




Human resource management practices as a predictor of employee turnover intentions in the hospitality industry: Mediating role of psychological capital



Authors:

Sekoale M. Ramajoe¹ 
Desere Kott¹ 
Eben Proos² 

Affiliations:

¹Department of Business Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Central University of Technology, Bloemfontein, South Africa

²Department of Tourism and Event Management, Faculty of Management Sciences, Central University of Technology, Bloemfontein, South Africa

Corresponding author:

Desere Kott,
kottd@cut.ac.za

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Orientation: The hospitality industry is known for its high employee turnover rates, which pose challenges to organisational stability and service quality. Human resource management practices play a crucial role in shaping employees' job satisfaction, engagement and retention.

Research purpose: Using empirical data from formally employed hospitality employees, this study examined how selected human resource management practices, notably training and development, teamwork, work-life balance and compensation, impact turnover intentions with psychological capital as a mediating variable.

Motivation for the study: As a result of the labour-intensive and customer-oriented focus of the hospitality industry, high employee turnover rates are a continuous concern.

Research approach/design and method: A structured questionnaire was administered using QuestionPro. Participants were identified using snowball sampling. One hundred and fifty respondents who are formally employed in the hospitality industry completed the questionnaire.

Main findings: The findings of this study suggest that human resource management practices significantly enhance psychological capital, leading to lower turnover intentions. Organisations that invest in employee well-being and development should foster resilience, hope, optimism and self-efficacy, reducing the likelihood of voluntary turnover.

Practical/managerial implications: The value of sound human resource management practices for hospitality establishments is a main implication, and management needs to develop strategies to retain talent in an increasingly competitive labour market.

Contribution/value-add: The findings support the importance of strengthening compensation and benefit structures, fostering work-life balance, and leveraging teamwork as a retention strategy for hospitality establishments.

Keywords: human resource management; human resource management practices; employee turnover intentions; psychological capital; hospitality; employee retention.

Introduction

The hospitality industry is a major contributor to South Africa's economy, accounting for over 8% of gross domestic product (GDP) and offering substantial employment opportunities (Sucheran, 2022). However, it faces persistent challenges related to high employee turnover, which negatively impact operational efficiency and service quality (Camilleri, 2020). Turnover intentions in the hospitality industry are exacerbated by factors such as job dissatisfaction, insufficient compensation, a lack of career advancement, and work-life imbalance (Bajrami et al., 2021; Park & Min, 2020). Effective human resource management practices can possibly mitigate these challenges by fostering a supportive work environment that enhances employee psychological capital (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Psychological capital, consisting of hope, self-efficacy, optimism and resilience, has been found to influence employees' attitudes towards their jobs and their likelihood of remaining with their employer (Mao et al., 2021). Although previous studies have explored human resource management practices or turnover independently, few have integrated psychological capital as a mediating variable, particularly within the South African hospitality industry. Theoretically, the study expands human resource management literature by empirically testing psychological capital as a mediator in the human resource management turnover relationship, particularly in a post-pandemic hospitality context. Practically, it offers context-specific recommendations for hospitality employers to build psychologically resilient

workforces through strategic human resource management interventions. The study examines how human resource management practices impact turnover intentions in the hospitality industry, focusing on the mediating role of psychological capital.

Literature review

The hospitality industry was significantly impacted by the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic in 2020, with global travel restrictions leading to widespread job losses and operational challenges. However, even before the pandemic, the industry had been struggling with high employee turnover and retention issues (Dwesini, 2019). Workforce instability is a major concern across the globe, and the hospitality industry experiences some of the highest job-switching rates (Ibrahim, 2021). High turnover not only disrupts workplace dynamics and reduces morale but also leads to the loss of skilled employees, ultimately affecting productivity and service quality (Holston-Okae & Mushi, 2018). Effective human resource management practices are essential in this labour-intensive sector. Psychological capital has been linked to employee attitudes and retention. Human resource management practices such as goal setting, recognition and fair compensation can enhance psychological capital, making employees more committed and less likely to leave (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Key human resource management practices that directly relate to hospitality were included in the study, namely training and development, teamwork, work-life balance and compensation and rewards. These aspects will be explained next.

