef, room service staff, housekeepers, front desk staff, bellhops, van drivers, pool attendants, and so on in the selected hotels, and who are willing to answer a series of questions. The interested questionnaire participants may come from any level from selected hotels because this is a strictly voluntary participation. As long as they work in selected hotels and they are also interested in participating in this research project, they can complete the questionnaire. It is important to note that HR managers and hotel managers will not be allowed to be involved in the questionnaire, they can fully participate in the interviews only.

The researcher employs the self-completion questionnaire in this research study because it can help the researcher to have sufficient and accurate data that are required in the data analysis process. Self-completed questionnaires also help the researcher to save time as participants answer questions or complete the

questionnaire by themselves (Bell & Bryman, 2011). Brace (2013) also emphasizes that one of the most popular tools for data collection is a self-completion questionnaire which can help researchers to reach a large number of participants.

In this research project, the researcher carefully designs and develops the questions in self-completion questionnaires as suggested by Fowler (2009) and Brace (2013) that the questions in the questionnaire should be relevant to the research objectives, clear-cut, and unambiguous in order to get accurate and relevant information to answer the research question, and ensure that the respondents answer the questions correctly and do not accidentally omit or skip the questions.

Besides, the researcher formulates questions by using simple, direct and precise words as recommended by Azzara (2010) that in order to avoid bias and reduce complication in the questionnaire, it is necessary for the researcher to use an appropriate wording in each question in the questionnaire. Moreover, the researcher does not use jargon or technical words or phrases that are not familiar to respondents or participants. It is recommended by Kothari (2011) and Brace (2013) that a questionnaire should be well-constructed and be easy for the respondents to understand in order to prevent misunderstanding and misinterpretation. Kothari (2011) also emphasizes that every question in the questionnaire should directly link to the research aims, and cover all of the research objectives in order to ensure that the researcher has accurate and sufficient data for the analysis.

Therefore, to guarantee that the questionnaire addresses the objectives of this research project, the researcher has formulated 29 questions and all of them are closed-ended questions. Closed-ended question refer to the question that give the respondents with options or choices from which to select or choose a response (Reid & Bojanic, 2009). The reason why the researcher employs closed-ended questions is that it is easy for participants or respondents to understand and it does not take much time to complete questions that have optional answers. In addition, Lewin (2005) claims that closed-ended questions help a researcher to analyse data easily and correctly. Reid and Bojanic (2009) add that the data which is in the form of closed-ended questions is easy and simple to record.

In terms of the structure of the questionnaire in this study, it begins with a brief summary of the main purposes of the research. There are three types of questions in

the questionnaire namely, multiple choice, rating scale, and yes/no questions. The questions move from general to the specific aspect of the research project.

3.4.3.2 Interview

“Interview is a process in which a researcher and participant engage in a conversation focused on questions related to a research study” (Merriam, 2009, p. 87). Interviews are generally divided into three types such as structured, semi-structured, and unstructured (Bell & Bryman, 2011). A structured interview refers to the interview that the researcher asks a set of questions and the researcher can not change those questions, and ask all participants the same questions (Lodico, Spaulding, & Voegtle, 2010). In contrast to a structured interview, a semi-structured interview is an interview that the researcher asks a series of standard questions and the researcher can also ask any additional questions in order to have in-depth answers to the standard questions (Mitchell & Jolley, 2012).

Another type of the interview is an unstructured interview. This type of interview is like a conversation and allows for the most flexibility. The researchers might have some opened-ended questions and a list of topics that they would like to ask and cover in the interview. In addition, in this type of interview, the interviewee directs the interview, and the researcher just listens and responds in a conversational style. Besides, the researcher is allowed to ask additional or further questions to get more detail or to redirect the interview to areas that have not been discussed yet (Lodico et al., 2010).

In this research study, the researcher employs only semi-structured interviews as a second method of data collection. In the semi-structured interview approach, open-ended questions are formed (see **Appendix 2**) and the researcher only chooses people who are in positions such as HR managers in selected hotels in Laos. As they are HR managers who work or get involved directly with the job that relates to or identifies with the research topic, they can supply in-depth, accurate and precise information.

The first reason why the researcher applies the interview is the researcher would like to know more about an HR manager’s experience in an hotel organizations. It is asserted by Bailey, Hutter, and Hennink (2010) that the interview is employed when

the researcher seeks information on personal experiences, perception, beliefs, feelings and emotions from respondents about some particular topics.

The second reason that the researcher uses this approach is the researcher would like to seek to understand the perspective of HR Managers in relation to employee selection and employee training in their organizations. It is asserted by Merriam (2009) that the semi-structured interview assists the researcher with a deeper understanding of the issues and this method can support the research objective when comparing to employing only questionnaires.

Another reason why the researcher employs the semi-structured interview is this approach allows participants to discuss the problems freely. This can help the researcher to get extensive and detailed data that can be used in answering the research questions and an analysis process (Sutherland & Canwell, 2008). Moreover, Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2010) claim that the semi-structured interview allows the researcher to have more detailed and in-depth information from respondents via direct or face-to-face communication. Hesse-Biber and Leavy (2010) also emphasize that the researcher gains deep, broad, and expert knowledge from different perspectives of participants when the researcher and the participants are fully engaged in conversation, especially asking, answering and listening.

However, there are some issues that the researcher has to consider when conducting an interview as stated by Polonsky and Waller (2010) that as the researcher allows respondents to freely provide and share information, the participants might use different terms to describe the same thing which may cause difficulties for the researcher to compare responses in the interview. Therefore, Polonsky and Waller (2010) recommend that the researcher should create and design a proper plan and adopt the most effective approach that helps to prevent difficulty in creating coding and transcribing. Moreover, Polonsky and Waller (2010) advise that prior to conducting an interview, the researcher should be trained in order to have interview skills. Besides, Polonsky and Waller (2010) emphasize that the researcher should be flexible, observant, open-minded, and responsive, and should listen actively in order to be a good interviewer.

3.4.3.3 Pilot study

A pilot study acts as a small-scale study that researchers carry out before the real survey (Blessing & Chakrabarti, 2009; Wilson, 2010). Beri (2013) states that pre-testing of a questionnaire should be performed before a real research. Blessing and Chakrabarti (2009) and Wilson (2010) also emphasize that undertaking a pilot study can help the researcher to get information to improve and revise the questionnaire's content, format and sequence. Thus, in this research study, the researcher has carried out a small scale pilot survey in order to test the questionnaire and to make sure that (1) the questionnaire is clear and understandable, (2) the answers obtained from the questionnaire addresses the research objectives, and (3) language use in the questionnaire is clear and correct. As a result, there may be some changes that have to be made in order to make the questionnaire more precise and clearer.

In relation to the interview, prior to the official interviews with the participants at the selected hotels, the researcher has conducted a pilot study in order to examine grammar and wording, check translating of interview questions, and check the understanding of participants relating to the interview questions. Two HR managers and three other employees who work for hotels were invited to participate in the pilot study and they have been asked to give feedback on the interview questions such as the terms and concept, and some ideas on how the interview questions could be improved. After finishing the pilot and based on feedback, changes were made in order to avoid biased answers and unclear questions.

3.5 Sampling

Dawson (2009) and (Kothari, 2011) assert that if the researcher does not have a huge fund and unlimited timescale, it will be difficult for the researcher to obtain information from all people within his/her research population. Martyn (2010) adds that in order to overcome this problem, the researcher has to choose a smaller and more manageable number of people to participate in his/her research study. This is known as sampling (Dawson, 2009). Dawson (2009), Kothari (2011), and Martyn (2010) believe that if this sample is selected carefully by employing the correct procedure, it is possible that the sample can be used to generalise the results overall of the research population. Kumar (2014) agrees and adds that the selection of an appropriate sample can be the significant part of any research. Kumar (2014) also emphasizes that a sufficient sample size can lead to the accuracy of the research study and findings.

In addition, Cargan (2007) points out that identifying population size for the research study is crucial. This is because the characteristics of the population influence the need of the sample size. Blaikie (2009) emphasizes that a common mistake in determining samples is that the researcher thinks that a sample is only some proportion of a research population, so Blaikie (2009) recommends that prior to choosing sampling methods, there are some factors that the researcher has to take into account, such as the amount of variation in the target population, a scale of measurement that is being performed, and analysis methods that can be applied.

Bergman (2008) also asserts that there are different sizes of sample that are being used in mixed methods designs. This is because data that are from qualitative and quantitative approaches are collected for different purpose. Bergman (2008) further explains that the main purpose of sampling in a qualitative research study is to obtain detailed and specific information about an event and situation, and seeks to understand more about different perspectives and views of each individual, whereas data that are from a quantitative research study is to draw inferences about the a particular group from a selected sample. Kumar (2014) points out that there are two views about identifying sample size in quantitative and qualitative research. In quantitative research, the sample size is predetermined based on the available resource and some other considerations, whereas in qualitative research, the researcher does not predetermine the sample size but the researcher will determine when the sufficient information has been received during the data collection process.

Besides, Martyn (2010), Dawson (2009) and Kumar (2014) further point out that in quantitative research, the researcher attempts to choose a representative sample which relates to the overall survey and the data collected from the representative sample can help the researcher to generalize his/her work to the overall research population' Whereas in qualitative research, the researcher tries to select a sample which is small-scale and the data which is obtained from this small-scale sample allows the researcher to understand more about different opinions and to obtain in-depth information from participants. Martyn (2010), Dawson (2009) and Kumar (2014) also emphasize that there are two methods of selecting samples in research study which are probability sampling and non-probability sampling. In a probability sampling methods, every individual within the study population has a specifiable and equal chance of being selected. On the other hand, the researcher uses a non-probability sampling method (also known as a purposive sampling method) when his/her goal is a description rather than generalization, when it is difficult for the researcher to specify the

possibility of one individual being included in the sample, and when there is insufficient information about the target population.

In relation to sampling selection in this research project, the researcher applies a probability sampling method in which every unit in the study population has an equal opportunity of being selected. By weighting sampled units according to their probability of selection can help the researcher to accurately determine samples. The researcher has sent request letters to most of the three to five star hotels in Vientiane, Laos. This means most three to five star hotels have equal opportunities to participate in this research project if they are interested.

In relation to sample size, these six hotels are able to represent the whole hotel industry in Laos in relation to HRM practices. This is because the six participated hotels are amongst the biggest hotels in Laos and there is not much variance in this kind of business. In addition, due to a limited time and budget constraint, the researcher cannot use a large sample of all three to five star hotels in Laos. However, Zikmund et al. (2012) and Neuman (2012) suggests that a small sample might be more accurate than the total study population, and a small sample can be used to generalize to the study population. Zikmund et al. (2012) also claim that a poorly identified population can lead to less reliable information than a carefully obtained sample. Thus, six hotels are selected to participate in this research project, and each HR manager from each hotel is considered as a sample for the interview. In addition, the respondents for the questionnaire are between 15 to 20 % of the total number of employees in each hotel (the proportion of respondents is according to the total number of employees in each hotel).

In the qualitative data collection process, each HR manager from each targeted hotel is interviewed in order to seek to understand their HRM skills and their HRM practices. This can help the researcher to obtain sufficient and detailed information to support the research objectives which relate to employee selection and training. In addition to qualitative data collection, quantitative data collection is applied to collect numeric data, and 100 employees from six hotels will be sufficient as group representatives. 100 respondents can provide sufficient information relating to employee motivation and satisfaction in the hotel industry. In addition, 100 respondents are sufficient for statistical analysis in SPSS software.

Besides, the researcher estimates that the total number of employees in the six hotels should not exceed 10,000 which is considered a small population sizes (Rea & Parker, 2005). In addition, the researcher does not need to have a sample size over of 50 percent of the total selected population (Rea & Parker, 2005). Therefore, the researcher selects 100 samples from

the six hotels, which is 95% level of confidence (Rea & Parker, 2005). This means that this sample size allows for valid and reliable data analysis. The following table shows minimum sample sizes for selected small populations.

Population Size (N)	Sample Sizes					
	95% Level of Confidence			99% Level of Confidence		
	±3%	±5%	±10%	±3%	±5%	±10%
500	250 ^a	218	81	250	250	125
1,000	500 ^a	278	88	500	399	143
1,500	624	306	91	750	460	150
2,000	696	323	92	959	498	154
3,000	788	341	94	1142	544	158
5,000	880	357	95	1347	586	161
10,000	965	370	96	1556	622	164
20,000	1014	377	96	1687	642	165
50,000	1045	382	96	1777	655	166
100,000	1058	383	96	1809	659	166

Note: The choice of ±3 percent, ±5 percent, and ±10 percent for confidence intervals is based on the tendency of researchers to use these intervals or a similar range of intervals in the design of their surveys. ^aPopulation sizes for which the assumption of normality does not apply; in such cases, the appropriate sample size is 50 percent of the population size.

Source: Rea & Parker (2005). 'Designing and conducting survey research: A comprehensive guide (3rd ed.)'

3.6 Data analysis methods

After raw data has been collected, the data analysis task is undertaken. Data analysis is the practice of evaluating data employing analytical and logical reasoning to examine and interpret each piece of raw data (Business Dictionary, 2014). Merriam (2009) adds that data analysis is the translating and interpreting process used to answer the research question(s). Merriam (2009) and Krishnaswami and Satyaprasad (2010) claim that the data analysis is the most demanding and skilled task in the research process as it requires the researcher's own judgement and skill. Thus, in this research study, the researcher classifies data into two categories which are (1) quantitative data collected through questionnaires and (2) qualitative

data collected from interviews. Then, the researchers use many different tools and approaches to analyse the data.

3.6.1 Quantitative data analysis

This research employs the Statistical Package for the Social Science (SPSS) to analyse the data that derive from the questionnaires. SPSS is an analytical computer program which has been developed for the analysis of social sciences data (Ho, 2006). SPSS helps researchers examine and extract meaning from the data and reduce or eliminate errors in data analysis (Oliver, 2010). Oliver (2010) also emphasizes that SPSS helps the researchers to manage data effectively and is suitable for managing and analysing complex samples and data. In addition, SPSS can help the researcher to calculate the mean scores of the questionnaires and formulates the nature of relationships that occur in the data, and then the raw data will be interpreted or transformed into information which answers each research question and hypothesis (Hinton, McMurray, & Brownlow, 2014). Saunders et al. (2009) also emphasize that SPSS helps the researcher to interpret, examine, describe, and show data in many significant ways such as graphs, chart, and statistics. These visual presentations help the researcher to describe the data, compare trends, and explore relationship within the data easily.

Besides, SPSS offers the researchers a large number of statistical analyses in social sciences or on research data (Hinton et al., 2014). Hinton et al. (2014) and Ho (2006) also contend that in SPSS, there are three modules of data analysis which are: (1) univariate, (2) bivariate, and (3) multivariate analysis. Univariate analysis is used to test hypotheses involving a single variable. This test is known as Frequency test which explores only one variable in a data set (Unitec, 2014d). Bivariate analysis is used to test hypotheses involving two variables. This test includes Correlation analysis, T-test analysis, and Cross-tabulation analysis (Unitec, 2014d). Multivariate analysis which consists of Regression, ANOVA is carried out to analyse three or more variables or sets of variables (Unitec, 2014d).

Even if there are many useful tools for analysing quantitative data in SPSS software, the researcher selects only some of them as suggested by Sekaran and Bougie (2010) and Niedrich, Weathers, Carter, and David (2009) that the choice of selecting tools for analysing data in SPSS software depends on the type of data collected and the objective

that the researcher would like to emphasize and illustrate. Therefore, the first analysis tool that the researcher employs is the frequency test.

3.6.1.1 Frequency analysis

The frequency test is one part of descriptive statistics. In statistics, frequency refers to the number of times an event occurs. Frequency test is a significant area of statistics that deals with the number of occurrences, and then analyses measures of central tendency, dispersion, and percentiles for interval level data (Greasley, 2007; Hinton et al., 2014). Frequency analysis provides the researcher with an initial overview of the selected sample or study population. It also shows the different ways respondents answered a question (Unitec, 2014c). However, frequency analysis can test only be one variable, and it is unable to test the relationship between variables (Unitec, 2014c). For example, the frequency test will illustrate: how many people or cases in each category, how many male/female expatriates are there, or how many respondents have experienced culture shock.

3.6.1.2 Correlation analysis

The second analysis tool that is applied for data analysis is correlation analysis. Correlation analysis is used to test relationships or associations between two continuous numeric variables or two interval variables (Greasley, 2007; Norusis, 2011; Unitec, 2014c) . In other words, correlation measures how variables are related or linked. Only interval variables can be tested in correlation analysis (Unitec, 2014d). There are two types of Correlation analysis which are: (1) bivariate correlation and (2) partial correlation.

Bivariate correlation is used to determine if two variables are directly related or linked to each other. For example, bivariate correlation is used to test if there is a relationship between husband's contribution to housework (a dependent variable) and a number of children (an independent variable) (Healey, 2012). On the other hand, partial correlation is used to determine if two variables arise because both are correlated or linked with a third variable (Sharma, 2007). In other words, partial correlation is used to test how the bivariate relationship changes when a third variable (a control variable) is introduced. For example, partial correlation test if well-educated husbands respond differently to an additional child than uneducated husbands (Healey, 2012).

3.6.1.3 Cross tabulation

The third analysis tool that the researcher uses for data analysis is cross-tabulation. Cross-tabulation which is also known as Crosstabs is a contingency table that summarizes categorical data. Cross-tabulation is mostly used in business surveys and scientific research. The cross-tabulation can illustrate the basic picture or visual of the interrelation between two variables (Rubin, 2012). Frankfort-Nachmias and Leon-Guerrero (2014) point out that only nominal and ordinal variables are able to be tested in the cross-tabulation analysis.

A cross-tabulation table illustrates how two or more nominal variables are connected or related. A cross-tabulation table also shows the frequencies or percentages of the groups of one variable cross-tabulated with the frequencies or percentages of other variables (Rubin, 2012). Typically, in cross-tabulation, Chi-square test is used to examine null hypothesis (Unitec, 2014d). In the Chi-square test process, if the P-value is larger than 0.05, then alternative hypotheses are accepted and null hypotheses are rejected. If the null hypothesis is accepted, this means there is no relationship between two variables. On the contrary, if an alternative hypothesis is accepted, this means there is a relationship between two variables (Norusis, 2011; Rubin, 2012).

3.6.1.4 T-Test

The fourth analysis tool that the researcher uses for data analysis is T-test. T-test is a basic statistical test that measures group differences. Typically, T-test analysis is used to test hypotheses by comparing the means of two groups to determine whether there is a significant difference between them (Andrew, Pedersen, & McEvoy, 2011). If the results of t-test illustrates that the two means are equal then null hypothesis is accepted and an alternative hypothesis is rejected, but if the two means are not equal then an alternative hypothesis is accepted and null hypothesis is rejected (Unitec, 2014d).

There are three basic types of t-test which are: (1) One-Sample T-test, Independent-Samples T-test, and Paired-Samples T-test. The one-sample t-test tests if the mean of one variable differs from a value identified or specified by the researcher whereas the paired-samples t-test is used to compare the scores of two interval variables drawn from studied populations (Andrew et al., 2011; Zikmund & Babin, 2012).

However, the independent-samples t-test is used to compare the means of two independently sampled groups; for example, males and females. In other words, the independent-samples t-test is used to determine if the mean scores of groups can be considered markedly different (Andrew et al., 2011). This research study has used only the independent-samples t-test as a tool to test the hypotheses.

3.6.1.5 ANOVA (Analysis of variance)

The fifth analysis tool that the researcher applies for data analysis is ANOVA. ANOVA is a useful technique concerning economics, education, sociology, psychology, and business researches (Kothari, 2011). ANOVA analysis is used when many or multiple sample cases are involved. Unlike, t-test that can examine only the 2 different sample means, ANOVA can test the significance of the difference among more than two means at the same time. In other words, the principle of ANOVA is to examine differences among the means of the populations by determining the amount of variation with each of these samples (Kothari, 2011; Reddy, 2011).

There are two types of ANOVA analysis. If the researcher takes only one factor and examines the differences amongst its several categories that have many possible values, this means the researcher uses one-way ANOVA analysis. On the other hand, if the researcher investigates two or more factors at the same time, then this means the researcher uses factorial ANOVA (Reddy, 2011). Most researchers use ANOVA to test null hypothesis (all of the means are equal) and alternative hypothesis (not all of the means are equal). Like any other analyses, the ANOVA has its own test statistic which is called F statistic or F-Test (Reddy, 2011; Shankar, 2009). In F-Test process, if P-value is lower than 0.05, null hypothesis is rejected and alternative hypothesis is accepted (Shankar, 2009).

3.6.2 Qualitative data analysis

The raw (qualitative) data or transcript that has been collected or derived from the interview was checked and translated into written English. Then, some suitable approaches were deployed for qualitative data analysis. The main purpose of qualitative data analysis is to consolidate, reduce, interpret what participants said and what the researcher saw and read (Merriam, 2009). However, many qualitative researchers may feel that there is quite a challenge in terms of how to reduce a huge amount of data

collected from in-depth observations, written documentation, interviews, and so on (Merriam, 2009).

Besides, Creswell (2013a) adds that text analysis is a challenging activity for qualitative researchers as there is no fixed set of approaches or techniques for analysing qualitative data (Saunders et al., 2009). Merriam (2009) also points out that all qualitative data is mainly inductive and comparative, so most researchers use the comparative method of data analysis as a tool to develop grounded theory. Merriam (2009) and Lyons and Coyle (2007) assert that there are a number of methods that help the researcher to analysing qualitative data which includes text coding, content analysis, comparative analysis, thematic analysis, conversation analysis, protocol analysis, analytic induction, grounded theory, interpretative phenomenological analysis, the voice relational method, narrative analysis and discourse analysis. However, in this research study, the researcher employs, applies and mixes only 5 approaches to analyse qualitative data which includes (1) text coding, (2) content analysis, (3) thematic analysis, (4) narrative analysis and (5) comparative analysis.

3.6.2.1 Text coding

Coding is one of the approaches for analysing a set of data in qualitative research (Flick, 2014). Boeije (2009) asserts that coding is the process of categorizing, assigning, or labelling segments of data with a word, a short phrase or a short name. This means in the coding process, the researcher creates categories in the research data and name them by attributing a code, and then the researcher will try to find descriptions for theories that go beyond the insightful observation in a particular sample. Myers (2009) also maintains that the purpose of coding is to help researchers draw meaningful conclusions about the data. In addition, Corbin and Strauss (2007) emphasize that coding helps the researcher to extract and develop concepts from raw data in relation to their dimensions and characteristics. Besides, Corbin and Strauss (2007) believe that data coding helps the researcher to explain and represent phenomena, and reduce and combine data. Polonsky and Waller (2013), and Myers (2009) also agree that data coding assists the researcher in familiarizing with the data, recognizing the meaning of the data, and exploring the connection of the data.

