

Practices and problems within the scope of human resources functions in hotels: a comparison of thermal and coastal hotels

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Abstract

This study emphasizes the importance of businesses establishing organizational structures, planning processes, and strategies that are compatible with the competitive conditions of globalization. It emphasizes the effective and accurate implementation of human resource management as a key determinant of success, particularly in five-star hotels operating in Turkey's thermal and coastal regions. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with human resources managers from 15 five-star thermal and coastal hotels that formed the research sample, and the data obtained were evaluated using descriptive analysis methods. The findings revealed various problems in the human resources functions of the hotels. Based on the results, comprehensive recommendations were made for relevant regions, sectors, hotels, and managers. This study highlights the critical role of human resource management in the hotel sector, suggesting that it should be viewed as a strategic tool for gaining a competitive advantage.

Keywords: Human Resources Management, Thermal Hotels, Coastal Hotels, Turkey.

1. Introduction

Human resources is the most important factor that directs a business and leads to success or failure (Benli and Şahin, 2004: 117). Human Resources Management (HRM), which focuses on practices that enhance employee happiness and productivity in their work life (Yılmaz & Eroğlu, 2008), differs from other approaches from a human-oriented perspective. It helps to realize the strategic goals of the organization, to meet the individual needs of employees, and includes the effective use of human resources to address these needs (Bingöl, 1990). The developments in information and technology caused by globalization force businesses and institutions to have higher-quality human resources (Adıgüzel, 2009: 243). The purpose of HRM is to ensure that companies achieve success through people, and that a business's ability to survive depends on the quality of the service it provides; HRM is essential as the quality of service also depends on its employees. The importance of human resource activities in personnel management is undeniably high (Pelit, Gökçe, and Gülen, 2016: 988). The increasing importance of HRM activities will enable businesses to support their HRM more effectively and achieve greater success.

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Rapid changes in the tourism sector, along with increased competition and technological advancements, are among the key challenges hotels face. Each of these challenges necessitates moving towards new organizational goals that adapt HRM functions, strategies, and tactics to the current trends. Management approaches that differ between coastal hotels and thermal hotels also differ in their HRM functions. Unlike other hotels, thermal hotels tend to prolong the average length of stay because people seek to protect or regain their health; therefore, employees must possess exceptional skills and receive specialized training. In this context, this study aims to reveal the human resource functions of thermal hotels and coastal hotels, as well as to identify their associated problems. This study will contribute to the relevant units (region, sector, hotel, and hotel managers) and the literature.

2. Review of the literature

2.1. Human Resources Management and Importance for Hotels

The success of an organization depends on the effective and efficient use of HRM (Tunçer, 2012: 206). The concept of human resources refers to employees, one of the basic resources that businesses must use to achieve their goals (Öğütöğulları and Akpınar, 2016: 25). This concept includes not only all employees from the top manager to the lowest level employees, but also the workforce outside the organization that can potentially be utilized (Kaynak, Acar, Adal, Dündar, Özçelik, Sadullah and Uyargil, 1998: 15; Öğüt, Akgemci and Demirsel, 2004: 278). The human factor plays a crucial role in determining the efficiency, effectiveness, and success/failure of organizations and businesses. Thus, if an organization's human resources are more effective, the organization will be more effective (Bucak, 2006: 3; Öğütöğulları & Akpınar, 2016: 25). HRM is an organizational function in which human resources in the organization are evaluated and met; the necessary working environment is provided for the realization of organizational goals, and it contributes to productivity (Gemlik et al. 2016: 146). This function provides a significant competitive advantage to businesses by offering a qualified workforce and utilizing it effectively for business purposes (Erdil, Alpkan, and Biber, 2004:102). HRM is a discipline that includes policy making, planning, organizing, directing, and supervising activities related to the provision, employment, and development of the necessary human resources to provide competitive advantages in the organization (Saldamlı, 2008: 240).

In addition, it is among the duties of HRM to provide talented and well-motivated qualified personnel who will fulfill the objectives of the organization to increase the satisfaction of these personnel with their work, to reveal their talents, and to carry out these activities by keeping labor costs under control as much as possible (Akin and Çolak, 2012: 86).

With the political, cultural, and technological developments in the world, people have become the most valuable resource that offers their mental and emotional labor to organizations, rather than being an element that only uses their physical strength for the organizations they work for (Keleş, 2015: 21). This is even more important in hotels located in the service sector, where most of their activities are based on human labor, and the number of employees in this direction is higher than that of other types of businesses (Pelit and Kılıç, 2014: 92). In the tourism sector, the quality of the service provided depends on the attitudes and behaviors exhibited by employees (Keleş, 2019: 258), which reveals the necessity of healthy management of human resources for businesses that want to be successful. Therefore, the success of a hotel business depends on the importance of human resource management (Erdem, 2003). As a result, regardless of the type or field of activity, all businesses can achieve their goals only if they have sufficient employees in terms of both quality and quantity. Employees with specified qualifications will only be met by the effective implementation of human resources management practices and functions (Ardıç and Döven, 2004: 81). In this context, HRM functions to carry out the tasks that fall under the mandate of human resources management most effectively and efficiently. It is important to evaluate and compare these functions between coastal and thermal hotels.

2.2. Human Resource Management Functions at Hotels

All the work done for the effectiveness of human resources and the organization constitutes the functions of HRM. Human resources, a crucial driving force in achieving organizational goals, strive to enhance the quality of work life by increasing productivity through these functions and ensuring that organizational policies are effectively implemented within a specific discipline (Aykaç, 1999). HRM should focus on human resource planning, job analysis, personnel recruitment, selection and placement, personnel training, performance evaluation, job evaluation and salary management, career management, protection and development, labor and industrial relations, legal regulations and disciplinary procedures, employee empowerment, and talent management (Pelit, 2015: 81).