Training and development

Training and development have consistently been identified as essential components of effective human resource management, particularly within the hospitality industry. Structured training improves employee performance by equipping them with the necessary knowledge, skills, and attitudes to fulfil their roles (Jawaad et al., 2019; Kakar et al., 2019; Karim et al., 2019). While training focuses on the immediate acquisition of job-specific skills, development tends to address long-term capacity-building, especially among managerial staff (Kakar et al., 2019). There is a broad consensus in the literature that investment in training enhances employee productivity and strengthens the employer–employee relationship (Ahmad & Manzoor, 2017; Santhanam et al., 2017). Similarly, Fatma et al. (2017) emphasise the importance of aligning training programmes with employee needs and organisational goals to optimise workforce efficiency. These findings suggest that organisations that prioritise targeted development initiatives are more likely to benefit from increased engagement and job satisfaction. Although the functional benefits of training are well documented, there is limited exploration of its psychological impacts, particularly how training contributes to the development of psychological capital. For instance, Presbitero (2017) notes that comprehensive training can boost employees' belief in their capabilities, yet few studies in the

hospitality industry examine this as a pathway to reducing turnover intentions. Moreover, research by Michael and Fotiadis (2022) links poor career development opportunities to high turnover, implying that training, if not designed with future growth in mind, may fall short of retaining staff. This disconnect highlights a theoretical and empirical gap: Existing literature often neglects the mediating psychological mechanisms, such as resilience or optimism, that may explain how training impacts long-term employee retention.

Teamwork

Teamwork is widely regarded as essential for organisational success, as it fosters collaboration, synergy and collective accountability among employees (Guchait et al., 2016; Khan, 2017). Defined as a group working towards common goals using complementary skills, effective teamwork strengthens employee relationships and enhances performance (Abdullah & Mamun, 2017; Ahmad, 2017). Teamwork not only supports organisational outcomes but also empowers employees to realise their potential and apply effective strategies to tasks (Al-Suraihi et al., 2021). By encouraging knowledge-sharing and mutual support, teamwork enhances motivation and productivity while cultivating a sense of belonging. However, while the positive link between teamwork and performance is well established, fewer studies have examined its influence on psychological capital dimensions such as optimism, resilience and hope.

Work-life balance

Work-life balance is a significant challenge in the hospitality industry because of irregular hours and demanding shift patterns. It is increasingly viewed not as a conflict between work and personal life, but as a complementary relationship that supports overall well-being (Chung & Van der Lippe, 2020; Oaya et al., 2019). There is general agreement that achieving balance requires sufficient personal and emotional resources (Rodríguez-Sánchez et al., 2020). A lack of balance can negatively affect both employees and their families (Alias et al., 2019), potentially increasing turnover. However, most existing studies focus on logistical aspects, with limited attention to how work-life balance may strengthen psychological resources such as resilience or optimism.

Compensation and rewards

An employee's desire to leave their job is significantly influenced by perceptions about fair compensation and benefits (Hakim, 2020). Compensation, defined as remuneration for work performed (Lugisani et al., 2018), plays a critical role in attracting, retaining and engaging employees (Hanafi & Sholihah, 2017). Abdullah and Mamun (2017) note that inadequate pay fosters negative attitudes and increases the likelihood of job-switching, especially when basic needs remain unmet. Mabaso and Dlamini (2017) further argue that compensation directly impacts employee engagement levels, which in turn influence retention. While these studies affirm the value of fair compensation, few have examined its indirect effect on turnover via psychological mechanisms.