3.6.2.2 Content analysis

The researcher uses content analysis approach to find out or identify the key words, paragraphs, or recurring patterns of meaning (Hennink, 2014; Merriam, 2009). Content analysis approach mainly focuses on counting the frequency of words or the numbers of a certain phrase is said by participants (Bernard & Ryan, 2010; Merriam, 2009). This means the communication or message of meaning is the main focus in the content analysis approach. In the content analysis process, the researcher continuously conducts coding of raw data and construct categories that can draw out relevant characteristics of the interview content (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Merriam, 2009).

In addition, Dawson (2009) contends that in the content analysis process, the researcher chooses a concept for examination and records the number of occurrences. Next, the researcher determines and examines the relationship between concepts. Guest and MacQueen (2008) conclude that content analysis is an efficiency and reliability approach. However, Guest and MacQueen (2008) suggest that the researcher should be careful when using content analysis approaches for qualitative data analysis as the main disadvantage of content analysis is that context is cut out or is completely omitted. In addition, in the content analysis, the richness or variety of the summary data generated is limited. This means the descriptive context of how participants describe or discuss issues are not included (Hennink, 2014).

3.6.2.3 Thematic analysis

Thematic analysis which is also known as categorization is one of the popular approaches used in qualitative data analysis (Creswell, 2013a; Dawson, 2009). The researcher employs this approach to identify specific themes or to set the related categories that carry similar meanings based on the specific question being answered in the interview (Creswell, 2013a; Dawson, 2009). In order to move beyond coding which only labels segments of data or counts the recurring patterns of explicit words or phrases, the researcher uses thematic analysis which centres on determining and describing implicit and explicit ideas from context (Guest & MacQueen, 2008). Guest and MacQueen (2008) and Creswell (2013a) also claim that throughout thematic analysis, the researcher clusters broad units of information that include several codes that construct a common idea. Besides, this approach allows the

researcher to be able to analyse the connection between issues identified, and fully understand the research issues from the perspective of selected participants (Denzin & Lincoln, 2008; Hennink, 2014).

3.6.2.4 Narrative analysis

Punch (2009) states that qualitative data is mostly collected in narrative form through unstructured or semi-structured interviews, observation, and focus groups, so it is vital to examine the content, context, and structure in a narrative way as a whole (as cited in O'Hara, Wainwright, Carter, Kay, & Dewis, 2011). Narrative analysis does not involve classifying data through coding or labelling to set particular themes or concepts (O'Hara et al., 2011; Wells, 2011). In narrative analysis, the researcher primarily pays attention to reporting the whole description of the story that was told by the participants in the interviews (O'Hara et al., 2011). Furthermore, in the narrative analysis, the researcher does not only put value on the content of the interview, but also on the context in which the interview takes place. This is because the what, where, and how factors are critical to each interview section (O'Hara et al., 2011).

3.6.2.5 Comparative analysis

Comparative analysis approach is also applied in qualitative data analysis. In the comparative analysis process, the researcher identifies, examines, and explains similarities among study participants, groups, or cases in a dataset (Dawson, 2009). Glaser and Strauss (1967) state that comparative analysis is a part of a grounded theory method, but Barbour (2008) claims that comparative analysis is the most important part of all qualitative data analysis because all qualitative data analysis heavily and continually relies on contrasting and comparing (as cited in Harding, 2013). Harding (2013) points out that comparative analysis allows the researcher to compare and contrast statements within the same interview, and compare and contrast statements in different interviews. Besides, Harding (2013) emphasizes that this approach allows the researcher to produce insights by recognizing and explaining patterns of difference or similarity within the data.

3.7 Ethical concerns

The researcher considers ethics is an important part of this research study as recommended by Bryman (2012) and Oliver (2010). The researcher should carefully address all factors related

to ethical issues in order to protect all participants from emotional, mental and physical harm or financial loss which may occur during the study. In addition, in order to avoid all possible ethical issues, this research project has followed UREC rules and guidelines (UREC, 2009).

As this research project is carried out in the researcher's own country where there are many ethnic minority groups, the researcher recognizes and is aware of the some possible effects of the ethnic minority group. In order to avoid ethical issues and problems, this research project does not pay more attention to any particular ethnic minority group, but only focuses on all aspects of human resource management practices, and only seeks to understand overall HRM performance issues in the hospitality industry. Finally, the researcher undertakes to protect all participants' rights and privacy based on the provision of confidentiality law and privacy policy to make sure that all of the participants are not suffered or harmed by this research project.

With regards to voluntary consent in the research project, the researcher has asked for permission and authorization before carrying out the research project in the hotels. The researcher has written official request letters based on the UREC guidelines and directions, and those letters have then been sent to the key contact persons of the six hotels in order to gain authorization and approval for conducting my research project. In addition, to ensure that the procedure in this research study allows for entirely voluntary consent, all participants are informed that it is a voluntary participation. They can participate in this research project if they are interested.

In relation to rights and confidentiality of participants, their identities are not revealed in the thesis or in public or any kinds of conference presentations or publication. Moreover, all the information collected from participants is kept completely confidential and is used for the thesis purpose only. Besides, in order to avoid practising any deceptive activities in this research study, the true purpose and aim of this research has been stated to every participant in the initial contact.

In terms of intellectual and cultural property ownership, the interviews are recorded upon the approval from the interviewees. The name of the interviewees and the hotels are recorded and kept for the purposes of analysis only, and are not reported in the thesis. In addition, the hard-copy of the questionnaires are stored and locked in a cupboard in the researcher's house, and the interview audio records are kept in the researcher's laptop which is password protected. Only the researcher is able to access the data and information.

3.8 Conclusion

In this chapter, the process of the data collection and data analysis were clearly explained. In conclusion the interviews and questionnaires are the main tools for data collection. In relation to testing the structure and the clarity of the questionnaire and the interview questions, conducting a pilot project is vital. In the data analysis process, SPSS software was utilized to analyse the data obtained from the questionnaires whereas text coding, thematic analysis, narrative analysis and comparative analysis were employed for analysing the data obtained from interviews. Secondary data collection was useful for this research.

3.9 Chapter summary

The chapter contains all key points in research methodology. This research study adopts mixed methods (a combination of quantitative and qualitative methods) because it helps the researcher to better understand the research problems in all aspects. In a quantitative approach, a questionnaire has been employed to collect data from employees in the six hotels in order to explore their opinion and experience about training, work satisfaction and motivation in the hotels in Laos.

In a qualitative approach, six HR managers from the six hotels have been interviewed in order to seek to understand the perspective of HR Managers in relation to the employee section and employee training in their organizations. Prior to both the interview questions and survey questionnaires being used in this study, a pilot project was carried out in order to ensure make sure that the questions are clear and understandable. In terms of data sources, in addition to the primary data, some secondary data from relevant organizations was also collected in order to have background information about a hotel industry in Laos. Finally, in relation to data analysis, text coding, content analysis, thematic analysis, narrative analysis, comparative analysis have been used to analyse qualitative data whereas SPSS software has been used to analyse quantitative data.

In the next chapter, the findings from the questionnaires and interviews are presented and discussed.

Chapter Four: Findings

4.1 Introduction

The previous chapter covers the research methods used for data collection and data analysis and discusses the reasons why the researcher employs those research methods in this study. This chapter provides the findings from the questionnaires and interviews. Firstly, the chapter illustrates the findings of questionnaires based on SPSS data analysis. In this section, four main points, including (1) demographic information, (2) employee satisfaction, (3) employee motivation, and (4) employee training are covered. These four components are regarded as crucial information as they are used for analysis and answering the research questions. Secondly, the chapter illustrates the interview results. In the interview, six HR managers from six hotels in Laos have been interviewed in order to seek to understand about the current practice of employee selection and training process in their hotels. Finally, the chapter shows a data analysis method that has been used to test each hypothesis and presents the result of the three hypothesis study.

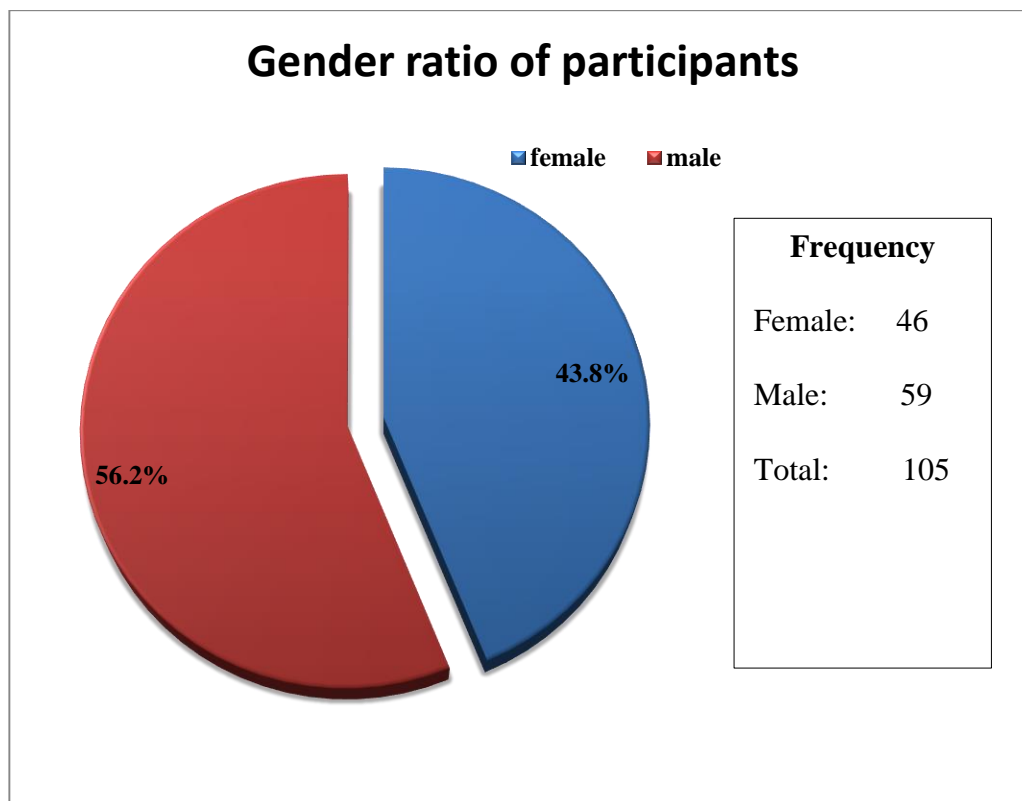
4.2 Demographic information

This section presents the information on population characteristics and dynamics in order to help readers understand the overall picture of the participants involved in a questionnaire survey in the study. In this section, the participants provide their gender, age, work experience, and education level.

Question 1

In question one, participants are asked to provide their gender. The result of this question showed that more males than females participated in the survey. The total number of respondents is 105, and there are 46 female and 59 male respondents. This means, of 105 respondents, female respondents occupy 55%, whereas male respondents account for 45% (see Figure 7).

Figure 7 Gender ratio of participants (Q1)



Note: The result is representative of actual hotel employees who participate in survey questionnaires (exclude HR managers who participate in the interview).

Question 2

In question two, participants are asked to provide information about their age range. The participants can choose one in the three age brackets which are '18-28 years', '29-39 years', and 'more than 40 years'. The result demonstrated that the majority of participants are in the age between 18-28 years, which occupies 47.6% of the percentage of total participants. The second highest number of participants is in the age of between 29-39 years, which accounts for 35.2%. In addition, the lowest number of participants is in the age of more than 40 years, which is only 17.2% (see Table 1).

Table 1: Participant age (Q.2)

Age bracket	Frequency	Percent
18-28	50	47.6%
29-39	37	35.2%
40 and more	18	17.2%
Total	105	100%

Note: The result is representative of actual age of hotel employees who participate in survey questionnaires (exclude HR managers who participate in the interview).

Question 3

In question three, participants were asked to state the number of years of their work experience. There are five options of the number of years of work experience, namely (1) less than 1 year, (2) 2-5 years, (3) 6-10 years, (4)11-15 years, and (5) more than 15 years that participants can choose. The result illustrated that the majority of respondents have work experience between 2-5 years, which occupy 37.1% of the percentage of total participation, followed by the participants who have work experience of less than one year, 21%. Among them, the employees who have work experience in between 6-10 years and in between 11-15 years are 15.2% and 18.2% respectively. It is interesting to note that the lowest numbers of participants are people who have experienced more than 15 years, which covers only 8.6% of the total participation rate (see Table 2).

Table 2: Work experience (Q3)

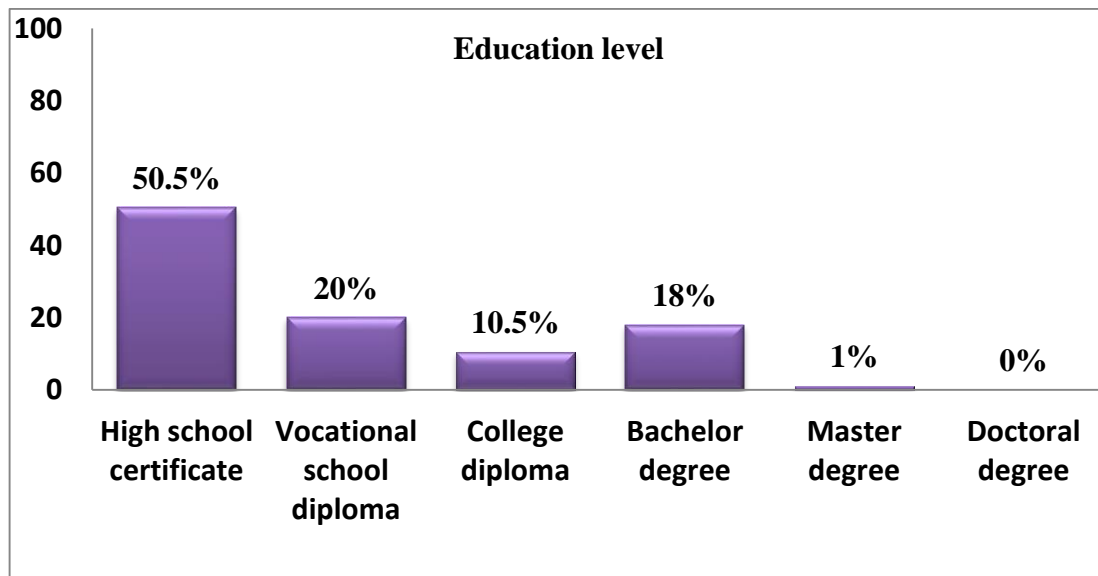
Work experience	Frequency	Percent
Less than 1 year	22	21.0%
2-5 years	39	37.1%
6-10 years	16	15.2%
11-15 years	19	18.2%
More than 15 years	9	8.6%
Total	105	100.0%

Note: The result is representative of actual work experience of hotel employees who participate in survey questionnaires (exclude HR managers who participate in the interview).

Question 4

In question four, participants were asked to state their level of education. There are 6 choices which are (1) high school certificate, (2) vocational school diploma, (3) college diploma, (4) bachelor degree, (5) master degree, and (6) doctoral degree that participants can choose. The result of the survey demonstrated that the majority of participants, which covers 50.5% of total participant rate have High school certificate for the highest education level, followed by the participants who achieve Vocational school diploma, College diploma and Bachelor degree which cover 20%, 10.5%, and 18% respectively. It is interesting that only 1% of participants have a Master degree and no participant has a Doctoral degree (see Figure 8).

Figure 8: Education level (Q4)



Note: The result is representative of the actual education level of hotel employees who participate in survey questionnaires (exclude HR managers who participate in the interview).

Question 5

Question five is the last question in the section of participants' general information. In this question, participants were asked to state the number of years they have worked for the organization. There are three options, namely 0-5 years, 6-10 years, and more than 10 years from which participants can choose. The result of the survey illustrated that the majority of participants (77 people) have been working in the organization in between 0-5 years, which account for 73.3% of the total participation rate, followed by

the participants who have been working in the organization in between 6-10 years which cover 16.2%. The lowest numbers of participants in this survey are people who have been working in the organization more than 10 years which is 10.5% (see Table 3).

Table 3: Number of years working in the hotel (Q5)

Number of years	Frequency	Percent
0-5 years	77	73.3
6-10 years	17	16.2
More than 10 years	11	10.5
Total	105	100

4.3 Questionnaire findings

This section presents the findings from the questionnaire survey. This section covers three main topics which are employee satisfaction, employee motivation, and employee training.

4.3.1 Employee satisfaction

The following findings show the level of employee satisfaction with their current job, and present some significant factors that influence their satisfaction in their workplace.

Question 6

In question six, participants were asked about their overall satisfaction in their current job. The participants were offered a choice of one of two options which are ‘yes’ and ‘no’. The result demonstrated in Table 4 shows that 63 people feel that they are satisfied with their current job, which occupy 60% of the total response rate, whereas 42 participants feel that they are not satisfied with their current job, which account for 40% (see Table 4).

Table 4: participant’s satisfaction with their current job (Q6)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	63	60.0	60.0	60.0
	No	42	40.0	40.0	100.0
	Total	105	100.0	100.0	

Question 7

In question 7, participants were asked to give their opinions about their satisfaction in their current organizations by using a scale from 1 to 5 (1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, and 5 = strongly agree). The findings are shown in Table 5.

Table 5: opinions about staff satisfaction in their current organization (Q7)

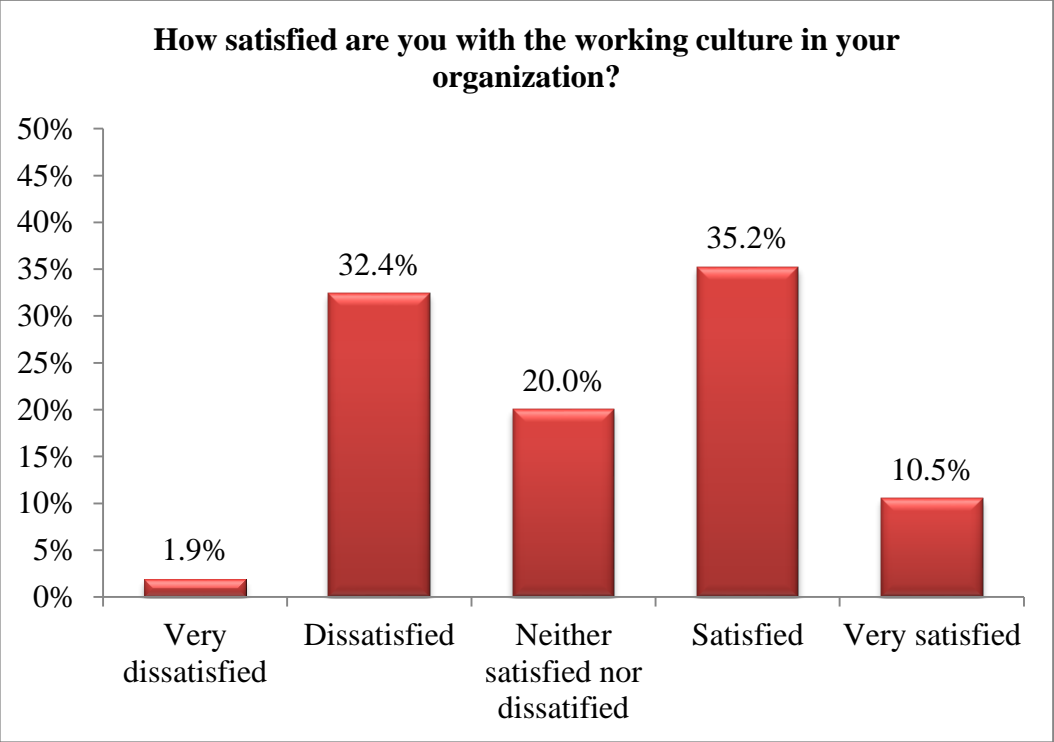
	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly	
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)	
1) I am satisfied with the organizational working culture	3.8%	8.6%	13.3%	55.2%	19.1%	100%
2) I feel my work is meaningful to me	0%	1.9%	13.3%	54.3%	30.5%	100%
3) I am satisfied with the supervision of my immediate supervisor	2.9%	8.6%	18.1%	36.2%	34.3%	100%
4) My organization pays me well for the work.	5.7%	21.9%	18.1%	41.9%	12.4%	100%
5) I am satisfied with my employment benefits	4.8%	24.8%	21.9%	39%	9.5%	100%
6) I am happy with my job overall	2.9%	6.7%	18.1%	40%	32.3%	100%

According to the information in Table 5, In the first statement, 55.2% of respondents agree that they are satisfied with the organizational working culture. In the second statement, 54.3% and 30.5% of respondents agree and strongly agree that they feel their work is meaningful to them. In the third statement, 36.2% and 34.3% agree and strongly agree that they are satisfied with the supervision of their immediate supervisors. In the fourth statement, 41.9% of respondents agree that their organizations pay them well for the work, and in fifth statement 39% of respondents agree that they are satisfied with their employment benefits. In the last statement, 40% and 32% of respondents agree and strongly agree that they are happy with their overall job.

Question 8

In question eight, participants were asked to indicate how satisfied they are with the working culture in their organization, and the findings are presented in Figure 9.