Human resource planning, one of the key functions of HRM, involves estimating an employee's needs from a business perspective and organizing the necessary activities to meet these needs. At the end of the HRM planning process, it is aimed to create an action program that will ensure the required number of labor force, which has the necessary qualifications to achieve the organizational goals, and is supplied on time (Sabuncuoğlu, 2000: 28; Koçak, 2006: 80; Khadka, 2009). Considering the labor-intensive nature of thermal and coastal hotels, it is essential to thoroughly analyze the quantity and quality of employees in these businesses at the outset (Erdem, 2004). In general, personnel development plans, such as education, career, performance, and development, should be made before the end of the year in coastal and thermal hotels (Pelit et al. 2016:998). Job analysis, as a core element of almost all HRM functions, involves the collection, systematic examination, and evaluation of information related to the qualifications of a job, including skills, knowledge, abilities, and responsibilities. This process helps distinguish one job from another and determines an employee's success in performing their duties (PPMS, 2018). In coastal and thermal hotels, clearly defining the boundaries of work done in different departments, understanding their features, and creating job descriptions are critically important for the effectiveness of business activities (Erdem and Gökdeniz, 2008: 28). Therefore, job analysis studies should be conducted for both coastal and thermal hotels.

Finding, selecting, and hiring personnel involves the process of identifying candidates who meet the qualifications required by the business (Pelit and Gökçe, 2019; Çavdar and Çavdar, 2010: 81; Aldemir, Ataol, and Budak, 2001: 105). In contrast to coastal hotels, thermal hotels employ personnel who are qualified to meet the needs of tourists with a very different structure because both the people who come for treatment and healthy people stay together (Özbek, 1991: 16). Therefore, apart from regular tourism personnel in thermal hotel businesses, various health personnel, such as specialist doctors, physiotherapists, psychiatrists, nurses, dietitians, and masseurs, are also employed (Pelit et al. 2017:57). In this context, the selection of employees, which is the most important factor in customer satisfaction in thermal and coastal hotel businesses, is one of the main criteria leading hotel businesses to succeed (Tanriverdi et al., 2018: 26). Personnel training contributes to the development of employees and achieves the desired goals (Campbell et al., 2001). In the training process, the main subjects that should be included in the training programs of the businesses are which subjects to be trained, which techniques will be used, which tools will be used, and when, where, by whom, and to whom the training will be provided (Karalar, 2007: 356). Training in coastal and thermal hotels is crucial for providing high-quality personnel and services. Choosing appropriate training methods ensures the desired efficiency of the training. Hotels need to analyze their personnel training needs and prepare training programs accordingly (Şahin, 2002).

Performance evaluation involves collecting information about the employee's behavior, communication styles, and/or skills, and providing feedback (Noe, 2009; Akdoğan & Demirtaş, 2009). Information obtained as a result of performance evaluation is used to make various decisions, such as salary adjustments, determining training needs of employees, promotions, dismissals, or transfers to another position within the business. In this direction, it is necessary to conduct effective workforce planning in coastal and thermal hotels according to performance evaluations (İplik, 2004: 204). Job evaluation and wage management are comparison methods that reveal the value differences between existing jobs in a business and are among the most important functions of the HRM process (Dağdeviren, Akay, & Kurt, 2004: 89). Effective and fair wage management is required to increase HR quality in coastal and thermal hotel businesses, and an effective job valuation process is required for successful wage management (Şahin, 2015:379). Career management is all the activities of integrating human resources plans and the system, determining career paths, announcing career opportunities, evaluating the performance of employees, providing career counseling to subordinates, increasing work experience and organizing training programs (Gürüz and Gürel 2006: 234; Kılıç and Öztürk 2009: 46). Career management, which is one of the most effective practices to receive superior service from personnel, is necessary to find and retain qualified personnel in both coastal hotels and thermal hotels (Türkay, 2015:417).

One of the key functions that human resource management must fulfill is protecting and developing employees. The purpose of protection is to increase productivity by providing necessary human behavior for a safe work environment and identifying and eliminating situations that cause work accidents and occupational diseases (Sadullah, 2018: 471). This development aims to equip employees with the knowledge, skills, and abilities necessary to meet the future business needs. Development enables employees to develop and implement creative ideas to overcome their skill deficiencies (Haile, 2019: 78). In this context, the implementation of protection and development activities in coastal and thermal hotels is critical in terms of efficiency and productivity.

Industrial relations examine the relations and regulations between workers, employers, or their organizations (unions) and the state (Aykaç and Balcı, 2016: 3). When unionization is examined in terms of tourism businesses, it is seen that unionization has not become widespread enough, and the reasons for this are the prevalence of daily, seasonal, and part-time workers, foreign employees staying away from unionization, high employee turnover rate, and managers' unwillingness to unionize (Baum, 2006:105).

Legal legislation and disciplinary procedures encompass labor laws, regulations, and judicial decisions in all human resource functions and activities, including hiring employees, determining their wages, and evaluating working conditions to assess their performance, from occupational health and safety processes to dismissal (Adal, 2018: 643). Especially in thermal and coastal hotels, problems related to legal regulations and disciplinary procedures should be emphasized due to the labor-intensive structure of the sector and the large number of personnel compared to other tourism businesses.

Employee empowerment and talent management are essential for the success of businesses, as they bring in the quality and quantity needed and ensure their continuity (Dündar, 2018: 311). Rather than waiting for managers to address customer needs and problems in coastal and thermal hotels, it is necessary to solve these issues by empowering employees, enabling customers to leave the relevant businesses satisfied (Tekin and Köksal, 2012: 4241).