Psychological capital: A mediating construct

Psychological capital denotes a positive psychological state, gaining continued attention as a critical psychological resource. The dimensions of psychological capital (self-efficacy, optimism, hope and resilience) can influence employees' attitudes towards their jobs and organisations, impacting their intention to stay or leave (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). *Self-efficacy* is a general belief in one's ability to engage in behaviours that will result in the successful completion of tasks and goals (Priyatama et al., 2018). Human resource management practices can nurture self-efficacy by creating a supportive and empowering environment. For instance, providing high-impact training can assist staff in developing the necessary abilities, hence enhancing their confidence (Presbitero, 2017). *Optimism* affords individuals a chance to make their lives easier and survive stressful situations. Optimism is the general mindset that events or actions will lead to positive outcomes (Nwanzu & Babalola, 2019). Nwanzu and Babalola (2019) found that optimism has a strong positive relationship with human resource management practices. *Hope* relates to a positive desire for things to happen. It positively impacts an individual's emotional health, academic achievement and the ability to cope with hardships and illness (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Some hopeful individuals tend to be recognised as risk-takers as they are driven to achieve goals and aims (Çavuş & Gökçen, 2015). Furthermore, human resource management practices can stimulate hope through clear goal setting and providing pathways for achieving goals. According to Sarwar et al. (2017), *resilient* individuals can transform for the better in complex situations. Nindl et al. (2018) assert that resilient employees display features such as endurance, tolerance, and flexibility when they face psychological pressures. Self-reliant employees, in general, are thought to stay longer within organisations, as they will be hopeful that the situation will improve. Avey et al. (2011) argue that organisations fostering a positive work environment through supportive human resource management practices can strengthen employees' psychological resources, reduce job-related stress and discourage turnover. Furthermore, Tsai et al. (2020) found that psychological capital can serve as a buffer against workplace stressors, reinforcing employees' emotional resilience and increasing their job satisfaction. Effective strategies that promote psychological well-being, such as employee recognition programmes, leadership support, and opportunities for professional growth, can mitigate turnover intentions by fostering a sense of belonging and career stability (Bamfo et al., 2018).

The theoretical underpinning of the study

Because of the nature of this study, social learning theory serves as its theoretical framework. The social learning theory is based on the idea that we learn from our interactions with others in a social context and that, by observing the behaviours of others, people develop similar behaviours (Edinyang, 2016). The social learning theory was conceptualised by Albert Bandura, who believed that behaviourism alone could

not explain all the permutations of learning and that behaviour and the environment affected each other (Bandura, 2012). As this study investigates concepts such as psychological capital and turnover intentions, it relates to individual-level behaviour that can influence group behaviour in an organisational context, hence the applicability of the social learning theory to this study.

Research approach and design

Data and analysis

The study adhered to positivism. A quantitative research approach was used to examine the influence of human resource management practices on psychological capital and employee turnover intentions in the hospitality industry (Saunders, 2016). A structured questionnaire was administered to formally employed hospitality employees, thus using a survey as a research design.

Measures

The data were gathered using a structured questionnaire applied to determine the relationships between the variables.

Participants

The study population consisted of employees who are formally employed in the hospitality industry. Participants were identified through snowball sampling. Snowball sampling enables the identification of respondents who are often difficult to reach (Naderifar et al., 2017). The researchers used alumni from the Central University of Technology (CUT) in the Free State hospitality management programme to reach respondents who are employed in the hospitality industry. This was carried out through social media (Facebook and LinkedIn) and referrals by alumni. Informed consent was obtained and respondents were informed of the anonymity and confidentiality of their responses. The questionnaire was administered via QuestionPro. The data gathering was laborious and numerous requests were posted targeting hospitality employees. One hundred and fifty respondents completed the questionnaire.

Measuring instrument

A structured questionnaire served as the primary data collection tool, enabling comprehensive and standardised information gathering. Section A captured the biographical data of respondents, while Section B recorded perceptions about the human resource management practices utilised by organisations (based on Al-Suraihi et al., 2021). Section C measured psychological capital based on Luthans and Youssef-Morgan (2017), and the turnover intentions section (Section D) was informed by Msengeti and Obwogi (2014), Abdullah and Mamun (2017) and Al-Suraihi et al. (2021).

Validity and reliability

Content validity was ensured by using established measurement instruments. Cronbach's alpha scores for all

constructs exceeded 0.80, indicating excellent reliability (e.g. Compensation $\alpha = 0.95$; Optimism $\alpha = 0.95$).