Figure 9: Working culture satisfaction (Q8)



The result presented in Figure 9 indicates that 35.2% of respondents are satisfied with the working culture in their organization, and 10.5% of them are very satisfied with the working culture of their organization. However, among them, 32.4% of employees are dissatisfied, and 1.9% of them are very dissatisfied with the working culture in their

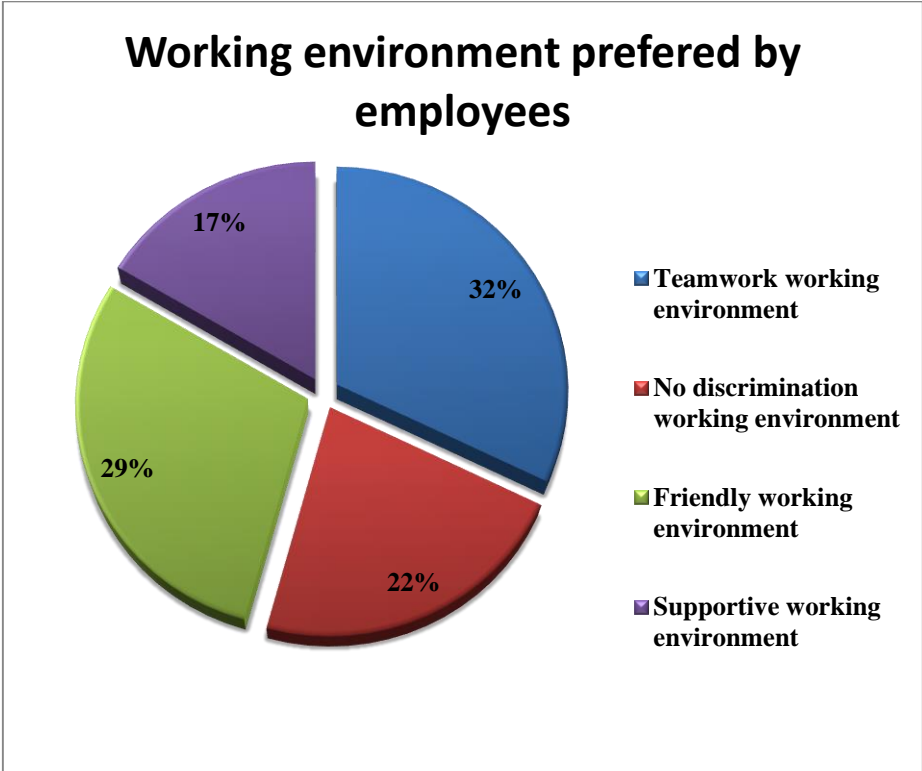
organization. The remaining 20% are those who have a neutral opinion about the working culture in their organization.

Question 9

In question eight, participants were asked to state the working culture they prefer in their organization, and the findings are presented in Figure 10

The information displayed in the Figure 10 presents that most of respondents prefer a teamwork working environment, which accounts for 32%, and another 32% of respondents prefer a friendly working environment. Those who prefer a no discrimination working environment cover 22%, and the remaining 17% are those respondents who prefer a supportive working environment.

Figure 10: Working environment (Q9)

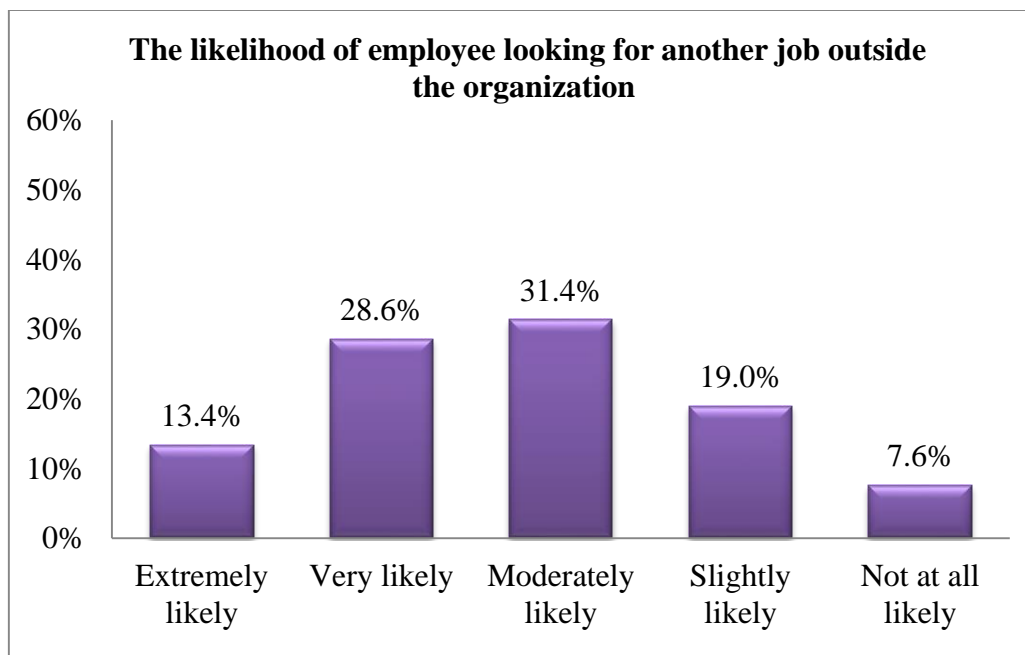


Question 10

In question 10, participants were asked to state the likelihood of looking for another job outside the organization, and the findings are presented in Figure 11.

In Figure 11, the result indicates that the majority of respondents are moderately likely to look for another job outside the organization, which covers 31.4%, followed by those who very likely and slightly likely look for a new job outside their organization at the rate of 28.6% and 19% respectively. It is interesting to note that 13.4% of respondents are extremely likely to look for a new job outside their organization, while only 7.6% of them do not look for another job outside their organization.

Figure 11: The likelihood of employee looking for another job outside the organization (Q10)



Question 11

In question 11, participants were asked to rate the statements about the positive experiences they have in their organizations, and the findings are shown in Table 6.

According to the information in Table 12, it clearly indicates that the majority of respondents have positive experiences in their current organizations, followed by those who have a neutral opinion about positive experiences in their current organization. In the first statement, 55.2% and 29.2% of respondents agree and strongly agree that they experience personal growth in their organization. In the second statement, 44.8% of respondents have a neutral opinion about how ‘management looks to me for suggestions and leadership’ statement, and 32.4% of the respondents agree with this statement.

In the third statement, 45.7% of respondents have neutral opinion about the great opportunities they have in their organization, and 28.6% of the respondents agree with this statement. In the fourth statement, 31.4% of respondents agree that the medical benefits provided in the organization are satisfactory, and 28.6% of the respondents have a neutral opinion about medical benefits in their organization. In the fifth statement, 49.5% of respondents agree that their Supervisors encourage them to be their best.

Table 6: opinions about staff positive experience in their current organization (Q11)

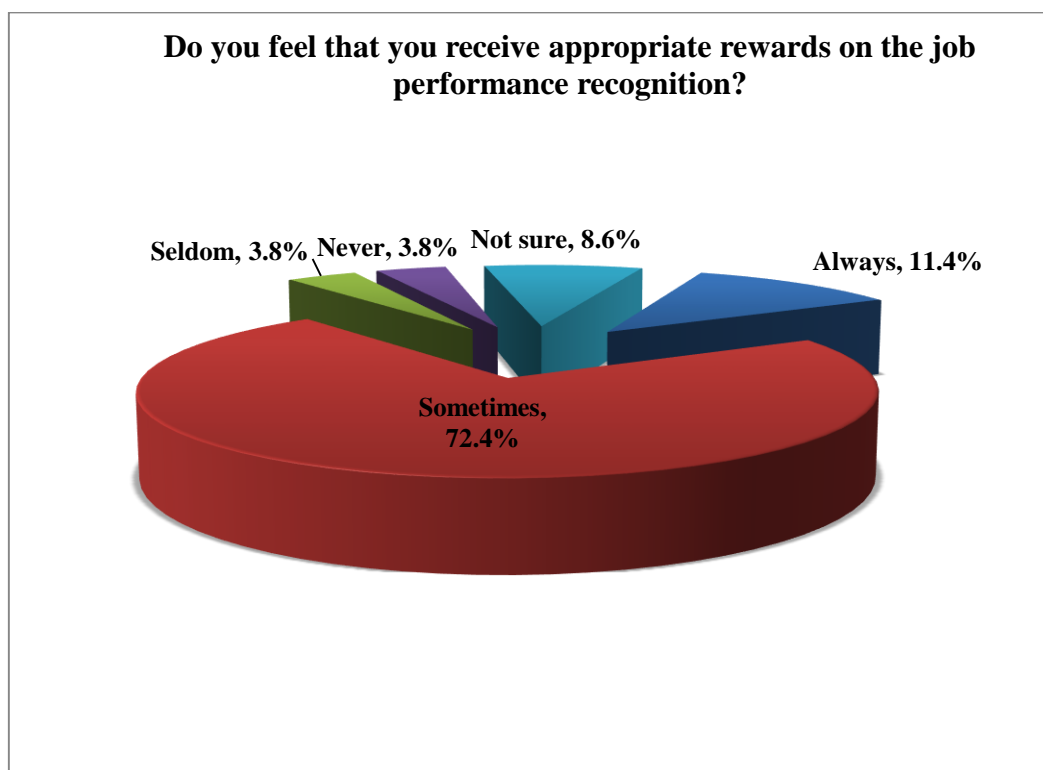
	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1) I experience personal growth, such as updating skills, and learning different jobs	0%	5.8%	9.5%	55.2%	29.2%
2) Management looks to me for suggestions and leadership	1%	15.2%	44.8%	32.4%	5.7
3) I have great opportunities to get promoted where I work	6.7%	12.4%	45.7%	28.6%	6.7%
4) The medical benefits provided in the organization are satisfactory	7.6%	21.9%	27.6%	31.4%	11.4
5) Supervisors encourage me to be my best	6.7%	16.2%	16.2%	49.5%	11.4%
6) I am rewarded for the quality of my efforts	6.7%	12.4%	28.6%	43.8%	8.5%
7) I receive an additional bonus if I do additional work	9.5%	12.4%	33.3%	38.1%	6.7%
8) The organization clearly communicates its goals and strategies to me	5.7%	10.5%	39%	35.3%	9.5%

In the sixth statement, 43.8% of the respondents agree that they are rewarded for the quality of their efforts. In the seventh statement, 38.1% of respondents agree that they receive an extra bonus if they do additional work, while 33.3% of respondents have a neutral opinion about this statement. In the last statement which is ‘the organization clearly communicates its goals and strategies to me’, 39% of respondents have a neutral opinion with this statement and 35.3% of them agree with this statement.

Question 12

In question 12, participants were asked to state to what extent they have received appropriate rewards on the job for performance recognition, and the findings are presented in Figure 12.

Figure 12: Opinions of rewards on the job performance recognition (Q12)



The result in Figure 12 indicates that 72.4% of respondents sometimes feel that they receive appropriate rewards on the job for performance recognition, followed by those who always feel that they receive appropriate rewards on their job performance, which accounts for 11.4%. It is interesting to note that 3.8% of respondents seldom, or never

feel that they receive appropriate rewards for their performance, while 8.6% of them are not sure about whether they receive appropriate rewards on their job performance or not.

Question 13

In question 13, participants were asked to state how often they feel stressed at work in a week, the findings are illustrated in Figure 13.

Figure 13: Level of stress at work in a week (Q13)



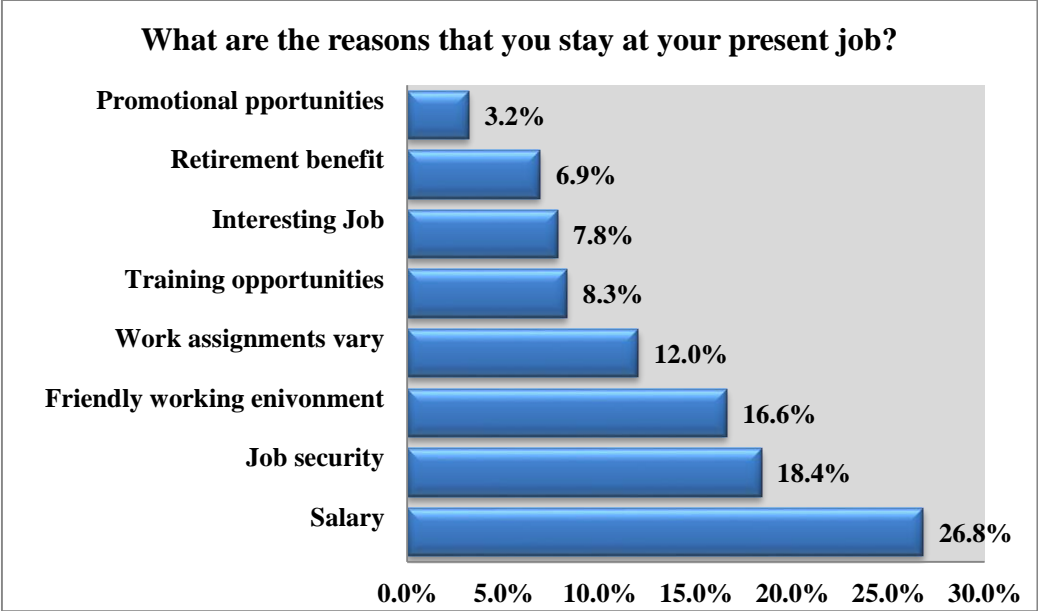
The graph presented in Figure 13 indicates that 72.4% of respondents sometimes feel stressed at work, while 11.4% of them are always stressed at work during a week. Only 3.8% of respondents seldom and never feel stressed at work during a week. The remaining 8.6% are those who are not sure about their stress at work.

Question 14

In question 14, participants were asked to give their opinion about the factors that contribute to their job satisfaction. The findings are shown in Figure 14 and demonstrate that the majority of respondents view salary as the main factor that makes them satisfied with their job, which covers 26% of the total response rate. Moreover, 18.4%, 16.6%, and 12% of respondents think that job security, friendly working environment, and varied work assignments are the other influential factors that make them satisfied with their job, while 8.3%, 7.8%, and 6.9% of them perceive that training

opportunities, interesting jobs, and retirement benefits as the influential factors that make them satisfied with their job. Only 3.2% of the respondents see promotional opportunities as the factor that influences their job satisfaction.

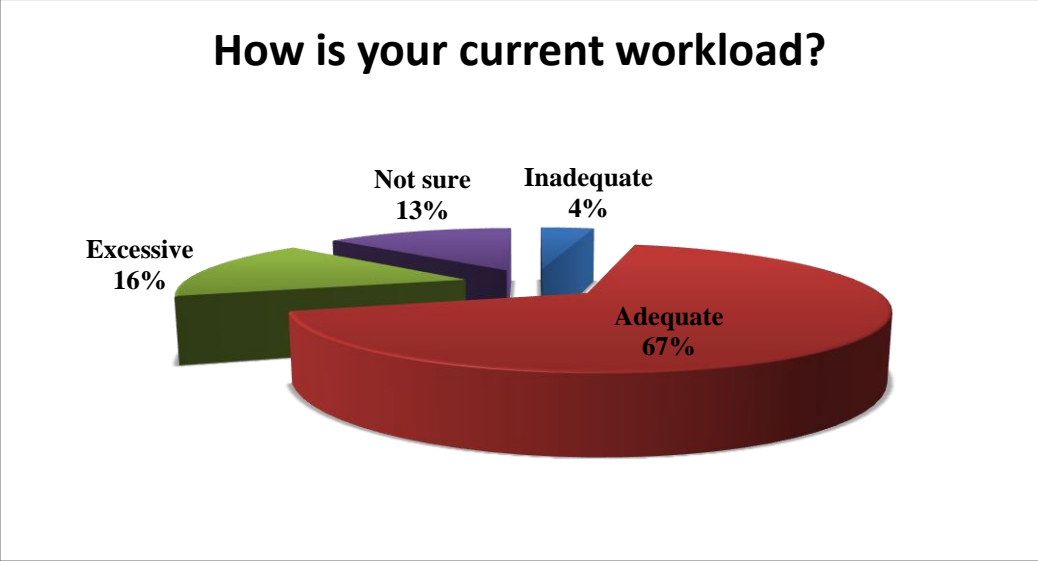
Figure 14: The reasons that employees stay at their present job (Q14)



Question 15

In question 15, participants were asked to indicate the amount of their current workload, and the findings are presented in Figure 15

Figure 15: Opinions about amount of the current workload (Q15)



In Figure 15, the result demonstrates that the majority of respondents think that their current workload is adequate, which covers 67% of the total response rate, while 13% of respondents feel that their work load is excessive. Only 13% of them are not sure about their current workload, and the remaining 4% are those who think that their work load is inadequate.

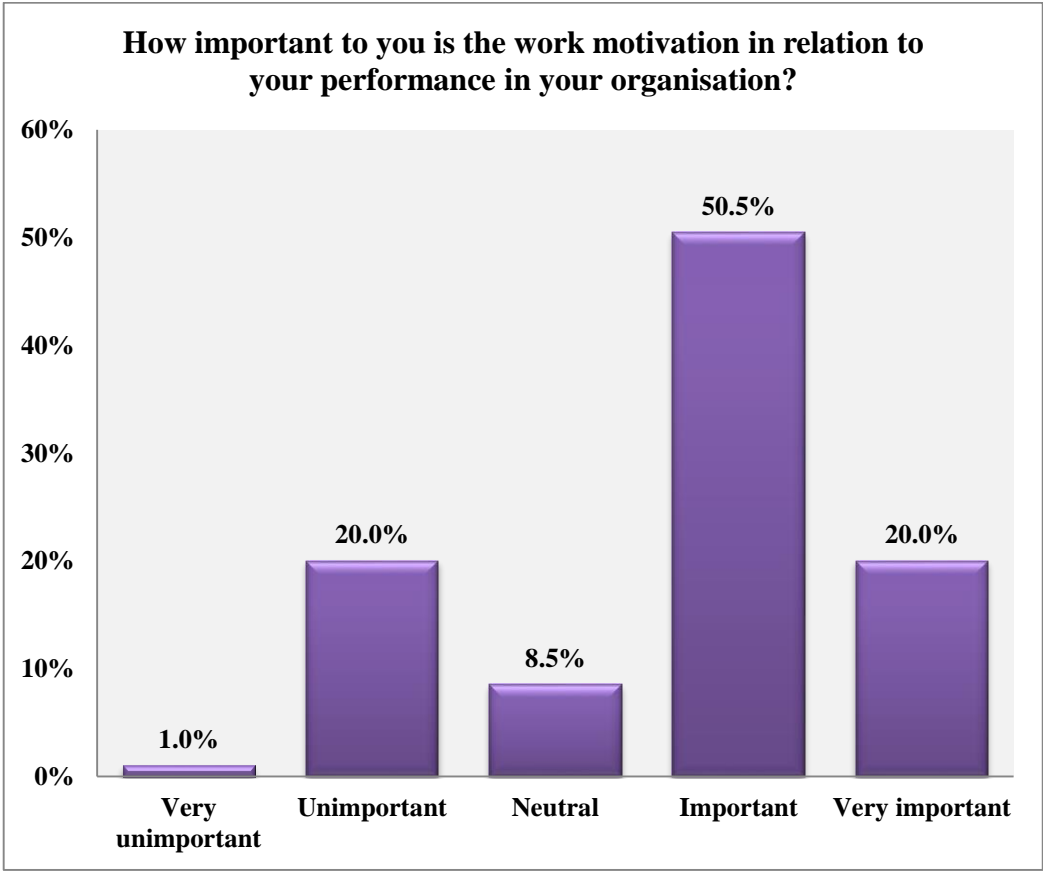
4.3.2 Employee motivation

In this section, The level of motivation employees have with their current organization are determined, and some significant factors that motivate employees to work harder in their workplace are also presented.

Question 16

In this question, respondents were asked to give their opinion about the importance of employee motivation in their organizations, and the findings are presented in Figure 16.

Figure 16: Opinions about the importance of work motivation (Q16)



The result shown in Figure 16 demonstrates that 70.5% of respondents are of the opinion that employee motivation is important in their organizations. Among them,

8.5% of employees have neutral opinion about the importance of employee motivation, while 21% of them think that employee motivation is not important in their organizations.

Question 17

In question 17, participants were asked to give their opinions about whether their organizations create the conditions whereby they are motivated to work harder, and the findings are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Opinions of work conditions created by the organization (Q17)

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	69	65.7	65.7	65.7
	No	36	34.3	34.3	100.0
Total		105	100.0	100.0	

The result in Table 7 illustrates that 65.7% of respondents believe that their organizations create the conditions whereby they are motivated to work harder, while 36% of them do not think that their organizations impose any conditions whereby they are motivated to work harder.

Question 18

In question 18, participants were asked to rate the 15 statements in the scale from 1 to 5. 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree. This question aims to understand motivational experiences the participants have in their organizations, and the findings are shown in Table 8.

Table 8: the motivational experience that employees have in their organization (Q18)

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
1) The top management is interested in motivating employees	3.8%	15.2%	21%	48.6%	11.4
2) I am motivated by the financial incentives provided by the organization	0%	23.8%	3.8%	65.7%	6.7%
3) I receive rewards for hard work	0%	33.3%	12.4%	44.8%	9.5%
4) I have a good salary	7.6%	36.2%	12.4%	38.1%	5.7%
5) My job security is high	7.6%	12.4%	44.8%	31.4%	3.8%
6) I have opportunities for advancement and development	6.7%	20%	43.7%	22.9%	6.7%
7) My organization increases salary reasonably and periodically	7.6%	18.1%	30.5%	40%	3.8%

8) The organization has an effective performance reward system that motivates them to work harder	6.7%	26.7%	27.6%	33.3%	5.7%
9) I feel the organization provides effective promotional opportunities system	3.8%	27.6%	40%	24.8%	3.8%
10) The organization has performance appraisal activities that are helpful to get motivated	7.6%	26.7%	28.6%	33.3%	3.8%
11) The retirement benefits available are sufficient	9.5%	28.6	36.2%	20%	5.7%
12) The organizational policies motivate you to achieve its aims and objectives	7.6%	24.8%	34.3%	29.5%	3.8%

According to the information in Table 8, it is clearly seen that the majority of respondents agree that they have motivational experiences in their current organizations, followed by those who have a neutral opinion about motivational experiences in their current organization.

In the first statement, most respondents agree that the top management in their organization is interested in motivating them, which covers 48.6% of the total response

rate, while 21% of them have a neutral opinion about this statement. In the second statement, 72.4% of respondents agree that they are motivated by the financial incentives provided by their organization while 32.4% of respondents feel that they are not motivated by the incentives provided by the organization. The remaining 3.8% are those who have a neutral opinion about the financial incentives provided by the organization.

In the third statement, 54.3% of respondents agree that they receive rewards for hard work in their organizations while 33.3% of respondents disagree that they receive rewards for hard work. Besides, among them, 12.4% of employees are neutral about receiving rewards for hard work. In the fourth statement, 43.8% of respondents agree that they have a good salary, while 43.8% of them do not think that they have a good salary. Among them, 12.4% of employees have a neutral opinion about their salary in the organization

In the fifth statement which is about their job security. 44.8% of respondents have a neutral opinion about this statement, while 35.2% feel that their job security is high. In the sixth statement, it is interesting that 43.7% of respondents have no opinion about opportunities for advancement and development in their organizations, while 29.6% of them agree that they have opportunities for advancement and development in their organizations. Besides, among them, 26.7% of employees disagree that they have opportunities for advancement and development.