Human resources have always been at the forefront of integrating technology into organizations, combining new technology with legacy processes (Lengnick-Hall and Moritz, 2003:365). Outsourcing human resources for both operational and strategic reasons (Greer et al., 1999:85) and talent (Cunningham and Debrah, 1995:79) are other topics in human resource management literature.

The effective performance of the functions described above within the scope of HRM in all businesses is one of the key factors driving business success (Pelit et al., 2016: 995).

HRM is gaining more importance in businesses that rely on human labor, such as hotels. This is because the human element creates both income and expenses in hotel businesses (Ağaoğlu, 1992:64). Most hotel employees are in direct contact with customers. Hotels should always have the necessary number and quality of staff to provide competitive advantages and service quality. In business, this function is fulfilled by HRM (Erdem, 2004: 52; Akbaba and Günlü, 2011; Soft and Kışlalıoğlu, 2013). On the other hand, the high occupancy rate of thermal hotels, thus creating high employment, is one of the issues that the human resources department should pay attention to (Özbek, 1991:16). Unlike coastal hotels, thermal hotel employees interact more with their guests. Therefore, both coastal and thermal hotels should pay more attention to HRM functions and reveal activities that affect these functions.

2.3. Fundamental Problems and Management of Human Resources in Hotel Businesses

The management of HRM is important. Among the observed problems, there are legal, organizational, cultural, technical, and managerial barriers regarding the applicability of personnel empowerment (Çuhadar, 2005:1). In coastal hotels and thermal hotels, lack of education, wage dissatisfaction and poor communication (Glover and Siu, 2000: 867), career problems (Rosen and Jerdee, 1992: 247), since the costs of human resources usually constitute a significant part of the total operating costs, the problem of managing costs (Cascio, 2015), difficulties in finding, recruiting and retaining talented workforce, problems in intercultural communication, poor working practices in labor supply companies and inappropriate personnel behavior (Wilkinson et al. 2005: 1886), some HR managers do not have the necessary skills to perform their duties competently (Cunningham and Debrah, 1995: 79), inability to reward key employees, have difficulty filling key staff vacancies, retain experienced staff, discipline underperforming employees, and uncompetitive payment (Elling and Thompson, 2006:302), ownership issue, different perspectives between department managers and HR specialists, differences in the evaluation of individual performance (Van der Heijden and Nijhof, 2004:493) are common problems in human resource management.

Human resource management is one of the most important hotel activities. This activity is designed to ensure customer satisfaction with hotels, enhance employee productivity, and promote a work environment where employees are happy and satisfied. However, some fundamental problems arise within the scope of human resources management (Chi & Gursoy, 2009). Solving these problems can significantly impact the success and efficiency of hotel businesses. First, low employee satisfaction in hotel businesses is one of the leading problems. This situation leads to employees being unhappy at work and reduces productivity (Choi et al., 2013). To increase employee satisfaction, hotels should take measures to meet the needs of their employees (Kim et al., 2020).

The second main problem is employee turnover in hotels (Choi et al., 2009). This situation causes hotel employees to constantly change and reduce their productivity. To reduce employee turnover and streamline the hiring process, hotel businesses must take measures to ensure their employees are satisfied with their work environment (Frye et al., 2020). The third main problem is the communication gap between management and employees in the hotels. This situation prevents employees from understanding their role in the workplace and hinders their ability to consider the significance of their work (Holcomb et al., 2007). Additionally, the lack of communication between management and employees can reduce employee satisfaction and productivity in the workplace (Bin & Shmailan, 2015). To resolve the communication issue between management and employees, hotels must take steps to understand their employees' needs and consider their views. As a result, fundamental

problems arise within the scope of human resources management in the hotel industry. The solution to these problems may affect the success and efficiency of the hotels. For this reason, hotel businesses must exercise caution in human resources management.

3. Methodology

This research aims to present and compare the current situations of five-star thermal hotels and coastal hotels within the scope of human resources management functions. The fact that most hotel activities rely on human labor and employ more staff than other types of businesses will cause the human resources of these hotels to be more significantly affected by adverse events (Pelit and Kılıç, 2014: 92), and thus, HRM problems will be more prevalent. In this context, it is essential to identify the challenges in HRM functions that hinder the success of thermal and coastal hotels, which play a significant role in the service sector. It is even more important to reveal the applications, problems, and differences in the scope of functions related to HRM, as there are notable differences in structure and operation, especially between thermal hotels that operate for 12 months and coastal hotels where seasonal intensity is experienced. In this direction, it is believed that the research will contribute to the tourism sector, including hotel businesses, managers, employees, and the broader literature. The absence of any study that reveals the problems and application differences within the scope of HRM functions of the five-star thermal and coastal hotels operating in Türkiye has provided the infrastructure for this study.

The qualitative research method was employed in this study, and face-to-face interviews were conducted using a semi-structured interview form as the primary data collection technique. In the research, an interview form consisting of 26 questions created by Pelit, Gökçe, and Gülen (2016) was used. The population of the research consists of human resources managers of five-star thermal and coastal hotels operating in Türkiye. The data were collected between September 2021 and February 2022 with the permission of the business managers, using a semi-structured interview technique, and reported by the researchers. The interviews with the human resources managers of each coastal and thermal hotel lasted an average of 40 minutes, and the participants were allowed to express their views on the subject. Interviews were conducted with the human resources managers of a total of 15 five-star hotels, including six five-star thermal hotels located in Afyonkarahisar, a significant thermal center in Turkey, and nine five-star coastal hotels situated in Antalya, Izmir, and Aydın, which are among the cities with the highest concentration of coastal hotels. The interviews were conducted with the participant's written consent or recorded using a voice recorder. The information/distribution regarding the types and locations of the five-star hotels where human resources managers were interviewed is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. Types of Hotels and Locations interviewed with HR Managers