Data analysis

The data were analysed using both descriptive and inferential statistical techniques. To perform the data analysis, version 9.2 of the Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) was used.

Ethical considerations

The study adhered to ethical research standards and received an approved ethical clearance from the CUT, Free State, by the Faculty of Research and Innovation Committee (No. FMSEC20220). The participants were informed that their participation was voluntary and that all the information provided would be treated as anonymous and confidential.

Results

A total of 150 participants completed the survey. Snowball sampling was used, and there was no fixed population size. To interpret the collected data, both descriptive and inferential statistical methods were utilised. The demographics derived from the data collected revealed that the median age of respondents was 32 years, with an interquartile range of 27–35 years, indicating that most participants were relatively young. Gender distribution showed that 63% were female and 37% were male. The racial composition indicated that 59% of respondents were black African people, 29% white people, 9% mixed race, and 3% Indian people. The educational qualifications of the respondents were as follows: 39% had a diploma, 39% had a bachelor's degree, 13% had an honours or equivalent degree, 7% had a master's degree and 1% had a doctoral degree. Multiple regression analysis was used to assess the impact of human resource management practices on psychological capital and employee turnover intentions. The dependent variables considered were the dimensions

of psychological capital (self-efficacy, resilience, optimism and hope) and employee turnover intentions. The independent variables were human resource management practices (training and development, compensation and benefits, work-life balance and teamwork). To ensure internal consistency and reliability of the human resource management practices and psychological capital scales, Cronbach's alpha was computed. The values obtained are shown in Table 1.

Table 1 illustrates the Cronbach's alpha scores. Constructs related to training and development (0.94), compensation and benefits (0.95), work-life balance (0.93) and teamwork (0.90) demonstrate excellent reliability, signifying that the items within each construction are highly correlated and measure the intended concept consistently. Similarly, the dimensions of psychological capital, including self-efficacy (0.95), resilience (0.96), optimism (0.95) and hope (0.95), also exhibit excellent reliability. This suggests that the scale used to assess psychological capital is robust and effectively captures its different facets. The employee turnover intentions construct, with a Cronbach's alpha of 0.81, falls within the 'good' reliability range, indicating an acceptable level of internal consistency. These results indicate strong internal consistency across the scales, confirming the appropriateness of further statistical analysis. Spearman's correlation analysis was conducted to determine the strength and direction of relationships between human resource management practices and psychological capital, as well as turnover intentions. The correlation results are shown in Table 2.

According to Table 2, training and development showed a weak but significant positive correlation with self-efficacy ($r = 0.231, p = 0.0045$), resilience ($r = 0.201, p = 0.0152$), optimism ($r = 0.159, p = 0.0508$) and hope ($r = 0.226, p = 0.0053$). This suggests that training opportunities contribute to psychological capital, though other factors play a stronger role. The significant negative correlation with turnover intentions ($r = -0.313, p < 0.0001$) indicates that improved training and development reduced employee turnover. Compensation and benefits showed the strongest correlation with turnover intentions ($r = -0.477, p < 0.0001$), demonstrating that higher compensation significantly reduces turnover rates. Additionally, it shows a moderate positive correlation with all psychological capital dimensions, particularly hope ($r = 0.359, p < 0.0001$) and optimism ($r = 0.303, p = 0.0002$), indicating that financial security enhances employees' confidence and motivation.

Work-life balance exhibited the strongest positive correlation with optimism ($r = 0.491, p < 0.0001$), followed by hope ($r = 0.378, p < 0.0001$) and self-efficacy ($r = 0.364, p < 0.0001$).

TABLE 1: Reliability analysis.

Constructs	Cronbach's alpha	Reliability interpretation
Training and development	0.94	Excellent
Compensation and benefits	0.95	Excellent
Work-life balance	0.93	Excellent
Teamwork	0.90	Excellent
Psychological capital: Self-efficacy	0.95	Excellent
Psychological capital: Resilience	0.96	Excellent
Psychological capital: Optimism	0.95	Excellent
Psychological capital: Hope	0.95	Excellent
Employee turnover intentions	0.81	Good

TABLE 2: Spearman's correlation analysis.