In the seventh statement, 43.8% of respondents feel that their organizations increase salary reasonably and periodically, while 30.5% of them have neutral opinion about this statement. In the eighth statement, 39% of respondents agree that their organizations have an effective performance reward system that motivates them to work harder, while 27.6% of them have a neutral opinion about a rewards system in their organization. However, among them, 26.7% of employees disagree that their organizations have an effective performance rewards system that motivates them to work harder.

In the ninth statement, most respondents have neutral opinion about promotional opportunities system in their organizations, which accounts for 40%. Among them, 31.4% of employees disagree that their organization provides an effective promotional

opportunity system, while 28.6% of respondents feel that their organizations have effective promotional opportunities systems.

In the tenth statement, 37.1% of respondents agree that their organizations have performance appraisal activities that are helpful to get motivated, while 34.3% of them do not feel that their organizations have performance appraisal activities that are helpful to motivate them. Among them, 28.6% of employees have no opinion about performance appraisal activities in their organization.

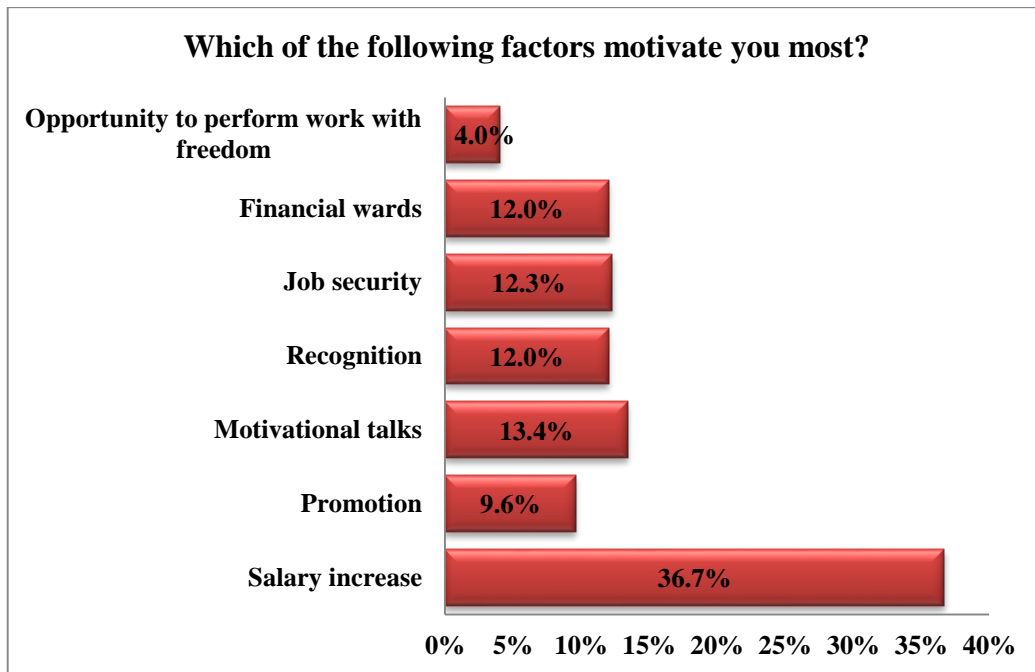
In the eleventh statement, 68.1% of respondents do not think that the retirement benefits available are sufficient for them, while 25.7% of them feel that retirement benefits available are sufficient. Among them, 36.2% of employees have a neutral opinion about retirement benefits in their organization. In the twelfth statement, 34.3% of respondents have no opinion about organizational policies, while 32.4% of them disagree that their organizational policies motivate them to achieve the aims and objective of the organizations. However, among them, 33.3% of employees agree that their organizational policies motivate them to achieve the aim of the organizations.

Question 19

In question 19, participants were asked to indicate the factors that motivate them most or motivate them to do extra work. This question aims to understand the main factors that motivate employees to work, and the findings are presented in Figure 17.

The result shown in Figure 17 reveals that the majority of respondents acknowledge that salary increases can motivate them most, and this covers 36.7% of the total response rate, followed by 13.4% for those who feel that motivational talks can motivate them to do extra work. Among them, 12% of employees think that giving financial rewards and recognition of their work can motivate them most, while only 12.3% of them view that it is job security that can drive them to do extra work. The remaining 4% are respondents who think that opportunity to perform work with freedom can influence them to do extra work.

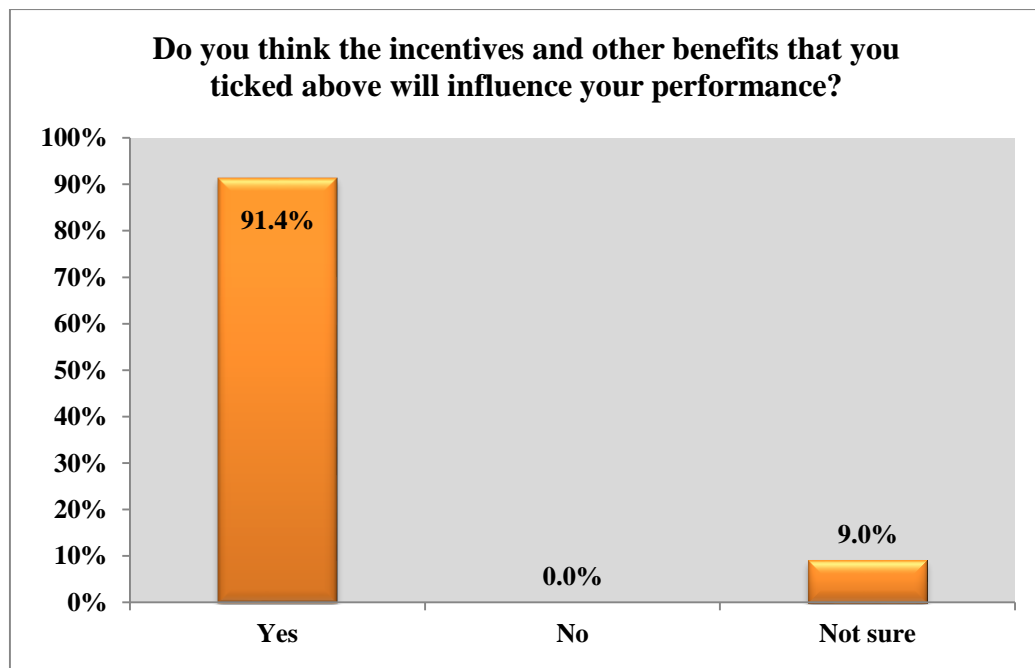
Figure 17: The factors motivating employees (Q19)



Question 20

In question 20, participants were asked to give their opinion whether the incentives and other benefits that they ticked on question 19 influence their performance or not, the findings are shown in Figure 18.

Figure 18: the influence of the incentives provided by the company

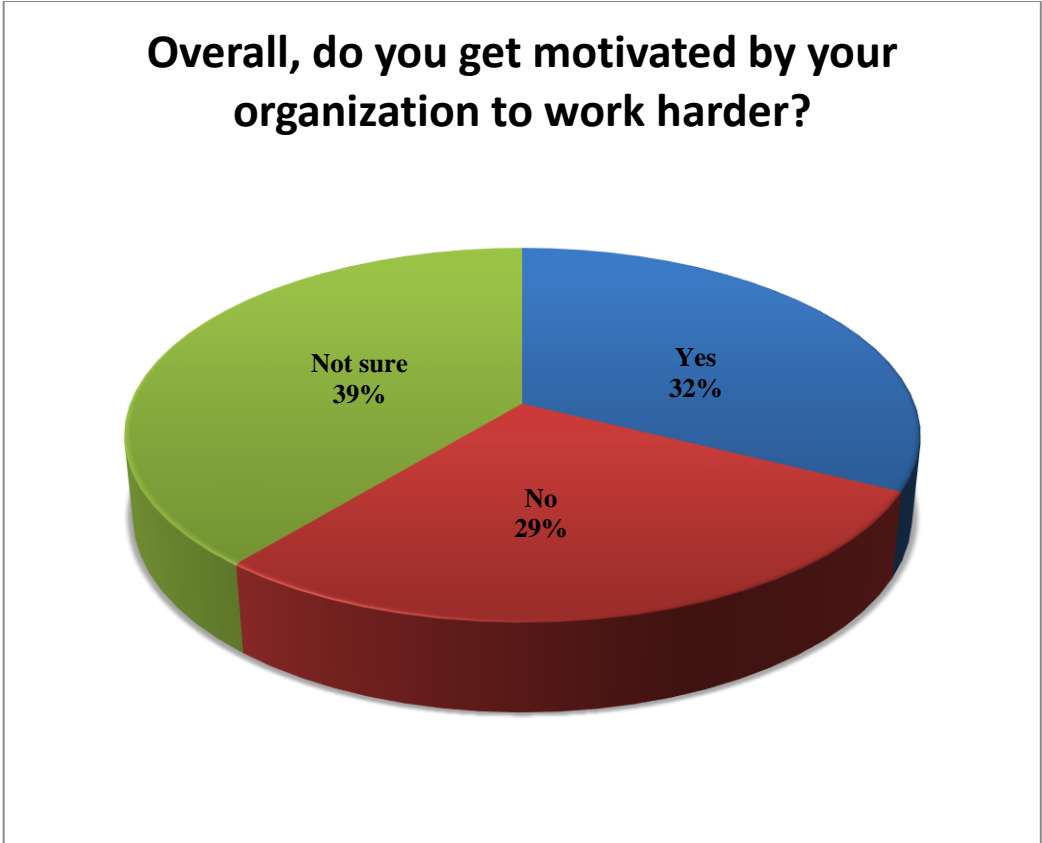


The result shown in Figure 18 indicates most of the respondents think that the incentives and other benefits that they selected in question 19 will influence their performance, while only 8.6% of them are not sure that the incentives and other benefits that they chose in question 19 will boost their performance.

Question 21

In question 21, participants were asked to give their overall opinion about whether they get motivated by their organizations to work harder, and the findings are illustrated in Figure 19.

Figure 19: Work motivation provided by the organization (Q21)



The result shown in Figure 19 demonstrates that most of the respondents are not sure that they are getting motivated by their organizations to do extra work, which accounts for 39% of the total response rate. However, among them, 32% of employees feel that they get motivated by their organizations to work harder whereas 29% of them do not think that they get motivated by their organizations.

4.3.3 Employee training

This section includes the employees' opinion about the training provided by their organizations. In addition, this section seeks to know whether the training they obtained helps them to perform better in their jobs. Besides, this selection contains the employees' opinion about whether the training provided by the organization are adequate for them or not.

Question 22

In question 22, participants were asked to give their opinion about the importance of training to their performance in the organizations, and the findings are presented in Table 9

Table 9: Importance of training in relation to improving employee performance (Q22)

How important to you is the training in relation to your performance in your organization?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Unimportant	7	6.7	6.7	6.7
	Neutral	17	16.2	16.2	22.9
	Important	56	53.3	53.3	76.2
	Very important	25	23.8	23.8	100.0
Total		105	100.0	100.0	

In Table 9, the result demonstrates that 81 respondents agree that training assists them in performing their job better, which covers 77.1%. 17 (19%) respondents are those who have neutral opinion about the importance of training, and Only 7 (6.7%) respondents feel that training does not help them to perform better.

Question 23

In question 23, the participants were further asked to give their opinion about whether their organizations provided adequate training for employees, and the findings are shown in Table 10.

Table 10: Opinions about training provided by the organization (Q23)

Do you think your organization provides adequate training for employees?				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid Yes	37	35.2	35.2	35.2
No	41	39.1	39.1	74.3
Not sure	27	25.7	25.7	100.0
Total	105	100.0	100.0	

The result appeared in Table 10 points out that 27 respondents not sure whether their organizations provide adequate training for them, which covers 25.7% of the total response rate. Among them, 37 employees feel that their organizations give adequate training which accounts for 35.2%, while 41 respondents feel that their organizations provide inadequate training for them, which covers 39.1%

Question 24

In question 24, participants were asked to state whether the organization has provided them some particular training or not, the finding is presented in Table 4.11.

Table 11: A number of employees receiving training (Q24)

	Frequency	Percent
Yes, answer only question 25 and 26	52	49.5
No, answer only question 27, 28, and 29	53	50.5
Total	105	100

The result presented in Table 11 illustrates that of 105 people, 52 respondents have attended the training, which covers 49%, and 53 respondents are those who did not receive the training, accounting for 53%.

Question 25

In question 25, the fifty-two respondents who answered ‘yes’ to question 24 were further asked to identify the hotel training they have obtained in their organization, and the findings are shown Figure 20.

Figure 20: The hotel training that employees have obtained (Q25)



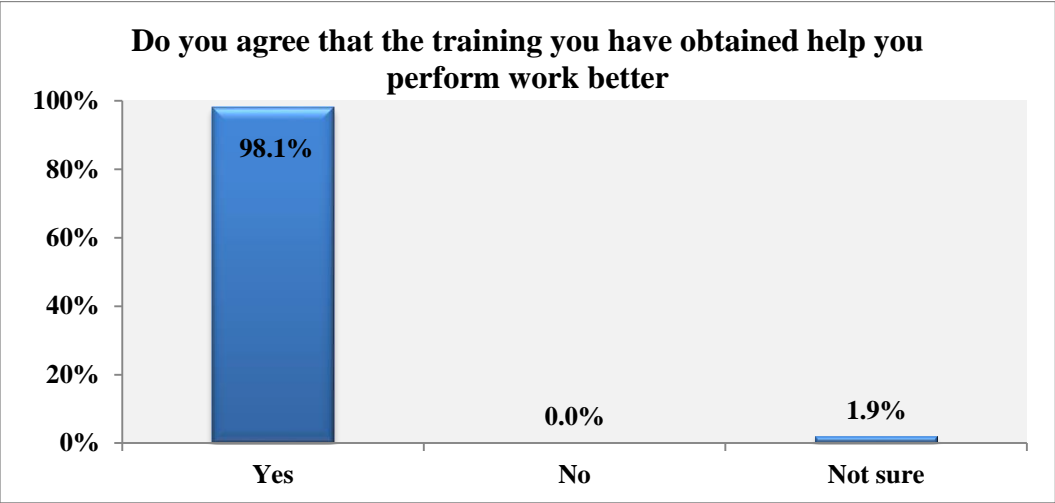
The results shown in Figure 20 demonstrate that 30.9% of respondents have attended customer service training, and followed by 27.7% of those who have had On-the job training. 19.1% of respondents have had English language training while 14% of them have attended Safety concerned training. The remaining 7.4% are those who have received food and beverage service training.

Question 26

In question 26, the fifty-two respondents who answered 'yes' to question 24 were further asked to state whether the training they have obtained helped them perform work better or not, and the findings are presented in Figure 21.

The result demonstrated in Figure 21 indicates that 98.1% of respondents agree that the training they have received helped them to perform work better, while only 1.9% of them are not sure that the training they have obtained assists them in performing work better.

Figure 21: The influence of training on work perform (Q26)

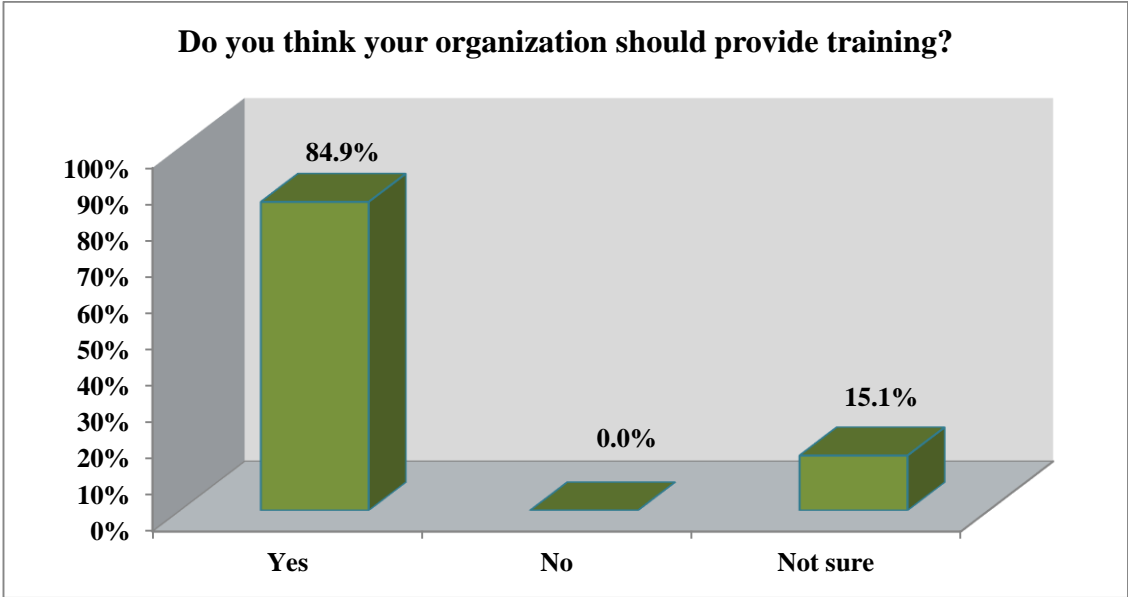


Question 27

In question 27, the fifty-three respondents who answered ‘no’ to question 24 were asked to give an opinion about whether their organization should provide training or not, and the findings are presented in Figure 22.

The result appeared in Figure 22 indicates that the majority of respondents feel that their organization should provide more training, this accounts for 84.9%. The remaining 15.1% are those who are not sure whether their organizations should give training or not.

Figure 22: Opinions of whether more training should be provided (Q27)



Question 28

In question 28, the fifty-three respondents who answered ‘no’ to question 24 were further asked to state the kind of training that their organizations should provide in order to improve their work performance, and the findings are shown in Figure 23

Figure 23: the kinds of training that their organizations should provide (Q28)



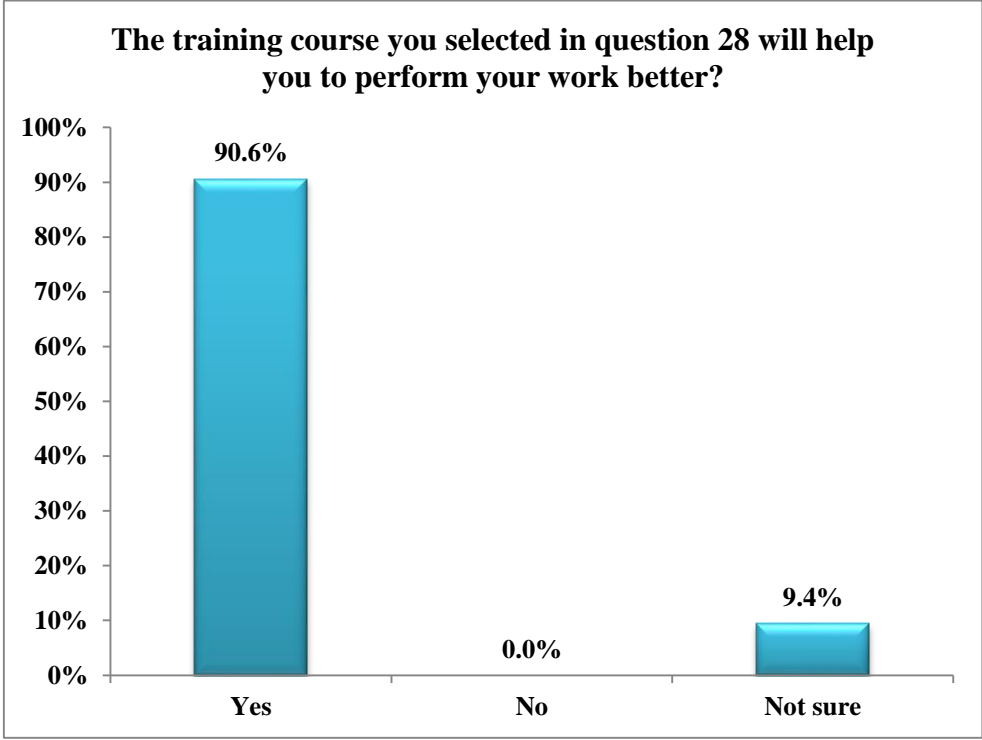
The information appeared in Figure 23 demonstrates that the majority of respondents feel that their organizations should provide more ‘English language’ training and ‘customer service training in order to help them to work better, and this covers 28% and 23.1% respectively. Among them, 21.6% of employees think that their organization should provide more on-the job training for them, while 14.7% are those who feel that more food and beverage service training should be provided. The remaining 12.6% are those who are of the opinion that safety concerns training should be provided in order to improve their work performance.

Question 29

Question 29 is the final question in the employee training selection. In this question, the fifty-three respondents who answered ‘no’ in question 24 were further asked to state

whether the training course they selected in question 28 will help them to perform their work better, and the findings are presented in Figure 24.

Figure 24: The relationship between the training course and work performance (Q29)



The result shown in Figure 24 indicates that the majority of respondents feel that the training course they selected in question 28 will help them to perform their work better, which accounts for 90.6% of the total response rate, while only 9.4% of them are not sure that the training they have selected in question 28 will help them to work better.

4.4 Interview finding

This section provides the findings from the interviews of HR managers in the HR departments of the hotels. This section is divided into two sub-sections which are employee selection and employee training. The interviews were summarized and executed by identifying key words, phrases, sentences, themes, and drawing a conclusion about the information obtained from the participants. The participants in the interview are labelled by letters with a number which are P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, and P6 in order to protect their identity.

4.4.1 Employee selection

In this section, the overall process of the current practice of employee selection is identified. The HR managers describe and explain the process of employee selection in their organization.

Question 1: What is the employee selection process in your organization?

All six respondents have similar processes in selecting new employees. They have 5 steps in employee selection, namely (1) application form screening, (2) job interviews, (3) background check (if the applicants have work experience for another organization), (4) hiring decision, and (5) job offer.

All respondents said that after applicants submit their own CVs with the necessary documents required by the organization, the application screening began. All respondents stated that the common documents they need to attach to CVs are a copy of their ID card, a photo, a copy of their residential certificate, a copy of their family book, references of work experience or training, and educational qualifications. Two of the respondents (P1 and P3) pointed out further that before submitting CVs, the organization needed the applicants to fill out the form provided by the organization in order to have information that the organization wanted.

However, four other respondents (P2, P4, P5, P6) said they did not need applicants to fill out any forms before submitting their CVs as the organization could get their information from their CVs and attached documents such as qualification and work experiences. Furthermore, four of the respondents (P2, P4, P5, P6) were of the opinion that application screening should be done properly and carefully in order to have the full potential candidates for the interview. Two more respondents (P1 and P3) agreed that in order to have qualified candidates for the interview, screening applications and resumes should be scrutinized carefully and intensely.