Hotels	Hotel Type	Location
Hotel A	Coastal Hotel	İzmir
Hotel B	Coastal Hotel	İzmir
Hotel C	Coastal Hotel	Antalya
Hotel D	Coastal Hotel	Antalya
Hotel E	Coastal Hotel	Antalya
Hotel F	Coastal Hotel	Antalya
Hotel G	Coastal Hotel	Antalya
Hotel H	Coastal Hotel	Antalya
Hotel I	Coastal Hotel	Aydın
Hotel J	Thermal Hotel	Afyonkarahisar
Hotel K	Thermal Hotel	Afyonkarahisar
Hotel L	Thermal Hotel	Afyonkarahisar
Hotel M	Thermal Hotel	Afyonkarahisar
Hotel N	Thermal Hotel	Afyonkarahisar
Hotel O	Thermal Hotel	Afyonkarahisar

4. Findings

The study on human resources management in thermal and coastal hotels is presented under three main headings. Firstly, the general practices and activities within the scope of HRM in 5-star hotels in Afyonkarahisar, Antalya, İzmir, and Aydın, which were the focus of the research, were revealed. Next, the HRM practices in these hotels are presented by function. Finally, the problems faced by human resources managers in 5-star hotels are discussed.

4.1. Findings on General Practices of Hotels in the Scope of HRM

The research was conducted with a total of 15 five-star hotels, six operating in Afyonkarahisar and nine operating in Antalya, Izmir, and Aydın. According to the answers provided regarding the organizational structure of the hotels, most of the human resources units of the five-star hotels operate under the general manager, while one unit reports directly to the accounting department. It has been determined that there are 1,194 employees in the five-star thermal hotels and 4861 employees in the five-star coastal hotels (Antalya, İzmir, and Aydın). The educational background of personnel working in hotels primarily consists of graduates from primary and secondary education, university graduates, and a small number of those holding master's degrees. When the opinions of HR managers regarding the adequacy of the employees' education status are examined in the research conducted at the mentioned hotels, it is found that while the majority stated the education level of the employees is not sufficient, only two stated that it is sufficient. HR managers, who stated that the education level of their employees is sufficient, reported that they strive to enhance the education level of their employees, even if it is sufficient, and that they organize continuous training programs in this direction. HR managers, who stated that the education level of employees is insufficient, noted that the need for training will not end, as they are in the service sector, and that employees should be continually developed through training. In this sense, compulsory training is provided in addition to foreign language training and personal development training in hotels.

Additionally, it has been noted that recruiting trained employees for specific departments is challenging due to their low wages and unappealing job offers. A manager from coastal hotels stated that there has been a significant decrease in the quality of the training content, so whether they are university graduates or high school graduates, the educational content is of insufficient quality. Therefore, it is possible to interpret that the educational status of the employees at the participating hotels is not at a sufficient level when considering both the education levels and opinions of the managers; however, it is also possible to interpret that they face difficulties in finding trained personnel. In many studies, the situation in question has been revealed and suggestions have been made for the relevant situation (Kuşluvan and Kuşluvan, 2000; Kozak and Kızılırmak, 2001; Birdir, 2002; Üzümcü Polat and Bayraktar, 2004; Pelit and Güçer, 2006; Pelit and Öztürk, 2010; Baltacı et al., 2012; Pelit and Gülen, 2016; Üzümcü Polat and Alyakut, 2017; Keleş, 2018).

When HR managers were asked whether the number of employees in the hotels was sufficient, it was stated that the majority of the employees were sufficient in number, and the number was determined by considering the budget. In addition, the majority of HR managers of coastal hotels reported that the number of employees changes seasonally. A HR manager from a coastal hotel stated that the number of employees has also changed due to the changes made to the hotel's interior areas. In addition, an HR manager from thermal hotels stated that although the number of employees seems to be sufficient, it is actually insufficient, and he attributed this situation to the fact that the hotel has experienced employees who know the working system, increasing efficiency, and therefore, the number of employees is ignored when productivity increases. HR managers were asked to identify the full name of the department responsible for human resources-related work; they reported that they were referred to as the Human Resources Department, Human Resources Management, and Human Resources Directorate. In addition, when asked about the number of employees in the human resources department of each hotel; it is stated that there are three personnel in 2 coastal hotels, five personnel in a coastal hotel, six personnel in 2 coastal hotels, eight personnel in a coastal hotel, nine personnel in a coastal hotel, one personnel in each of four thermal hotels, two personnel in 1 thermal hotel, three personnel in 2 thermal hotels. The following section of the research discusses the current situation regarding the practices of the mentioned hotels within the scope of HRM functions.

4.2. Applications of Hotels within the Scope of HRM Functions

Human Resources Planning: All human resources managers reported conducting human resources planning. HR managers stated that the planning was made by taking into account occupancy rates and the budget, and it was noted that instant plans were developed for extraordinary situations that arose during the year. In addition to these, it was stated that training, career plans, salary plans, personnel plans, and other related plans are developed on an annual basis.

Table 2. Personnel Per Bed, Per Room, and Workforce Turnover Rate of Hotels

Hotels	Personnel Per Bed	Personnel Per Room	Workforce Turnover Rate (%)
Hotel A	0,1	0,3	—
Hotel B	0,2	0,5	13
Hotel C	0,3	0,8	15-20
Hotel D	0,4	1,2	5
Hotel E	0,2	0,9	3
Hotel F	0,7	2,2	10
Hotel G	0,6	0,8	5-10
Hotel H	0,3	0,8	10

Hotel I	0,5	1	22
Hotel J	0,3	0,6	—
Hotel K	0,2	0,5	—
Hotel L	0,3	0,7	—
Hotel M	0,2	0,6	10
Hotel N	0,3	0,7	—
Hotel O	0,2	0,7	—