HRM practice	Self-efficacy	<i>P</i>	Resilience	<i>P</i>	Optimism	<i>P</i>	Hope	<i>P</i>	Turnover intentions	<i>P</i>
Training and development	0.231	= 0.0045	0.201	= 0.0152	0.159	= 0.0508	0.226	= 0.0053	-0.313	< 0.0001
Compensation and benefits	0.313	< 0.0001	0.198	= 0.0153	0.303	= 0.0002	0.359	< 0.0001	-0.477	< 0.0001
Work-life balance	0.364	< 0.0001	0.287	= 0.0004	0.491	< 0.0001	0.378	< 0.0001	-0.227	= 0.0053
Teamwork	0.272	= 0.0007	0.127	= 0.1208	0.384	< 0.0001	0.281	= 0.0005	-0.266	= 0.0010

HRM, Human resource management.

This suggests that employees with a balanced work-life perspective are more positive and motivated. It also negatively correlates with turnover intentions ($r = -0.227$, $p = 0.0053$), reinforcing the idea that the work-life balance contributes to employee retention. Teamwork showed a strong correlation with optimism ($r = 0.384$, $p < 0.0001$) and hope ($r = 0.281$, $p = 0.0005$), suggesting that collaborative environments positively influence employees' outlook. However, the correlation with resilience ($r = 0.127$, $p = 0.1208$) is not significant, implying that teamwork alone may not substantially enhance employees' ability to recover from challenges. The negative correlation with turnover intentions ($r = -0.266$, $p = 0.0010$) supports the idea that team cohesion reduces employees' desire to leave the organisation. Multiple linear regression was conducted to examine the predictive power of human resource management practices on psychological capital dimensions and employee turnover intentions. Refer to Table 3.

The Beta (β) coefficients and corresponding p -values demonstrate the significance and strength of each predictor. Table 3 shows that teamwork has the highest Beta value ($\beta = 0.174$) and a highly significant p -value (< 0.0001), indicating it is the most influential predictor in this model. Work-life balance has a smaller Beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.058$) but remains statistically significant ($p = 0.0011$), suggesting it has a moderate positive impact on the outcome. Similarly, training and development had the smallest Beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.028$), yet it is still statistically significant ($p = 0.0181$), indicating a smaller but noteworthy effect. Collectively, the results highlight the varying degrees to which the variables contribute to the outcome, with teamwork emerging as the most critical factor.

Table 4 shows the regression analysis related to work-life balance and teamwork as predictors for psychological capital and optimism.

According to Table 4, work-life balance has the highest Beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.491$) with a highly significant p -value (< 0.0001), indicating that it is a strong and significant predictor of the outcome. This suggests that improvements in the work-life balance are strongly associated with positive changes in the outcome variable. Teamwork has a lower Beta coefficient ($\beta = 0.280$) but remains statistically significant ($p = 0.0005$). This indicates that teamwork also contributes positively to the outcome, although its effect is smaller compared to work-life balance.

TABLE 3: Predicting psychological capital – Self-efficacy.

Predictor variable	Beta (β)	P
Teamwork	0.174	< 0.0001
Work-life balance	0.058	0.0011
Training and development	0.028	0.0181

TABLE 4: Predicting psychological capital – Optimism.

Predictor variable	Beta (β)	P
Work-life balance	0.491	< 0.0001
Teamwork	0.280	0.0005

Table 5 shows the regression analysis for work-life balance and training and development as predictors for psychological capital and resilience.

Table 5 shows that work-life balance has a Beta coefficient of 0.287 with a statistically significant p -value of 0.0004, indicating a moderate positive relationship with the outcome. This suggests that an improvement in work-life balance is associated with a positive impact on the outcome. Training and development have a Beta coefficient of 0.220 with a statistically significant p -value of 0.0021, indicating a smaller but meaningful positive relationship with the outcome. This implies that initiatives in training and development also positively affect the outcome, albeit to a slightly lesser degree than work-life balance.

Table 6 shows the regression analysis for teamwork and compensation and benefits as predictors of hope.