All respondents stated that job interviews were conducted in both Lao and English in order to test the candidate's communication skill. All respondents emphasized that the job interview process played a critical role in pinpointing whether the organization and the candidate made an effective match. Four of the respondents (P2, P3, P4, P5) further pointed out that even though the applicant's resume, cover letter, references of work experience, and educational qualification gave the interviewer(s) an overview of the

applicant's skills and background, job interviews were great for the interviewer(s) or examiner(s) to see the applicant's physical appearance and ability to handle himself/herself during questioning. Besides, other two respondents (P1&P6) said that the job interview was the process that examined and assessed the applicant's personality and determined if he/she would be suitable for the job and the organization.

The next step is the hiring decision. All respondents agreed that the interviewer or the group of interviewers made the hiring decision. Four of the respondents (P1, P2, P4, P5) said that after job interviews, the interviewer selected applicants who were well-matched to the organization through comparing all applicants' qualifications, skills, personality, and ability. However, two other respondents (P3 and P6) pointed out that after job interviews, the interviewer and the head of the department had a meeting and discussed selecting the best qualified applicant for the position by scoring the qualification, skills, ability, and experience of all applicants during the job interviews based on the requirements of the position. The two respondents (P3 and P6) further asserted that the organization offered the job to the applicant who got the highest score.

The final step is job offer, all respondents stated that they contacted the most qualified candidate and offered the job. All respondents further pointed out that they gave an employment contract to the selected candidate to read before the selected candidate made a decision to accept the job offer. All respondents further explained that the contract included terms and conditions the new employee should follow, the job responsibility, salary and health care benefits. Besides, all respondents said that they had a 3 month probation period.

During the probation period, the supervisor would follow up and evaluate the new employee's work. All respondents also added that if the new employee could work well and could adapt to the organizational environment, the organization would extend the contract for the new employee. If the new employee could not adapt or could not work in the new environment in the first two months, the organization would inform the new employee about his/her below standard of work performance and asked him/her to improve his/her performance. In the last month of the probation period. If the new employee still could not improve his/her performance, the organization would stop his/her contract, re-advertise the job vacancy, and begin the employee process again.

Question 2: Do you think the employee selection process in your organization is effective? Why or why not?

All respondents have similar feelings that the employee selection process in their organization is effective. Two of the respondents (P1&P2) said that there was not much of a problem with the selection process as they just screened the application, interviewed the qualified candidates, and offered the job to the most qualified candidate who matched with the requirement of the job such as associated educational degree and work experience. The other four respondents (P3, P4, P5 and P6) further stated that their selection processes were practical because they did not expect much from the candidates. They (P3, P4, P5, and P6) said they knew that people who got a high education degree such as Bachelor degree or Master degree did not apply or like to work in the hotel industry. They (P3, P4, P5, and P6) acknowledged that most labour in the market did not directly study about hospitality, so they did not place attention on the candidates' education degree. They only selected the new employees who seemed to be honest and would work hard – this is because they could train and teach them to do the work later.

Question 3: What do you expect the personal characteristics of candidates to be that are suitable for working in your organization? Why or why not?

Four of the respondents (P3, P4, P5, and P6) have common answers. They said that they normally selected the candidates who are active, friendly, hard-working, patient, honest, speak politely, and enthusiastic about doing their work. Furthermore, four of the respondents (P3, P4, P5 and P6) stressed that they selected employees who have particular personal characteristics based on the type of position. They (P3, P4, P5 and P6) gave the example that if they needed a new staff to work as a front desk receptionist, that person should be friendly, active, and not afraid to interact with customers. However, two respondents (P1& P2) do not put emphasis on personal characteristic of candidates. They (P1& P2) stated that they did not look for a particular characteristic of people who would work with them. They (P1&P2) primarily select the candidates based on their education, background, and experience.

Question 4: In the employee selection process, do you think skills and experience of candidates are more important than their qualifications? Why or why not?

Three of the respondents (P1, P2, P5) agreed that in the employee selection process, skills and experience were more important than their qualifications. The respondents (P1, P2, P5) also stated that they usually selected new staff based on their work experience and skills that are relevant to the position for which they applied. Besides, the respondents (P1, P2, P5) believed that previous work experience and skills that the new employee has could help him/her to learn and adapt themselves to the new environment and learn the new job quickly. The respondents (P1, P2, P5) further explained that the reason they did not put much emphasis on the qualifications of candidates in the employee selection process was because the education system in Laos did not seem to be in high standard and the study courses in the school were not quite practical. After finishing school, new graduates did not know how to use or apply their skills they had learnt in school in the real job.

However, other three respondents (P3, P4, P6) said that the skills and experience of candidates and their qualifications were equally important. They (P3, P4, P6) pointed out that when they screened the application form, they looked at the associated qualification of the candidates in the first place, and then the skills and abilities of the candidates could be tested in the interview session. The respondents (P3, P4, P6) further claimed that previous work experience was not the main factor that influenced the hiring decision. They (P3, P4, P6) said that they had to check both the qualifications and previous work experience of the candidates before the hiring decision and job offer were made.

Question 5: Do you address any problems in the employee selection process? If yes, what are they?

Two of the respondents (P2, P3) said that they encountered some problems during the employee selection process. The respondent (P2) pointed out that when they offered the job to the most qualified candidate, that candidate required a high salary which the organization could not pay, so they sometimes did not get the most qualified candidate for the position. The respondent (P3) also stated that there were high competition in the hospitality labour market, so it was hard to get qualified people to work in the organization unless the organization offered a competitive salary to them.

In contrast, four of the respondents (P1, P4, P5, P6) said that they did not encounter any difficulties in the employee selection process, but they stated that they encountered problems after the employee selection process. The respondents (P1, P4) pointed that a new employee who came to work just for a few weeks then left the organization was an example. This made them (P1, P4) spend more time re-advertising a job vacancy and selecting a new employee. Besides, other two respondents (P5, P6) stated that after a new employee had worked for a couple of months, he/she stole the property of the organization. This made them (P5, P6) fire that new staff member from his/her job and had to spend more time selecting a new employee.

4.4.2 Employee training

In this section, the overall process of the current practice of employee training is identified. The HR managers describe and explain the process of employee training in their organization.

Question 1: Does your organization provide training to employees?

During the interview, all six respondents accepted that training activities were vital for their organizations as training helped their employees to work efficiently and effectively. However, only five of the respondents answered 'yes' and one respondent answered 'no' to the question above. The five respondents (P1, P3, P4, P5, P6) stated that their organization has seen the importance of employee training, and have recently sent their employees for training. The (P1) respondent pointed out that the organization has sent employees for training, but his organization sometimes had a problem about matching employee time schedules with the training course time.

The respondents (P3, P4, P5, P6) also said that their organizations has always sent employees who did not take the training courses yet for training, or provided a training to those who needed more training to improve their work performance. Five respondents (P1, P3, P4, P5, P6) said that most of the hotel training courses in Laos were held by the Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism. Besides, the respondents (P3 & P5) said that their organizations had their own training in the organizations. The (P3) respondents further said that each year, his organization has sent each head of its department abroad to have training one to two times per year. In contrast with answers from five respondents (P1, P3, P4, P5, P6), the (P2) respondent

stated that his organization did not send employees outside for training as the organization did not budget for training activities.

Question 2: Could you tell me about particular training provided by your organization? *Note: this question is only for those respondents who answered 'Yes' in question 1*

Five respondents (P1, P3, P4, P5, P6) said their organizations usually have sent employees such as front desk staff, waiters, waitresses, bartenders, and room maids to the training courses that were related to room service, housekeeping, customer service, and table arrangement. Mostly, the hotel training courses were held by Ministry of Information, Culture and Tourism (MICT) and some non-profit organizations (NGOs) one to two times per year. The respondents (P3, P4, P5, P6) further explained there was not many hotel training courses in Lao. Only MICT and some NGOs provided the hotel training.

(P3) respondent stated that her hotel also provided a workshop which was mostly about the importance of teamwork, the importance of customer service, and the importance of employee and customer satisfaction on its own site each year. The (P4) respondent further pointed out that his hotel provided English training 2 hours per week on its own site to employees who were not good at speaking English. The (P4) respondents also stated that his hotel has sent its employees who were at management level to learn or explore the hotel management from a big five star hotel in other countries each year. In contrast to the answers from the five respondents (P1, P3, P4, P5, P6), the (P2) respondent said that his organization did not provide any kind of training to its staff. The (P2) respondents explained that his organization expected that people who came to work with his hotel should know how to work and its employees could learn and practise their skills in the real job or in the real situation.

Question 3: Should your organization provide training to employees? Why or why not? *Note: this question is only for respondents who answered 'No' in question 1*

The (P2) respondent pointed out that training should be provided to employees. However, the (P2) respondent further explained that his hotel was small; it was not possible to provide training to employees as there was no budget for training activities.

The (P2) said that whenever they needed new employees, they first looked for people who had previous work experience.

Question 4: Does your organization provide training to employees before performing new jobs? Why or why not?

In relation to on-job training, all respondents (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6) had the same answers which were that the organizations provide 'on-job training to all of their new employees who just started working in their organizations. All respondents pointed out that in order to make sure that every new employee understood their roles and responsibilities, and knew how to do their job correctly and effectively, it was vital for their organization to provide on-job training in which every employee can learn from the actual work activities and from the real situations. Furthermore, all respondents stated that their organization provided on-the job training to an employee who was promoted to a new position in order to make sure that he/she knew how to do a job correctly and effectively.

Question 5: In your opinion, does employee training have a positive influence on employee performance? Why or why not?

All respondents (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6) agreed that training had a positive influence on employee performance. One of the respondents (P1) said that after training, the employees know more about their tasks and know how to do their job effectively. This could lead to an increase in the profits of the organization. The (P2) respondent stated that it was good to provide training to employees, so they could work more effectively as this resulted in the satisfaction of customers. However, the (P2) respondent said that when people applied for a particular position, the hotel expected that they would know or had experience about the work they had applied for.

The (P2) respondent further pointed out that his hotel could not afford the employee training cost because his hotel was small, as this hotel did not have the budget for staff training.

Four of the respondents (P3, P4, P5, P6) said that after training, the employees seemed to be more enthusiastic about doing their work. The respondents (P3, P4, P5, P6) also stated that after training, the employees did not only apply the skills obtained from training, but also brought new knowledge into the workplace. This did not only help

their business operations to be more effective and efficient, but also made their customers happy about their services. The respondents (P4, P5, P6) further emphasized that when customers were happy, they would go back for their service again. Besides, the (P4, P5, P6) respondents believed that employee training could improve employee retention rates. However, the respondents (P4, P5, P6) said that after employee training, they encountered a problem which is that the employees their organizations have sent for training resigned or left the hotel to work in other hotels.

4.4.3 Summary of the key findings from the interviews

What is the employee selection process in your organization?	Do you think the employee selection process in your organization is effective? Why or why not?	What do you expect the personal characteristics of candidates to be that are suitable for working in your organization? Why or why not?
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All 6 HR managers have similar methods for selecting a new employee to work in their organizations which are (1) application form screening, (2) job interviews, (3) background check (if the applicants have work experience from another organization), (4) hiring decision, and (5) Job offer. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 HR managers feel that employee selection methods in their organizations are effective because they have followed the employee selection criteria of their organizations strictly. ▪ 4 HR managers also think that employee selection process employed in their organizations is effective, but there are not many qualified people applying to work in the Hotel industry. Thus, after offering a job to a new employee, a new employee would receive on-the job training during their work probation period in order to ensure they can work effectively in a new work environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 4 HR managers select a candidate who has a particular personal characteristic based on a particular position, but normally they select the candidate who is: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Active • Friendly • Hard-working • Patient, • Honest • Polite • Enthusiastic ▪ 2 HR managers do not look for any particular personal characteristics. They only look for a candidate's experience and qualification that matches with the job requirement.

<p>Do you think the skills and experience of candidates are more important than their qualifications? Why or why not?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 3 HR managers point out that the skills and experience of candidates are more important than their qualifications because Skill and experience from previous relevant work helps them to work effectively and adapt quickly in the new workplace. ▪ Other 3 HR Managers state that the skills, experiences and qualifications of candidates are equally important because before the candidates are granted for the interview, they should have the associated qualifications first. Then, their abilities and skills can be tested during the interview. 	<p>Do you address any problems in the employee selection process? If yes, what are they?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ 2 HR managers accept that they have problems in the employee selection process in their organization which are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. It is hard to find a qualified candidate in the market. 2. The qualified candidate requires a high salary which cannot be met by the organization ▪ Other 4 HR managers do not encounter any problems during the employee selection process, but They have problems after the employee selection process which are: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. A new employee leaves his/her job after a few weeks without his/her notification. 2. A new employee is not honest. He/she steal the assets of the organization. 	<p>Does your organization provide training to employees?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All 6 HR managers acknowledge the importance of employee training in relation to employee work performance. However, 1 of 6 HR managers points out that his organization does not provide training to the staff because the organization is small and does not have a budget for staff training.
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<p>What kind of training does your organization provide to employees?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Customer service training ▪ Room service training ▪ Bartender training ▪ Housekeeping training ▪ English training ▪ Some particular Training for employees who work at management level 	<p>Does your organization provide training to employees before performing new jobs? Why or why not?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The organization provides on-the job training to a new employee who performs a new job in order to ensure a new employee understands his/her responsibility. ▪ The organization also provides on-the job training to an employee who is promoted to a new position in order to make sure that he/she know how to do a job correctly and effectively 	<p>In your opinion, does employee training have a positive influence on employee performance? Why or why not?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ All HR managers agree that employee training has a positive influence on employee and organizational performance. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Increasing productivity and profits 2. Employee training can increase employee satisfaction which results in customer satisfaction as well 3. Employees seem to be more enthusiastic and work harder after training. 4. Improving employee retention rates
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4.5 Hypotheses

This section discusses the hypotheses that are relevant to some objectives of this research study. The hypotheses mainly focus on 3 objectives in relation to the influence of employee training, employee satisfaction, and employee motivation on the organizational work performance. The hypotheses are verified and tested by employing quantitative analysing techniques that are available in ‘SPSS’ software.

4.5.1 Hypothesis 1

According to objective 5: **To understand the perspective of employees in the Lao hotel industry about the importance of training**, the researcher tests whether all employees acknowledge the importance of training in relation to their work performed in their organizations. Thus, the researcher has developed the following hypothesis:

H₁₀ - There is no difference in the views of employees towards the importance of training in relation to work performance in the organization.

H_{1a} - There is a difference in the views of employees towards the importance of training in relation to work performance in the organization.

✚ One-Way ANOVA is used to analyse the difference in three groups (Q23) towards the views that training is important in relation to their work performed in the organization (Q22). The result is shown as follows:

Table 12: The importance of training * the improvement of work performance in the organization

Descriptives								
How important to you is the training in relation to your performance in your organization?								
	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	95% Confidence Interval for Mean		Minimum	Maximum
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound		
Yes	37	3.81	.877	.144	3.52	4.10	2	5
No	41	4.02	.758	.118	3.79	4.26	2	5
Not sure	27	4.00	.832	.160	3.67	4.33	2	5
Total	105	3.94	.818	.080	3.78	4.10	2	5

The result shown in Table 12 illustrates that the three groups of people categorized by their answers to question 22: ‘**Do you think your organization provides adequate training for employees?**’ The three groups are classified as ‘yes’, ‘no’, and ‘not sure’. The mean values for the groups are 3.81, 4.02, and 4.00 respectively.

Table 13: Test of Homogeneity of Variances

Test of Homogeneity of Variances			
How important to you is the training in relation to your performance in your organization?			
Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
.960	2	102	.386

In the Test of Homogeneity of Variances table, the significance value of Levene statistic is 0.386 which is higher than 0.05. This means the variances of the 3 groups are similar.

Table 14: ANOVA – The importance of training in relation to employee work performance

ANOVA					
How important to you is the training in relation to your performance in your organization?					
	Sum of Squares	Df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Between Groups	1.006	2	.503	.747	.476
Within Groups	68.651	102	.673		
Total	69.657	104			

It can be seen that the significance value in the ANOVA table is 0.476 which is greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis (H_{10}) is accepted. In other words, there is no difference in the attitude of three groups towards the importance of training in relation to employee performance in the organization.

Table 15: Post Hoc Tests – Multiple Comparisons

Multiple Comparisons						
Dependent Variable: How important to you is the training in relation to your performance in your organization?						
Tukey HSD						
(I) Do you think your organization provides adequate training for employees?	(J) Do you think your organization provides adequate training for employees?	Mean Difference (I-J)	Std. Error	Sig.	95% Confidence Interval	
					Lower Bound	Upper Bound
Yes	No	-.214	.186	.487	-.66	.23
	Not sure	-.189	.208	.635	-.68	.30
No	Yes	.214	.186	.487	-.23	.66
	Not sure	.024	.203	.992	-.46	.51
Not sure	Yes	.189	.208	.635	-.30	.68
	No	-.024	.203	.992	-.51	.46

The Post Hoc Tests table indicates that the significance values (Sig.) of three groups are greater than 0.05. Thus, the null hypothesis is supported.

✚ In addition to ANOVA test, t-test is employed to analyse the difference between male and female (Q1) towards their levels of agreement that training is important in relation to their work performed in the organization (Q22), and the result is shown as follows:

Table 16: Independent Samples Test

		Levene's Test for Equality of Variances		t-test for Equality of Means						
		F	Sig.	t	df	Sig. (2-tailed)	Mean Difference	Std. Error Difference	95% Confidence Interval of the Difference	
									Lower	Upper
How important to you is the training in relation to your performance in your organization?	Equal variances assumed	1.935	.167	.390	103	.697	.063	.162	-.258	.384
	Equal variances not assumed			.395	100.715	.694	.063	.160	-.254	.380

▪ Table 16 shows the results of the independent samples t-test. The Levene’s results had an F-statistic of 1.935 with a significance value of 0.167. This indicates that the P-value is higher than 0.05; in other words, the two variables had no statistically different variance distributions. Therefore, the null hypothesis is accepted and the alternative hypothesis is rejected. As a result, there is no difference between male and female opinion on the level of importance of training in relation to their work performed in the organization.

▪ The significance (2-tailed) value in the T-test for Equality of Means column is 0.697. This means there is no different occurrence between the two variables. Furthermore, the value of 95% Confidence Interval of the Difference begins from -0.258 to +0.384 which indicates that there is at least one sample that has gone through 0 (zero) point.

Therefore, it can be said that there is no difference between male and female in relation to the opinion on the level of importance of training in relation to their work performed in the organization.

After testing the above hypothesis by using One-Way ANOVA and t-test in SPSS software, it can be concluded that all employees recognize the importance of training in relation to their work performed in the organization.

4.5.2 Hypothesis 2

According to objective 6: **To identify the impact of the financial incentives provided by the organization on employee performance**, the researcher has established the following hypothesis:

H2o - The financial incentives provided by the organizations have no effect on employee performance

H2a - The financial incentives provided by the organizations have a positive effect on employee performance.

✚ Correlation analysis is used to examine the relationship between Question 16 and Question 18 (number 2). The result is shown as follows:

Table 17: Correlation between Q16 and Q18 (number 2)

Correlations			
		How important to you is the work motivation in relation to your performance in your organisation?	I am motivated by the financial incentives provided by the organization
How important to you is the work motivation in relation to your performance in your organisation?	Pearson Correlation	1	.747**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	112.629	75.229
	Covariance	1.083	.723
	N	105	105
I am motivated by the financial incentives provided by the organization.	Pearson Correlation	.747**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	Sum of Squares and Cross-products	75.229	89.962
	Covariance	.723	.865
	N	105	105

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

The information shown in Table 17 demonstrates that two variables are linearly related to each other. The correlation between the two variables is 0.747 which is equivalent to 74.7% of the correlation coefficient.


In Table 17, the significant value (P-value) is 0.000 which is less than 0.05. This means the financial incentives provided by the organization have a positive effect on employee performance. As a result, the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted

4.5.3 Hypothesis 3

According to objective 7: **To determine the relationship between satisfaction of employee and the pay offered by the organization**, the researcher has developed the following hypothesis:

H_{3o} - There is no relationship between employee satisfaction and the salary paid by the organization.

H_{3a} - There is a relationship between employee satisfaction and the salary paid by the organization.

 Cross-tabulation is employed to analyse the relationship between Question 6 and Question7 (number 4 in the table). The result is displayed as follows:

According to Table 18, of the total 105 employees, 60% of them say 'yes' they are satisfied with their current jobs, while 40 of them say 'no', they are not satisfied with their current job.

Based on Table 18, of 105 employees, 57 (52.3%) employees agree and strongly agree that their organizations pay them well for work, while 29 (27.6%) employees disagree and strongly disagree that their organizations pay them well for the work. 19 (18.1%) of employees have neutral opinion about the pay in their organizations.

Table 18: The organization pays me well for the work * I am satisfied with my job Cross-tabulation

			Overall, are you satisfied with your job?		Total
			Yes	No	
My organization pays me well for the work	Disagree strongly	Count	1	5	6
		% within Statement: My organization pays me well for the work	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%
	% within Question: Overall, are you satisfied with your job?	1.6%	11.9%	5.7%	
	Disagree	Count	16	7	23
		% within Statement: My organization pays me well for the work	69.6%	30.4%	100.0%
% within Question: Overall, are you satisfied with your job?	25.4%	16.7%	21.9%		
Neither agree nor disagree	Count	10	9	19	
	% within Statement: My organization pays me well for the work	52.6%	47.4%	100.0%	
% within Question: Overall, are you satisfied with your job?	15.9%	21.4%	18.1%		
Agree	Count	24	20	44	
	% within My organization pays me well for the work	54.5%	45.5%	100.0%	
% within Overall, are you satisfied with your job?	38.1%	47.6%	41.9%		
Agree strongly	Count	12	1	13	
	% within Statement: My organization pays me well for the work	92.3%	7.7%	100.0%	
% within Question: Overall, are you satisfied with your job?	19.0%	2.4%	12.4%		
Total	Count	63	42	105	
	% within Statement: My organization pays me well for the work	60.0%	40.0%	100.0%	
	% within Question: Overall, are you satisfied with your job?	100.0%	100.0%	100.0%	

Table 19: Chi-Square Tests of Q6 and Q7

	Value	df	Asymp. Sig. (2-sided)
Pearson Chi-Square	12.200 ^a	4	.016
Likelihood Ratio	13.688	4	.008
Linear-by-Linear Association	2.545	1	.111
N of Valid Cases	105		

a. 2 cells (20.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 2.40.