When planning human resources, HR managers in the hotels were asked whether the personnel ratio per room and bed was calculated, and they stated that the calculation was made in all hotels. While the ratio of personnel per bed in hotels varies between 0.1 and 0.7 in coastal hotels, it has been observed that the ratio in thermal hotels ranges from 0.2 to 0.3. When the staff-to-room ratios of hotels are calculated, it is found that they range from 0.3 to 2.2 in coastal hotels and from 0.5 to 0.7 in thermal hotels. When asked whether they calculate the labor turnover rate, it has been observed that six hotels (one coastal hotel and five thermal hotels) do not calculate the workforce turnover rate, while the other hotels do calculations. The coastal hotels have rates ranging from 3% to 22%. In addition, it was found that only one thermal hotel calculates its labor turnover rate, which is 10%. According to international data, the average number of personnel per bed in hotels is stated to be 0.5 (Kozak, 2014: 55-59). The number of employees per room in five-star hotels ranges from 0.53 to 1.49. At the same time, it was stated that the number of employees in large-scale businesses (with 250 or more personnel) should show a 10% distribution (T.R. Council of Ministers, 2005; Hatipoğlu et al. 2013: 17). When all these data are examined, it is seen that they have achieved the standards and even some hotels are above the standards.

When HR managers were asked about personnel absenteeism at work, they stated that follow-up and calculations were generally made. There were not many instances of absenteeism in some hotels, and in some hotels, personnel received frequent medical reports. When examined according to hotel types, all of the thermal hotels participating in the research stated that absenteeism follow-up and calculation are made. It is stated that in most coastal hotels, staff absenteeism is closely monitored at work.

It was asked whether there is a sufficient level of information network/pool to reach people who are aware of tourism that can be hired if necessary for the business; they stated that some of the hotels have an information pool, they benefit from local areas, there are also groups on social media platforms, and staff are provided through the university. Some hotels evaluate CVs submitted to them, applications found on the internet, advertisements, and CVs sent via email in order to recruit employees. Thus, hotels create a CV pool electronically and recruit their personnel from there. In some hotels, it is seen that personnel are recruited by reference.

When examining whether hotels conduct job analysis, it was emphasized that job analysis is carried out in the vast majority of hotels. It has been stated that they conduct job analysis in order to obtain an ISO certificate in coastal hotels, they make new assignments according to job analysis, they are done according to the knowledge and ability of the personnel while making business plans, and at the same time, they renew their job analysis activities while receiving the certificate. In addition, it was stated that in one of the coastal hotels, industrial engineers work in the hotel and determine the norm staff, following business processes. According to this follow-up, budgets are created and job analyses are conducted. In the thermal hotels, the analysis is collected separately and stored in the personnel file. The job analysis is conducted through one-on-one interviews with employees. They stated that they do the job analysis according to the employee's ability. When asked about the methods they use for job analysis in hotels, most hotels reported using observation, interviews, and surveys. It was stated that all observation methods were employed, targets were determined, and studies were conducted in line with these targets. One hotel stated that they conducted a survey with the personnel through experienced department managers. In one of the thermal hotels, job analysis is carried out with subjects by observing the job in its natural environment, choosing the person to be observed, taking notes with a good memory, making connections between the work done by considering the whole job, not making the person doing the job feel under surveillance, and consulting the first manager to check the information.

When hotels are asked about their personnel recruitment process, it is evident that both internal and external resources are utilized quite widely. In coastal hotels, workers are typically recruited through the Türk Employment Agency (İŞKUR), tourism portals, and similar job search platforms. It has been reported that all managers were selected from internal sources. On the other hand, they stated that they benefited from external resources to find personnel that was not present at the hotel before. At the same time, they stated that they recruited the selected students from the career days at universities. Thermal hotels stated that they prefer to hire personnel who can use an automation program. It has been stated that employees from other hotels owned by the same hotel brand may be transferred or promoted through the method of employee transfer or promotion. Thermal hotels stated that they utilize external resources extensively in finding personnel. They stated that they are trying to find personnel by attending university career days, posting advertisements on "Kariyer.net" and "İŞKUR".

It is understood that the personnel selection and recruitment processes of hotels typically involve submitting applications to the human resources department (in various forms, such as CVs and online applications), a

preliminary interview with HR, and an interview with the department manager. It has been stated that some employees are recruited through an interview with the general manager, assistant general manager, or hotel owner. It was stated that candidates applying from abroad or from another city were invited to the hotel for an online interview.

One of the duties of the human resources department is training activities. When it is asked whether employees in hotels receive training, it is understood that training is generally offered in most hotels, and additional training is provided to employees as needed. In coastal hotels, orientation training is usually provided. In addition, environmental training, chemical use training, personal development training, awareness training, manager training in winter, leadership training, and other relevant programs are provided in the coastal hotels. At the same time, it was stated that a 45-hour training course, provided by the Ministry of Culture and Tourism, was given. University lecturers also provide training to the hotel's employees when the hotel is closed. Trainings are given on communication, motivation, foreign language, and quality management systems. Coastal hotels reported that they had received training in first aid, fire safety, and hygiene. In thermal hotels, orientation training, communication training, and manager training are provided. They stated that they have annual training plans and are making progress in this direction, with training provided to personnel on a monthly basis. They also mentioned that if managers have not received training, they have received it as well. It is stated that apart from the monthly trainings, trainings such as sales skills, coaching, hospitality, and first aid are given once a year.

In the research, it was revealed that performance evaluations were conducted in 7 of the 9 coastal hotels. In thermal hotels, it was stated that performance evaluation was made in 5 hotels, but not in 1 hotel. In coastal hotels, performance evaluations are typically conducted by the team leader or manager, and rewards and punishments are based on individual performance. Performance evaluations are conducted in 6-month periods. In some coastal hotels, successful personnel are promoted to a higher position during the promotion period.