According to Table 6, teamwork has a Beta coefficient of 0.281 with a p -value of 0.0005, indicating a statistically significant and moderately positive relationship with the outcome variable. This highlights the predictive influence of teamwork, along with compensation and benefits, on the outcome.

Table 7 shows the results of a regression analysis, with compensation and benefits, work-life balance and teamwork as predictor variables.

Table 7 shows compensation and benefits, work-life balance and teamwork as predictors with negative Beta (β) coefficients and statistically significant p -values. This indicates negative relationships with the outcome variables. Compensation and benefits have the most substantial negative Beta coefficient ($\beta = -0.477$) with a highly significant p -value (< 0.0001). This indicates a strong and significant negative relationship, suggesting that higher compensation and benefits are associated with a decrease in the outcome variable. Teamwork has a Beta coefficient of -0.266 with a significant p -value (0.001). This represents a moderate negative relationship, showing that improved teamwork is also associated with a

TABLE 5: Predicting psychological capital – Resilience.

Predictor variable	Beta (β)	P
Work-life balance	0.287	0.0004
Training and development	0.220	0.0021

TABLE 6: Predicting psychological capital – Hope.

Predictor variable	Beta (β)	P
Teamwork	0.281	0.0005
Compensation and benefits	0.245	0.0013

TABLE 7: Predicting employee turnover intentions.

Predictor variable	Beta (β)	P
Compensation and benefits	-0.477	< 0.0001
Work-life balance	-0.227	0.0053
Teamwork	-0.266	0.0010

reduction in the outcome variable, although to a lesser extent than compensation and benefits. Work-life balance has the smallest negative Beta coefficient ($\beta = -0.227$) with a significant p -value (0.0053). While the relationship is weaker compared to the other predictors, it still suggests that improved work-life balance negatively affects the outcome.

Discussion

Outline of the results

The following section provides a discussion of the empirical results of the study.

Related to training and development, the statistics revealed that training and development positively correlate with self-efficacy ($r = 0.231$; $p = 0.0045$), resilience ($r = 0.201$; $p = 0.0152$) and hope ($r = 0.226$; $p = 0.0053$), indicating its role in strengthening psychological capital. However, despite its benefits, training alone was not the strongest predictor of resilience or optimism. The results corroborate earlier studies that highlight training as a critical factor in fostering employee confidence and flexibility (Luthans & Youssef-Morgan, 2017). Teamwork emerged as a significant factor. The statistical analysis showed that teamwork strongly correlates with optimism ($r = 0.384$; $p < 0.0001$) and hope ($r = 0.281$; $p = 0.0005$), suggesting that a collaborative environment contributes positively to psychological capital. Additionally, teamwork negatively correlates with turnover intentions ($r = -0.266$; $p = 0.0010$), indicating that strong team dynamics reduce employees' desire to leave. These findings align with Guchait et al. (2016), highlighting the significance of social support in employee well-being and retention, especially within service-oriented industries. Work-life balance revealed a mixed influence. The statistical analysis showed a strong correlation between work-life balance and optimism ($r = 0.491$; $p < 0.0001$), indicating that employees with better work-life balance tended to maintain a more positive outlook. In addition, work-life balance negatively correlated with turnover intentions ($r = -0.227$; $p = 0.0053$), reinforcing its role in employee retention. Karatepe (2014) found that work-life balance was a crucial factor influencing job satisfaction, especially in high-stress industries such as the hospitality industry. Compensation and benefits emerged as the most critical area of dissatisfaction. The statistical analysis confirmed a strong negative correlation between compensation and benefits and turnover intentions ($r = -0.477$; $p < 0.0001$), meaning dissatisfaction in this area significantly increases the likelihood of employees leaving the organisation. Furthermore, compensation and benefits positively correlate with hope ($r = 0.359$; $p < 0.0001$) and optimism ($r = 0.303$; $p = 0.0002$). The findings align with existing evidence that associates compensation with employee motivation and retention, underscoring its significance as a vital component of human resource management (Hossain et al., 2021). The psychological capital construct revealed notable strengths across its four dimensions. The regression analysis confirmed that teamwork ($\beta = 0.174$; $p < 0.0001$), work-life balance ($\beta = 0.058$; $p = 0.0011$) and training and development ($\beta = 0.028$; $p = 0.0181$) significantly contribute to self-efficacy.