The Chi-Square test illustrates that the Asymptotic significance value is 0.016 which is less than 0.05. This, therefore, means the null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is supported. Consequently, There is a relationship between employee satisfaction and the pay offered by the organization.

4.6 Conclusion

In conclusion the Lao hotel employees felt comfortable to work in (1) Teamwork working environment, (2) Friendly working environment and (3) No discrimination working environment. Thus, the Lao hotels should deliver those working environments in order to retain skilful and experienced employees. In the hotel industry in Laos, employees are motivated by money more than other factors. Therefore, it is important for the Lao hotel industry to increase salaries for their employees in order to enhance their performance and involve themselves to the goals of the organizations.

4.7 Chapter summary

This chapter presents the results and findings of the data collected from both the interview and the questionnaire survey.

In the questionnaire survey, there are 105 respondents in total participating in this survey. The first section presents the demographic statistics including gender, age group, level of education and work experience. In the second section, the overall level of employee satisfaction in the hotels in Laos is demonstrated, and in the third section, the level of employee motivation, which includes the factors that motivate employees the most, are presented. The final section of the questionnaire survey presents the training that the Laos hotels have provided to their employees in order to improve their employees' work performance.

In the interview, the answers from 6 respondents to each interview question have been presented by linking the same ideas to produce a meaningful conclusion in order to have the main idea which was talked about and discussed in the interview. The results of the interview lead to better understanding of how HR managers in the Hotels in Laos select their new employees and what training they provide to their employees.

The final section of the chapter focuses on testing hypotheses, which aims at achieving the objectives of the research. The three hypotheses are tested by applying relevant quantitative analysis tools which are One-ANOVA, T-Test, Correlations and Cross-tabulation.

The next chapter discusses and interprets the findings, which are essential for answering main research question and sub-questions in this research study.

Chapter Five: Discussion of findings

5.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the results of data collection and data analysis which are related to the research objectives in this study are presented. This chapter discusses employee selection, employee training, employee satisfaction, and employee motivation in the hotel industry in Laos based on the findings from the previous chapter. It explains in detail about what employee selection process the Lao hotels use in order to have the right employee for the right position, and what training the Lao hotels have provided to their employees in order to help their employees to perform better. In addition, the researcher investigates the level of employee satisfaction and discusses the factors that influence satisfaction of employees in hotels in Laos. Finally, the researcher discusses the factors that motivate hotel employees to do extra work.

5.2 Employee selection process in hotels in Laos.

The purpose of this research is to identify and determine the practical HRM that supports the hotel industry in Laos to have competitive advantage, attain their goals and sustain their business. HRM is strongly related to the success of a business and the improvement of employee work performance (Phillips & Gully, 2014; Prasad, 2013). One of HRM functions is employee selection. As the success of any organizations, large or small, mainly relies on the ability and efficiency of the people in their various roles, it is important for the organization to have good employee selection methods to select people who do not only have the ability and competence to achieve duties and responsibilities successfully, but also have the potential to grow with the organization.

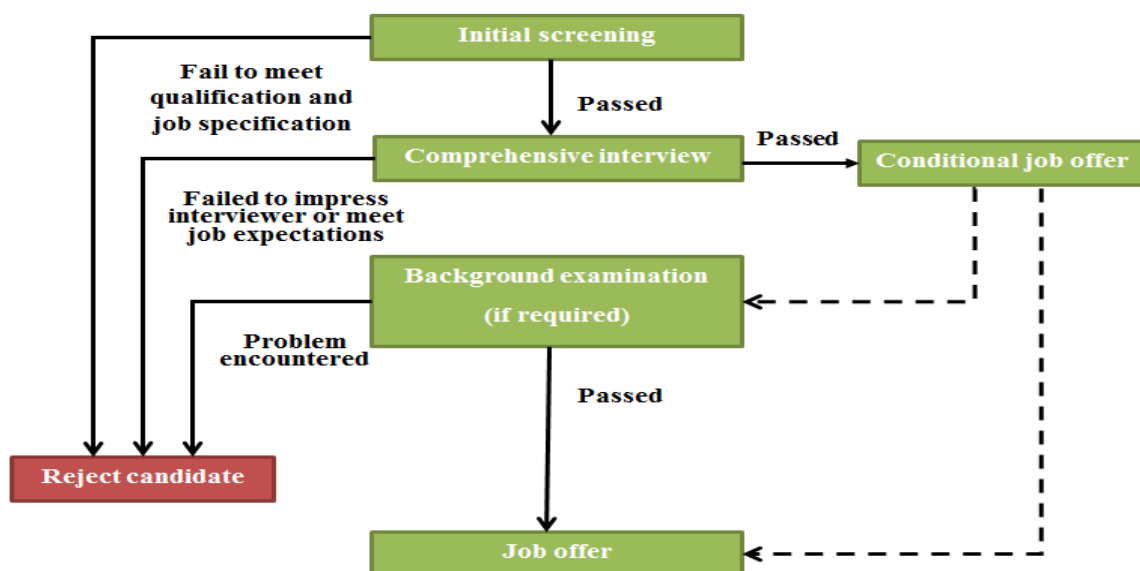
In other words, in order to have competitiveness and maintain its leadership in the market, the organization should select and hire the right people who can contribute to its business (Jackson et al., 2012). As jobs differ, the organization requires wide ranges of knowledge, skills, and ability. People also differ from one another in many significant ways, so the organization has to select the right type of people to the right position. If a worker is selected and assigned to do a job in which his/her character, ability, and knowledge are not suited, it is likely that he/she will fail and cause a problem for the organizational management. Providing the organization with the right workers with the right skills in the right place can result in the

improvement of organizational productivity and a high quality of service (Lussier & Hendon, 2013). In order to select and hire the right candidate who is the best qualified to fill the job position the organization should have an effective employee selection process (Jackson et al., 2012).

Therefore, in order to achieve the first objective of this study, the researcher has interviewed HR managers in the six hotels in Laos about the methods of employee selection they have employed in order to find the right person for a job in their hotel. The main question in this interview section is: “What is the employee selection process in your organization?”

The result of the study indicates that all respondents have similar methods in selecting new employees. After advertising a job opening in newspapers, trade journals and on websites, they (P1, P2, P3, P4, P5, P6) said that they had five stages in employee selection. First one was screening application form. The second one was conducting the job interviews. The third one was checking the background of the candidates (if the applicants have work experience for another organization. The fourth one was hiring decision, and the last one was Job offer. (See Figure 25)

Figure 25: Selection process in hotels in Laos



Source: Developed by the researcher

In addition, all respondents are of the opinion that the employee selection process in their hotels was effective. Two of the respondents pointed out that there was no problem in selecting a new employee for the job because they just hired a person who had educational

qualifications and work experience that matched with the job. Other four respondents said that their selection process was practical because they did not expect much from the candidates who applied for a job opening in the hotel industry. They knew that the most of the labour in the market did not have previous hotel training, and a person who had high educational qualification did not apply for work in the service hotel industry. Therefore, they were likely to select a candidate who seemed to work hard and be honest. Afterwards, the hotels could train them how to work in the new environment.

5.3 Employee training in hotels in Laos

In order to help employees to improve their performance which results in productivity and high quality of service in the organization, it is necessary for the organization to develop and improve employee knowledge, skills, and ability (KSA) periodically (Barling & Cooper, 2008). Another function of HRM is personnel training and development. The training activities can help to increase skill and ability of employees, and improve employee retention rates (Hashim, 2013). The success of the organization is likely to depend on how well its employees perform their work, so employee training and development which brings about high performance of employees is essential to the success of the organization (Jackson, Schuler, & Werner, 2009). In today's age of competition, every organization considers training and development (T&D) activities as an investment in the employees, not as expenditure. The organization wants their employees to have the best skills and full knowledge. In turn, their employees can perform better in their job, boost high level of productivity, and maintain high quality of service (Jackson et al., 2009).

Thus, in order to achieve the second objective: To find out whether Lao hotels have provided training to their employees and what training Lao hotel employees have received in order to help them to perform their job better, the second section of the interview is about employee training. The two main questions in this section are “does your organization provide training to employees?” And “could you tell me about some particular training provided by your organization?”

According to the result in the interview of HR managers in Lao Hotels, all six respondents acknowledged that training activities were important for their employees as training practices could help their employees to work to a high standard. However, not all six of the respondents have sent their employees for training activities. Only five respondents (P1, P3, P4, P5, P6) said that their organizations have provided training to their staff, but one (P2) of

the respondents said that his organization did not send employees to training activities because his organization was small and did not have the budget for employee training activities.

In addition to the interview of HR managers in Lao hotels, the researcher is interested in the opinion of hotel employees about training activities provided by their organizations. Hence, the researcher has conducted a questionnaire survey to ask hotel employees' opinions about the training in their organizations. The result shown in section 4.3.3 Employee training (Question 23) indicates that from the total number of questionnaire respondents which is 105 people, 52 respondents have attended training activities and 53 respondents did not yet have training. This can imply that 50% of respondents in the hotels did not receive any particular training to help them to perform their work better.

The researcher is further keen to know what training they have received, and the result presented in section 4.3.3 Employee training (Question 24) demonstrates that the majority of respondents has received 'customer service' and 'on-the job' training, which covers 30.9% and 27.7% respectively. Among them, the employees who have attended 'English language', 'safety concerns' and 'food and beverage service' training are 19.1%, 14.9%, and 7.4% respectively. Besides, the result shown in section 4.3.3 Employee training (Question 28) indicates that the majority of respondents feel that their organizations should provide more 'English language' training and 'Customer service' training in order to help them to work better.

5.4 Employee motivation level in hotels in Laos

In addition to the improvement of knowledge, skill, and ability (KSA) of employees, the organization should also be aware of employees' motivational factors in order to ensure that employees have a high standard of work performance in the organization. Motivation is "an employee's desire or drive to achieve". Employee motivation is one of the crucial factors that contributes to organizational success as employee motivation is related to job performance (Cassidy & Kreitner, 2010).

Motivated workers are necessary for all businesses because motivated workers are productive workers, and productive workers are more profitable and professional than unmotivated workers. Unmotivated workers seem to be less productive and creative in the organization, so the organization needs motivated workers rather than unmotivated workers (Waldman, 2014).

Motivated employees tend to engage and be fully involved in the organizational activities, and they seem to be excited about their work and are willing to act and provide better job performance for their organizations (Waldman, 2014).

Besides, many researchers and psychologists generally agree that apart from improving KSA of employees, the organization has to increase employee motivation as well in order to increase job performance in the organization (Aamodt, 2010). There are 4 factors that motivate employees in the organization, namely needs, satisfaction, expectations, and goals. This means the organizational policy has a direct influence on employees because these 4 factors are influenced by the organizational policy such as challenging work, rewards, and participation (Cassidy & Kreitner, 2010). (See Figure 26)

Figure 26: Employee motivation and job performance (figure adapted and modified from Cassidy and Kreitner, 2010, p. 211)



Source: Cassidy and Kreitner (2010, p.211)

Cassidy and Kreitner (2010) also point out that the motivators of each employee vary, so it is important for the organization to study, examine, explore and understand what factor motivates each employee in their own organization in order to enhance performance of employees.

Thus, in order to achieve the third objective of this study: To identify factors that motivate hotel employees to perform at a high standard, the researcher has conducted a questionnaire survey to ask hotel employees for their opinion about their motivation in their workplaces.

The results appear in **Table 8 (Q18) in chapter 4** and illustrates that the majority of respondents agree that they have motivational experience in their organization. However, to some extent, there is a high rate of employees who disagree that they have a motivational experience in their organizations.

Besides, the result that appeared in **Figure 17 (Q19) in section 4.3.2 Employee motivation** in chapter 4, demonstrates that the first most influential factor that motivates the respondents is increasing salary, followed by the other four top factors that motivate them to work harder. Those factors are motivational talks, job security, financial awards, and recognition respectively. From the perspective of the respondents the opportunity to work with freedom and promotion are the least influential factors.

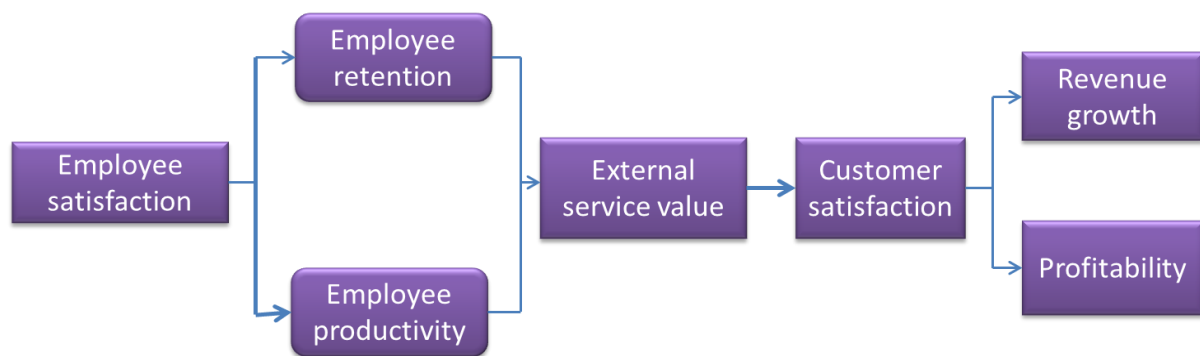
Again, the researcher asked the overall opinion of employees about whether they are motivated by their organizations to work harder or not, and the result shown in **Figure 19 (Q21) in section 4.3.2 Employee motivation in chapter 4**, reveals that the response rate between 'yes', 'no' and 'not sure' answers is not much different. However, most respondents are not sure whether they get motivated by their organizations to work harder or not.

5.5 Employee satisfaction level in hotels in Laos

Many organizations spend a lot of money, effort, and time to try to maintain a reasonable standard of job satisfaction among their staff in the belief that job satisfaction is connected to many positive consequences for individuals, their colleagues, and their organizations. Dissatisfaction with a job can result in many negative impacts on the organization (Bernstein, 2011). The studies of Fisher (2003), Judge et al. (2001), Harrison, Newman, & Roth (2006), and Jacobs & Solomon (1977) reveal that employees who are satisfied with their work seem to be more motivated, perform better, and work harder than dissatisfied employees (as cited in Bernstein, 2011). Furthermore, the studies of Borman et al. (2001), Ilies, Scott, & Judge (2006), Moorman & Byrne (2005), and Organ, Podsakoff, & MacKenzie (2006) demonstrate that job satisfaction can bring about organizational citizenship behaviour (OCB) in which employees go beyond, or work more than the work requirements, in their organizations (as cited in Bernstein, 2011).

The result of many studies demonstrates that employees' job satisfaction is necessary for the organization because it influences employees' performance and organizational performance (Chanda & Shen, 2009). Employee satisfaction is also positively linked to organizational commitment and is relatively connected to organizational productivity (Nel et al., 2011; Paauwe, 2004). Moreover, it is interesting that some studies point out that the high level of job satisfaction can reduce employees' absenteeism and prevent turnover of skilled employees in the organization (Bernstein, 2011; Chanda & Shen, 2009; Nel et al., 2011). Another study by Hessket et al. (1997) shows that there is a relationship between employees' job satisfaction and organizational success (as cited in Egger & Maurer, 2014). (See Figure 27)

Figure 27: the relationship between employee satisfaction and profit (figure adapted and modified from Rai (2013, p. 321))



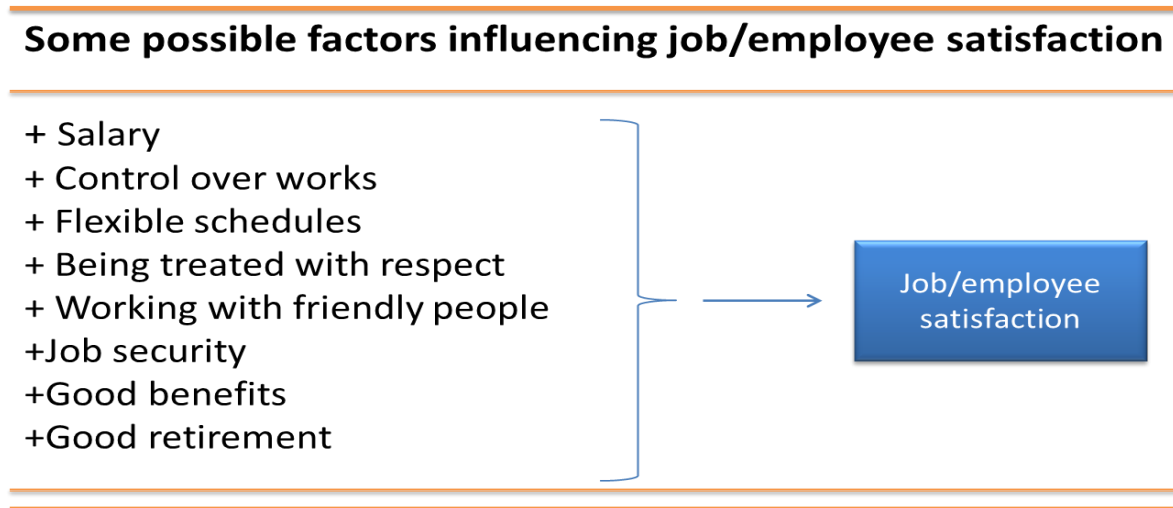
Source: Rai (2013, p. 321)

The graph indicates that employee satisfaction can bring about greater productivity and higher rate of employee retention. According to positive employee thinking and feeling, the external service value or customer service is improved with better outcomes for the customer. This increases customer satisfaction by meeting or going beyond the customer's expectations. As a result, the customers turn into loyal customers. When customers become loyal, they will return again and again to use goods or services from a business which leads to revenue growth and profitability (Egger & Maurer, 2014).

Furthermore, there are some studies that indicate there are some important factors that contribute to job satisfaction in the organization (Nelson & Quick, 2012). According to Herzberg's Motivation-Hygiene theory, there are 7 critical factors that lead to job satisfaction which are (1) the organizational policy and administration, (2) interpersonal relations, (3)

supervision, (4) working conditions, (5) salary, (6) status, and (7) job security (see Figure 28).

Figure 28: Factors affecting job/employee satisfaction (Figure adapted and modified from Mathis and Jackson (2010, p. 158))



Source: Mathis and Jackson (2010, p. 158)

However, different people have different expectations and needs to be satisfied in their workplace (Nelson & Quick, 2012).

Hence, in order to achieve the fourth objective of this research study: To determine factors that bring about a high level of job satisfaction among employees in order to engage them in organizational goals and reduce the rate of employee turnover in hotels in Laos, the researcher has further conducted a questionnaire survey to ask the opinion of hotel employees about their job satisfaction in their organizations.

The information appearing in **Figure 10 (Q9)** in chapter 4 shows that most employees prefer to work in a teamwork working environment and friendly working environment, This is followed by respondents who prefer to work in a no discrimination working environment and a supportive working environment in their organizations. The information presented in **Table 6 (Q11)** in chapter 4 demonstrates that the majority of respondents agree that they have had a positive experience and this is followed by respondents who have a neutral opinion about their positive experience in their current organizations.

Besides, the information shown in the **Figure 12 (Q12)** illustrates that the majority of respondents feel that they sometimes receive appropriate rewards for the job performance

recognition. This is followed by respondents who feel that they always receive appropriate rewards for job performance. The information presented in the **Figure 14 (Q14)** in chapter 4 reveals that the three top factors that make the respondents satisfied with their present job, or still work in their current organization, are (1) salary, (2) job security, and (3) friendly working environment.

5.6 The influence of employee training on employee performance

From the analysis in **Table 9 (Q22) in Chapter 4**, the result showed that the majority of respondents acknowledge the importance of training in which they feel it can help improve their work performance in their organizations. More than 70% of respondents agree that training assists them in performing their job better. Besides, the researcher is also interested in the opinion of hotel employees about whether the training activities provided by their organizations are adequate or not. The result shown in **Table 10 (Q23) in Chapter 4** illustrates that the majority of respondents are not sure whether their organizations provide adequate training for them or not. This covers 65% of the total responds rate, and among them, 19.2% of employees do not think that they have adequate training. The remaining 15% are those who feel that they have adequate training that helps them to perform their job better. The findings can imply that most employees working in the Lao hotels recognize the importance of training, but there is not sufficient training provided by their organizations. It can be concluded that training activities have positive influences on the employee's work performance in the Lao hotel organization.

In addition, two studies were carried out to examine the difference in employees' views towards the importance of training activities. The findings support the hypothesis **H₁₀**: There is no difference in the views of employees towards the importance of training in relation to work performance in the organization. The results are presented as follows:

First, the study of the difference between three groups (Q23) towards their levels of agreement that training is important for the quality of their work performance (Q22). The three groups are categorized by their answers to the question 23: '**Do you think your organization provides adequate training for employees?**' The three groups are classified as 'yes', 'no', and 'not sure'. These findings show that there is no difference in the variances between the 3 groups towards their agreement about the importance of training (refer to Table 13). This means employees recognize the significance of training activities and its positive contribution to the quality of their work performance.

Second, the study of the difference between male and female (Q1) towards their levels of agreement that training is important in relation to their work performed in the organization (Q22) shows that there was no difference in the variances between male and female towards their agreement about the importance of training (refer Table 16). These findings indicate that there is no difference between male and female in relation to the opinion on the level of importance of training in relation to their work performed in the organization and it can be implied that all employees regardless of their gender in the Lao hotel organization recognize the importance of training activities in relation to the improvement of their performance.

The analyses above aim at achieving the objective 5: To examine the influence of training on the employee's work as performed in the Lao hotel industry. The results illustrate that the majority of employees recognize the importance of training in relation to their work performed in the organization. Therefore, the Lao hotels should provide more training for their employees in order to help them to increase their knowledge, abilities, and skills which will result in the improvement of their work performance and the increase in the quality of the service in the organization.

5.7 The impact of the motivational program implemented by the organization on employee performance

From the analysis in **Figure 16 (Q16)** in section **4.3.2 Employee motivation** in chapter 4, the result revealed that the majority of respondents feel that employee motivation in their organizations is important and very important, which covered more than 80% of the total response rate. Furthermore, the information shown in **Table 8 (number 2)** in chapter 4 presents that most respondents agree that their organizations offer financial incentives to employees to motivate them to work harder, and this accounts for 65.7% of the total response rates. The findings indicate that the motivational programme implemented by the organization has a positive influence on employee performance.