In some cases, end-of-year events are held, and bonuses are given as a reward. In the punishment system, there are verbal or written warnings, as well as disciplinary punishments, in some coastal hotels. In thermal hotels, the performance of employees is evaluated in 2-month, 6-month, and annual periods. Some thermal hotels have stated that they apply a reward system. As a reward, it was stated that promotion and salary adjustments were made, and gold or monetary rewards were given. Most of the thermal hotels do not have a punishment system.

When the hotels were asked whether the successful personnel of the month, year, and week were selected, it was determined that this practice was applied in 6 of the coastal hotels, but not in 3 of them. It has been observed that personnel evaluation criteria in coastal hotels are generally based on guest surveys and the evaluation of personnel managers. It was stated that a quarter gold coin was given as a reward to the personnel selected as the personnel of the month and the year. When the thermal hotels were asked whether successful personnel of the month, year, and week were selected, it was revealed that three hotels applied it, and three hotels did not. It is stated that the managers choose the personnel of the month and the year in a thermal hotel. It was stated that the candidate to be the employee of the month for the year at one of the thermal hotels was selected by a vote. In the other two thermal hotels, it was observed that department managers used the evaluation and the absence of complaints as criteria. It was stated that in one of the thermal hotels, a gift certificate was given to the candidate who was selected as Employee of the Month and the Year. It was stated that in other thermal hotels, a quarter gold coin and monetary awards were given.

When asked about the wage management applied by the hotels, it was said that equal pay for equal work, the same wages are given within the departments, experienced personnel are paid more than the other personnel working in the same department, there is a certain wage scale, and the wages change as the regions differ. In terms of fee management, it is stated that some coastal hotels consider the fee applications of surrounding hotels and generally determine the fee based on the environment; others attempt to pay more than the fee of the surrounding hotels. In contrast, a fixed fee is determined centrally in chain hotels, or a fee is determined according to the region, and no comparison is made with the surrounding businesses. In determining wages, some hotels apply a seasonal bonus and a foreign language allowance in addition to the salary, or the double salary method at the end of the season. This may also involve applying a salary increase in line with the inflation rate, providing additional overtime pay, and offering an end-of-season bonus. However, some hotels do not offer a bonus. It was stated that the wage policies of businesses in the area were investigated in terms of wage management in thermal hotels, taking into account the application of equal pay for equal work, salary regulation based on performance evaluation, seniority, and career development in annual periods. It has been stated that salaries and bonuses are given in one thermal hotel, while in another thermal hotel, a percentage wage increase is planned, taking into account the standard wage increase, personnel performance, and the knowledge, skills, compliance, productivity, etc., of the personnel.

When career planning is implemented in coastal hotels, personal development and career development training are provided, and successful or experienced personnel are promoted to higher positions based on performance evaluation. It was stated that training was provided by creating a plan (for example, general manager training), and promotion and job change regulations were implemented. Additionally, information on career planning was distributed based on departmental structures. A hotel stated that May is the promotion period. During this period,

staff members are promoted after obtaining approval from the hotel's management. A higher position is then determined for the following

year. Additionally, if there are vacant positions available in other hotels within the same hotel brand in the country or abroad, these positions are also evaluated. It was also stated that a career planning commission was established in one of the chain hotels, and this commission observed the personnel and directed them to suitable positions abroad. It was determined that one hotel does not have a career planning application in place. In thermal hotels, within the scope of career planning, training provides information on career planning. Promotion is based on performance evaluation, and an annual plan is made for the following year. Personnel are encouraged to participate in career planning, and training is provided in areas where they can enhance their career development. It is stated that promotions are given with performance evaluation and job analysis.

Within the scope of safety practices, in coastal hotels, it has been stated that there are practices to ensure occupational health, safety, and hygiene standards, and some of them organize on-the-job training on this subject every month, they have practices on occupational diseases, and some hotel businesses fulfill the legal duties that should be done for the protection of personnel. It is stated that some hotels hold Green Star certificates, Occupational Health and Safety certificates, TSE, and ISO certificates in accordance with national and international standards. A hotel emphasized that it has the ISO 45001 certificate, which ensures the occupational health and safety of its employees and prevents work accidents and occupational diseases. On the other hand, it has been understood that there are also hotels that do not hold certificates, such as ISO certificates, in international standards. It is stated that on-the-job and off-the-job trainings are provided within the scope of human resources development practices. In thermal hotels, it has been stated that there are practices in place to enhance the health and working standards of workers. Occupational safety, health, and fire training are provided, and an occupational safety training certificate should be among the employment documents of newly recruited personnel. It has been understood that there are also thermal hotels that do not hold certificates, such as ISO certificates, in accordance with international standards. Additionally, it was stated that training sessions were held in thermal hotels and that efforts were made to increase the number of female leaders and managers under the brand's name in a chain hotel.

Coastal hotels were asked whether any members of their staff were registered with a union within the scope of their employment and industrial relations function. It has been stated that the personnel in coastal hotels are not registered with any union. When the managers were asked for their opinions about why there are no personnel registered with the union, one manager thought that the conditions for unionization were not met because they work seasonally in the tourism industry, and another manager believed that it was very difficult to implement this in the tourism sector. On the other hand, most managers did not express their opinions on this issue. When the thermal hotels were asked about the personnel registered with any union among their personnel, it was stated that most of the personnel were not registered with any union. Two thermal hotel managers stated that they were unaware of this issue, that only personnel to be recruited were checked for registry records, and that there could be people registered with a union among their personnel.