Work-life balance ($\beta = 0.287$; $p = 0.0004$) and training and development ($\beta = 0.220$; $p = 0.0021$) were significant predictors of resilience. Optimism was strongly influenced by work-life balance ($\beta = 0.491$; $p < 0.0001$) and teamwork ($\beta = 0.280$; $p = 0.0005$), while hope was positively related to teamwork ($\beta = 0.281$; $p = 0.0005$) and compensation and benefits ($\beta = 0.245$; $p = 0.0013$). Luthans and Youssef-Morgan (2017) note that employee performance and commitment are strongly influenced by self-efficacy, resilience, optimism and hope. The results further showed that compensation and benefits ($\beta = -0.477$; $p < 0.0001$) were the strongest predictors of turnover intentions, followed by teamwork ($\beta = -0.266$; $p = 0.0010$) and work-life balance ($\beta = -0.227$; $p = 0.0053$). These results underscore that financial dissatisfaction, lack of teamwork and poor work-life balance are key drivers of employee turnover. This is supported by Avey et al. (2011), who found that employees who have higher levels of psychological capital are less likely to leave their current employer. To summarise, the regression analysis found significant negative relationships between the outcome variable and the predictor variables: compensation and benefits, teamwork and work-life balance. Among these, compensation and benefits emerged as the strongest predictors, with the most substantial negative impact on the outcome, followed by teamwork and work-life balance. The findings suggest that increases in these factors (compensation and benefits, teamwork and work-life balance) are associated with a reduction in the outcome variable (turnover intention).

Practical implications

The hospitality industry is characterised by people-centred and customer-oriented work, confirming that human interaction is at the heart of the industry. Given the nature of the industry (long hours, perceived low pay, working on holidays and weekends), retention is a persistent issue. It is thus necessary to research the reasons for turnover intentions in the industry. The practical contribution of the study confirms the necessity of sound human resource management practices that support employees' development and functioning. Equally important is cultivating psychological capital that can assist employees on an individual level to perform their jobs in a highly demanding industry.

Limitations and recommendations

The study focused on formally employed hospitality employees. Snowball sampling was used to identify the respondents; thus, the findings of the study cannot be generalised to all hospitality employees or establishments.

The following recommendations are thus proposed:

- Hospitality establishments need to develop more transparent and competitive total rewards strategies informed by comprehensive benchmarking, including the establishment of performance-based incentive structures.

- Personalised training programmes, including individualised professional development plans, mentorship programmes and career progression pathways, can assist employees in developing their competencies.
- In ensuring better work-life balance, hospitality establishments can consider flexible working arrangements and develop policies that support employee well-being, notably counselling, coaching, leadership development, stress management workshops and personal resilience training. The focus should be on creating an organisational environment that nurtures individual potential and provides continuous support for personal and professional growth.
- Retention strategies must be holistic, proactive and robust. Regular employee engagement surveys, exit interviews and transparent communication can foster better interaction and problem-solving.

Conclusion

The main objective of the study was to ascertain the extent to which human resource management practices predict turnover intentions in the hospitality industry and the mediating role of psychological capital. The findings of the study indicate that strengthening compensation and benefit structures, fostering work-life balance and leveraging teamwork as a retention strategy are essential for enhancing employee engagement, satisfaction and organisational commitment. Employees with higher levels of psychological capital are less likely to leave an organisation, hence its applicability to tackling retention in the hospitality industry.

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Competing interests

The authors declare that they have no financial or personal relationships that may have inappropriately influenced them in writing this article.

Authors' contributions

S.M.R. conducted a literature review and data gathering. In addition, he worked on the first draft of the article. D.K. and E.P. assisted with the overall aim and refined the results and conclusion of the article.

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Data availability

The data that support the findings of this study are available from the corresponding author, D.K., upon reasonable request.

Disclaimer

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