Besides, another study was conducted to examine the impact of the motivational programme implemented by the organization on employee performance. The findings supports hypothesis **H₂₀**: The financial incentives provided by the organization have a positive effect on employee performance. There are two groups that have been tested. The two groups are categorized by their answers to the question 17: '**Does your organization offer financial incentive to employees to motivate them to work harder?**' The two groups are classified

as 'yes', and 'no'. These results are obtained from the analyses of question 17 and question 18 (number 2 in the Table) in section **4.3.2: Employee motivation**, which are as follows:

The study of the difference between the two groups (Q17) towards their levels of agreement that the financial incentives provided by the organization have a positive effect on employee performance (Q18 number 2 in the table) showed that there was no difference in the variances between the 2 groups towards their agreement about the financial incentives provided by the organization (refer to Table 17). These findings demonstrate that the financial incentives provided by the organization have a positive effect on employee performance.

The analyses above aim at achieving the objective 6: To identify the impact of the financial incentives implemented by the organization on employee performance. The results demonstrate that most of the employees agree that the financial incentives provided by the organization have a positive effect on their performance. Therefore, the Lao hotels should put emphasis on improving the financial incentive programme in order to increase employee motivation which can lead to employee engagement, higher employee productivity and a higher level of efficiency of employees in the workplace.

5.8 The relationship between satisfaction of employee and the pay offered by the organization

The result shown in section **4.3.1 Employee satisfaction (Question 6)** in chapter 4 reveals that the majority of respondents are satisfied with their current job. 60% of respondents feel that they are satisfied with their current job while 40% are those who are not satisfied with their current job. In addition, the information shown in **Table 5 (Q7) and in Figure 9 (Q8)** in chapter 4 demonstrates that the majority of respondents are satisfied with the pay and employment benefits. The findings suggest that the employment benefits and the pay offered by the organization have an influence on the satisfaction of employees.

Besides, another analysis was conducted to figure out whether there is a relationship between employee satisfaction and the pay offered by the organization or not. The findings support the hypothesis **H_{3a}**: There is a relationship between employee satisfaction and the salary paid by the organization.

From the study of the relationship between Question 6 and Question 7 (number 4 in the table) using cross-tabulation, it showed that there were 63 employees who were satisfied with their current job, and, among them, 36 employees agree and strongly agree that their organization pay them well for the work (refer to Table 18). The findings imply that the salary/pay offered by the organization has an influence on the satisfaction of employees in the organization.

The above analyses aim at achieving the objective 7: To determine the relationship between satisfaction of employees and the salary paid by the organization. The results reveal that there is a positive relationship between employee satisfaction and the salary paid by the organization. Therefore, the Lao hotels should focus on improving their salary structure and policies in order to increase employee satisfaction which brings about the reduction of the employee turnover rate, organizational commitment among employees, and organizational citizenship behaviour.

5.9 Conclusion

To conclude, it was found that the hotel industry in Laos seems not to pay much attention to HRM in their organizations. Thus, in order to improve their current HRM practices, it is vital for the hotel business in Laos to check and review their HRM including employee selection process and criteria, employee training programmes and staff retreat workshops, employee motivation and employee satisfaction schemes, and rewards and pay points system.

5.10 Chapter summary

Chapter Five elaborates and discusses the findings of chapter four, and the chapter five answers all aspects covered in the research objectives and sub-research questions. These findings are supported by relevant literature in order to draw the conclusions of the research. In addition, all relevant hypotheses are statistically analysed and critically tested which bring out the fulfilment of the research objectives and the achievement of the aim of this research.

Chapter Six is about conclusions, recommendations, and further areas of research.

Chapter Six: Conclusion of Findings and Recommendations

6.1 Introduction

In the previous chapter, the findings, which are obtained from data analysis, are examined and fully discussed. This chapter begins with the research conclusion where the researcher summarizes the results of research objectives. This is followed by recommendations for the hotel industry in Laos to improve their HRM practices. Some of the limitations of this research study are displayed and presented. Finally, possible further research is suggested.

6.2 Research conclusion

The aim of this research study was to identify and determine the practical and suitable HRM approaches in relation to employee selection, employee training, employee satisfaction, and employee motivation that supported the hotel industry in Laos to have a competitive advantage, attain their goals and sustain their business. As HRM plays a key role in developing an organization and has direct influence on employee performance, employee satisfaction and work motivation, it is important to know the effective HRM practices that support employees to perform at their best. In recent times, it was claimed that the growth rate of hotels in Laos was more than triple and the number of foreign investments in the hospitality industry has grown continuously. However, when compared to regional and international competitors, the hotel business in Laos still underperforms in relation to quality of customer service.

According to the literature, the main reason for the low quality of customer service is from ineffective HR management and HR development in the hotel business in Laos. Thus, in order to identify and determine the practical and optimal HRM that can boost employee and organizational performance in the hotel business, it is vital to know the current HRM practices in the existing hotels. Studying and understanding the current HRM practices in the existing hotels helps to identify the strengths and weaknesses of the current HRM practices in relation to employee selection process, employee training, employee motivation and employee satisfaction, and then, work towards optimal solutions

The primary data of this research study were mainly collected in six hotels in Laos, namely City Inn, Rashmi's Plaza Hotel, Best Western Vientiane Hotel, Lane Xang Hotel, Settha Palace Hotel, and Vientiane Golden Hotel. These hotels were used as sources of data collection. This research study also adopts and applies mixed methods (both qualitative and quantitative approaches) in order to ensure that the research problems are fully answered and successfully addressed. In the qualitative method, 6 HR managers, one from each selected hotel, were interviewed in order to explore and understand their current practise of HRM in relation to employee selection and employee training in their organizations.

In the quantitative approach, a questionnaire survey was conducted in the 6 selected hotels in order to seek to understand the perspective of all employees on HRM in relation to employee training, job satisfaction, and work motivation in their workplace. 120 questionnaires were distributed in the 6 hotels, with 105 questionnaires returned resulting in an 87.4% response rate. In terms of data analysis, firstly, the data collected from the interviews were analysed by applying and mixing 5 approaches together, including text coding, content analysis, thematic analysis, narrative analysis and comparative analysis. Secondly, the data collected from the questionnaire survey were analysed by using statistical analysis software 'SPSS'. The results of findings help to answer the sub-research questions and are clearly explained as follows:

The first sub-research question is to explore procedures that HR managers have employed in order to select the right employee to the right position in the Lao hotel industry. The findings demonstrate that the majority of HR managers at Lao hotels have similar methods and process in selecting a new employee to work in their organizations which are (1) screening application form, (2) conducting the job interviews. (3) checking the background of the candidates (if the applicants have work experience for another organization), (4) hiring decision, and (5) Job offer.

The second sub-question is to find out training programmes that employees have received in order to develop their capacity of their work performance in hotels in Laos. The result illustrates that all HR managers admit that training activities are essential for their employees, so their organizations have recently sent their employees to have training. However, in addition to the interview of HR managers in Lao hotels, the researcher conducted a questionnaire survey to ask the opinion of hotel employees at all levels about training activities provided by their organizations. It appears that of the 105 employees who participated in the survey, 52 respondents have attended training activities and 53

respondents did not have training yet. Furthermore, the majority of the respondents feel that they need more training. Most of the respondents need to attend training courses, namely 'English language' training and 'Customer service' training in order to perform better at their work.

The third sub-research question is to identify factors that motivate hotel employees to perform at high standard levels. The result of the study demonstrates that most of the respondents feel that their organizations create the conditions whereby they are motivated to work harder. In addition, the result indicates that the most influential factor that motivates the respondents to work harder is increasing salary.

The fourth sub-research question is to determine factors that bring about a high level of job satisfaction among employees in order to reduce the rate of employee turnover and engage them in organizational goals. The result of the study reveals that the majority of respondents are satisfied and happy with their current work and organizational work conditions. Besides, the majority of the respondents point out that the main factor that brings about the high level of their job satisfaction is salary. The other two most influential factors that lead to employee satisfaction in the Lao hotel industry are job security and friendly working environment.

The fifth sub-research question is to examine the influence of training on the employee's work performed in the organization. In order to answer this sub-question, the researcher has created a hypothesis **H₁₀**: There is no difference in the views of employees towards the importance of training in relation to work performance in the organization. The result of testing this hypothesis shows that the majority of employees in the hotel industry recognize the importance of training in relation to their work performed in the organization. Most of them feel that training has a positive influence on their work performed in the organization (refer to 4.6.1 Hypothesis 1 in Chapter 4).

The sixth sub-research question is to identify the impact of the financial incentives implemented by the organization on employee performance. In order to answer this sub-research question, the researcher has developed the hypothesis **H₂₀**: The financial incentives provided by the organization have no effect on employee performance. The result of testing this hypothesis reveals that the financial incentives provided by the organization have a positive impact on employee performance (refer to 4.6.2 Hypothesis 2 in Chapter 4). This means the majority of hotel employees have no different opinion that financial incentives provided by their organization motivate them to work harder.

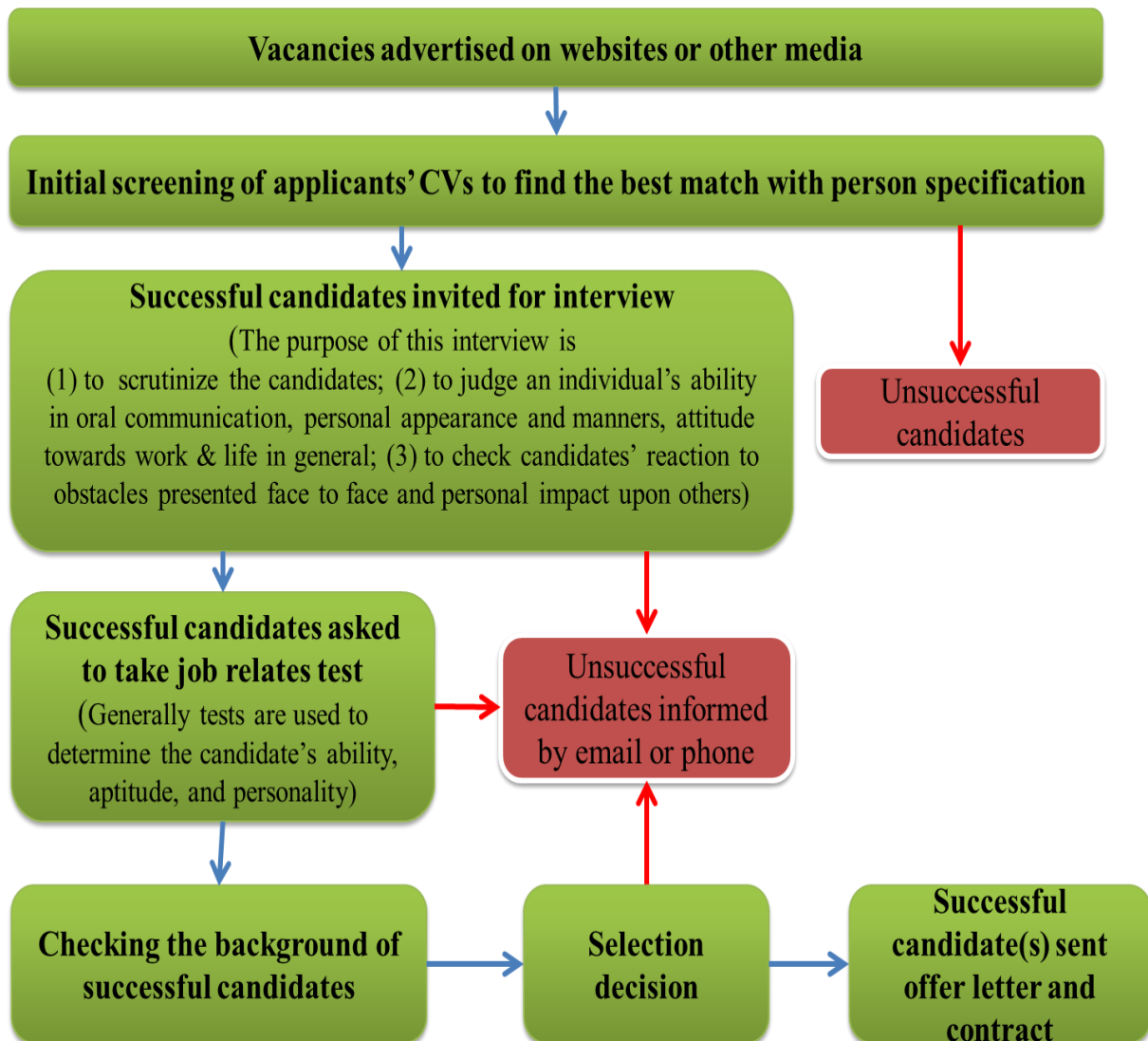
Finally, the seventh sub-question is to determine the relationship between satisfaction of employees and the salary paid by the organization. In order to answer this sub-research question, the researcher has developed **H_{3o}**: There is no relationship between employee satisfaction and the pay/salary offered by the organization. The result of testing this hypothesis indicates that there is a positive relationship between employee satisfaction and high pay/salary offered by the organization (refer to 46.3 Hypothesis 3 in chapter 4).

6.3 Recommendations for hotels in Laos

According to the results and the findings of the study, the researcher has produced some recommendations that help to improve HRM in the hotel industry in Laos.

- ✚ The hotels should reconsider the process of employee selection because the proper selection and placement of personnel seems to build up a suitable workforce and improve the efficiency of organizational operations and the morale of employees. Besides, the selection of the right person for every job is more likely to help to reduce the rate of labour turnover and absenteeism and increase the quality and quantity of performance. It appears that when the right people are selected for the right jobs, job satisfaction and work efficiency will be increased. However, there is no ideal employee selection procedure that is appropriate for all cases or situations. Thus, in the case of the hotels in Laos, the researcher suggests that the Lao hotels should follow the steps in the selection process below (see Figure 29) in order to improve the effectiveness of the employee selection procedure in the Lao hotels.

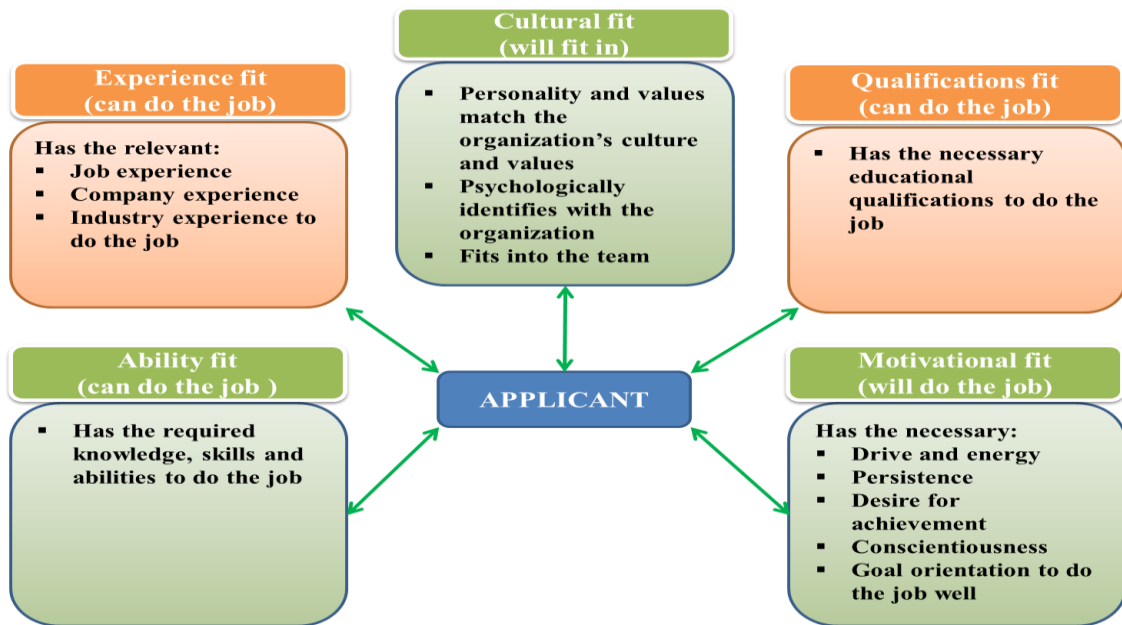
Figure 29: Steps in the employee selection process (Figure is modified and adapted from: Nel, Werner, Botha, Du Plessis, Mey, Ngalo, Poisat, & Van Hoek (2015))



Source: Nel, Werner, Botha, Du Plessis, Mey, Ngalo, Poisat, & Van Hoek (2015, p. 91)

- ✚ In the employee selection criteria, apart from considering qualifications, experience, knowledge, skills, and abilities of the candidates, the hotels should consider the candidates' attitudes, values, personality. This is because person-organization fit can lead to organisational commitment and intention to stay (Stone, 2013). Furthermore, motivational and cultural fit can bring about high job performance (Stone, 2013). Hence, in the selection of employees, the hotels should ensure that they select and hire the candidate who has the right personality, attitude and values to match the values and culture of their work environment (see Figure 30).

Figure 30: Candidate fit (Figure is modified and adapted from: Stone (2013, p.253))



Source: Stone (2013, p. 253)

✚ The hotel should provide more training that is necessary for employees, especially a Customer service course and English language course in order to improve and increase their ability and better their performance at work (refer to **Figure 23** in chapter 4). Besides, the hotels should reconsider their training needs analysis program in order to ensure that the training increases productivity in the organization. The researcher recommends that the hotels should adopt and apply a training needs analysis model below in order to guarantee that the training benefits the organization (see Figure 31).

Figure 31: Assessing training and development needs (Figure is modified and adapted from: DeNisi and Griffin (2008, p. 328))

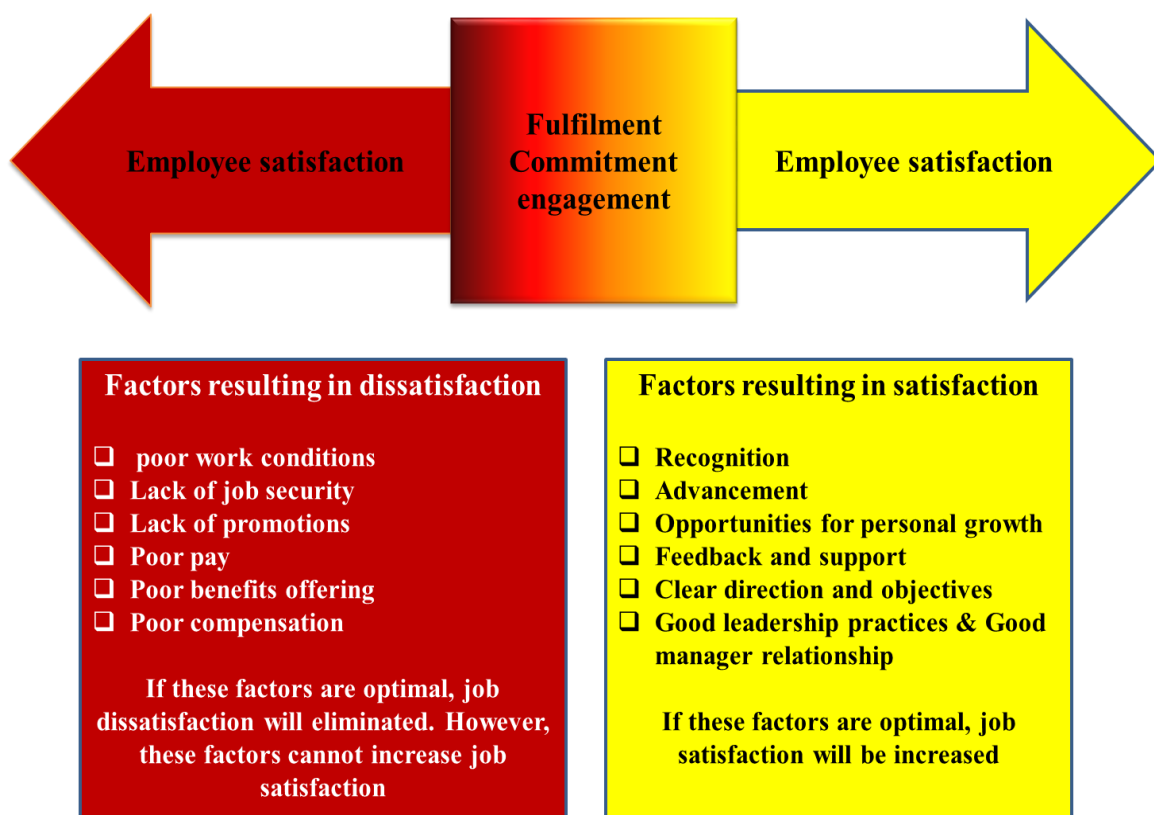


Source: DeNisi and Griffin (2008, p. 328)

*Note: full explanation of this graph is in section 2.6: Training improving employee performance in chapter 2.

✚ The hotels should understand that apart from self-actualization needs, self-esteem needs, money is the most important factor that drives hotel employees to work harder (see **Figure 17** in section **4.3.2 Employee motivation** in chapter 4). In addition, the hotels should consider the factors that are illustrated in Figure 32 shown below in order to be able to increase employees' job satisfaction which brings about an increase in employee commitment to the organization and results in their organizational citizenship behaviours.