Human resources managers in coastal hotels were asked about the current situation regarding motivation, employee empowerment, job satisfaction, commitment, citizenship, stress, mobbing, and cynicism. It has been reported that volleyball tournaments, staff nights, and staff dinners are organized in the hotels, gifts are given, department managers go to the houses of the staff and meet their families, monthly barbecue parties, staff entertainment days, tournaments among staff, and birthday celebrations are held in the hotels in order to provide motivation. It has been stated that a social committee exists in a hotel to motivate and strengthen the staff. This social committee meets twice a month to organize staff entertainment and events. Another hotel stated that it surveyed at the end of the season to measure job satisfaction and commitment, with a result of 70 percent. It has been stated that measures are taken regarding mobbing in hotels, and an attempt is made to determine whether personnel have been exposed to mobbing by talking to them, and if so, they are punished. It has been stated that coping with stress or stress management training is given to reduce stress. It has been stated that the thermal hotels focus on increasing motivation, in addition, activities and organizations are planned to ensure the continuity of motivation, one-to-one communication is established with the employee, an anniversary ball is held every year with the participation of the staff's families, a feast ceremony is held on religious holidays, a barbecue party is organized in the spring, and birthday organizations are held. A thermal hotel stated that it held meetings at the beginning of every morning and evening shift to empower employees. At the same time, it was stated that coping with stress and stress management training were provided, and activities were organized to promote commitment.

4.3. Findings Related to Major Problems Encountered in the Scope of HRM in Hotels

It has been observed that there are problems in finding qualified, experienced, and tourism-trained personnel in all coastal hotels. It has been stated that finding personnel is challenging, especially at a regional level, and that it is necessary to recruit and train personnel according to the hotel brand's standards through in-service training. It is also stated that there are problems with the internship start dates of the intern students. It has been stated that the need for labor increases, especially because the tourism season starts early, the late closing and early opening of

universities, and the inability of international students to start work in April and May make workforce planning difficult. A coastal hotel manager stated that experienced staff could not be found when needed in high season.

It has been observed that the primary issue with thermal hotels in terms of human resources is the inability to find qualified and sufficient personnel. A thermal hotel manager stated that it has regional problems in the recruitment process. Additionally, one of the thermal hotels reported that employees from the region spoke with a local dialect, which caused communication problems, and they received training on this issue. Another thermal hotel manager stated that it was difficult to find employees in the kitchen department. A thermal hotel stated that department managers were recruited within the hotel and that HRM was informed only during the recruitment process. Another thermal hotel manager stated that personnel who did not receive tourism training and approached the job with the motto "I will do any job" could not easily adapt to the hotel industry, as the adaptation period for the hired personnel was prolonged, or they encountered problems adapting to the job. In this context, the similarities and differences between coastal and thermal hotels in terms of HRM practices are presented in Table 3.

Table 3. Similarities and Differences in HRM Practices of Coastal and Thermal Hotels

HRM Functions	Coastal Hotels	Thermal Hotels
Human Resources Planning	- The vast majority of hotels calculate the turnover rate. - The ratio of personnel per bed varies between 0.1 and 0.7. The ratio is too high. - The ratio of personnel per room is between 0.3 and 2.2. The ratio is too high. - Absence calculation and follow-up are done less than thermal hotels.	- Most of the hotels do not calculate the turnover rate. - The ratio of personnel per bed varies between 0.2 and 0.3. - The ratio of personnel per room is between 0.5 and 0.7. - Absenteeism calculation and follow-up are done more frequently than in coastal hotels.
Job Analysis- Job Description	- It has been found that the hotels do not have a standard application while doing job analysis and almost every hotel conducts job analysis with different methods. - It has been determined that job analysis and employee job description procedures are applied in some hotels in order to obtain the necessary documents and certificates.	- It has been found that thermal hotels do not have a standard application while doing job analysis, and almost every hotel conducts job analysis with different methods.
Finding, Selecting and Recruiting Personnel	- There are different ways of recruiting personnel. - According to the destination, the number of employees who do not have accommodation is higher.	- There are different ways of recruiting personnel. - It has been found that mostly employees working at hotels are residing in the region.
Staff Training	- It is stated that the trainings are given in the coastal hotels, but they are not considered sufficient.	- It has been stated that trainings are given in thermal hotels, but they are not considered sufficient.
Performance Evaluation	- It has been observed that some of the coastal hotels do not make performance evaluations. - It has been observed that the department managers make the performance evaluation. - There are different applications in performance evaluation. - Performance evaluation is done in different periods. - Reward and punishment system practices are not sufficient. - Some hotels do not have successful staffing practices of the month, year or week.	- It has been observed that very few of the thermal hotels do not make performance evaluations. - Department managers and HRM carry out performance evaluations. - There are different applications in performance evaluation. - Performance evaluation is done in different periods. - Reward and punishment system practices are not sufficient. - Thermal hotels do not have successful staffing practices of the month, year, or week.
Job Evaluation and Wage Management	- Job valuation is done on a departmental basis. - There are different applications for determining the fee.	- Job valuation is done on a departmental basis. - There are different applications for determining the fee.
Career Planning/ Management	- There are coastal hotels that do not practice career planning.	- It has been observed that career development trainings are given, and those who are successful or experienced according to performance evaluation are promoted to higher positions. - In career planning, a backup system is applied and a plan is made according to the backup table, and training, promotion, and change in duty regulations are applied.
Safety and Development	- It has been observed that there are coastal hotels that do not have safety and development practices. - Within the scope of safety and development practices, it has been seen that there are coastal hotels that only aim to fulfill the legal standards.	- Some hotels do not have an international certificate within the scope of safety and development practices in thermal hotels.
Labor- Industry and Union Relations	- Employees in coastal hotels do not have union activities.	- The majority of employees in thermal hotels do not have union activities.

As a result of the interviews with HR managers in the coastal and thermal hotels, a human resources department is present in all the hotels where the research was conducted. In this context, according to Table 3, some similar or different problems encountered in the execution of HRM activities in both coastal and thermal hotels are revealed. These issues include in-house communication, personnel adequacy, personnel rights, wages and

payments, performance evaluation, and human resources management. To address these issues, various measures are implemented by hotel HR departments, and their effectiveness is periodically evaluated. In this study, the effectiveness of measures taken to address problems encountered during the execution of HR department activities in coastal and thermal hotels has been evaluated. As a result of evaluating the effectiveness of the measures, it has been determined that the measures taken to address the problems encountered during the HR departments' activities in coastal and thermal hotels are generally effective. In addition, to solve the problems encountered, better cooperation and coordination between the HR department and hotel managers are required.

5. Conclusion and directions

Hotel businesses are among the most significant income centers in today's business world. Due to the competition created by market size, HRM must carry out its responsibilities towards employees effectively and efficiently at the appropriate levels. In this way, success will be achieved both in terms of the hotel's image and in providing quality service to customers. Since hotels are among service businesses, the human factor comes to the fore. Hotel employees provide all services during the period from check-in to check-out. Therefore, the success of service businesses is ensured by strong employee management. In other words, the success of hotels will be ensured in line with the importance given to HRM functions and practices (Pelit et al., 2016:1005).

Hotels strive to ensure that the service they provide to their customers is of high quality and that they consistently meet or exceed customer expectations. These goals make human resources practices even more important. The separation of hotels into coastal and thermal hotels, based on their field of activity, also differentiates hotels in terms of the skills and abilities required of their employees. These differences also distinguish a large part of the successive processes in HRM practices. For example, it is necessary to have trained and expert personnel in activities such as health practices within the thermal hotels. All employees in the hotel should possess a diverse range of knowledge, skills, and experiences compared to those in other hotels.

It is believed that for problem-solving, employees, HRM, and managers will be more sensitive, and solutions will be achieved through practices carried out in a coordinated manner. In this context, the following suggestions are made to solve the identified problems:

- HR departments will be able to fill an important position for both the hotel and its employees by eliminating deficiencies related to the specified functions. In the research, it is seen that thermal hotels do not calculate the workforce turnover rate. Especially thermal hotels need to give more importance to calculating the workforce turnover rate. Knowing the workforce turnover rate of hotels provides a clue in identifying and eliminating the risks that may cause employees to leave their jobs. Therefore, it is important to calculate the workforce turnover rate by both thermal and coastal hotels and to take the necessary measures in this direction.
- According to the results of the research, it is seen that the personnel ratios per bed of the coastal hotels are different from each other, the ratios of the thermal hotels are similar to each other, and the relevant ratios of most coastal hotels and thermal hotels are below the international standard (0.5). Both thermal hotels and coastal hotels need to meet the international standard. Unlike the situation with personnel per bed, the ratio of personnel per room is at a sufficient level. Absence calculation and follow-up must be done in thermal and coastal hotels.
- In the research, it was found that almost every hotel does not have a standard application. When conducting job analyses of coastal and thermal hotels, different methods are used. As a solution to this situation, it is necessary to utilize methods supported by scientific studies and conduct job analyses using the most effective methods for the hotel's fields of activity.
- In the research, it was found that employees residing in the destination where the hotel is located mostly work in thermal hotels, while coastal hotels offer accommodation to their staff. Personnel needs determined by HR should be met effectively and efficiently; businesses should provide qualified personnel. Coastal and thermal hotels must pay closer attention to staff recruitment activities to provide sustainable benefits.
- In the research, it was found that the training sessions were held in hotels, but they were not considered sufficient. In coastal and thermal hotel businesses, legal obligations must be fulfilled in every respect. For hotels to meet their goals in light of these legal obligations, they should provide the necessary support for personnel training.
- In the research, it was observed that most hotels conducted performance evaluations. The practical implementation of performance evaluation, which provides information on achieving the targets of coastal and thermal hotel businesses, and the application of a reward system in response to positive feedback, as well as the implementation of a punishment system in response to negative feedback, will enhance the hotels' success.

- It has been observed that job valuation is based on departments in coastal and thermal hotels, and different practices are used to determine wages. At this point, various practices related to job valuation and wage management need to be resolved fairly within the hotel.
- Observed that some coastal hotels in the region do not have career planning practices. On the other hand, although there are practices in career planning in thermal hotels, it is equally important for both coastal and thermal hotels to prioritize planning, both in terms of business and personnel. It is not enough for human resources managers to select personnel based on their knowledge and ability in recruitment; they also need to be able to retain these talented personnel at the hotel. Appropriate job and promotion opportunities should be provided for this. If talented personnel have the opportunity to advance in the business, it is essential to retain them within the organization and enhance their productivity.
- In the research, it has been observed that the practices implemented within the scope of safety and development in coastal and thermal hotel enterprises are insufficient. It is important for the sustainable success of businesses that the protection and development functions are fully performed. In this context, it is essential to ensure adherence to national and international standards.
- Within the scope of industry and union relations, the fact that businesses undertake supportive activities in addition to fulfilling their legal obligations can contribute to a successful management process.
- Intensifying professional studies on stress, mobbing, empowerment, job satisfaction, and commitment in hotels, and conducting special studies to observe these areas, may make it possible to identify and solve existing problems.

As a result, human resources functions in hotels need to be fulfilled effectively. At this point, success will be achieved as long as both managers and employees participate in the execution of human resources activities. Making the necessary effort to eliminate deficiencies in HRM, investing in employee resources, and taking measures to address these issues will yield beneficial results for both personnel and businesses. On the other hand, studies can be conducted to reveal the problems and application differences within the scope of HRM functions of thermal-coastal hotels in different cities. One of the key issues that managers should pay particular attention to is enhancing employee performance and productivity, a crucial goal for competing businesses in the global market. In summary, when HRM functions are performed regularly, hotel performance will increase and targets will be achieved more easily.

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