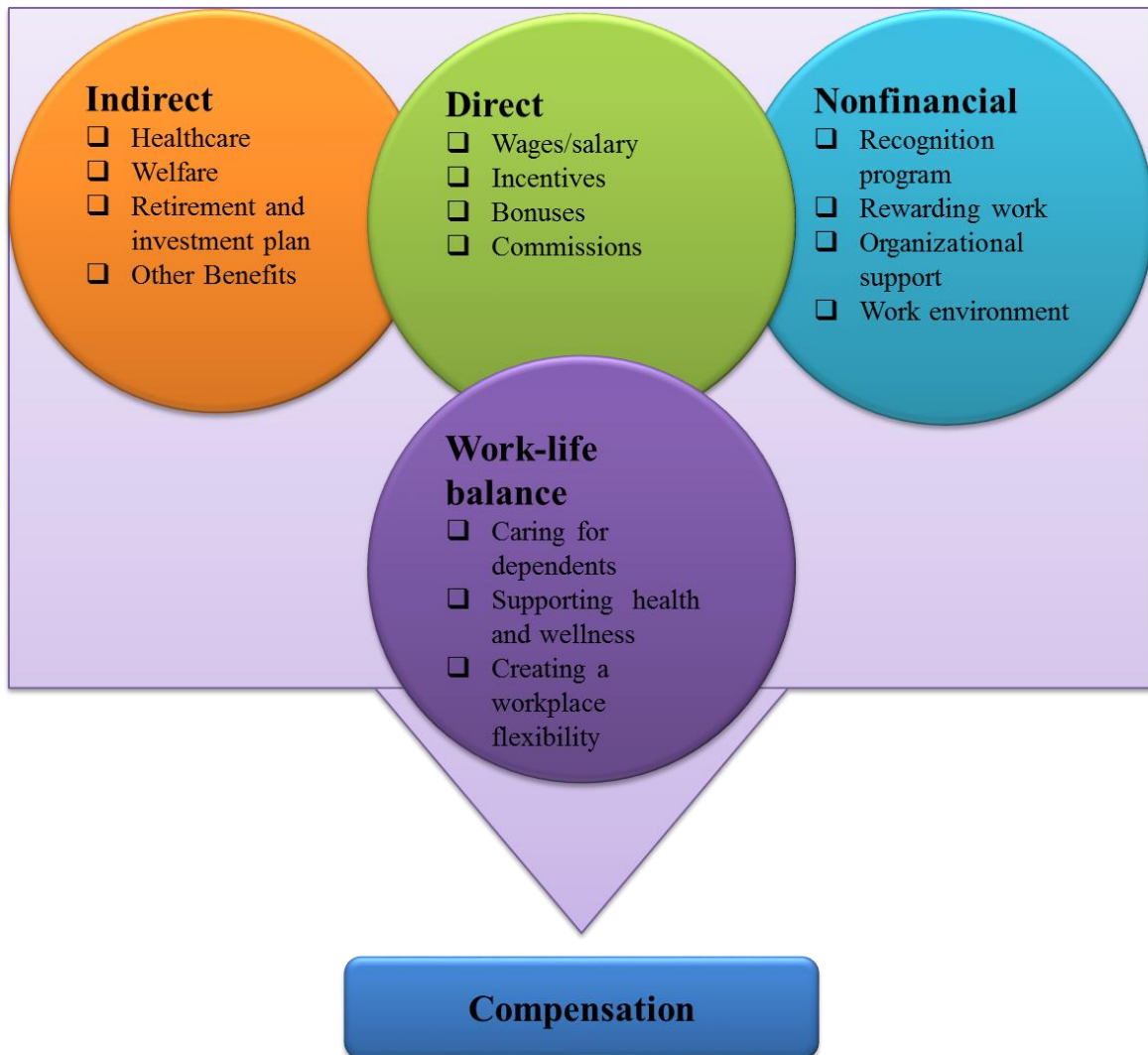
Figure 32: Employee satisfaction factors (Figure is modified and adapted from: Nel, Werner, Botha, Du Plessis, Mey, Ngalo, Poisat, & Van Hoek (2015))



Source: Nel, Werner, Botha, Du Plessis, Mey, Ngalo, Poisat, & Van Hoek (2015, pp. 270-280)

✚ The hotels should reconsider and develop the fair compensation policies for all employees as it is more likely to result in employee satisfaction which leads to the increase of employees' work performance, higher level of employee commitment and higher retention levels. Before creating fair compensation policies for all employees, the hotels should understand the components of compensation (see Figure 33). Besides, the hotels should periodically carry out employee attitude surveys as they can help to determine the rewards that are most needed or sought by their employees.

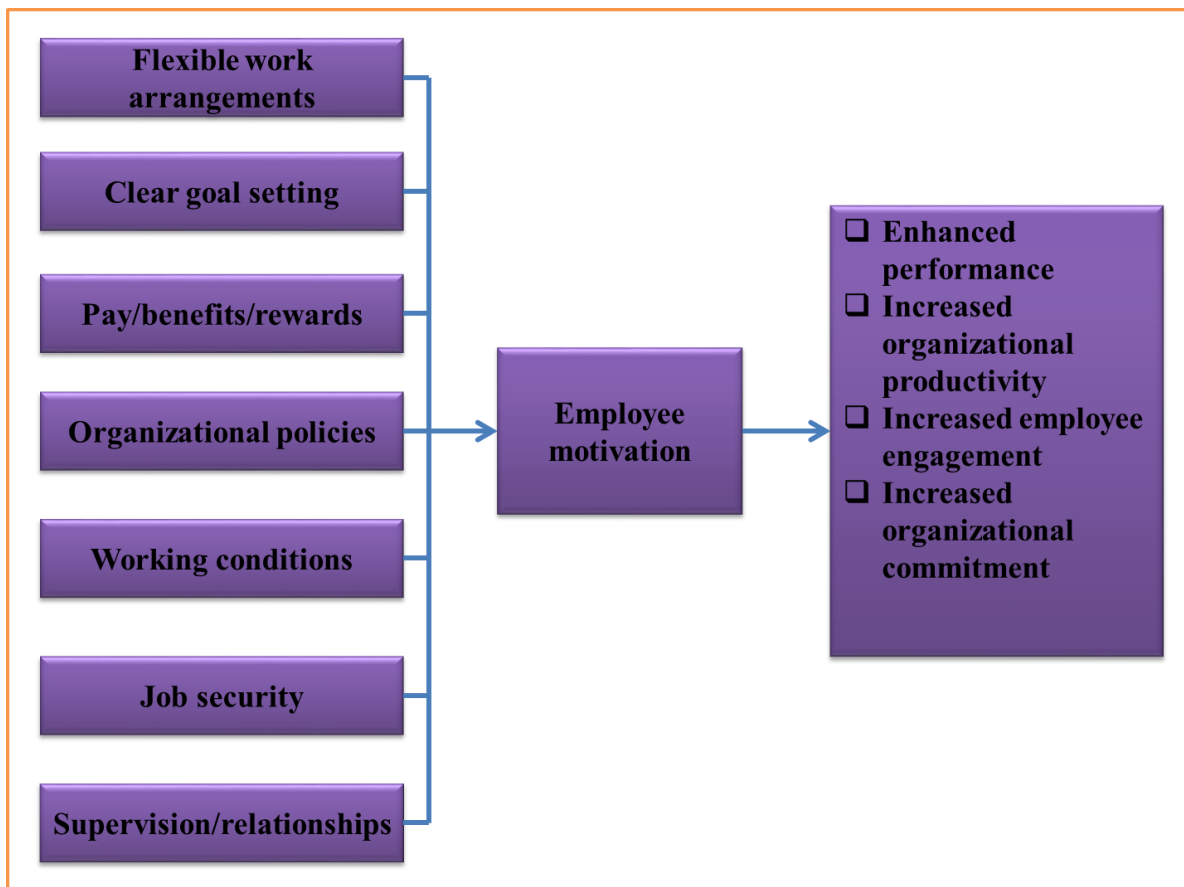
Figure 33: compensation components (Figure modified and adapted from: Nel, Werner, Botha, Du Plessis, Mey, Ngalo, Poisat, & Van Hoek (2015) and Snell and Bohlander (2013))



Source: Nel, Werner, Botha, Du Plessis, Mey, Ngalo, Poisat, & Van Hoek (2015, pp. 136-154) and Snell and Bohlander (2013, p. 395)

- ✦ The hotels should reconsider their organizational working environment, organizational rewards, flexible work arrangements, and their organizational promotion systems in order to ensure that there is a high level of employee motivation which results in an increase of employee work performance, an improvement of organizational productivity, and high level of employee commitment and engagement (see Figure 34).

Figure 34: Employee motivation and employee performance (Figure modified and adapted from Griffin and Moorhead (2014, p. 126) and Nel, Werner, Botha, Du Plessis, Mey, Ngalo, Poisat, & Van Hoek (2015, pp. 270-280))



Source: Griffin and Moorhead (2014, p. 126), and Nel, Werner, Botha, Du Plessis, Mey, Ngalo, Poisat, & Van Hoek (2015, pp. 270-280)

6.4 Limitations

It has been claimed that all pieces of research work have limitations and without exception, this research study has a limitation as well. Even if this research has adopted and applied mixed methods for data collection and data analysis, it still has some limitations in relation to the research procedures. With regard to the qualitative method, due to time constraint, the sample size seems to be small. Only 6 participants were selected for this research. The 6 participants were HR managers from 6 hotels, namely City Inn, Rashmi's Plaza Hotel, Best Western Vientiane Hotel, Lane Xang Hotel, Settha Palace Hotel, and Vientiane Golden Hotel. Even if the sample size appears to be sufficient for this study, it would be more useful and beneficial if the researcher could carry out interviews with more HR managers in other Lao hotels in order to experience and explore more HRM practices in the Lao hotel industry.

With regard to the quantitative method, the questionnaire survey was carried out by employees at all levels in the hotels, but all of the hotels that participated in this research study are only located in the capital city of Laos. Thus, this research study might not represent the overall HRM practices in the hotel industry nationwide. Furthermore, the sample size for a questionnaire survey is relatively small, which might reduce the accuracy, reliability and validity of the findings in this research.

6.5 Further research

This research study has sought the practical and suitable HRM processes that Lao hotel business should employ and apply in order to improve their staff performance, increase their employee satisfaction and motivation, gain a competitive advantage, attain their goals and sustain their business. However, this research study was conducted based on a small sample size. Thus, the researcher recommends that further research could be carried out as follows:

- ✚ Further research could be conducted with a larger sample from more hotels across the country in order to ensure that there is a better understanding of the current HRM practices. Moreover, a large sample size helps a researcher to have more precise, reliable and valid information about current HRM practices in the Lao hotel industry. Besides, it is claimed that the larger number of participants allows the researcher to generalize to the study population more precisely.
- ✚ Further research could be carried out to evaluate the effectiveness of HRM practices in relation to the improvement of employee motivation and performance in the Lao hotel industry.
- ✚ Further research could be conducted by comparing before and after application of some particular methods of employee satisfaction and motivation that are suggested in this research in order to identify and evaluate the effectiveness of different employee motivation and satisfaction practices in the Lao hotels.
- ✚ Further research could be conducted to identify the levels of satisfaction among employees in the Lao hotels, and how their satisfaction influences the quality of customer service in the Lao hotels.
- ✚ Further research could be carried on how employee engagement has an influence on the organizational performance in the Lao hotels and what factors contribute to employee engagement in the hotel industry in Laos.

6.6 Closing statement

This research study provides guidance and direction for the hotel industry in Laos to improve their performance and to have a competitive edge over their rivals in the market. Even if there are many factors that influence the organizational performance and the success of the organization, the effectiveness of HRM practices is one of the major components that indicate and determine the success of the hotel business. If the hotels carefully analyse and evaluate employee needs and align those needs with organizational goals, the hotels will get the desired results that might help them grow continuously and beneficially.

Apart from the effectiveness of HRM practices, the Lao hotels should consider other important components that lead to the success of their businesses and results in sustainable competitive advantage. For example the effectiveness of financial management, the quality of customer service, the leadership style of the managers, cutting-edge technology, the design of the hotel and the effectiveness of a marketing strategy.

Finally, the researcher hopes that this research study can help the hotel industry in Laos to improve their current HRM practices to increase employee performance, job satisfaction and work motivation in their organizations, and help to sustain their business in the future.

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APPENDICES

Appendix 1: Survey questions

Survey questionnaires

This survey aims to determine the HRM practices in relation to employee motivation, employee satisfaction, and job performance that support the hotel industry in Laos to have a competitive advantage. Completing this survey is voluntary. This survey should not take more than 15-20 minutes to complete. No information that could identify you is included in this questionnaire, so you will not be named as a participant in this research project. In other words, your identity will remain completely confidential, and no one, including the researcher, will know who has completed the questionnaires. You can take a questionnaire from front desk. After you complete it, please return it in the box at the front desk. By completing this questionnaire, you agree to the terms that it is voluntary and that you want to participate

A. General information

1. What is your gender? (Please tick one)

- 1. Female
- 2. Male

2. What is your age? (Please tick one)

- 1. 18 – 28
- 2. 29 – 39
- 3. 40 and more

3. How many years of work experience do you have? (Includes your previous job)

(Please tick one)

- 1. Less than 1 year
- 2. Two – Five years
- 3. Six – ten years
- 4. Eleven- fifteen years
- 5. More than 15 years

4. What is your highest qualification? (Please tick one)

- 1. High school certificate
- 2. Vocational school diploma
- 3. College diploma
- 4. Bachelor degree
- 5. Master degree
- 6. Doctoral degree

5. How many years have you been working in this organization? (Please tick one)

- 1. 0-5 years
- 2. 6-10 years
- 3. More than 10 years

B. Employee satisfaction

6. Overall, are you satisfied with your job? (Please tick one)

- 1. Yes
- 2. No

7. I am interested in your opinions about your satisfaction in your current organization. Please state your level of agreement with the following statement. 1= Disagree strongly, 5= Agree strongly.

	Disagree strongly (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Agree strongly (5)
1) I am satisfied with the organizational working culture					
2) I feel my work is meaningful to me					
3) I have a good relationship with my immediate supervisor					
4) My organization pays me well for the work					
5) I am satisfied with my employment benefits					
6) I am happy with my job overall					

8. How satisfied are you with the working culture in your organization?

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Very
dissatisfied | 2 Dissatisfied | 3 Neither satisfied
nor dissatisfied | 4 Satisfied | 5 Very
satisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

9. What kind of working culture of the organization do you prefer? (Please select all applicable)

- 1. Teamwork working environment
- 2. No discrimination working environment
- 3. Friendly working environment
- 4. Supportive working environment
- 5. Others (Please specify).....

10. How likely is it that you would look for another job outside the organization? (Please tick one)

- 1. Extremely likely
- 2. Very likely
- 3. Moderately likely
- 4. Slightly likely
- 5. Not at all likely

11. What kinds of positive experiences do you have in your organization?

Please state your level of agreement with the following statement. 1= Disagree strongly, 5= Agree strongly.

	Disagree strongly (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Agree strongly (5)
1) I experience personal growth, such as updating skills, and learning different jobs					
2) Management looks to me for suggestions and leadership					
3) I have great opportunities to get promoted where I work					
4) The medical benefits provided in the organization are satisfactory					
5) Supervisors encourage me to be my best					
6) I am rewarded for the quality of my efforts					
7) I receive an additional bonus if I do additional work					
8) The organization clearly communicates its goals and strategies to me					

12. Do you feel that you receive appropriate rewards on the job performance recognition? *(Please tick one)*

- 1. Always
- 2. Sometimes
- 3. Seldom
- 4. Never
- 5. Not sure

13. How often do you feel stressed at work in a week? *(Please tick one)*

- 1. Always
- 2. Sometimes
- 3. Seldom
- 4. Never
- 5. Not sure

14. What are the factors that contribute to your job satisfaction? *(Please select all applicable)*

- 1. Salary
- 2. Retirement Benefit
- 3. Job security
- 4. Interesting Work
- 5. Work assignments vary
- 6. Convenient Location
- 7. Training opportunities
- 8. Promotional opportunities
- 9. Others (Please specify).....

15. How is your current workload? *(Please tick one)*

- 1. Inadequate
- 2. Adequate
- 3. Excessive
- 4. Not sure

C. Employee motivation

16. How important to you is the work motivation in relation to your performance in your organisation? (Please tick one)

1 Very important
2 Unimportant
3 Neutral
4 Important
5 Very unimportant

17. Does your organization offer financial incentive to employees to motivate them to work harder? (Please tick one)

1. Yes
 2. No

18. To what extent do you agree with the following statements?

Please state your level of agreement with the following statement. 1= Disagree strongly, 5= Agree strongly.

	Disagree strongly (1)	Disagree (2)	Neither agree nor disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Agree strongly (5)
1) The top management is interested in motivating employees					
2) I am motivated by the financial incentives provided by the organization to work harder					
3) I receive rewards for hard work					
4) I have a good salary					
5) My job security is high					
6) I have opportunities for advancement and development					

To what extent do you agree with the following statements? (Continue)

	Disagree strongly	Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Agree	Agree strongly
	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(5)
7) My organization increases salary reasonably and periodically					
8) The organization has an effective performance reward system that motivate employees to work harder					
9) I feel the organization provides effective promotional opportunities system					
10) The organization has performance appraisal activities that are helpful to get motivated					
11) The retirement benefits available are sufficient					
12) The organizational policies motivate you to achieve its aims and objectives					

19. Which of the following factors motivate you most? In other words, what do you think will motivate you to do extra work? (Please select all applicable)

- 1. Salary increase
- 2. Promotion
- 3. Motivational talks
- 4. Recognition
- 5. Job security
- 6. Financial wards
- 7. Opportunity to perform work with freedom
- 8. Others (please specify).....

20. Do you think the incentives and other benefits that you ticked above will influence your performance? (Please tick one)

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Not sure

21. Overall, do you get motivated by your organization to work harder? (Please tick one)

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Not sure

D. Training

22. How important to you is the training in relation to your performance in your organization?

- | | | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 Very important | 2 Unimportant | 3 Neutral | 4 Important | 5 Very unimportant |
| <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

23. Do you think your organization provides adequate training for employees? (Please tick one)

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Not sure

24. Does the hotel provide you particular training to do your job to a high standard? (Please tick one)

- 1. Yes, please answer question 25, and 26.
- 2. No, please answer question 27, 28, and 29.

25. What hotel training have you obtained? (Please select all applicable)

- 1. Customer service
- 2. Food and beverage Service
- 3. Safety concerns
- 4. English language
- 5. "On the job" training
- 6. Others (Please specify).....

26. Do you agree that the training you have obtained help you perform work better?

(Please tick one)

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 3. Not sure

27. Do you think your organization should provide training? *(Please tick one)*

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 2. Not sure

28. What kind of training should your organization provide in order to improve your work performance? *(Please select all applicable)*

- 1. Customer service
- 2. Food and beverage Service
- 3. Safety concerns
- 4. English language
- 5. “On the job” training
- 6. Others (Please specify).....

29. Do you agree that the training course you selected in question 28 will help you to perform your work better? *(Please tick one)*

- 1. Yes
- 2. No
- 2. Not sure



Interview questions

A. Employee selection

1. What is the employee selection process in your organization?
.....
.....
.....
2. Do you think the employee selection process in your organization is effective? Why or why not?
.....
.....
.....
3. What do you expect the personal characteristics of candidates to be that are suitable for working in your organization? Why or why not?
.....
.....
.....
4. In the employee selection process, do you think skills and experience of candidates are more important than their qualifications? Why or why not?
.....
.....
.....
5. Do you address any problems in the employee selection process? If yes, what are they?
.....
.....
.....

B. Employee training

1. Does your organization provide training to employees?
Yes, go to question 2.
No, go to question 3.
2. Could you tell me about particular training provided by your organization?
.....
.....
 - 2.1 What kind of training does your organization provide to employees?
.....
.....
 - 2.2 How often does your organization provide training to employees?
.....
.....

3. Should your organization provide training to employees? Why or why not?
.....
.....
- 3.1 Should your organization provide training to employees quarterly, ½ annually, or annually? Why?
.....
.....
- 3.2 What kind of training should your organization provide?
.....
.....
- 3.3 Do you know why your organization does not provide training to employees?
.....
.....
4. Does your organization provide training to employees before performing new jobs? Why or why not?
.....
.....
5. In your opinion, does employee training have a positive influence on employee performance? Why or why not?
.....
.....



Appendix 3: Information sheet for participants

INFORMATION FOR PARTICIPANTS

My name is Nalinh Douangphichit. I am currently enrolled in the *Master of Business* degree in the School of Management and Marketing at Unitec New Zealand and seek your help in meeting the requirements of research for a Thesis course which forms a substantial part of this degree.

The major aim of this research project is to identify and determine the factors that motivate employees to work and improve their performance in order to support the hotels in Laos to have competitive advantage, attain their goals, and sustain their business.

The findings or results from this project will be made available to hotel managers, without any participant or hotel names used.

I (the researcher) would like to interview you (HR manager) and ask some questions in relation to the current HRM practice in your organization. I would like to interview you for about 30 to 60 minutes to discuss about the aforementioned topic. I will interview you at your office at a convenient time as pre-arranged between us.

The interview will be voice recorded and then transcribed by the researcher. In order to ensure the confidentiality, I will send a copy of the transcription both in Lao and English to you to check for accuracy or adjust as you see fit. You have the right to withdraw within 2 weeks after receiving a transcript.

Neither you nor your organisation will be identified in the Thesis. The results of the research activity will not be seen by any other person in your organisation without the prior agreement of everyone involved. You are free to ask me not to use any of the information you have given but it must be within 2 weeks after receiving a transcript, and you can, if you wish, ask to see the Thesis before it is submitted for examination.

The data will be stored in a secured place, and unauthorised persons cannot access those data. Only the researcher, the supervisor, and you can access the data.

If you find this research study interesting, you can take part or participate. If you have any queries about the research, you may contact my supervisors at Unitec New Zealand.

Dr. Andries Du Plessis, telephone is +64-9- 815 4321 ext. 8923 or email aduplessis@unitec.ac.nz. Dr. Helen Mitchell, +64-9-[815-4321 ext. 5171](tel:+6498154321) or email hmitchell@unitec.ac.nz.

Appendix 4: Participant consent form



Participant Consent Form

Research Project Title: The practice of HRM in relation to employee motivation and job performance by HR managers in the hospitality industry in Lao PDR

I have had the research project explained to me and I have read and understand the information for participants given to me.

I understand that I don't have to be part of this research project should I chose not to participate and may withdraw within two weeks after receiving a transcript.

I understand that the findings or results from this project will be made available to hotel managers, without any participant or hotel names used.

I understand that everything I say is confidential and none of the information I give will identify me and that the only persons who will know what I have said will be the researchers and their supervisor. I also understand that all the information that I give will be stored securely on a computer at Unitec for a period of 5 years.

I understand that my discussion with the researcher will be taped and transcribed.

I understand that I can see the finished research document.

I have had time to consider everything and I give my consent to be a part of this project.

Participant Name:

Participant Signature: *Date:*

Project Researcher: *Date:*

UREC REGISTRATION NUMBER: 2014-1049

This study has been approved by the UNITEC Research Ethics Committee from 2 July 2014 to 2 July 2015. If you have any complaints or reservations about the ethical conduct of this research, you may contact the Committee through the UREC Secretary (ph: 09 815-4321 ext 8551). Any issues you raise will be treated in confidence and investigated fully, and you will be informed of the outcome.

Appendix 5: Organisational consent letter



Organisational Consent

I (*name*) (*position in organisation*) of (*organisational name*) give consent for *Nalinh Douangphichit* to undertake research in this organisation as discussed with the researcher.

The consent is subject to approval of research ethics application no **2014-1049** by the Unitec Research Ethics Committee and a copy of the approval letter being forwarded to the organisation as soon as possible.

Signature:

Date: