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# Social Capital and Talent Management: A Comparative Analysis of Foreign and Domestic Owned Hotel Companies in South Asia

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**UNIVERSITY OF  
PLYMOUTH**

**SOCIAL CAPITAL AND TALENT MANAGEMENT: A  
COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC  
OWNED HOTEL COMPANIES IN SOUTH ASIA**

by

**ROHIT REJI GEORGE**

A thesis submitted to the University of Plymouth  
in partial fulfilment for the degree of

**DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY**

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Faculty of Arts, Humanities and Business

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*God's will, not mine.*

*Luke 22:42*

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## **Author's declaration**

At no time during the registration for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy has the author been registered for any other University award without prior agreement of the Doctoral College Quality Sub-Committee. Work submitted for this research degree at the University of Plymouth has not formed part of any other degree either at the University of Plymouth or at another establishment.

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# **Social Capital and Talent Management: A Comparative Analysis of Foreign and Domestic Owned Hotel Companies in South Asia**

*Rohit Reji George*

## **Abstract**

Talent management as a concept is not new; however, few studies have investigated the association between talent management and social capital despite the fact that the importance of organisational culture has been acknowledged as a significant influence on workforce practices and experiences. The study contained three aims: (i) to investigate the current TM policies and practices implemented in hospitality firms in South Asia and whether there are differences based on a company's culture; (ii) to assess the character and level of SC prevalent in the hospitality work environment in South Asia; and, (iii) to examine the association between talent management and social capital. The study is set in the context of South Asia and focuses on one domestic and one foreign-owned company, located in Colombo and Delhi.

The study conducts a regional and country-level comparison of talent management and social capital based on the company ownership (foreign versus domestic). The study used the quantitative method for the regional level comparison, and a mixed-methods approach was used for the country-level comparison. Finally, to test the talent management-social capital association, the survey data combining foreign-owned and domestic owned companies in the South Asian context were used. From the surveys, a final sample size of 237 responses was used for the analysis. A total of 14 semi-structured interviews were conducted in the qualitative research.

The research findings revealed the workforce perspectives and experiences of each talent management practice and social capital indicator resulting in the categorisation of the role of managers, parent companies, and the individual hotel management board, which influences the organisational culture. By examining the association between talent management and social capital, the research has developed a conceptual framework, which depicts variance in the degree of correlation between the variables based on company ownership. The research provides a new lens on the issues, challenges and solutions on talent management and social capital. The study posits that efficient TM practices can act as a tool in building social capital in a hospitality workplace. The tests of association between talent management and social capital has provided an in-depth understanding of how talent management can be theoretically explained through the lens of social capital theory. By doing this, the research has provided an original contribution to management and sociology literature, and specifically to the talent management and organisational social capital literature. The study reveals the positive and adverse impacts of organisational practices on the workforce, contributing to industry practitioners in South Asia and globally.

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## List of Abbreviations

TM:	Talent Management
GTM:	Global Talent Management
SC:	Social Capital
OSC:	Organisational Social Capital
OJ:	Organisational Justice
HRM:	Human Resource Management
HR:	Human Resources
MNC:	Multinational Company
SET:	Social Exchange Theory
CIPD:	Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development
IFC:	International Finance Corporation
PM:	Performance Management
FSA:	Foreign South Asian Companies
DSA:	Domestic South Asian Companies
F1:	Foreign Sri Lankan Company
D1:	Domestic Sri Lankan Company
F2:	Foreign Indian Company
D2:	Domestic Indian Company
ILO:	International Labour Organisation
IMF:	International Monetary Fund
FDI:	Foreign Direct Investment
L&D:	Learning and Development
GDP:	Gross Domestic Product
WDI:	World Development Indicators
HOD:	Head of Department
UN:	United Nations
UNICEF:	United Nations Children's Fund
UNSD:	United Nations Statistics Division
UNPF:	United Nations Population Fund
UNDP:	United Nations Development Programme
NGO:	Non-Governmental Organisation
WDI:	World Development Indicators
NCT:	National Capital Territory





# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

### 1.1 Introduction to the research

*“Labour is prior to, and independent of, capital. Capital is only the fruit of labour, and could never have existed if labour had not first existed. Labour is the superior of capital, and deserves much the higher consideration”.*

(Abraham Lincoln, 1861, cited in Stevenson, 1992, p. 200)

This excerpt is from President Abraham Lincoln’s first annual message to the U.S Congress in 1861. It outlines the fundamental interrelatedness between labour and capital and the primacy of labour within it. Several scholars and philosophers have acknowledged the importance of prioritising labour for societal and economic development (e.g. Marx, 1865; Smith, 1789). This has led to the development of the idea of “*labour as Human Resources*” (HR) (Adamsen, 2016) post the industrial revolution era. Companies started intentionally formulating and adopting the concept of a strategic way of managing labour in the early 1920s (Lengnick-Hall *et al.*, 2009, p. 65). However, the concept has gone through various eras, with changes in its titles and definitions from personal administration (the 1920s) to personnel management (late 1940s) to Human Resource Management (HRM) (mid-1980s). The shift to HRM resulted from the globalisation of Western countries due to the substantial increase in competitive pressures in business organisations (Ahammad, 2017).

Even though some regions have started embracing globalisation which has led to substantial economic growth, South Asia as a sub-region has adopted globalisation relatively late (Weerakoon, 2004). The liberalisation of economies in the South Asian countries started in the late 1970s <sup>1</sup>, which has seen an enormous leap in investment by foreign companies in the sub-region (Ullah and Inaba, 2014; Siriwardana, 2003; Dev, 2000). Even though Foreign Direct Investments (FDI) could be massively beneficial for both host country and home country (Lehnert *et al.*, 2013), some scholars have mentioned the adverse effect this has had on the development of domestic firms (Agrawal, 2005). The adverse effects include increased competition (Aitken and Harrison, 1999), foreign companies' ability to use funds generated elsewhere, which leads to competitive disadvantage (e.g. increase in workforce salaries) (Kurtishi-Kastrati, 2013).

An inappropriately qualified workforce poses major challenges (to domestic and foreign firms) when a country is attracting a significant number of foreign firms (Ayyagari, Demirgüç-Kunt and Maksimovic, 2011). Contrarily, foreign firms' entry could also benefit domestic firms (e.g. spillover effects, restructuring process of domestic firms) (Javorcik, 2004; Apostolov, 2017). Post the 2008 recession, the hospitality industry had a decade of rapid growth with increased demand which caused new hotel companies and subsidiaries to emerge (Shulga and Busser, 2019; Slowey, 2018). More and more hotel companies have stepped out of their comfort zone and expanded their territories during this period. This has caused a considerable gap between the supply and demand of the workforce (Jooss *et al.*, 2019; Sheehan *et al.*, 2018; Khilji and Keilson, 2014), and this has been a critical issue in the industry as “*people*” are considered as a critical source of

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<sup>1</sup> Sri Lanka (1977); Pakistan (1987); Bangladesh (1980s-1990s), India (1991); Nepal (1991); Maldives (1990s), Bhutan (1990s) (United Nations Statistic Division, 2021; Asia Society Policy Institute, 2021).

competitive advantage in emerging and developed economies (Horner, 2017; Jooss *et al.*, 2019).

This introductory chapter establishes the context of the research topic, the motivation for undertaking the study and its importance. Firstly, the chapter outlines a brief introduction to Talent Management (TM) (section 1.2) and Social Capital (SC) (section 1.3). To fully set the context, the research gap is presented (section 1.4). Following this, the research aims and objectives are established (section 1.5). Section 1.6 establishes the rationale for selecting South Asia for the study. Lastly, a brief outline of the thesis structure is presented to help orient the reader (section 1.7).

## **1.2 Importance of Talent Management**

In the last couple of decades, the focus has shifted from HRM to TM (early 1990s), which has resulted in a shift from the terminologies of “*people*” to “*talent*” (Brown *et al.*, 2004; Chatterjee *et al.*, 2014). The ongoing competition resulting from globalisation is the primary reason the organisations pays closer attention to TM (Borisova *et al.*, 2017; Morley *et al.*, 2015). Numerous scholars’ emphasise the need for efficient talent management (Woolridge, 2006; Martin, 2015), and multi-national corporations across different nationalities, across all industrial sectors, are acutely aware of this (McDonnell *et al.*, 2010; Latukha, 2016; Heinen and O’Neill, 2004). Talent management studies in the past have been mainly conducted from a resource-based view, contextual factors were often ignored, and the majority of the studies related to this primarily focussed on the intended TM strategy of the organisations (Gallardo-Gallardo, Thunnissen and Scullion, 2019; Thunnissen and Gallardo-Gallardo, 2017). Scholars have highlighted the need for more studies underpinning contextual factors on the employees’ reactions to TM

implementation (Sparrow and Makram, 2015; Thunnissen and Gallardo-Gallardo, 2017; Sparrow, Scullion and Tarique, 2014). One factor that plays a decisive role in TM practice is organisational culture (Vaiman *et al.*, 2015). This is where the TM experiences of the workforce based on different ownership (foreign and domestic companies) become imperative to be investigated.

Moreover, the empirical studies have been mostly conducted in the Western contexts (e.g. D'Annunzio-Green, 2008; Scott and Revis, 2008; Marinakou and Giosmpasoglou, 2019), and there is a lack of studies from other cultural contexts despite the call for more studies in the developing countries (Beamond *et al.*, 2016; Cooke, 2017; Sparrow, Scullion and Tarique, 2014). A limited number of studies have explored the different meanings attributed to talent across cultures and their impact on TM (Gallardo-Gallardo and Thunnissen; 2016; Meyers *et al.*, 2019; Tlaiss, 2021). This is notably less in the Asian context, where the studies are limited to only 5 per cent of the published empirical articles (Mohamed *et al.*, 2013; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2015; Li *et al.*, 2018). When it comes to hospitality studies, a number of scholars have conceptualised TM in the past, and a number of them have revisited it recently (e.g. Hughes and Murray, 2018; Garavan *et al.*, 2021). However, the existing studies lack focus on contextual factors, and there is a need for more studies focussing on different regional contexts and not just limited to Western countries.

It is established by various studies on the value that TM brings to organisations (Boudreau and Ramstad, 2007; Ready and Conger, 2007; Martin, 2015). However, Thunnissen *et al.* (2013) recommended more research to understand how harnessing talent skills, knowledge and learning agility brings value to the employees and society. Especially in the South Asian context, where skills shortage, unemployment, low literacy rates are

concerning issues (Sheikh and Loney, 2018; UNICEF, 2019; ILO, 2021). Efficient talent acquisition, nurturing and development programmes by companies could provide benefits not only to the organisations but also to society (e.g. career mobility, social mobility).

Numerous scholars have found that TM influences employee satisfaction, employee psychological wellbeing and individual outcomes, and organisational justice (Altındağ *et al.*, 2018; Björkman *et al.*, 2013; Höglund, 2012; King, 2018). One of the under-researched fields in hospitality is social capital, which is considered an extension of Social Exchange Theory (SET) (Astone *et al.*, 1999; Mensah, 2019). Very few studies focussed on exploring the effect of TM practices and functions on enhancing Organisational Social Capital (OSC), including any disciplines. This includes the effect of TM on organisational trust (e.g. Altınöz, Çakıroğlu, and Çöp, 2013), the mediating effect of feedback on the relationship between trust and networking ability (e.g. Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2018), global talent management on social capital development (e.g. Moeller *et al.*, 2016), and HR policies on fostering social capital (e.g. Brien, Ratna and Boddington, 2012). The following section introduces social capital and its relevance and importance in an organisational context.

### **1.3 Relevance and importance of Social Capital**

As a concept incorporating the word capital, SC was first recognised in economics in the late 19<sup>th</sup> century (e.g. Marx, 1867; Sidgwick, 1883, cited in Farr, 2004). There is increasing attention received by the concept of SC, especially in the public sector (Kim *et al.*, 2013). Since the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, SC has been explored by numerous scholars in various disciplines, including sociology (e.g. Jacobs, 1965; Coleman 1988), political science (e.g. Woolcock, 1998; Tsai, 2007), economics (e.g. Chou, 2006), business studies

(e.g. Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Adler and Kwon, 2002), and management (e.g. Hoffman *et al.*, 2005).

Scholars consider SC a critical component for every organisation in today's competitive business environment to manage the current and future dynamic workforce (Brien and Smallman, 2011; Akram *et al.*, 2016; Hitt and Duane, 2002; Leana and Barry, 2000; Adler and Kwon, 2002). SC is viewed as an organisational resource reflecting the character of social relationships and interactions by creating value through facilitating successful collective action (Leana and Van Buren, 1999). These social interactions among the actors have a crucial influence on employees, such as raising employees' morale and motivations, job satisfaction, commitment, and work-life balance (Mojeed-Sanni *et al.*, 2015).

There is limited empirical research on understanding SC in an organisational context, especially within the hospitality industry. Social capital studies undertaken within the hospitality industry are primarily based on individual themes such as the management of contingent labour (Brien, 2010), hotel managers' salaries (Barros and Santos, 2009) (who concluded that hotel managers' earnings are positively related to their social ties), intellectual capital/ entrepreneurship (Kalnins and Chung, 2006; Zhao *et al.*, 2011), organisational trust (Brien *et al.*, 2012), knowledge sharing (Kim *et al.*, 2013), and the role of middle managers (Brien and Smallman, 2011). There are a few studies that focus on the impact of SC on job performance (Huang *et al.*, 2021; Sainaghi and Baggio, 2014), hospitality customer research (Huang, Chen and Wong, 2020; Munzel and Kunz, 2014) and the crisis during COVID-19 (Visentin *et al.*, 2021).

Studies related to Organisational Social Capital's (OSC) influence on talent management practices are scarce, especially in the hospitality context. Related studies in different disciplines explore the mediating or moderating role of organisational SC functions related to TM (e.g. Lin and Huang, 2005; Mostafa, 2019; Harjanti, 2019; Kroll and Tantardini, 2019). There are individual studies which focussed on the effect of SC on specific TM practices such as recruitment (e.g. Godechot, 2016), retention (e.g. Ko, 2021), onboarding (e.g. Morrow, 1999; Szreter, 2000), performance management (e.g. Tantardini and Kroll, 2015), and leadership development (e.g. Kroll and Tantardini, 2019; Leitch, McMullan and Harrison 2012). The following section presents the research gaps found from the extant literature.

#### **1.4 Research gaps**

By reviewing the literature, it was identified that there is limited research that focuses on the employee experience of TM (e.g. Malik *et al.*, 2017; Luna-Arocas and Morley, 2015; Khoreva *et al.*, 2017; Sonnenberg *et al.*, 2014). Moreover, the inclusion of the overall workforce, including every hierarchy and department, is scarce. There are limited studies that focus on the overall workforce experience of talent management. When studying TM practices in hotels with different cultural backgrounds, focussing on one particular section of the workforce (e.g. certain department, certain hierarchy) only provides a partial view of the organisational culture (Scott *et al.*, 2003). When assessing organisational culture, having the data from different hierarchical levels and departments is imperative as this would not limit the generalisability of the results and reflect the whole company's culture (Schein, 1990; Bavik, 2016). There are no comparative studies that explore the organisational practices in talent management in the South Asian luxury hotel industry. Additionally, no studies have investigated TM strategies and practices in foreign and



domestically owned hotel companies in the South Asian context. Therefore, the value of this research is that there are no studies that have focussed on TM, its process and practices, comparing different organisational cultures (foreign versus domestic owned) in the luxury hospitality context in South Asian countries.

As the study explores the level of social capital in hospitality organisations, the theory incorporated in this study is organisational social capital. Most of the studies in this subject area are theoretical, and there had been limited consideration to the measurement aspects of SC (Akram *et al.*, 2016). SC research in the hospitality industry remains under-researched, with most studies based on data from Western countries (Cho *et al.*, 2017; Brien *et al.*, 2012; Visentin *et al.*, 2021). The researcher has located 31 papers in major journals related to the study of SC in the hospitality industry. Very few studies have been conducted in an Asian context (Tang, 2016; Kim *et al.*, 2013; Liu and Jiang, 2020; Uen *et al.*, 2018; Tang, 2015) and none specifically in a South Asian context, especially in hospitality enterprises. From the review, it is evident that no studies had in the past had investigated the level of SC in a hospitality firm incorporating the overall workforce (including every hierarchy and department). Studies have mostly been conducted on the impact of SC on individual themes and other organisational factors. Moreover, this study intends to compare the difference in the level of SC in foreign and domestically owned luxury hotels in South Asian countries by precisely measuring each SC dimensions. By doing this, an overall understanding of the studying organisations' level of SC will be gained.

A number of studies have found the positive role of SC in organisations (e.g. Leana and Pil, 2006; Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998). However, not many studies found empirical evidence concerning how organisations may build this resource (Pastoriza and Ariño, 2013). In this thesis, the researcher indulges in the unexplored area in this field of research which is the relationship between talent management and social capital. Like psychological contracts and organisational justice theory, there is an increased interest in the literary world in linking TM to several social exchange theories. However, there is little attention given to linking the effect of TM on SC and vice versa. There are individual studies that focussed on social capital's effect on specific TM practices (e.g. Godechot, 2016; Kroll and Tantardini, 2019). Few studies focussed on exploring the effect of TM practices in fostering SC (e.g. Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2018; Altinoz *et al.*, 2013). It is evident from the review that no research has been undertaken which investigates the overall relationship between the different TM practices and the SC dimensions in any context, let alone hospitality.

The present study intends to help overcome the challenges facing the South Asian hospitality industry when it comes to managing talent. The study intends to add knowledge to the workforces' experience of talent management and thereby provide practical contributions to the industry in refining the TM practices. Moreover, the research intends to draw conclusions about the manifestation of SC in a hospitality setting and its relationship with different TM policies and practices. The literature review shows that there are limited studies that focus on the overall experience of the workforce in both TM and SC literature. This study underpins the different organisational cultures (foreign and domestic), providing the workforces' perception of the best TM practices and the adverse impacts of the company practices, contributing to industry practitioners in South Asia and benefiting the workforce. The research will overcome this by offering a new

lens on the issues, challenges and solutions on TM and SC, thereby creating a valuable contribution to knowledge in management studies and industry practitioners.

## **1.5 Research aims and objectives**

**Aim 1:** To investigate the current TM policies and practices implemented in hospitality firms and investigate whether there are differences based on the company's culture.

### **Objectives:**

- I. To examine and compare the overall workforce experience of current TM practices in foreign and domestic owned hospitality companies in individual countries.
- II. To examine and compare the experience of the overall workforce on current TM practices in foreign and domestic owned hospitality companies regionally (South Asian foreign versus South Asian domestic).

**Aim 2:** To identify the character and level of SC prevalent in the hospitality work environment in South Asia.

### **Objectives:**

- I. To measure social capital and thereby understand and compare perceptions of the level of SC in foreign and domestic owned hospitality firms in individual countries.
- II. To measure social capital dimensions and thereby understand and compare the level of SC in foreign and domestic owned hospitality firms regionally (South Asian foreign versus South Asian domestic).

**Aim 3:** To investigate in what ways and to what extent TM and SC are related.

**Objectives:**

- I. To assess the level of SC and examine whether they impact the workforce experiences of TM practices in South Asian foreign and South Asian domestic hospitality firms separately.
- II. To evaluate the workforce experiences of TM and examine whether these impact the formation of SC in South Asian foreign and South Asian domestic hospitality firms separately.

## **1.6 Rationale for selecting South Asia**

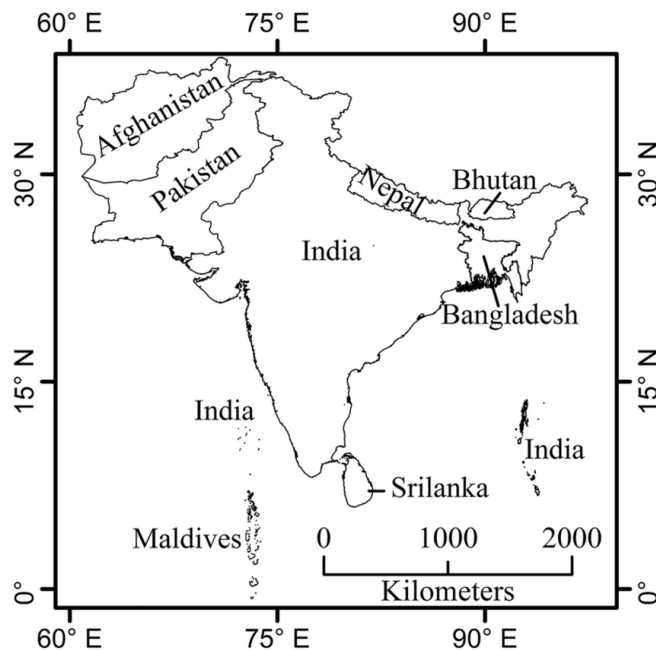
The research focussed on one particular sub-region of Asia, which is South Asia<sup>2</sup>. There is no universal agreement among the scholars on which countries should be included within South Asia (Razzaqui, 2004). The United Nations (UN) definition of South Asia includes the eight countries; Afghanistan, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka, but also adds Iran for statistical convenience (United Nations Statistics Division, 2008). However, the United Nations does not endorse any definition or area boundaries. One of the primary reasons behind this scepticism is the lack of a clear boundary in the geographical, geopolitical, socio-cultural, economic and historical aspects between the South Asian sub-region and other Asian sub-regions (Timothy and Nyaupane, 2009). There is a certain consistency in the modern definition of South Asia, which includes Afghanistan, India, Sri Lanka, Nepal, Pakistan, Maldives, Bhutan and

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<sup>2</sup> United Nations geosphere and South Asia Policy Institute divides Asia into five sub-regions: Southeast Asia, East Asia, Central Asia, West Asia and South Asia (United Nations Statistics Division, 2021; Asia Society Policy Institute, 2021).

Bangladesh (Figure 1.1). Iran is considered by various development agencies, scholars and institutions to be in Western Asia, so it is not included in this research (United Nations Statistics Division, 2008; World Bank, 2020; SAARC, 2018).

**Figure 1.1:** Map of South Asian sub-region



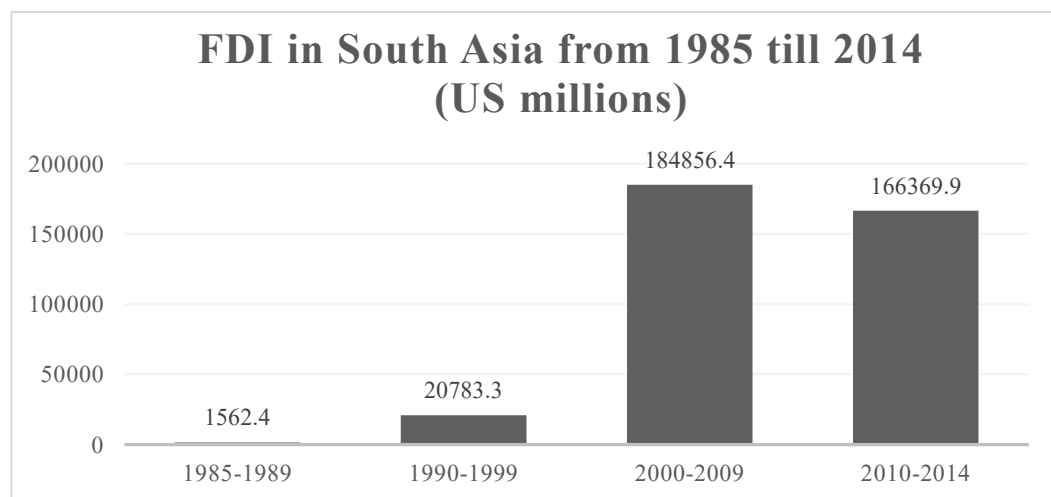
Source: Singh *et al.* (2020)

The tourism and hospitality industry plays a crucial role in the socio-economic fabric of the South Asian region, with a growing number of people employed in the industry (Table 1.1). This section depicts the challenges faced by the South Asian hospitality industry in terms of the labour situation, which leads to the study. The most salient was the following:

Firstly, in the year 2017, East Asia was ranked number one in Asia in terms of total FDI inflows, followed by South-East Asia, South Asia and West Asia, respectively (Fernando and Rajapakshe, 2018). Since the beginning of the 1970s, there has been a gradual rise in FDI's to South Asian countries due to liberalised policies adopted by the nations. The

FDI in these economies has increased substantially at the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century and extended up to \$184856.4 million (Figure 1.2) (Imtiaz and Bashir, 2017). Among the Asian sub-regions, only South Asia has managed to escape from the sharp FDI decline in the last decade (Fernando and Rajapakshe, 2018). The countries in South Asia requires substantial foreign capital inflow to achieve economic growth and development. The tourism and hospitality industry contributed significantly to the regions GDP over the past decades. Some of the countries in the region<sup>3</sup> had been granting 100% FDI permission in the tourism and hospitality industry. This meant that foreign companies could own up to 100% equity in a country’s tourism and hospitality industry (IBEF, 2020). The economic elevation that the industry brings in the region makes it all the more challenging for the existing businesses and the new entrants where the competition is not just for revenue; it is also to acquire the best talents to sustain businesses.

**Figure 1.2:** FDI in South Asia from 1985-2014



Source: Imtiaz and Bashir (2017)

Secondly, the availability of a skilled workforce is a significant factor and plays an integral part in attracting FDI stock (Imtiaz and Bashir, 2017). In the interest of the present

<sup>3</sup> 100% FDI is permitted in the hotel and tourism industry in India under various approvals (IBEF, 2020).

study, the tourism and hospitality industry has been a major employer in some countries in South Asia. Maldives, India, Sri Lanka and Bhutan had over 5% of people employed in tourism than total employment in the country in 2017 (Table 1.1). The sub-region is expecting a record hike in the number of working-age people in the next decade due to the demographic dividend<sup>4</sup> in all the South Asian countries except Pakistan and Afghanistan (Afghanistan and Pakistan are expected to enter the demographic dividend soon after 2050) (Asia-Pacific Human Development Report, 2016, p. 52). Countries in a demographic transition have the opportunity to capitalise on the demographic dividend provided there are right social, economic, and human capital policies in place (Ssewamala, 2015). However, some of the countries in the region are in a precarious position regarding the possibility of benefiting from the demographic dividend (Bloom and Sachs, 1998; Navaneetham and Dharmalingam, 2012).

As a preparatory measure, the central governments of some of these countries invested in programmes to prepare the people entering the job market with skills aligning to the demand in their key sector currently and for the future (e.g. Skill India Mission) (Kuzhiparambil, 2020). Some of the countries (e.g. India and Bangladesh) had tourism and hospitality included in their national development plan, whereas some had only tourism in their national skill development plan (e.g. Nepal and Sri Lanka) (The Economist Intelligence Unit, 2013). This shows the importance given to the industry in these developing economies. Apart from government initiatives, major transnational companies have started investing in skill development institutes and hotel schools in some South Asian countries (Jauhari and Thomas, 2013; IBEF, 2020). This research explores these practices and to what extent it is successful in the South Asian context.

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<sup>4</sup> United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) defined demographic dividend as “*the economic growth potential that can result from shifts in a population’s age structure, mainly when the share of the working-age population (15 to 64) is larger than the non-working-age share of the population (14 and younger, and 65 and older)*” (Haloi and Barman, 2020, p. 1585).

**Table 1.1:** South Asian countries, total employment, tourism employment and tourism employment percentage

<i>Country</i>	<i>Employed persons</i>	<i>Number of people employed in tourism (Direct contribution)</i>	<i>% of total people employed in tourism comparing to total employment in the country</i>
Bangladesh	64,000,000	1,178,500	1.8
Bhutan	332,099	29,827	8.9
India	522,960,000	26,148,000	5.0
Maldives	215,625	34,500	16.0
Nepal	15,546,875	497,500	3.2
Pakistan	58,750,000	1,493,000	2.5
Sri Lanka	7,961,358	404,000	5.1

Source: United Nations Statistics Division (2017); World Economic Forum (2017)

Thirdly, selection, recruitment, training, development and retaining talent have been an ongoing issue for hospitality companies over the past decades. Different companies in South Asia had differing strategies, whether it is foreign or domestic owned. The most significant development recently is the increase in the investments of foreign companies to the same level as the domestic companies in the South Asian market (e.g. Marriott and TAJ hotels in India). Therefore, it has become crucial to understand the changing needs of a 21<sup>st</sup>-century workforce, their motivations, and aspirations (Gupta, 2020). It involves a considerable investment to get an employee on board; however, the increasing number of opportunities in the market gives the employee different options elsewhere (Gupta, 2020). Some of the major companies present in South Asia have been reported to have implemented talent management strategies to achieve a competitive edge in order to have a skilful workforce (Santhanalaxmi and Chandramohan, 2019; Jauhari and Sanjeev, 2012). Hospitality and tourism is a fast-changing industry, and it was imperative to revisit the talent management strategies of both foreign-owned and domestic owned hotel companies.



Fourth, the South Asian region faces a significant mismatch between education/skill development and market needs (Ra *et al.*, 2015). A lot of this has to do with the basic educational provisions to the general public (Ra *et al.*, 2015). According to a UNICEF (2019) report, a staggering 54% of the South Asian young population leave the school education system without the necessary skills to work in the formal sector in the next decade. The report further establishes that nearly 100,000 South Asian young population enter the labour market each day, and approximately half of them lack the skills to be competent in the current job market (UNICEF, 2019). This increase in the labour force is beneficial for a country; however, a labour force that does not possess human capital cannot be utilised in the job market (International Labour Organisation, 2010). The unemployment rates vary across South Asian countries, with Afghanistan, India and Nepal showing the highest unemployment rates with intermediate education. Regarding unemployment with basic education, Afghanistan, Maldives and Nepal have the highest rates (Table 1.2).

Moreover, countries such as Afghanistan and India have a high unemployment rate even for individuals with advanced educational qualifications (Table 1.2). The most pressing issue in all countries in the sub-region is the differing rate of male and female literacy. The male and female literacy rates were varied across the South Asian countries, where Sri Lanka and the Maldives had the highest rate of male and female literacy rates (both combined and separately) according to the last census years in the respective countries. Contrary to this, other countries, including India, Nepal, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Bhutan and Bangladesh, showed significantly low female literacy rates (Sheikh and Loney, 2018). All these factors cause all the more reasons for efficient TM strategies to bring value to the employers, employees and the society (Thunnissen *et al.*, 2013).

**Table 1.2:** Unemployment with different educational levels

<i>Country</i>	<i>Unemployment with basic education (% of total labour force with basic education)</i>	<i>Unemployment with intermediate education (% of total labour force with intermediate education)</i>	<i>Unemployment with advanced education (% of total labour force with advanced education)</i>
	<i>2015-2018</i>	<i>2015-2018</i>	<i>2015-2018</i>
Afghanistan	12.3	16.2	15.5
Bangladesh	3.5	8.5	10.7
Bhutan	n/a	n/a	n/a
India	4.2	10.8	15.3
Maldives	9.4	6.0	3.5
Nepal	10.4	15.1	8.5
Pakistan	3.9	5.6	7.1
Sri Lanka	2.6	6.7	7.1

Source: Extracted from World Bank's World Development Indicators (WDI) database (Unemployment)

## 1.7 Thesis overview

This section outlines the structure of the thesis and provides a summary of each chapter's purpose. The thesis consist of these chapters:

Chapter 1 introduces the research by presenting the rationale for the research, purpose and background, displaying the research aims and objectives, and finally, the rationale for selecting the studying region.

Chapter 2 reviews the literature on talent management, the different approaches and practices. The significance of organisational culture in talent management is explored, and a review of the perceived benefit of talent management for the workforce is undertaken. This is followed by a section that explores talent management practices in the hospitality industry and depicts the gaps found in the literature. The chapter provides

an in-depth review of the topic of social capital, particularly organisational social capital and explores its different types, perceived benefits and what constitutes organisational social capital. It then explores the existing literature on the relationship between talent management and social capital. It contains a comprehensive review of the luxury hospitality segment and explores the factors that protrude the segment from other hotel segments. Lastly, a section brings together the existing literature on the relationship between talent management and social capital based on the luxury hospitality industry.

Chapter 3 presents the theoretical framework for both TM and SC. The chapter will explain each talent management practice and the social capital framework adapted for the study. This chapter ends with establishing a proposed conceptual model for testing the association between TM and SC.

In chapter 4, there will be a detailed explanation of the research methodology applied to fulfil the demands of the study. This includes the research philosophy, case selection strategy, and empirical approach for the study. The chapter will then present a comprehensive explanation of the two chosen empirical studies (quantitative and qualitative), techniques and instruments used for data collection, and explain the sampling strategies and the analysis techniques implemented. The chapter ends with explaining the ethical considerations and a conclusion section.

Chapters 5, 6 and 7 present the entire empirical findings and discussions of the thesis. Chapter 5 fulfils aim 1 of the research and documents the findings and analysis of employees' talent management experiences through a South Asian regional and country-level comparison. Chapter 6 fulfils aim 2 and documents the findings and analysis of the level and extent of social capital in a South Asian regional and country-level comparison.

Chapter 7 fulfils aims 3 and explores the relationship between talent management practices and social capital indicators within South Asian foreign (FSA) and South Asian domestic (DSA) companies. The chapter presents an in-depth exploration of the impact of the talent management practice on social capital formation and vice versa.

Chapter 8 presents the conclusion of the thesis, which contains the key research findings and provides an overall discussion and the implications of the research in the field of talent management and social capital. This is followed by a discussion on the research contribution to theory and practice, study limitations and recommendations for further research.



# CHAPTER 2

## LITERATURE REVIEW

### 2.1 Introduction

Talent management is generally conceived as a process that helps the companies anticipate their talent needs, and the process is considered critical for individual benefits and organisational success (Mensah, 2015). Social capital relates to building inter-unit relationships that could be beneficial for individuals and organisations (Moeller, Harvey and Kiessling, 2015). However, there are adverse effects or risks associated with certain talent management approaches (e.g. potential to marginalise employees, internal competition, organisational justice) (Daubner-Siva *et al.*, 2018; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2019; Kwon and Jang, 2021) and social capital (e.g. increasing restrictions on individual freedom, excluding the outsiders, encouraging discrimination) (Portes, 2014; Pillai *et al.*, 2017; Edelman *et al.*, 2002) in an organisational context. Therefore, understanding these two phenomena and the correlation between TM and SC is critical from an organisational and individual viewpoint. This chapter will first provide an in-depth review of the conceptual difference in understanding talent and talent management, including its segmentations, philosophies and conceptualisations over the past two decades. This is accompanied by exploring the global and local TM strategies by organisations and the hospitality industry in particular. This section will present the novel TM practices and the standard HRM practices in the hospitality industry.

Secondly, an in-depth review of the concept of SC is conducted. This includes understanding the different types of organisational social capital (external and internal) and perceived benefits (individual vs collective). This is followed by a detailed review of the variations by different scholars in determining what constitutes social capital (SC dimensions). The major theoretical and empirical developments of SC research in the hospitality industry will be discussed. Thirdly, a section will bring together the topics of talent management and social capital and identify the gaps in the literature. The section will provide a detailed review on the benefits, disadvantages and consequences for the employees' when adapting different TM approaches and practices and link it with the SC theory. Fourth, the researcher put together various scholars' definitions of luxury hotels and derived criteria that define luxury hotels. Following this, the existing studies linking TM and SC in the luxury hospitality industry are discussed. Finally, the chapter finishes with a conclusion section.

## **2.2 Definitions: Talent and talent management**

There is always a fascination to discover from who and where the manifestation of different terms came from. There is no difference to the term talent management. It is an overt fact that it all began when McKinsey & Company coined the term a 'war for talent' in the late 1990s (Minbaeva and Collings, 2013). Since then, academics from different disciplines such as Human Resource Management (HRM) and psychology (Dries, 2013) have refined the philosophical interpretations of the term and continue to do so. Interpretations are subjected to different attributes such as size and complexity of the organisation, cultural context and nationality. This has caused a lack of consistent definition of the terms talent and talent management in academic literature (Tansley *et*

al., 2013). According to Creelman (2004), TM is best regarded as a mind-set whereby talent is at the forefront of organisational success. Collings and Mellahi (2009, p. 305) define strategic TM as:

*“Activities and processes that involve the systematic identification of key positions which differentially contribute to the organisation’s sustainable competitive advantage, the development of a talent pool of high potential and high performing incumbents to fill these roles, and the development of a differentiated human resource architecture to facilitate filling these positions with competent incumbents and to ensure their continued commitment to the organisation”.*

Cappelli (2008, p. 74) gave a simplistic definition that it is only a matter of forecasting the need for human capital and then working out a plan to meet it. Lewis and Heckman (2006) defined TM into three broad categories (Burbach and Royle, 2010). The first perspective views TM as a combination of standard HRM practices. In the second category, the concentration is predominately on creating a large talent pool. In the third category, talent is viewed more in general terms, whereby talent is either viewed *“as an unqualified good and a resource to be managed primarily according to performance levels or as an undifferentiated good, based on a demographic necessity to manage talent”* (Lewis and Heckman, 2006, p. 141).

Since the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, there have been debates surrounding the differentiation between TM and HRM. This led to a series of definitions, differentiation and views on TM. This is mainly due to the second perspective of TM mentioned by Lewis and Heckman (2006), which posit that TM might be little more than a trendy term or euphemism for HRM (Hughes and Rog, 2008). According to Cheese, Thomas and Craig (2008, p. 46), *“Talent is used as an all-encompassing term to describe the human resources that organisations want to acquire, retain and develop in order to meet their business goals”*. This typology has been criticised for being too broad, and some have



criticised it as illogical (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2012). Hatum (2010) argues that even though HRM plays an essential role in TM, organisations' CEO and top managers have much more involvement in the strategic TM process. Smith *et al.* (2006) backed this and stated that managing a talent pool has become a joint responsibility of the HR department and the other senior managers. Hughes and Rog (2008) reviewed the academic and popular TM literature and have posited TM as a multifaceted strategic management activity championed by HR, if effectively organised, might assist companies in improved employee recruitment, high retention rates and enhanced employee engagement.

According to Minbaeva and Collings (2013), who conducted a study to understand the differentiation between HR and TM concluded that in Multinational Corporations (MNC), top management and corporate HR has joint responsibility in TM, as it is owned by management but governed by HR through the differentiated HR architecture. According to Chowhan (2006), TM acts as a key transmission mechanism through which HRM practices influence organisational performance. When it comes to the hospitality industry, Solnet, Kralj and Baum (2013) argues that *"TM is a key function of hospitality HR staff, even though many human resource departments have been downsized, decentralised or eliminated because of internal and external environmental pressures"* (Deery and Jago, 2015, p. 455). The hospitality industry is overly reliant on low skilled workers, which makes the lack of clarity of the concept of talent more pronounced within the industry (Kaewsaeng-on, Kane and Vundla, 2015; Baum, 2015).

Irrespective of the definition, there is no doubt in the scholarly world that talent is an essential aspect and plays a central role in the hospitality industry due to its service-

intensive nature (Scott and Revis, 2008). According to Deery and Jago (2015), the focus of TM in the hospitality industry appears to be different from mainstream management literature. The following section explores the two key tensions in talent philosophies: inclusive versus exclusive and subject versus object approach.

## **2.3 Talent management philosophies: conceptual divergences**

### **2.3.1 Talent seen as inclusive and exclusive**

One of the most debated issues in the TM literature is surrounding the key question, “*who is considered a talent and why*” (Dries, 2013; Meyers and Marianne, 2014; Sparrow and Makram, 2015). This links to one of the key debates; whether talent management practices should be exclusive or inclusive (Swailies *et al.*, 2014; Wilcox, 2016). Exclusive discourses primarily contain concepts such as talent pools and talent pipelines within a workforce based on ability and contribution (Axelrod *et al.*, 2002). For Barron (2008), an organisation that efficiently promotes TM categorises staff members and concentrates improvement interest in key, superior and high potential people such as people with potential for the jobs at the top of the organisation. As Swailies *et al.* (2014) argue, practitioners of conventional exclusive talent programmes tended to deliver partial TM. This is due to the nature of these practices where the focus is on a selected section, although arguably, a large portion of the available talent is of immediate use to the company (Swailies *et al.*, 2014).

According to the studies by Sparrow *et al.* (2011) and Stahl *et al.* (2012), many organisations use a combination of both the inclusive and exclusive approaches, although exclusive conceptualisation seems to be the most preferred (Thunnissen *et al.*, 2013). Exclusive TM has received little consideration from an ethical and organisational justice (Greenberg 1990) standpoint in the business and management literature. This could be due to the potential of these practices to marginalise employees and lead to disengagement (O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2019). Kwon and Jang (2021) conducted a literature review of 32 theoretical and empirical studies and found four themes that highlight the dysfunctional aspects of exclusive TM and workforce differentiation: organisational justice, ethics, internal competition and workplace diversity.

A more inclusive approach was proposed by Berger and Berger (2003), who suggests that everyone is talented in some ways, which can be identified and liberated. This view is similar to that mentioned by Iles, Preece and Chuai (2010, pp. 79-189), who states that an inclusive perspective loosely views “*talent as the whole staff*”. This approach intends to include everyone in an organisation and recognises that all the employees have their strengths, which can add value to the organisation (Buckingham and Vosburgh, 2001). The concept has good acceptance with academics and practitioners, although it is neither realistic nor sustainable in an organisational context (Wilcox, 2016, p. 40). According to the definition provided by Iles, Preece and Chuai (2010, p. 130), in an inclusive perspective, “*talent is an equivalent word for staff such that talent, rather than referring to relative ability, refers to people and thus assumes a completely different meaning*”. There is a connection between the inclusive approaches and the positive psychology movement mainly because the former fits in well with the latter due to its emphasis on providing assistance for all employees to flourish and succeed (Crook *et al.*, 2011; Newman *et al.*, 2014; Luthans and Jensen, 2002). Positive psychology, and by

implication, inclusive TM, helps increase the hope an employee has in imagining desirable future outcomes (Luthans and Jensen, 2002).

### **2.3.2 Object and subject approach**

Gallardo-Gallardo (2012) developed different typologies of the different approaches to talent in an organisation. By drawing on the concept of TM approaches, a clear distinction is made below between the object (talent as characteristics of people) and subject (talent as people).

#### **I. Object approach**

The object approach is defined as “*talent conceptualised as being people with exceptional characteristics*” and is further distinguished in terms of natural ability, mastery, commitment, or fit with the organisational context (Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2013, p. 293).

Several scholars have mentioned the inability to learn or teach talent and that it comes as a natural ability. For instance, Davies and Davies (2010) argue that talent is a natural innate ability and something that is not learnable and unmanageable. They suggest that the key to organisational success is to focus on the enablement of talent rather than its development. Contrarily to this, many scholars strongly opposes this approach (Rattan, Good and Dweck, 2012; Ericsson, Prietula and Cokely 2007; Pfeffer and Sutton, 2006; Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.*, 2013). They possess a different view and argue that talent is a function of experience and effort, also known as mastery. This view is similar to that of Ericsson *et al.* (2007, p. 117), who suggests that talent should be “*demonstrated by*

*measurable and consistently superior performance*". Dweck, Chiu and Hong (1995) argue that when organisations see talent as essential and neglect the room for improvement, it is irrational and pointless to continue exerting effort. The notion that ability is stagnant and cannot be changed is related to the entity theory, whereas an incremental theory involves believing effort can improve ability (Brown *et al.*, 2018).

In the literature, talent refers to the commitment to one's work and their employing organisation. Commitment to one's work is seen as a trait inherent to a person who directs focus, attention, and dedication (Pruis, 2011). Characteristics such as individual personality, motivation, will, perseverance, interest, and passion contribute to this talent construct to create individual organisational and professional commitment (Dwivedula *et al.*, 2016). An employee committed to an organisation would believe and accept the organisation's goals, values, and philosophies and be willing to exert considerable effort for organisational success (Mowday *et al.*, 1982; Dunham *et al.*, 1994; Bishop *et al.*, 2000). Finally, talent is viewed objectively as the fit between an individual's talent and the context (right place, right position) within which they work (Gallardo *et al.*, 2013). The importance of context is emphasised in this view, and that the meaning of talent is relative and subjective (González-Cruz *et al.*, 2019).

Gallardo-Gallardo *et al.* (2012) developed two typologies based on the object approach; inclusive object approach and exclusive object approach (Table 2.1) (Thunnissen *et al.*, 2013). Firstly, the inclusive object approach of talent represents the idea of having every employee in the organisation reach the height of their potential (Ashton and Morton, 2005). Scholars have mentioned this approach to have a resemblance to HR development, where the focus is on a broad range of people and their development activities (McCracken *et al.*, 2016). Secondly, the exclusive object approach of talent concentrates

on those employees in the organisation who possess exceptional abilities and can apply those abilities to achieve excellence in their performance (Gallardo *et al.*, 2013).

## **II. Subject approach**

The subject approach to talent enables a focus on who is identified as talent (Iles, 2013). This perspective has led Gallardo-Gallardo, Dries, and González-Cruz (2013, p. 297) to draw a distinction: talent as all people (Inclusive subject approach) or talent as some people (Exclusive subject approach) (Table 2.1).

According to the inclusive subject approach, every individual working in the organisation has their strengths and, thus, can create added value (Buckingham and Vosburgh, 2001). Peters (2006) supported this approach and mentioned the importance of considering each employee as talented. Bourdeau and Ramstad (2005) point out the importance of segments such as luxury hotels where frontline and behind the scenes employees play an equally important role in providing the expected service from these segments. Critics argued that this approach makes it all the more difficult to differentiate between TM and well-designed HRM (Swailies *et al.*, 2014; Gallardo *et al.*, 2013). Scholars who believe in this approach have tried to provide the distinction between the two. According to some scholars, the traditional HR process such as recruitment, selection, development, training, performance appraisal, and retention is the crux of the inclusive subject approach, but TM refers to doing them faster and better (Lewis and Heckman, 2006).

Meanwhile, the exclusive subject approach is based on the notion of workforce differentiation. This involves organisations using differentiated HR architecture, which

includes selecting high performing and high potential individuals who are capable of contributing towards the organisational goals (Kulkarni and Scullion, 2014; Becker *et al.*, 2009; Lepak and Snell, 1999; Schuler *et al.*, 2011; Smart, 2005). The core idea of an exclusive subject approach is to identify and retain the high performers (Beechler and Woodward, 2009). High performers are expected to outperform their peers in terms of skills and competency levels (Lopes, 2016) and advance faster than ordinary employees (Pepermans *et al.*, 2003).

**Table 2.1:** Approaches to talent management

<i>Inclusive and subject approach</i>	TM is all-encompassing that is no different from HRM
A broad range of TM practices applied to a broad range of people	
<i>Inclusive and object approach</i>	TM resembles human resource development
Appreciates the potential of a broad range of people and focuses on development activities in order to maximise potential	
<i>Exclusive and subject approach</i>	TM resembles management development or succession planning
Focuses solely on a select few who have been identified to fill pivotal positions because of high performance or high potential	
<i>Exclusive and object approach</i>	TM is about tailoring opportunities for specific individuals deemed to have 'innate talent'
Focuses on giving opportunities to a select few who have been identified as being differentially different in terms of ability, motivation and commitment	

Source: Gallardo *et al.* (2013) cited in McCracken *et al.* (2016, p. 2730)

## 2.4 Organisational culture, ownership and talent management

This section and the next section (section 2.5) intends to establish how context is operationalised in this research. As mentioned in Chapter 1, one of the aims of this study is to investigate the TM policies and practices and explore the differences based on different organisational cultures. The understanding of organisational culture is considered by various researchers (Barney, 1986; Joyce *et al.*, 1982; Lund, 1983) as one of the efficient ways for shaping employee performance and behaviours, which could contribute positively to delivering organisational effectiveness. Organisational culture is described as collective concepts, beliefs, and value systems of organisational members in a work environment (Hsieh, Chen and Liu, 2019; Denison and Mishra, 1995; Hartnell *et al.*, 2011; Al-Ali, 2003). High human involvement is considered an integral and distinct characteristic of the hospitality industry (Yavas and Konyar, 2003). The distinct characteristics of the hospitality industry compared to other industries makes organisational culture an essential concern, as organisational culture potentially affects employees' behaviours (Bavik, 2016).

Organisational culture appears to be a major driver for a hotel's strategy formation, ultimately impacting organisational performance (Kemp and Dwyer, 2001). Studies by various researchers (e.g. Biswas, 2009; Tang and Tang, 2012; Taylor *et al.*, 2008) found that organisational culture influences HR functions and impacts the roles, skills, and activities of HR. Cameron and Quinn (1999) found that the roles of HR vary according to the different organisational culture types. Vaiman and Brewster (2015) argued that there will be differences in HRM based on different geographic locations and that a universalistic approach to HRM will not work. Beamond, Farndale and Hartel (2016, p.



499) suggested that metropolitan and cultural differences could potentially be one of the reasons why the translation of corporate TM strategies to emerging economies is affected (Li *et al.*, 2018).

A higher level of misalignment between the internal (e.g. company culture and values, branding or organisational reputation) and external (e.g. level of economic development, industry characteristics within the country, country culture and labour market) environments could potentially affect the TM practices, which could negatively affect the organisational efficiency (Kontoghiorghes, 2016; Latukha and Selivanovskikh, 2016; Glenn, 2012; Kravariti and Johnston, 2019). There are studies on organisational culture that focus on a single hierarchical level (e.g. Fey and Denison, 2003; Hartog and Verburg, 2004) or a single department, and such an approach only provides a partial view of the organisational culture (Scott *et al.*, 2003). When assessing organisational culture, having the data from different hierarchal levels and departments is imperative as this would not limit the generalisability of the results and reflect the whole company's culture (Schein, 1990; Bavik, 2016). This factor has been carefully considered when deciding the sampling strategy for this study. Various studies found a substantial difference in the HRM practices, organisational culture and work environments between foreign and domestic companies across different countries (Newburry *et al.*, 2006; Budhwar, 2012; Pudelko and Harzing, 2007).

Moreover, there are arguments that domestic employers and those that show domestic organisational characteristics will be more attractive to the host country's national employees (Peltokorpi *et al.*, 2019). However, numerous scholars found that foreign firms

pay more attention to strategic HRM as a whole and TM in particular (Mills, 1998; Zupan and Kase, 2005; Latukha, 2015). TM came as a delayed concept in many domestic companies in the emerging economies (Skuzza, McDonnell and Scullion, 2015), including many South Asian countries. It is interesting to note that certain factors, such as the host country's national culture, may assist the domestic firms in implementing peculiar TM practices, although foreign companies might have a more elaborate TM approach (Latukha, 2015). The TM adaptability of foreign companies in the host country destinations is discussed in detail in the section below.

## **2.5 Global and local strategy for talent management in foreign companies**

Scholars have established the challenges foreign entrants face when adapting their systems to a new territory (Dunning, 1993). This includes attracting host country nationals towards foreign companies due to their lack of fit with the host country context and differing HRM practices (Newburry *et al.*, 2006). The country of origin factor immensely influences management decision-making regarding HR practices and, thus, TM decisions (Almond *et al.*, 2005; Ferner, 1997; Burbach and Royle, 2010). Many global companies had reported struggling to compete in these diverse markets, primarily due to the competition for the best talent. This has caused companies worldwide to incorporate Global Talent Management (GTM) as their business strategy (Preece *et al.*, 2013). GTM is often misunderstood by some scholars and practitioners where 'global' often implies a standardised operation across different territories and centralised control from headquarters (Preece *et al.*, 2013), with the "home" talent management practices of these companies transferred to the foreign markets. However, according to scholars, firm structure and strategy (Scullion and Starkey, 2000) and differing national contexts

(Hartman *et al.*, 2010) causes considerable variations in GTM practice. Collings, Scullion and Morley (2017, p. 102) define GTM as:

*“The strategic integration of resourcing and development at the international level which involves the proactive identification, development and strategic deployment of high performing and high-potential strategic employees on a global scale”.*

Turban and Greening (1997) call for more research to provide more comprehensive accounts of organisational and individual factors affecting foreign companies' organisational attractiveness. Peltokorpi *et al.* (2019), in their latest research, tried finding the host country national's organisational attractiveness perceptions. They found that the local adaptation of organisational culture, HRM practices, and work environment is what matters to the employees and not where the company country of origin is. As McDonnell, Hickey and Gunnigle (2011) mentioned, the corporate HR function closely supports GTM, including identifying global talent in MNCs. Björkman *et al.* (2008) suggested the need for foreign MNC's to understand the importance of responding to local demands when transferring the HRM practices to foreign subsidiaries. He proposed three dimensions to assess the successful transfer of HRM practices from the home country HRM practices to a foreign subsidiary which are the degree to which the practices are 1) implemented, 2) internalised and 3) integrated (Hartmann *et al.*, 2010). In their research, Chung, Sparrow and Bozkurt (2014) investigated Korean multinational enterprises' approaches to subsidiary HRM and found that the firms pursue hybridisation through blending localisation and global standardisation across detailed elements in different HRM practice areas<sup>5</sup>. Some scholars argue for global standardisation as they believe lack of this could lead to vulnerabilities by a firm. For instance, the managerial discretion of

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<sup>5</sup>This includes five broad HRM practice areas: job and grade, recruitment and selection, learning and development, performance management, compensation and benefit (Chung *et al.*, 2014).

local leaders may be not up to the highest standard at times (Kostova *et al.*, 2018). Scholars have established the effective role of leadership in improving talent management (Sheehan, Grant and Garavan, 2018; Betchoo, 2014; Reilly, 2018). Rosenzweig and Nohria (1994) argued that global standardisation provides internal consistency across their global operations that benefit organisations when employees need to move between geographic locations (Banks *et al.*, 2019). He added that multinational corporations should strive for internal consistency and engage in local isomorphism where national institutional pressures necessitate such adaptations (Rosenzweig and Nohria, 1994).

## **2.6 Talent management practices in the hospitality industry**

One of the earliest scholars to have critically reviewed TM is Lewis and Heckman (2006, p. 140), who tried to understand the practices associated with TM and proposed three broad but significant perspectives. He mentioned TM as resembling typical HR department practices such as “*recruiting, selection, and career and succession management*”. The second perspective concentrates on creating a large talent pool similar to succession or HR planning. The third perspective views “*talent as a resource to be managed primarily according to performance levels*”. TM practices vary according to different contexts (e.g. organisations, countries, culture). This is where talent strategy planning plays a role in the TM system. The organisation’s prerogative is to create and conceive a TM system according to the culture, characteristics and circumstances (Anlesinya and Amponsah-Tawiah, 2020). However, scholars have posited recurring ideas of the practices which should be included in a TM system (McDonnell *et al.*, 2010).

TM practices generally include talent attraction and identification, talent acquisition, talent development and talent retention management (Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Anlesinya *et al.*, 2019). According to Collings and Scullion (2007), TM typically involves identifying, developing, evaluating, deploying, and retaining high-performing and high-potential employees. McCauley and Wakefield (2006, p. 4) suggested that TM lifecycle includes workforce planning, talent gap analysis, recruiting, staffing, education and development, retention, talent reviews, succession planning, and evaluation. A study by Naim and Lenka (2017) on identifying the practices associated with TM has found that recruitment, talent development, knowledge management, social media, performance management, and rewards as the major practices.

According to Stahl *et al.* (2007), TM encompasses three sets of practices: recruitment, staffing and succession planning; training and development; and retention management. CIPD (2007) includes attention to career management, training and development, performance management, strategic HR planning, recruitment and selection and succession planning activity part of TM (Scott and Revis, 2008). Some researchers have mentioned the importance of reinventing the TM approach on the different practices and designing new TM architecture (e.g. agile management, behavioural economics and design thinking) (Claus, 2019). According to Martin (2015), focussing on talent agility and the deployment of unconventional strategic talent transformation initiatives helps achieve organisational success. These new-age TM initiatives revise the command and control rulebook of the human resource policies to experiment, reengineer, and test new solutions to organisational success (Claus, 2019).

Until the recent past, most of the studies on TM in hospitality were conducted from an organisational perspective (e.g. D'Annunzio-Green, 2008; Maxwell and MacLean 2008; Jooss *et al.*, 2019; Cooke, Saini and Wang, 2014), including the exploration of the association between TM and organisational performance (e.g. Boudreau and Ramstad, 2007; Ready and Conger, 2007). Post-2010, there has been an increase in the number of TM studies that focus on the individual employee perspective, such as employee reactions to talent identification (e.g. Sonnenberg *et al.*, 2014; Björkman *et al.*, 2013; Tansley and Tietze, 2013; Sumelius *et al.*, 2020) and career progression (e.g. Kichuk, Brown and Ladkin, 2019) but is still under-explored (Schuler *et al.*, 2017). The fundamental element in most of these studies is to understand the challenges in attaining a successful TM strategy. It is important to note that most of the research on TM in the hospitality industry based on workforce experiences has been carried out on a single hierarchical level or a single department that only provides a partial view of an organisation's culture. According to the studies by various scholars, TM is heavily influenced by organisational culture (Crawford *et al.*, 2010; Robbins, 1996) and individual differences (Kahn, 1990; Robinson, 2006). To understand the TM strategy of a hotel, it is imperative to understand the overall workforce's experience (every hierarchy and department) of TM in each stage of the TM life cycle.

Most of the research on TM in the hospitality industry has been conducted in the context of a western or developed economy (e.g. D'Annunzio-Green, 2008; Scott and Revis, 2008; Marinakou and Giosmpasoglou, 2019). A very few have been undertaken in a South Asian context; however, the focus has been mainly on individual countries in the sub-region (e.g. Rathore and Rathore, 2015; Perera and Dayarathna, 2019). There are studies which are based on different hotel standards; two and three-star hotels (e.g. Sarangal, Sharma and Manhas, 2020), five-star hotels (e.g. Sen and Bhattacharya, 2019) and budget

versus luxury hotels (Rathore and Rathore, 2015). One of the only studies on the TM approach and practices on foreign and domestic hotel companies in South Asia was conducted by Sen and Bhattacharya (2019), which was based on the Indian context. The study attempted to understand the TM practices in three top hotel companies in India (includes one foreign and two domestic brands). The study was not comparative in nature; it was more of an individual assessment of the three hotel companies' approach to managing talent in a single country (Sen and Bhattacharya, 2019).

By reviewing the literature, it was identified that there is limited research focussing on the employee experience of TM, and most of the research focusses on the manager's perspectives on managing talent (e.g. Cooke, Saini and Wang, 2014). Moreover, the inclusion of the overall workforce, including every hierarchy and department, is scarce. When studying TM practices in hotels with different cultural backgrounds, such an approach only provide a partial view of the organisational culture (Scott *et al.*, 2003). No comparative studies are found to explore overall workforces' experiences in TM in the South Asian luxury hotel industry. Additionally, no studies have intended to compare the TM strategies and practices in the foreign and domestically owned hotel companies present in the South Asian context.

The preceding sections have established the literature surrounding the topic of TM and its importance in the hospitality industry. Scholars have mentioned the benefit of social capital theory in explaining the social-psychological processes that help develop organisational and individual competitiveness by establishing interpersonal relationships (Watson and Papamarcos, 2002; Adler and Kwon, 2002; King and Lee, 2016). Studies

have confirmed the role of SC to enhance employees' tacit and explicit knowledge sharing intentions (Hau *et al.*, 2013; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). By utilising the social capital theory, the study has investigated the overall level of SC based on different company cultures (foreign and domestic). This gives an insight into the significant differences in the interpersonal relationships found, if any, between the two company cultures. Moreover, on the one hand, the study explores the influence of these interpersonal relationships (social capital) in the efficiency of talent management practices, leading to organisational and individual competitiveness. On the other hand, the study examines the role of TM practices of an organisation in fostering SC. Therefore, the following section and the corresponding sub-sections provide a comprehensive review of SC, its adaptation into organisational context (OSC), and review previous studies related to SC in the hospitality industry.



## 2.7 Definitions: Social capital and organisational social capital

Much of the discussions and debates over the use of SC emerge from epistemological differences in the academic work produced by Bourdieu, Coleman and Putnam, who are the three principal originators of the concept of the late 20<sup>th</sup> century (Lochner *et al.*, 1999). By the late 20<sup>th</sup> century, there had been vigorous advancement in SC research which almost covered all the topics in the social sciences (e.g. social, political, managerial, and economic) (Woolcock and Narayan, 2002). Bourdieu (1986, p. 248) views SC as:

*“The aggregate of actual and potential resources which are linked to the possession of a durable network of more or less institutionalised relationships of mutual acquaintance or recognition—or in other words, to membership in a group”.*

According to Bourdieu (1986), SC can be seen as the total stock or quantity of resources attached to an institutionalised network. The exclusion of specific individuals from obtaining resources tied to a network is recognised as a potential negative aspect of SC (Bourdieu, 1986). In contrast, Coleman conceives SC as a largely unintentional outcome of social processes and interaction. According to Coleman (1988, p. S98):

*“SC is defined by its function. It is not a single entity but a variety of different entities, with two elements in common: they all consist of some aspect of social structures, and they facilitate certain actions of actors—whether persons or corporate actors—within the structure”.*

Several scholarly critics have argued Coleman’s characterisation of SC as vague (e.g. DeFilippis, 2001; Lochner *et al.*, 1999; Macinko and Starfield, 2001). Putnam offered an

even more extensive definition of SC. The definition Putnam introduced has become the most frequently used in the academic sphere:

*“SC refers to features of social organisation such as networks, norms, and social trust that facilitate coordination and cooperation for mutual benefit”.*

(Putnam, 1995, p. 67)

Putnam’s (1995) scholarly works have become highly influential in development studies globally (Miller, 1997; Schulgasser, 1999; Servon, 1999; Wallis, 1998; Wilson, 1997). The World Bank has mentioned the SC as the missing link in global economic development (Harriss and de Renzio, 1997).

However, in a later work, Putnam (2000, p. 19) give a precise definition of SC as:

*“Connections among individuals—social networks and the norms of reciprocity and trustworthiness that arise from them”.*

Putnam has reworked the definition number of times, although certain elements are common across these varying definitions, such as social networks, norms of reciprocity, and trust (Carpiano, 2006). However, some critics and scholars highlight the major flaw in Putnam’s and Coleman’s conceptualisation as over-reliant on consensus-building (Defilippis, 2001; Mayer, 2003; Carpenter *et al.*, 2004). Sabel (1994) argues that SC builds up when every actor commits to ongoing negotiations based on a shared understanding of common goals (Hobbs, 2000). Fukuyama (1995) emphasises the role of trust and spontaneous sociability in reducing transactions costs and increasing economic efficiency. Echoing similar themes, Bowles and Gintis (2002, p. F419) define SC as *“trust, concern for one’s associates, a willingness to live by the norms of one’s community and to punish those who do not”*. Inglehart (1997, p. 188) equates SC with culture: that

is, “*a culture of trust and tolerance, in which extensive network of voluntary associations form*”.

Three different types of SC are identified in the literature: community SC (macro), organisational SC (meso), and individual SC (micro) (Adler and Kwon, 2002; Portes, 1998; Putnam, 2000; Kroll and Tantardini, 2019). At a micro level, SC benefits at an individual level as a result of interpersonal relationships (Coleman, 1988). Deriving from Coleman’s (1988) perspective, SC is concerned with the ability of an individual to utilise resources from interpersonal relationships for personal development or gains (King and Lee, 2016). Contrarily, a macro view considers SC to be an attribute of a collective group (e.g. organisations) (Watson and Papamarcos, 2002), where the interpersonal relationships result in the advancement of the group (King and Lee, 2016). The meso level includes a “*social structure that facilitates personal and corporate actions with vertical and horizontal associations and hierarchical relationships*” (Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2001, cited in Pawar, 2016, p. 216). Meso level is similar to the macro level, which is concerned with the benefits within an organisational/collective level (Grootaert and Bastelaer, 2001; Pawar, 2016, p. 216); however, it is more structurally oriented in its approach, where the primary concern is with the networks and norms that guide the interactions within the organisation (Grootaert, 1997; King and Lee, 2016).

This research focussed on organisational SC (meso), where the focus was on a target social group (workforce in the hotels) as the context for analysis. Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) was the first to relate SC to organisational advantages and introduced the concept of SC in management science (Kiline and Alex-Brown, 2013). They define SC as “*the sum of the actual and potential resources embedded within, available through, and derived from the network of relationships possessed by an individual or social unit*”

(Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998, p. 243). Tsai and Ghoshal (1998) also reviewed the concept of SC from an organisational perspective, building on the work by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998). They have defined SC as a resource that “*encompasses many aspects of a social context, such as, social ties, trusting relations and value streams that facilitate actions of individuals located within that context*” (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998, p. 465). Numerous scholars have explored OSC in various aspects of business and management studies (e.g. Adler and Kwon, 2002; Cooke, 2007; Tokman *et al.*, 2007; Hoffman *et al.*, 2005; Tien-Shang and Sukoco, 2007). OSC is defined by Leana and Van Buren (1999) as the summation of actual and potential resources rooted in relationships between individuals within the context of an organisation (Mostafa, 2019). Organisational social capital is recognised as a beneficial organisational resource by many researchers (e.g. Briena and Smallman, 2011; Sanchez-Famoso, Maseda and Iturralde, 2014; Mojeed-Sanni, Adeniyi and Sanni, 2015; Valentinov, 2003; Presutti, Boari and Fratocchi, 2016; Akram *et al.*, 2016).

## **2.8 Individual and collective benefit**

At the meso level (organisational level), SC is generally conceptualised as both an individual asset and a collective asset (Yasunobu and Bhandari, 2009). In one perspective, the focus is on using SC by individuals’ when accessing and using resources embedded in social networks to gain returns. In this perspective, the concept is relatable to human capital, and the assumption is that individuals can make such investments with expected returns (Hirschman, 1958; Adelman and Morris, 1967). Lin *et al.* (2001) noted that the aggregation of individual returns would benefit collectively. The next perspective focusses on SC at the group or organisational level while acknowledging the need for individuals to interact and network to develop payoffs of SC. SC literature generally can

be organised into two broad classifications: Ego-centric/psycho-centric theories and Socio-centric theories (Saudefur and Laumann, 1998; Adler and Kwon, 2002; Portes, 1998; Fukuyama, 1997; Granovetter, 1973). In ego-centric theory/psycho-centric theory, “*the focal actor is an individual who appropriates resources from social networks or relationships in which the person is a part of, in order to take individual action*” (Adler and Kwon. 2000, p. 92). In the case of socio-centric theory, the focal actor is a collective entity (e.g. an organisation), and SC appears to be in the internal linkages that characterise their structures and, in turn, provide cohesiveness (Adler and Kwon. 2000, p. 92) and enhance their capacity for collective action (McElroy *et al.*, 2006).

## **2.9 Internal and external social capital**

Two types of SC that exist at an organisational level: external SC and internal SC (Adler and Kwon, 2002). Internal SC deals with the intra-firm relationships, whereas external SC implies the relationships with external actors’ (extra-firm affairs) (Akram *et al.*, 2016; Wu, 2008). Considering a hospitality setting, external SC is concerned with the links with external entities (e.g. suppliers and partners), and internal SC depicts the social ties between employees or departments and the assets that are embedded in and accessible through these ties. It can be argued that both internal and external SC influences hotel operations (Adler and Kwon, 2002). The past few decades have seen prominence in the analysis of inter-organisational networks and firm behaviour using the theory of SC (Adler and Kwon, 2002). Although, it is important to note that an organisation may not necessarily be internally homogeneous, especially in the hospitality industry where different social groups coexist in most organisations such as departmental teams, hierarchy, divisions and shift work teams.

The development of OSC is affected by the dynamics within and between groups and, consequently, could enhance or limit any advantages that capital renders (Arregle *et al.*, 2007). The studies in the past have focused on the performance implications of either external (e.g., Lau and Bruton, 2011; Maurer and Ebers, 2006; Yloi-Renko *et al.*, 2001) or internal SC (e.g. Coleman, 1998; Maurer *et al.*, 2010) (Weiqi *et al.*, 2015). There have been very few studies conducted on both external and internal SC in the hospitality and tourism industry (Perez and Beauchesne, 2017). To better understand how SC influences firm performance, both extra firm and intrafirm social relationships must be considered (Leana and Van Buren, 1999). The research by Weiqi *et al.* (2015) tried to understand the impact of internal and external SC on the hotel's financial performance. The findings indicate the positive effect the interaction of external and internal SC has on financial performance.

## **2.10 Conceptualisations of social capital**

There are varied theoretical approaches to SC, and various conceptualisations also exist (Durlauf, 2002). SC has initially been defined and operationalised by various researchers as a unidimensional rather than multidimensional construct, emphasising the network or structural component (e.g. ties of network) (Liao and Welsch, 2005). Coleman viewed SC as a multidimensional concept, and in one of those dimensions (i.e. networks), there was an agreement between him and Bourdieu. Coleman viewed SC as emerging from social relations between persons (Coleman and Hoffer, 1988). Coleman (1988) has explained the three dimensions of SC: trustworthiness, information-flow capacity, and norms which is accompanied by sanctions. Putnam (2000) had made a differentiation between two of the SC components: bonding and bridging SC. One is the connection between individuals sharing similar characteristics (bonding capital), and the other refers to the connection which comes from networks of different individuals

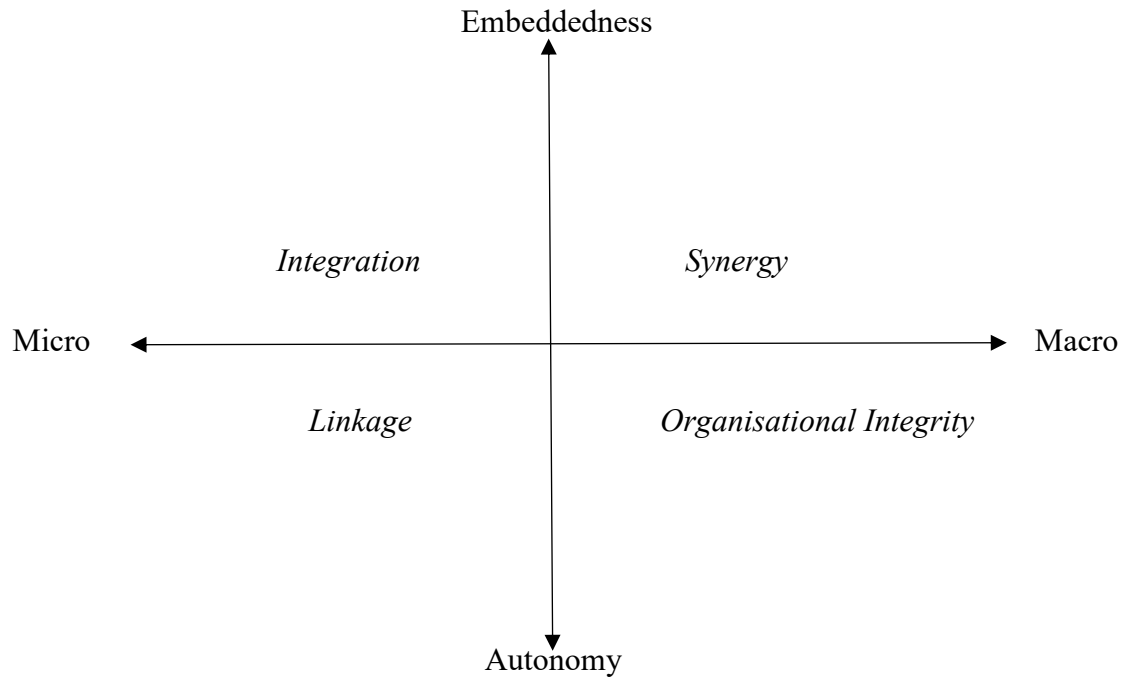
(bridging capital) (Martínez-Pérez and García-Villaverde, 2016). Bonding SC enables strong networks within a group (e.g. an organisation), whereas bridging SC increases the individuals' external direct and indirect connections (Coleman, 1988). In other words, bridging SC enables growth and bonding SC negatively affects sociability outside the closed social circle (Putnam, 2000).

One of the first scholars to attempt a dissection of the concept of SC is Woolcock (1997). Deriving from the two pairs of opposing concepts (embeddedness/autonomy<sup>6</sup> and macro/micro-level), Woolcock (1997, p. 168) has derived four dimensions of SC (Figure 2.1). At the micro-level, embeddedness (intra-community/intra-social ties) is referred to as “*Integration*”, and autonomy (extra-community ties) as “*Linkage*”. In contrast, at the macro level, embeddedness (state-societal relations) is referred to as “*Synergy*”, and autonomy (institutional competence and coherence) as “*Organisational Integrity*”. Several development outcomes, such as anarchic individualism (the absence of all four dimensions) to beneficent autonomy (the presence of all four), can be achieved using the different combinations of the four dimensions (Woolcock, 1997, p. 165). Woolcock (2001), in his later work, has differentiated SC between bonding SC (ties between people within the immediate circle), bridging SC (connection with distant ties) and linking SC (a link to connect individuals in different situations which would strengthen the external resources).

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<sup>6</sup> “*Embeddedness is an idea developed by Polanyi and Granovetter (Mankiw et al., 1992), which refers to the fact that all forms of exchange are inherently embedded in social relationships, in several possible ways, each with its benefits but also costs. ‘Autonomy’ is the opposite concept to embeddedness, referring to the degree to which agents have access to non-community members and operate by wider values and rules than those of the community*” (Woolcock, 1997, p. 165, cited in Piazza-Georgi, 2002).

**Figure 2.1:** Dissection of social capital

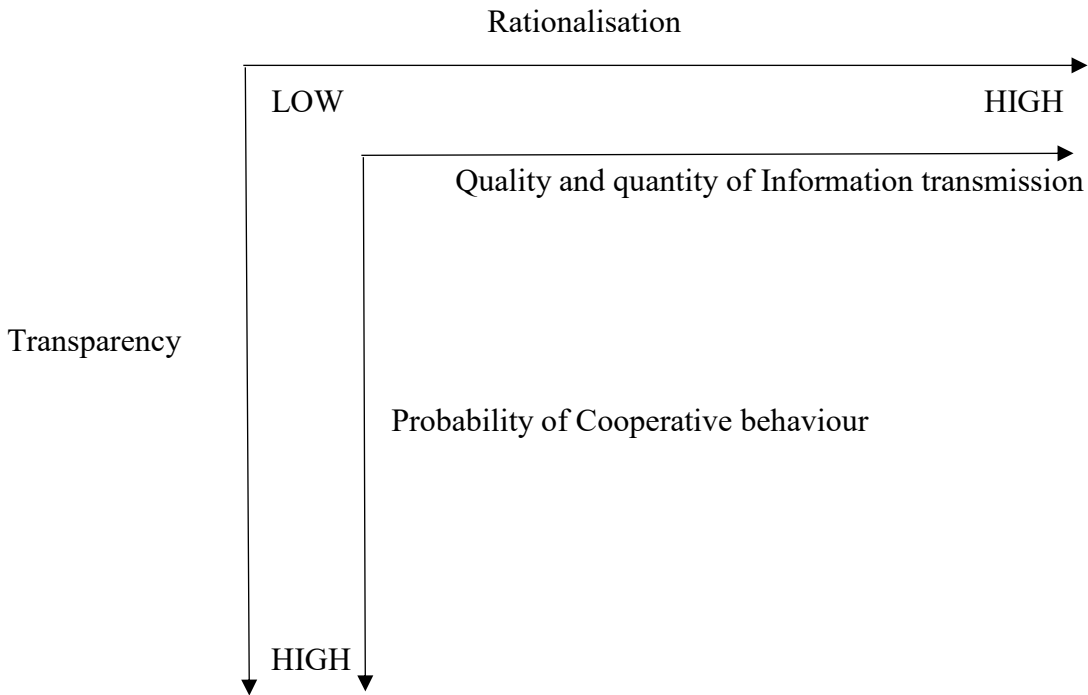


Source: Woolcock (1997)

Fedderke *et al.* (1999, p. 717) proposed a dissection of the concept and viewed SC under two interacting dimensions: “*transparency*” and “*rationalisation*” (Figure 2.2). “*Transparency denotes the transaction-cost-lowering function of social capital*”, and with the increase in transparency (improved information and increased predictability), the probability of cooperative behaviour among agents is believed to increase. Whereas rationalisation is “*the degree to which social capital moves from rules and norms that assume substantive content to rules and norms that are procedural in character*” (Nelson and Winter, 1982). When there is increased transparency, higher will be the corporative behaviour, and when there is increased rationalism, there will be better quantity and quality of information transmission (Fedderke *et al.*, 1999).



**Figure 2.2:** Transparency and rationalisation



Source: Fedderke *et al.* (1999, p. 718)

Some researchers have conceptualised SC as a resource forming along three dimensions: structural, cognitive and relational (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, pp. 251-256) categorised SC into three interrelated dimensions: structural (network ties, network configuration, and appropriable organisation), cognitive (shared language/code and shared vision) and relational (trust, norms, obligation and expectation, identification). Koka and Prescott (2002) proposed a set of three dimensions of SC: information diversity (technology diversity, country diversity, and holes), information volume (eigenvector centrality, number of partners, and number of ties) and information richness (multiplex and repeated ties). Each SC dimension is supposed to have different information benefits and influences differently on firm performance (Koka and Prescott, 2002).

Few studies in the past have adopted a two-dimensional view of SC consisting of structural and relational dimensions (Moran, 2005; Grootaert and van Bastelaer, 2001; Chou *et al.*, 2006; Grootaert *et al.*, 2004; Krishna and Shrader, 1999; Uphoff, 2000). This is primarily due to the commonality between cognitive dimension (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998) and the relational dimension (Cuevas-Rodríguez *et al.*, 2014; Weiqi *et al.*, 2015). This has caused confusion in defining cognitive and relational SC (Claridge, 2018). Cognitive and relational SC are intangible and come from individuals' observation, perception, and opinion, which can be highly subjective (Claridge, 2018).

According to Hobbs (2000), structural and cognitive SC are complementary and that structures assist in translating norms and beliefs into well co-ordinated goal-oriented behaviour. Uphoff and Wijeratne (2000) identified two types of micro-level SC: cognitive and structural. Cognitive SC is more internal and subjective, consisting of less tangible SC (e.g. norms, trust). Structural SC consists of objective variables such as information sharing, collective action and decision making through established roles, social networks, rules, procedures and precedents (Bandaralage, 2009). In order to investigate the concept of SC, Hazleton and Kennan (2000) have divided SC into a structural, relational and content (communicative) dimension. Along with the structural (network access, timing, and referral) and relational (trust, identification, norms), they also categorised content dimension, which includes four communication functions: (i) information exchange, (ii) problem identification, (iii) behaviour regulation, and (iv) conflict management.

Alternatively, Mu *et al.* (2008) conceived SC as resources, knowledge, and capability accessed using social networks and resources mobilised through network ties. Reviewing the existing conceptualisations of dimensions of SC, Pichler and Wallace (2007) categorised two dimensions: formal and informal SC. The former refers to participation

in more of a formally constituted civic organisations (Putnam, 2000; Schofer and Fourcade-Gourninchas, 2001), whereas the latter refers to social ties between individuals and their family or friends (Bourdieu, 1983; Coleman, 1988; Burt, 2001; Lin *et al.*, 2001). Table 2.2 displays the most established classification of SC dimensions by different researchers.

**Table 2.2:** Social capital dimensions by different authors

	<b>Authors</b>	<b>Dimensions</b>	<b>Variables</b>
1	Coleman (1999) and Putnam (1995)		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network ties</li> <li>• Norms</li> <li>• Trust</li> </ul>
2	Woolcock (1997)	Integration Synergy Linkage Organisational Integrity	
3	Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998)	Structural  Cognitive  Relational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network ties</li> <li>• Network configuration</li> <li>• Appropriable organisation</li> <li>• Shared language</li> <li>• Shared Vision</li> <li>• Trust</li> <li>• Norm of Reciprocity</li> <li>• Obligations and expectations</li> <li>• Identification</li> </ul>
4	Tsai and Ghoshal (1998)	Structural  Cognitive  Structural	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Social interaction</li> <li>• Shared Vision</li> <li>• Trust and trustworthiness</li> </ul>
5	Fedderke <i>et al.</i> , (1999)	Transparency Rationalisation	
6	Hazleton and Kennan (2000)	Structural  Content  Relational	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Network Access</li> <li>• Timing</li> <li>• Referral</li> <li>• Information exchange</li> <li>• Problem identification</li> <li>• Behaviour regulation</li> <li>• Conflict management</li> <li>• Trust</li> <li>• Identification</li> <li>• Norms</li> </ul>
7	Putnam (2000)	Bridging SC Bonding SC	

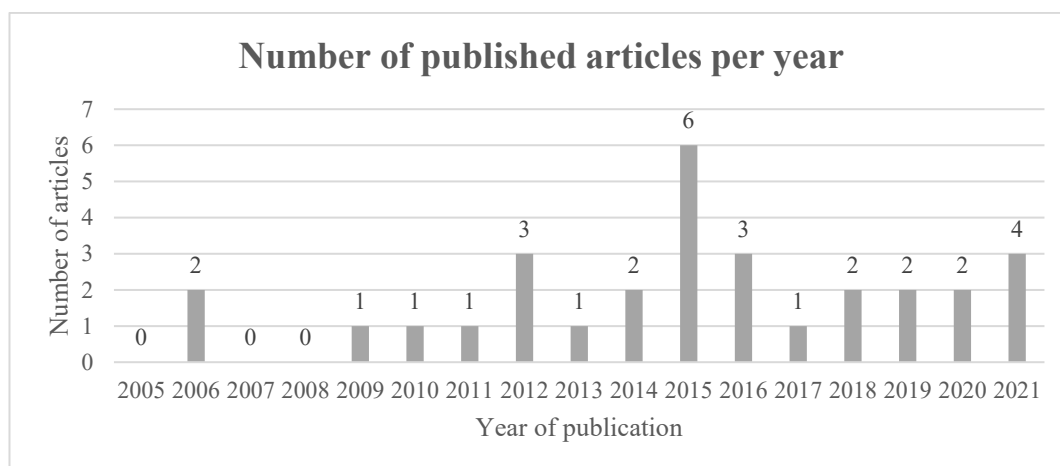
8	Woolcock (2001)	Bridging SC Bonding SC Linking SC	
9	Koko and Prescott (2002)	Information diversity  Information volume  Information richness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Technology diversity</li> <li>• Country diversity</li> <li>• Holes</li>   <li>• Centrality</li> <li>• Number of partners</li> <li>• Number of ties</li>   <li>• Multiplex</li> <li>• Repeated ties</li> </ul>
10	Pichler and Wallace (2007)	Formal SC Informal SC	

Source: The author (2021)

## 2.11 Social capital in the hospitality industry

Hotels are embedded in a complex social system, more often described as a network involving a large workforce that delivers a wide variety of services (Haugland *et al.*, 2011; Sainaghi and Baggio, 2014). *“To achieve good results, hotels must manage a wide set of relationships useful to access resources and information”* (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998, cited in Sainaghi and Baggio, 2014, p. 99). In the hospitality industry, resources include physical, human and organisational forms of capital that can be used to implement value-creating strategies (Kim *et al.*, 2013). Table 2.3 illustrates a wide array of academic outlets used to disseminate SC research in the hospitality industry, and Figure 2.3 shows the journal articles published every year till 2021.

**Figure 2.3:** Articles published per year based on social capital in the hospitality industry



Note: N = 31.

\*2021 figure to the end of July 2021.

Source: The author (2021)

**Table 2.3:** Journals and published articles focussing social capital in the hospitality industry

<b>International Journals</b>	<b>Number of publications</b>
<i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i>	9
<i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i>	8
<i>Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and Tourism</i>	3
<i>Asia Pacific Business Review</i>	1
<i>International Journal of Service Industry Management</i>	1
<i>Cornell Hospitality Quarterly</i>	1
<i>Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research</i>	1
<i>Journal of Business Research-Turk</i>	1
<i>Management Science</i>	1
<i>Journal of Service Management</i>	1
<i>Psychology and Marketing</i>	1
<i>Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management</i>	1
<i>Tourism Economics</i>	1
<i>Information Development</i>	1

Source: The author (2021)

The analysis demonstrates that only four journal articles were published between 2005 and 2011. There is an impressive growth rate between 2015 and 2021, as there were 20 journal articles during these years (Figure 2.3). **International Journal of Hospitality Management, International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, Journal of Human Resource in Hospitality and Tourism** were the three most popular publishing outlets (Table 2.3). The researcher had undergone an in-depth examination of the prior journals on this topic.

The initial search was conducted utilising the Google Scholar search engine. ‘Social capital’ and ‘organisational social capital’ linked with ‘hospitality industry’ were the keywords in the search. For a more detailed search, the researcher has used ‘Science Direct’, ‘Taylor & Francis Online’, ‘Emerald insight’ and ‘Wiley Online Library’ to collect academic literature on social capital in the hospitality industry. The search was restricted to publications in English and international journals. Even though the field has quite a long history in the academic sphere, studies related to the hospitality industry is relatively new. A total of 31 peer-reviewed international journal articles were published until July 2021, examining the different areas and issues related to SC in the hospitality industry. Table 2.4 demonstrates all the articles published until 2021 on the topic of SC in the hospitality industry.

**Table 2.4:** Social capital studies undertaken within the hospitality industry

<p><b><i>International Journal of Hospitality Management</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brien and Smallman (2011)</li> <li>- Ramos-Rodriquez, Medina-Garrido and Ruiz-Navarro (2012)</li> <li>- Sainaghi and Baggio (2014)</li> <li>- Dai, Mao, Zhao and Mattila (2015)</li> <li>- Uen, Chang, McConville and Su-Chen (2018)</li> <li>- Cho, Bonn, Guinipero and Jaggi, (2017)</li> <li>- Visentin, Reis, Cappiello and Casoli (2021)</li> <li>- Tang (2016)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>International Journal of Service Industry Management</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Friedrichs and Gummerson (2006)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Cornell Hospitality Quarterly</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Hsu, Liu and Huang (2015)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Asia Pacific Business Review</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tham, Fleischman and Jenner (2018)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Management Science</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Kalnins and Chung (2006)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Psychology and Marketing</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Palacios-Marqués, Devece-Caranana and Llopis-Albert (2016)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Information Development</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Ghorbanzadeh, Khoruzhy, Safanova and Morozov (2021)</li> </ul>	<p><b><i>Tourism Economics</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Barros and Santos (2009)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Journal of Human Resources in Hospitality and tourism</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Brien , Thomas and Hussein, (2015)</li> <li>- Brien, Ratna and Boddington (2012)</li> <li>- Brien (2010)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Campopiano, Minola and Sainaghi (2015)</li> <li>- Hsu, Liu and Huang (2012)</li> <li>- King and Lee (2016)</li> <li>- Kim, Lee, Paek and Lee (2013)</li> <li>- Huang, Yu, Shao, Yu and Li (2021)</li> <li>- Zoghbi-Manrique-de-Lara and Ruiz-Palomino (2019)</li> <li>- Huang, Chen and Wong (2020)</li> <li>- Casanueva, Gallego and Revilla (2015)</li> <li>- Kang and Jang (2019)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Asia Pacific Journal of Tourism Research</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Tang (2015)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Journal of Business Research-Turk</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Örgun and Percin (2021)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Journal of Service Management</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Munzel and Kunz (2014)</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management</i></b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Liu and Jiang (2020)</li> </ul>
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Source: The Author (2021)



Various scholars have examined SC at multiple levels of analysis in the hospitality sector due to its influence on individual and collective outcomes (Payne *et al.*, 2011). For instance, the studies on individual outcomes focussed on compensation (Seibert *et al.*, 2011), placement on a board of directors (Lester *et al.*, 2008), and knowledge creation (McFadyen and Cannella, 2004). Whereas at a collective level, the studies focussed on entrepreneurship (Shane and Stuart, 2002), Initial Public Offerings (IPO) failure (Fischer and Pollock, 2004) and firm competitiveness (Wu, 2008) (Sainaghi and Baggio, 2014). Zhao *et al.* (2011, p. 1571) argued that the application of the SC concept to hospitality research is lacking compared to other industries. It is important to note that the studies on the hospitality industry are largely based on an individual level. Therefore, the relationship between SC and hotel performance is not very well explored. In reviewing the past decade of research on SC in the hospitality industry, few studies focused on the relationship between different dimensions of SC and the relationship between the dimensions and the different endowments (e.g. Brien *et al.*, 2015; Ramos-Rodriguez *et al.*, 2012), organisational outcomes (e.g. Weiqi *et al.*, 2015; Brien *et al.*, 2012) and organisational practices (e.g. Taegoo *et al.*, 2013; Brien *et al.*, 2012).

As displayed in Table 2.4, to date, not many studies have explored the potentiality of SC in the hospitality industry and in these, the focus is primarily on individual themes, such as the management of contingent labour (Brien, 2010), hotel managers' salaries (Barros and Santos, 2009) (who concluded that hotel managers' earnings are positively related to their social ties), intellectual capital/ entrepreneurship (Kalnins and Chung, 2006; Zhao *et al.*, 2011), organisational trust (Brien *et al.*, 2012), knowledge sharing (Kim *et al.*, 2013), and the role of middle managers (Brien and Smallman, 2011) (Sainaghi and Baggio, 2014). There are a few studies that focus on the impact of SC on job performance (Huang *et al.*, 2021; Sainaghi and Baggio, 2014), hospitality customer research (Huang,

Chen and Wong, 2020; Munzel and Kunz, 2014) and the crisis during COVID-19 (Visentin *et al.*, 2021). The research by Sainaghi and Baggio (2014) found a gap in the literature in exploring the impact of SC on hotel performance, and their findings posit SC as a valuable asset, which can impact performance. The recent study by Huang *et al.* (2021) examined the relative effects of human capital, social capital and psychological capital on hotel employees' job performance in five-star hotels in China. Although psychological capital and human capital were found to impact job performance, SC was found to have no significant effect on employees' job performance. In their research, Brien *et al.* (2015) have tried to understand how the variables of organisational SC, such as communication, influence, and trust, impact organisational commitment (employee turnover) in the hotel industry. The research validates the positive impact of communication and influence on commitment, and that trust has a low impact on commitment.

Most of the studies on SC in the hospitality industry were based on data from the US and European countries (e.g. Cho *et al.*, 2017; Brien *et al.*, 2012; Visentin *et al.*, 2021). Very few studies have been conducted in an Asian context (e.g. Tang, 2016; Taegoo *et al.*, 2013; Liu and Lee, 2016; Uen *et al.*, 2018) and none specifically in a South Asian context. This appears to be a serious gap. From the review, it is evident that no studies had in the past investigated the level of SC in a hospitality firm incorporating the overall workforce (including every hierarchy and department). The following section links talent management and social capital and provides an account of the previous studies related to this.

## 2.12 Linking talent management and social capital

Traditionally organisational researchers attempted to explain employee attitudes and behaviours in terms of either organisational characteristics (by predicting behaviour by assessing the characteristics of a person's situation or organisation or individual characteristics) (Sheridan, 1992) or individual characteristics (by understanding individual characteristics as personality traits, values, and beliefs are primarily responsible for behaviour) (Weiss and Adler, 1994; Tepeci and Bartlett, 2002). When it comes to the studies on the employee reactions to talent management practices, scholars tend to focus on the employee attitudes towards the organisation (e.g. satisfaction, engagement, organisational commitment, perceived justice) or the attitude of the individuals own role within the organisation (e.g. psychological contract fulfilment, commitment towards development) (Murillo and King, 2019). Social exchange theory with the related theories of psychological contracts and perceived organisational support are recurring topics when studying micro-level TM (Mensah, 2019; Murillo and King, 2019). According to Cropanzano and Mitchell's (2005, p. 890) definition, "*social exchange comprises actions contingent on the rewarding reactions of others, which over time provide for mutually and rewarding transactions and relationships*". Psychological contract and organisational justice theory are seen as an extension of social exchange theory in the context of employee reactions to TM (Mensah, 2019; De Boeck *et al.*, 2017).

Regarding TM, psychological contract acts as a useful lens to examine employee perceptions of the extent to which the organisation induces talent (Höglund, 2012). Few scholars in their recent studies have found evidence on the involvement of psychological contracts in TM (e.g. Björkman *et al.*, 2013; Höglund, 2012; King, 2018). The organisational justice theory (Adams, 1965; Greenberg and Baron, 2003; Anlesinya and

Amponsah-Tawiah, 2020) is related to the perception of the workforce on fairness in their employment relationships. The impact of talent and non-talent segregation is studied using the organisational justice theory framework (De Boeck *et al.*, 2017). In contrast to the inclusive TM approach (which provides equal access to TM opportunities for all employees), the exclusive TM approach appears to create inequality gaps among the workers in organisations, which results in major ethical problems (Anlesinya and Amponsah-Tawiah, 2020), the morality of focusing on an elite group (Swales, 2013) and potential adverse reactions from the excluded majority (Bjorkman *et al.*, 2013; Pfeffer, 2001, cited in Swales and Blackburn, 2016).

Social capital is also viewed as an extension of social exchange theory (Uen *et al.*, 2018; Astone *et al.*, 1999). The social capital theory has been applied in sociology and management (organisational social capital) to study the networks embedded in organisations and personnel relationships (Uen *et al.*, 2018). One of the under-researched areas in this field is the relationship between talent management and social capital. The related studies usually focus on exploring the mediating or moderating role of organisational SC in individual and organisational attributes and functions related to TM, such as career mobility and human capital (Lin and Huang, 2005), performance management (Tantardini and Kroll, 2015), organisational ambidexterity and entrepreneurial orientation (Luu, 2017), transformational leadership and work engagement (Mostafa, 2019), reducing burnout and improving employee performance (Harjanti, 2019), and motivating and retaining employees (Kroll and Tantardini, 2019). For instance, in their research, Kroll and Tantardini (2019) found the role of OSC in mitigating turnover intention but is unrelated to turnover behaviour. SC in the form of support from supervisors and co-workers is found to positively impact employee retention (Kroll and Tantardini, 2019). The research by Ko (2021) has found the link between OSC

and employee wellbeing and that the former can generate both organisational outcomes and employee wellbeing. Several researchers have mentioned the negative aspect of SC that it could potentially make the onboarding of new recruits to already existing groups more difficult (Aldridge, Halpern and Fitzpatrick 2002; Morrow, 1999; Szreter 2000). These groupings and associations with more SC are found to be more likely to exclude outsiders (Morrow, 1999; Szreter, 2000; Ko, 2021; Kroll and Tantardini, 2019).

There have been studies in the past which assessed the role of SC in leadership development. Leitch, McMullan and Harrison (2012) suggest that the enhancement of leaders' human capital only occurred through their development of SC. A Study by Moeller *et al.* (2016) has explored the GTM practices that can reduce the in-patriates' difficulties in building SC at headquarters. They have found that the relationship between GTM practices and SC building needs to be appropriately managed by in-patriates themselves and the organisation. Meanwhile, Altinoz, Cakiroglu and Cop (2013) attempted to find the effects of TM on organisational trust in the management level staff and found a difference in the results based on the hotel standards (between five-star and four-star hotels). There are individual studies as mentioned above which focussed on the effect of SC on specific TM practices such as recruitment (e.g. Godechot, 2016), retention (e.g. Ko 2021), onboarding (e.g. Morrow, 1999; Szreter, 2000), and leadership development (e.g. Kroll and Tantardini, 2019; Leitch, McMullan and Harrison 2012). In addition, few studies focussed on exploring the effect of TM practices and functions on enhancing OSC variables such as trust (Altinoz, Cakiroglu and Cop 2013), mediating effect of feedback on the relationship between trust and networking ability (Lapointe and Vandenberghe, 2018), GTM on SC development (Moeller *et al.*, 2016). It is evident from the review that no research has been undertaken which investigates the overall relationship between the different TM practices and the OSC dimensions in any context,

let alone hospitality. The rationale for selecting the luxury hospitality segment is described in detail in the Methodology chapter (refer to section 4.3). The following section (Section 2.13) consists of a comprehensive review of the luxury segment in hospitality, including its definition and what it constitutes.

## **2.13 Luxury hotel sector**

Since the beginning of the millennium, there has been a sudden shift in consumerism towards an experience economy (Pine and Gilmore, 1999). With economic growth and social democracy growing, particularly within the middle-class stratum, luxury (product, brand or company) is not only available for the social elite but also people from other social strata (Kapferer and Bastien, 2012). The luxury sector in hospitality and tourism contributes to many national economies. According to a report by EuroMonitor International, the luxury goods market worldwide grew from just over \$250 billion in 2010 to \$317 billion in 2015 (EuroMonitor International, 2015) despite global challenges, including political instability, terrorist threats, and ongoing economic issues. Independent studies show that hotels that demand high manpower and other multimillion tourism investments can create opportunities for significant economic growth in developing countries (IFC, 2011).

A report by World Bank (2012) mentioned the critical role luxury hotels play in development as they catalyse tourism and business infrastructure. Institutions such as International Finance Corporation (IFC) has partners, including leading luxury hotel chains such as Shangri-La, Hilton, Marriott, InterContinental and Mövenpick. Entities such as World Bank have financed and had partnerships with luxury hotel brands for over half a century in Asian countries to fight poverty and unemployment (IFC, 2011). The

luxury hotel segment provides the highest number of jobs, and the market share in many Asian countries is higher than any other hotel segment. The high employability is due to the various amenities and also to offer personalised service to the guests. This section sought to establish criteria for luxury hotels based on the definitions by different scholars. This review has solely focussed on the tangible features of luxury mentioned in the literature. The purpose of this section is to review the definitions of luxury hotels, based on the definitions of the term luxury itself, and thereby develop generic criteria by looking at the physical resources. The primary objective is to establish a list of criteria upon which the hotels in the South Asian countries are selected for inclusion in the study.

### **2.13.1 Definition of luxury in the hotel sector**

As far as the hotel industry is concerned, different countries have their approaches to classifying hotel standards. Slattery and Games (2010) have raised concerns over the international classification systems across different locations, where the 5-star hotel classification reflects the luxury category. Some countries have star categories with features that satisfy the criteria set by the tourism boards to categorise them as 4-star, 5-star or even 5-star deluxe. Meanwhile, some countries have 5-star hotels, which might not offer up to the standards of a 4-star hotel in another country. There are countries where hotel classification is entirely voluntary, and the criteria for classification are handled at the national level. In some countries, the regulation of hotel classification is the responsibility of regional governments, who develop a classification based on specific requirements. There is so far no internationally recognised classification that has been adopted. Being a 5-star rated hotel in a particular country's standards does not necessarily make a hotel luxury in today's day and age. There is no such definition of luxury or classifying a hotel as luxury unless the country or the government body develops a

classification of what makes a hotel luxury (Philippines Department of Tourism, 2012; Hotel Stars Union, 2015).

Luxury is a highly subjective word since people are different regarding ethnic background, culture of origin, educational background and personal experience (Potavanich, 2015). Moreover, individuals from the same culture sometimes define luxury differently (Berry, 1994). According to Ariffin and Maghzi (2012), the difference in the culture could affect guests' expectations. For instance, a study conducted by Gilbert and Tsao (2000) has mentioned the influence of culture on guests' expectations and found out in a study that the Chinese guests are focused more on the price, status and brand names of hotels, whereas the main concerns of western guests are location, room size and security. Hansen and Wanke (2011, p. 789) mentioned that "*the idea of luxury products and services are exceptions to the everyday normality's of life*" (Hoffmann and Coste-Marnière, 2012). Even though numerous studies have been conducted on luxury goods and services, very few have been conducted on luxury hotels. One of the first who has studied luxury hotels was Bernstein (1999, p. 47), who posited that "*luxury should be defined at both an emotional and experiential level*".

Different researchers and academic practitioners have defined luxury in hospitality based on high price, ambience and outstanding service quality. Swarbrooke *et al.* (2003) mentioned the need for luxury hotels to provide the opportunity for enjoyment and the need for luxury hotels to provide free entertainment activities (Swarbrooke *et al.*, 2003). Hennings *et al.* (2012, p. 932) noted that "*the true value of luxury concept lies heavily in the perception of excellence, exclusivity and uniqueness*" (Heyes and Lashley, 2017, p. 24). Swarbrooke (2018) noted that the idea of luxury is about exclusivity, achieved through a high sales price, and is evident in the tourism and hospitality industry through



everything from first-class airfares to presidential suites in hotels, to suite cabins on cruise ships. Commenting on luxury, Heyes and Lashley (2017, p. 24) argue *“that a hotel room that is more expensive does not necessarily mean it is correspondingly more luxurious”* and that the *“relationship between price and luxury is not seen to correlate parallel to the relationship of price and exclusivity”*. According to Chen and Hu (2010), providing superior tangible products such as a luxurious room layout and the quality and variety of Food and Beverage (F&B) are significant in luxury hotels. Mun *et al.* (2021) argue that the F&B services are closely related to the classification of hotels and that the differentiation strategy for F&B services would highly be related to luxury hotels. A luxury hotel offers F&B services with diversity, such as a coffee shop, upscale restaurants, and bars and banquets (Mun *et al.*, 2021).

Danzinger (2005) categorised luxury into four dimensions; luxury as a brand (individuals who consume luxury services because they are perceived as a symbol of the best quality), luxury as luxe product features (specific attributes of the product or service such as the inner and outer decor of the hotel building, or the physical amenities provided by the hotel), luxury as non-necessities (products or services which are more than the necessities; e.g. physical amenities such as swimming pools and fitness centres), luxury as the power to pursue your passions (purchase of luxury products to make life more comfortable; e.g. spa treatment and massages). Reliable access to the internet is considered a must for a luxury hotel by Swarbrooke (2018), which is not the case in remote regions in developed countries, let alone in developing countries. Furthermore, there are extra charges for accessing Wi-Fi in some luxury hotels, without realising that most guests see this as a necessity rather than a luxury. With all these amenities, luxury hotels create a service-

intensive environment where the staff-to-guest ratio is high to ensure high interpersonal customer contact (Brien, Ratna and Boddington 2012).

All the different characteristics stated by various academics have been put together in Table 2.5. From that, the researcher established minimum benchmark criteria for luxury by solely looking at the physical amenities. The luxury standards can go much beyond the established minimum benchmark criteria, which cannot be ignored. The criteria were established solely by focussing on the physical amenities as these are quantifiable, and the quality factor could be varied.

**Table 2.5:** Characteristics and criteria of luxury hotels

<i>Characteristics of luxury in modern day hotel industry</i>	<i>Criteria</i>
Exclusivity (Swarbrooke, 2018; Hennings <i>et al.</i> , 2012) Luxurious room layout (Chen and Hu, 2010)	<b>C1:</b> At least one presidential suite (Chen and Hu, 2010; Swarbrooke, 2018; Hennings <i>et al.</i> , 2012)
Quality and variety of food and beverage (Chen and Hu, 2010) Differentiation strategy for F&B services would highly be related to luxury hotels (Mun <i>et al.</i> , 2021)	<b>C2:</b> At least one restaurant with variety cuisine <b>C3:</b> At least one coffee house/bar (Mun <i>et al.</i> , 2021; Chen and Hu, 2010)
Physical amenities (Danzinger, 2005) Luxury products to make life more comfortable (Danzinger, 2005)	<b>C4:</b> Spa/massage centre <b>C5:</b> Swimming Pool <b>C6:</b> Fitness centre (Danzinger, 2005)
Free Wi-Fi is a necessity (Swarbrooke, 2018) It should not be an obligatory undertaken, entertainment should come freely (Swarbrooke <i>et al.</i> , 2003) Amenities or experiences which the hotel offers the guests which are above the basic needs or necessity (Danzinger, 2005)	<b>C7:</b> Free Wi-Fi (Swarbrooke, 2018) <b>C8:</b> Free entertainment activities (Danzinger, 2005; Swarbrooke <i>et al.</i> , 2003)

Source: The author (2021)

## **2.14 Talent management and social capital in the luxury hospitality industry**

The studies on TM in the hospitality industry is mostly based on larger organisations. The primary reason is that due to the complexity in the topic of TM, it is better investigated in larger organisations where there are sufficient resources in adopting them (Bolander, Werr and Asplund, 2017; Schuler, Jackson and Tarique, 2011). Larger organisations in

the hospitality industry do not particularly mean the luxury category but organisations with less limitation on resources (Schuler, Jackson and Tarique, 2011). The luxury segment in the hospitality industry is one prime example of this. One popular belief in the scholarly world is that localisation of the foreign MNC's on the HRM practices is necessary when they enter new territory. Contrarily, some scholars argue that global standardisation in HRM practices creates an internal consistency across the global operations (refer to section 2.5).

Luxury hotels (irrespective of domestic or foreign companies) in many Asian countries had a demand for expatriates in the past. Many companies in the past have hired senior managers and employees in specific roles (e.g. chef specialised in a particular cuisine, finance, HRM) from foreign countries, and recently companies are focusing on talent localisation due to its cost efficiency (Chan, Ye and Honggang, 2016). The differentiation between the TM practices in the luxury hotel companies rooted domestically and foreign MNC's who enters the market is highly under-researched. Due to the significance of the luxury hotel segment in a country's general economy, it is imperative to conduct a comparative study of TM in the luxury hospitality industry. The value of this research is that there are no studies that have focussed on TM, its process and practices, comparing different organisational cultures (foreign versus domestic owned) in the luxury hospitality context in multiple South Asian counties.

The studies on SC in the luxury hospitality industry is a massively under-researched area in the academic sphere. A study by Brien, Ratna and Boddington (2012) has explored the influence of SC on organisational productivity in the New Zealand luxury hotel industry. The findings from the study noted the need for OSC for growth in productivity. The study also found the incapability of human resource practices in lifting productivity. For example, the study found that having a full-time contract and a long length of service

could potentially foster SC, and these are based on the HR policies undertaken by the companies. The study included the overall workforce with full-time and part-time contracts highlighting the importance of having an overall representation of the workforce to study the OSC.

Very few scholars in the past had explicitly studied the influence of intra-organisational SC on employee job performance in the luxury hotel industry (e.g. Tian and Zuo, 2013; Huang *et al.*, 2021). These studies had stemmed from the link suggested by various researchers between OSC on organisational productivity (e.g. Brooks and Nafukho, 2006; Dess, 1999; Huselid, 1995) and employee job performance (Kim *et al.*, 2013). Luxury hotels are a melting pot for different nationalities (Chen and Myasin, 2008; Brien, Ratna and Boddington 2012; Chan, Ye and Xu, 2016), speaking different languages (Singh, 2019) and working in different hierarchies (Maroudas, Kyriakidou, and Vacharis, 2008). These factors itself causes challenges regarding OSC development. The crux of this current study is the differences in the organisational culture between foreign-owned and domestically-owned hotel companies in South Asia. Therefore, the study documents the level of SC in both the foreign and domestic companies and compare them to see the differences between them for each SC dimension examined.

There is an increased interest in the academic sphere in linking TM to several social exchange theories. However, there is little attention given to linking the effect of TM on SC and vice versa. It is evident from the review that no research intended to explore the relationship between TM practices and the SC dimensions in the luxury hospitality context. Therefore, this research will assess whether there is a relationship between

different TM and the SC dimensions and how this association is influenced by ownership and organisational culture.

## **2.15 Chapter conclusion**

Several researchers have mentioned the importance of TM in a business strategy and how it influences organisational outcomes, and there has been an increase in the number of research on TM over the past decade. However, TM is still a new concept in certain emerging countries, and, in some countries, it came as a delayed concept (Latukha, 2015). South Asia as a sub-region is yet to discover its potential to utilise the immense resources they possess. As mentioned in Chapter 1, most of the countries in the sub-region are on the verge of reaching the demographic dividend, which could provide enormous contributions to national development if utilised. Tourism and hospitality is a service industry relying hugely on human resources (Baum, 2015). In the past two decades, several foreign companies have shown their presence in countries in South Asia.

However, some countries in the region are yet to attract foreign companies, and one of the major reasons is the difficulty in dealing with the workforce. Especially during the demographic dividend, the most challenging task would be to adapt to managing the changing workforce. This could potentially affect the domestically rooted companies as well. However, scholars have mentioned that the familiarity factor could give these companies a competitive edge in dealing with the workforce (Peltokorpi *et al.*, 2019). The organisational cultural difference is still under-researched, where studies on the differences in TM practices in foreign and domestic companies are still scarce. Similarly, the role of SC is still under-researched in the context of the luxury hotel industry. This

study intends to document the differences in each SC dimension between the foreign and domestic luxury hotel companies in South Asian countries. Finally, it is evident from the literature review that no research in the past had studied the correlation between TM and SC in any context, let alone the luxury hospitality industry. The present study gains direction from the above-cited gaps in the literature. Chapter 3, which follows, provides a detailed explanation of the TM practices and SC dimensions to be tested along with the conceptual research model.

# CHAPTER 3

## THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

### 3.1 Introduction

This chapter, firstly, presents the TM practices in the hospitality industry with a detailed explanation of each practice (section 3.2). Each practice is followed by specific indicators, which are examined in the quantitative investigation. Considering the recurring ideas in the scholarly literature of the TM practices (applicable to the hospitality industry context), the researcher had decided to explore the following TM practices: (1) talent strategy and planning, (2) recruitment and selection, (2a) job attractiveness, (2b) talent acquisition, (3) development, (3a) performance management, (3b) learning and development, (4) retention, and (5) succession planning (Tarique and Schuler, 2010; Collings and Scullion, 2007; Anlesinya *et al.*, 2019; Stahl *et al.*, 2007; Al Ariss and Sidani, 2016; Thunnissen and Gallardo-Gallardo, 2019; Scott and Revis, 2008; Collings and Scullion, 2007; McCauley and Wakefield, 2006; Bonneton *et al.*, 2020).

SC exists in different forms (Coleman, 1988; Putnam, 1995) and dimensions as depicted in the literature review (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1988; Koka and Prescott, 2002; Hazleton and Kennan, 2000). SC is known to be complex to define and measure (Garcia-Villaverde *et al.*, 2017). This research follows the analytical model by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) that distinguishes three dimensions of SC: structural, cognitive and relational. The researcher adopts this framework for two reasons. The three dimensions proposed by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) is a multi-faceted conceptualisation of SC. It fits well for understanding the level of SC in different ownership patterns and investigating its



relationship with different TM processes. It is the most widely used and well-established SC framework and has been commonly adopted and used by researchers (e.g. Chiu *et al.*, 2006, Butler and Purchase, 2008; Adam and Urquhart, 2009; Balijepally, Mahapatra and Nerur, 2004). Section 3.3 explains each SC dimension and its variables, followed by specific indicators examined in the quantitative investigation. This is the first study that completely follows Nahapiet and Ghoshal's (1998) manifestations of the three dimensions of SC and applies them to the study of TM in the luxury hospitality industry. This is followed by section 3.4, which presents the conceptual model for testing the TM-SC correlation, followed by the conclusion section (Section 3.5).

## **3.2 Talent management practices**

### **3.2.1 Talent strategy and planning**

The fundamental role of strategic workforce planning is to examine whether there is any gap between staff availabilities and staffing requirements over time and establish the course of action to narrow such a gap (Khoong, 1996). Workforce planning is defined as a dynamic process to ensure the availability of the right staff with the right skills at the right place, time and price based on strategic business strategy (Department of Health, 2002; Nel *et al.*, 2011). As mentioned in the literature (refer to section 2.5), TM strategies vary according to different contexts (e.g. organisations, countries, culture). This is where talent strategy planning plays a role in the TM system. It is the organisations prerogative to create and conceive a talent system according to the culture, characteristics and circumstances in a particular context. This includes the questions on the processes they should implement for talent identification, whether they should “*make or buy*” talent, or whether they should adopt an “*inclusive*” or an “*exclusive*” approach

(Burbach and Royle, 2010, p. 415). Several scholars in this research area have advocated for the need for an alignment between talent management and organisational environments (Anlesinya and Amponsah-Tawiah, 2020).

TM involves different practices, but how organisations prioritise these practices is depended on the adopted TM approach and to whom they are directed (McCracken *et al.*, 2016). Several scholars have suggested an inclusive approach of TM in tourism and hospitality firms to ensure that all employees have the requisite skills regardless of size and hierarchy levels in all functional areas (Baum, 2008). Swailes *et al.* (2014) noted that the high cost associated with inclusive TM practice makes it unrealistic in several companies. In contrast, some scholars (e.g. Barron, 2008) argue that an exclusive approach may be more appropriate for the hospitality industry (Johnson *et al.*, 2019). However, adopting an exclusive subject approach means organisations need to focus on the appropriate development strategies. This ensures that the required skills and competencies are developed within the talent pipeline to fill higher positions by the most capable individuals (McCracken *et al.*, 2016; Kulkarni and Scullion, 2014).

When adopting an exclusive object approach, processes such as attracting, recruiting and retaining innately talented individuals could act as important factors for a company to gain a competitive advantage. Therefore when adopting this approach, even organisational branding could be an important aspect of attracting talented employees into an organisation (McCracken *et al.*, 2016; Rivera, 2012). The potential issues such as workforce differentiation, internal competitions associated with this approach are discussed in detail in Section 2.3.1 and Section 2.12. Additionally, this approach could cause favouritism where rewarding and recognising a talented individual is done based on the previous display of their potential even if they stop developing their talent and stop

contributing to the company's performance (Adamsen, 2016). Therefore, understanding both the organisational strategy and workforce perception of utilising their talents is important to get an overall picture of the TM strategy in the participating companies.

The following indicators emerge from the extant research:

<b>Indicator</b>	Perception of the overall workforce in utilising their talent.
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<b>Indicator</b>	Participating organisations' strategy leaning towards an inclusive or exclusive approach.
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### 3.2.2 Recruitment and selection

Scholars have found a positive connection between careful recruitment and the productivity of a labour force (Koch and McGrath, 1996). Powell and Wood (1999) have identified recruitment as one of the biggest challenges of the hospitality and tourism industry. Many researchers (e.g. Collins, 2007; Dermondy *et al.*, 2004; Reynolds *et al.*, 2004; Martin *et al.*, 2006) focus on the influence of efficient recruitment in other TM processes such as employee engagement and retention. Successful workforce engagement of a hotel begins before employees join the business and should be reflected in recruitment efforts (Flippo, 1984). Based on the countries of origin of the companies, recruitment and selection procedures are found to differ (Mohamed *et al.*, 2013, p. 2056). Hospitality recruiters need to be fully aware of the various skills and attributes required for the specific hotel during the recruiting phase (Mohamed *et al.*, 2013). Effective recruitment plays an important part to ensure potential employees have a realistic knowledge of what to expect from working in the hospitality industry and their

job role. This will also demonstrate suitable personal characteristics for the job and analyse whether the candidates' fit the organisational culture (Pizam and Shani, 2009; Moncarz *et al.*, 2009). Specific recruitment practices could positively or negatively influence job-choice decisions, and the characteristics of recruitment activities could impact the result of recruitment significantly (Boswell *et al.*, 2003; Yen, Murrmann and Murrman, 2011).

### **3.2.2.1 Job attractiveness**

Several factors could attract individuals' to a workplace. This includes organisational culture (Looney and Looney, 2005), employee brand (McCracken *et al.*, 2016; Rivera, 2012), TM approach (D'Annunzio-Green, 2008), activities for leadership development, career opportunities and vision of the organisation (Tetik, 2017). An applicant's attraction outcomes can be predicted by the perceived fit with the organisation and the job (Chapman *et al.*, 2005). Person-job fit is found to highly influence a candidate's decision-making (Chapman *et al.*, 2005). Nevertheless, individuals' view organisational characteristics as critical to maintaining their applicant status (Uggerslev *et al.*, 2012). Many scholars have mentioned the effect of the negative image of the hospitality industry on employee attraction (Deery and Jago, 2015). There is an increasing need for recruiters to be pragmatic on the perennial concerns of hospitality as a low skilled, low-paid industry that acts as a deterrent to attraction and recruitment (Powell and Wood, 1999; Goh and Okumus, 2020). Generation Z<sup>7</sup> employees view a profession in the hospitality industry as "*fun, interesting, exciting, fulfilling, and encompasses travel opportunities over salary bands*" (Goh and Lee, 2018,

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<sup>7</sup> Generation Z: people born after 2000 (Ozkan and Solmaz, 2015).

cited in Goh and Okumus, 2020, p. 2). Whereas Baby-Boomers<sup>8</sup> and Generation X<sup>9</sup> employees had an unpleasant outlook on the hospitality profession as “*low remunerating with poor working conditions*” (Robinson *et al.*, 2014, cited in Goh and Okumus, 2020, p. 2).

Other factors which add to the negative image include the lack of job security associated with seasonality (Twining-Ward and Baum, 1998); the lack of opportunity for promotion from within (Riley, 1996); the low-status nature of hospitality work (Pizam, 1999), the image as an interim job for graduates who move on to other career paths (Nzozu and Chipfuva, 2013), unsocial working hours and poor working conditions in general (Hughes and Rog, 2008). According to Deery and Jago (2015), recruiters should eradicate the negative attention and emphasise the fun aspects of working in the industry to combat this negative image. Bharwani and Butt (2012) suggested solutions to improve the image of the industry by implementing a range of measures, which includes “*the provision of work-life balance policies, better training and higher quality of work, tangible rewards and high-quality leadership*” (Deery and Jago, 2015, p. 464).

In developed countries such as the United States, females occupy most of the hospitality work environment (Remington and Kitterlin-Lynch, 2018); however, this may not be the case in emerging economies (Peshave and Gupta, 2021). The studies in the past have found the barriers and disparities for female representation in the hospitality industry and their career succession (Santero *et al.*, 2015; Iverson, 2000; Segovia-Pérez *et al.*, 2018; Calinaud, Kokkranikal and Gebbels, 2021). Social issues due to cultural differences within a workforce present a unique challenge for recruiters. If a foreign firm with a local

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<sup>8</sup> Baby boomers: people born between 1946 and 1964 (Kumar and Lim, 2008).

<sup>9</sup> Generation X: people born between 1965 and 1979 (Berraies *et al.*, 2017).

workforce begins to import employees from other cultures, the diversity may impact the effectiveness of policies and programs. Cultural orientation may cause employees or potential applicants to view the workforce management strategies of the organisation to be unfit for them that could lead to a negative image (Greene, 2020).

The following indicators emerge from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	<p>Factors affecting the decision-to-work in the hospitality industry and the current company:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- High level of uncertainty in previous industry</li> <li>- Social problems in the previous work environment</li> <li>- High level of interaction with the people</li> <li>- Improved job opportunities</li> <li>- Better pay scale</li> <li>- Attractive job profile</li> <li>- Relaxed lifestyle</li> <li>- Attractive work environment</li> <li>- Fast-paced environment</li> <li>- Job promotion based on good performance rather than seniority</li> <li>- Wanting to make a fresh start in life</li> <li>- Chances of job promotion</li> </ul>
<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	<p>Considering other industries before deciding to work in the hospitality industry.</p>

### **3.2.2.2 Talent acquisition**

Efficient employee acquisition processes include talent acquisition planning and strategy, workforce segmentation, candidate audiences, employment branding, candidate relationship management, metrics and analytics (Cepin, 2013). It is found by Carless (2005) that assessing applicants' perceived fit during the recruitment stage can recognise their potential job-related attitude that will allow companies to develop strategies for retaining these employees (Yen, 2017). One of the most common approaches to acquiring employees is by selecting fully qualified people. There are many different ways to determine if a candidate is fully qualified for a job (Greene, 2020). The educational qualification could be one way to establish that a person is qualified for the job (Purcell and Quinn, 1996; Raybould and Wilkins, 2005). Prior work experience could be another way to establish if a person is viewed as qualified and for the candidate to demonstrate their skills (Chan and Kuok, 2011), but the issue that arises here is whether their experience can be transferred to the acquiring organisation (Greene, 2020). Another common approach in acquiring employees is selecting candidates with no educational qualification or prior work experience but with the potential to learn the job (Greene, 2020).

Even though there are variances relating to skill requirements across organisations in the selection stage (Walsh and Taylor, 2007), previous employment and transferable skill are consistently acknowledged as crucial (Scott and Revis, 2008). This applies to both graduates with qualifications in hospitality and also other disciplines. Johns and McKechnie (1995) found hospitality education problematic, which provides graduates with a good breadth of theoretical knowledge, but lacks certain skills to operate effectively in the industry (Scott and Revis, 2008). There has been a shift from providing

practical skills to theoretical training, and this gives all the more reason for industry personnel and hoteliers to question the value of these degrees (Powell and Wood, 1999). Therefore, the approach taken by the participating companies in acquiring employees is investigated in this research.

The following indicators emerge from the extant research:

<b>Indicator</b>	Importance of prior experience during acquisition.
<b>Indicator</b>	Importance of educational qualification during acquisition.

### 3.2.3 Development

Efficient development initiatives lead to better employee development in an organisation. This has resulted in organisations taking up various HR development interventions to advance the workforce's development (Panda and Sahoo, 2015). An organisation's development initiatives depend on the approach an organisation adopts: inclusive or exclusive (Johnson *et al.*, 2019; Sumardi and Othman 2009). McCauley and Douglas (2004) divided talent development practices into five categories. These includes (i) developmental relationships, (ii) assignments (e.g. deployment), (iii) feedback systems (e.g. performance management), (iv) formal programs (e.g. training) and (v) individual self-development methods (e.g. reading and e-learning). According to Singh (2018), the development practices are intended to ensure the internal consistency of the organisation's talent pool (internal fit). The alignment with the company goals and purposes is important when incorporating development practices into a company's culture (cultural fit) (Mishra *et al.*, 2019). The benefits of development interventions such as training, performance management and coaching include updating employees'



knowledge, skills and abilities and preparing the workforce for challenges in the future (Birdi, 2005; Brooks and Nafukho, 2006). Learning, training and performance appraisal have been seen as integral practices in the TM process. These practices are considered essential in developing the workforce and key for competitive advantage and talent retention (Frank and Taylor, 2004; Scott and Revis, 2008). After careful consideration, the researcher has selected the process of performance management and learning and development to be included for testing in the participating organisations.

### **3.2.3.1 Performance management**

Numerous development and implementation process models have been presented in the performance management literature in the past (e.g. Kaplan and Norton, 1996; Simons, 2000) and have evaluated the performance measurement and performance management systems in some segments of the service industries (Bititci *et al.*, 2012; Choong, 2014). Firstly, it is vital to understand the difference between performance management, performance measurement and performance appraisal. Roberts (2001) notes that:

*“Performance management involves the setting of corporate, developmental, team, and individual objectives; the use of performance appraisal systems; appropriate reward strategies and schemes; training and development strategies and plans; feedback, communication, and coaching; individual career planning; mechanisms for monitoring the effectiveness of PM system and interventions and even culture management”.*

(Roberts, 2001, cited in den Hartog *et al.*, 2004, p. 558)

Performance measurement and appraisals are relevant elements of performance management (PM), but the latter concept is much wider (Bayo-Moriones *et al.*, 2019). Performance measurement and appraisals are an essential part of the overall performance management of an organisation (Aguinis, 2009; Otley, 1999). Similar

performance measurement practices may have varying importance and meaning in different organisations (Euske *et al.*, 1993). Performance management efforts indicate to the employees that their training needs and development are being taken seriously by an organisation (Dhanalakshmi and Gurunathan 2014). Performance appraisal is defined as “*activities through which organisations seek to assess employees, develop their competence, enhance performance and distribute rewards*” (Fletcher, 2001, p. 473). According to the research conducted by the Institute of Employment Studies (IES), a clear positive correlation was displayed between employees who have participated in any appraisal performed in a hotel and those that exhibit higher levels of engagement at the workplace (Dhanalakshmi and Gurunathan, 2014). According to CIPD (2009), a structured appraisal strategy includes “*setting employees’ performance targets, conducting appraisals, giving feedback, assessing employees’ developmental needs*” (Ikramullah *et al.*, 2015, p. 335).

A study by Farndale and Keillihier (2013) found that employees who have higher trust towards the senior management have a higher level of commitment. The study also found a strong connection between employee perceptions of fair treatment by their line manager during performance appraisal and organisational commitment. A 2017 survey by Deloitte reports that a staggering 79% of global executives rated agile performance management as a high organisational priority (Cappelli and Tavis, 2018). It is reported that there is currently a search among the companies for innovative approaches rather than traditional annual performance review, which provides meaningful feedback and improve employee performance (Pyrrillis, 2011; Brett and Atwater, 2001). In the hospitality industry, this includes frequent performance reviews, 360-degree feedback, feedback from different managers and employees (Horng and Lin, 2013; Deery and Jago, 2003; Nath and Raheja; 2001; Eyoun *et al.*, 2020).

The following indicators emerge from the extant research:

<b>Indicator</b>	Experience of 360-degree feedback.
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<b>Indicator</b>	Frequency of feedback.
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### 3.2.3.2 Learning and development

According to a study by Schneider, Macey and Barbera (2009), an organisation's recruitment procedures (including induction and on-boarding efforts) directly impact an employee's engagement and commitment towards work. Training is viewed as a narrow interpretation of learning and development, and it has been suggested through various studies that efficient training leads to developing positive work-related attitudes within the employee (Panda and Sahoo, 2015). Training is a major component of talent development (Bhatnagar, 2008), and in turn, training and development act as instruments for TM effectiveness and productivity (Russell, Terborg and Powers, 1985) in tourism and hospitality organisations. Organisations invest heavily in training due to the realisation that only a skilled workforce will make them remain relevant in the market (Kraimer *et al.*, 2011). Traditionally, the industry relied on on-the-job training, vocational training or apprenticeships as the common approach to learning activity due to this being economical (Nolan, 2002). Lately, it is common for organisations to rely on online learning methods. This has been proven cost-effective and allows more flexibility to the employees (Collins *et al.*, 2003). However, it is argued that the e-learning method lack resonance when a firm wants to train their workforce in soft communication skills (Johnson *et al.*, 2019). Hospitality tasks tend to be repetitive, and jobs involving repetitive

actions are likely to demotivate an employee. Job rotation can help overcome this, and it could also provide additional benefits to the organisation by developing multi-skilled employees (Bhatnagar, 2008). Nelson and Hancer (2011) found qualifications from universities and vocational training institutions foundational to talent development and that hospitality graduates remains as the major recruitment sources for executives and hoteliers (Johnson, Huang and Doyle, 2019). Contrarily, some scholars do not believe these qualifications are needed for talent development and, in turn, career progression in a hospitality workplace (Struggles, 2007).

The following indicators emerge from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Training and development programmes.
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<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	The efficiency of induction/training during recruitment.
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### **3.2.4 Retention**

Turnover is and has been a persistent problem for the hospitality industry worldwide (Powell and Wood, 1999). Many researchers agreed that the high turnover costs hospitality companies significant amounts of money and a considerable decrease in profits (Walsh and Taylor, 2007; Richardson, 2010; Barron, 2008; Rutherford and O’fallon, 2007). Cappelli (2008) and Yang *et al.* (2012) points out that the main reason for employee turnover in organisations is that the employees found better opportunities in other organisations. Hospitality employees can easily find jobs in other industries due to the ease of transferring the customer service skills acquired from working in the hospitality workplace (Riley, 1996; Baum, 1995). The findings emerging from the examination on the literature of TM in the hospitality industry by Deery and Jago

(2015) shows work-life balance as one of the key variables when addressing issues of retention and employee management. Many scholars have recommended implementing better training and development programmes for the efficient retention of employees (Moncraz *et al.*, 2009; Bharwani and Butt, 2012; Davidson *et al.*, 2010).

Scholars have found the importance of issuing appropriate pay levels (Chan and Kuok, 2011; Dwesini, 2019; Bonn and Forbringer, 1992; Dogru *et al.*, 2019) and providing decent career opportunities (Kichuk, Brown and Ladkin, 2019; Khan *et al.*, 2011) to retain employees in the hospitality and tourism industry. The research by Yang *et al.* (2012) confirms that many employees leave an organisation because they were offered advancement in their careers or jobs with better employment conditions in another workplace. Karatepe (2013) stated that engaging employees through development, training, empowerment and recognition through rewards would also assist in retaining talented employees. Recognition and rewards, both financial and non-financial rewards during different TM processes, are significant antecedents of employee engagement (Saks and Rotman, 2006). The study by Jung and Yoon (2015) examined the effect of multi-dimensional factors of pay satisfaction (employee benefits, pay level, pay structure and pay raise) on employee engagement. The research found a positive effect between employees' benefits, pay level, and pay structure on employees' job engagement (except pay raise). Appropriate recognition and reward are vital for the engagement of employees, to avoid burnout and to retain them (Saks, 2006; Anitha, 2014; Hoole and Hotz, 2016; Kahn, 1990). Scholars have also found that work-related stress affects the quality of life for hotel employees (Chiang *et al.*, 2010; Hon and Chan, 2013; Deery and Jago, 2015). Staff retention has always been an issue in the hospitality industry, and many studies have mentioned this over the years (e.g. Hausknecht *et al.*, 2009; Bharwani and Butt, 2012). Moreover, low wages and poor working conditions have

given the industry a negative image for attraction and retention (Bharwani and Butt, 2012).

The following indicator emerges from the extant research:

<b>Indicator</b>	Reasons for turnover/indicators for retaining workforce.
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### **3.2.5 Succession planning**

From a TM perspective, succession planning plays a crucial role in organisational development. Mellahi and Collings (2010) mentioned that succession planning is one of the essential elements in the hospitality industry that requires building long-term strategies, which will also be aligned with the goals of an organisation. Murray-Leduc (2008) connected succession planning to leadership development and found that any organisation which develops their high achievers supports them and engages them in individual development plans and future career paths. This will help the organisation build leadership capacity, strengthen human capital, and build sustained competitive advantage (Murray-Leduc, 2008).

In their study, Schuler and Tarique (2012) found that employees who have clarity in their career path and the assurance of their development will be more connected and engaged to their work and the organisation. Reilly (2018) noted that the employees who cannot visualise their career pathway with a company would eventually leave the company. Especially with Generation Z employees who are considered more impatient are more likely to leave the company if they are unsure about their career progression (Smith *et al.*, 2018). Goh and Okumus (2020) mentioned the importance of career counselling to provide information on the individuals' future career pathway through reliable traineeship

programmes (e.g. graduate management traineeship programmes, supervisory traineeship programmes, advancement programmes).

There is a need for a customised pathway that projects the progression throughout the various hierarchy (including senior managers to graduate trainees) and not simply stop at middle management (Goh and Okumus, 2020). Scholars have found the emphasis hotel managers give for their long-term career planning (Ladkin, 2002; Walsh and Taylor, 2007) and that the most important factor considered for a career in hotel management is managerial skills (Ladkin, 2002). It is reported that due to the lack of meaningful career planning, hospitality managers experience stagnation and disengagement (McGuire, Polla and Heidi, 2017). This is why it is imperative to demonstrate a long-term career planning trajectory to the overall workforce (Goh and Okumus, 2020). Managers interested in career development may not always be availed of many opportunities for career growth (Yu and Lee, 2015). Struges *et al.* (2005) has mentioned the importance of individuals focusing on their career development themselves (e.g. self-management programs, setting career-related goals) and utilising opportunities available to pursue their career goals (Yu and Lee, 2015; Noe, 1996). According to Cannon and McGee (2007), hospitality companies predominantly focus on a small talent pool of top management (exclusive TM) when designing succession planning strategies. Kichuk, Brown and Ladkin (2019) suggested the need for hotel managers to give attention to the excluded employees and build effective TM strategies to provide career development to minimise adverse reactions from these employees.

The following indicators emerge from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Importance of succession planning to the workforce.
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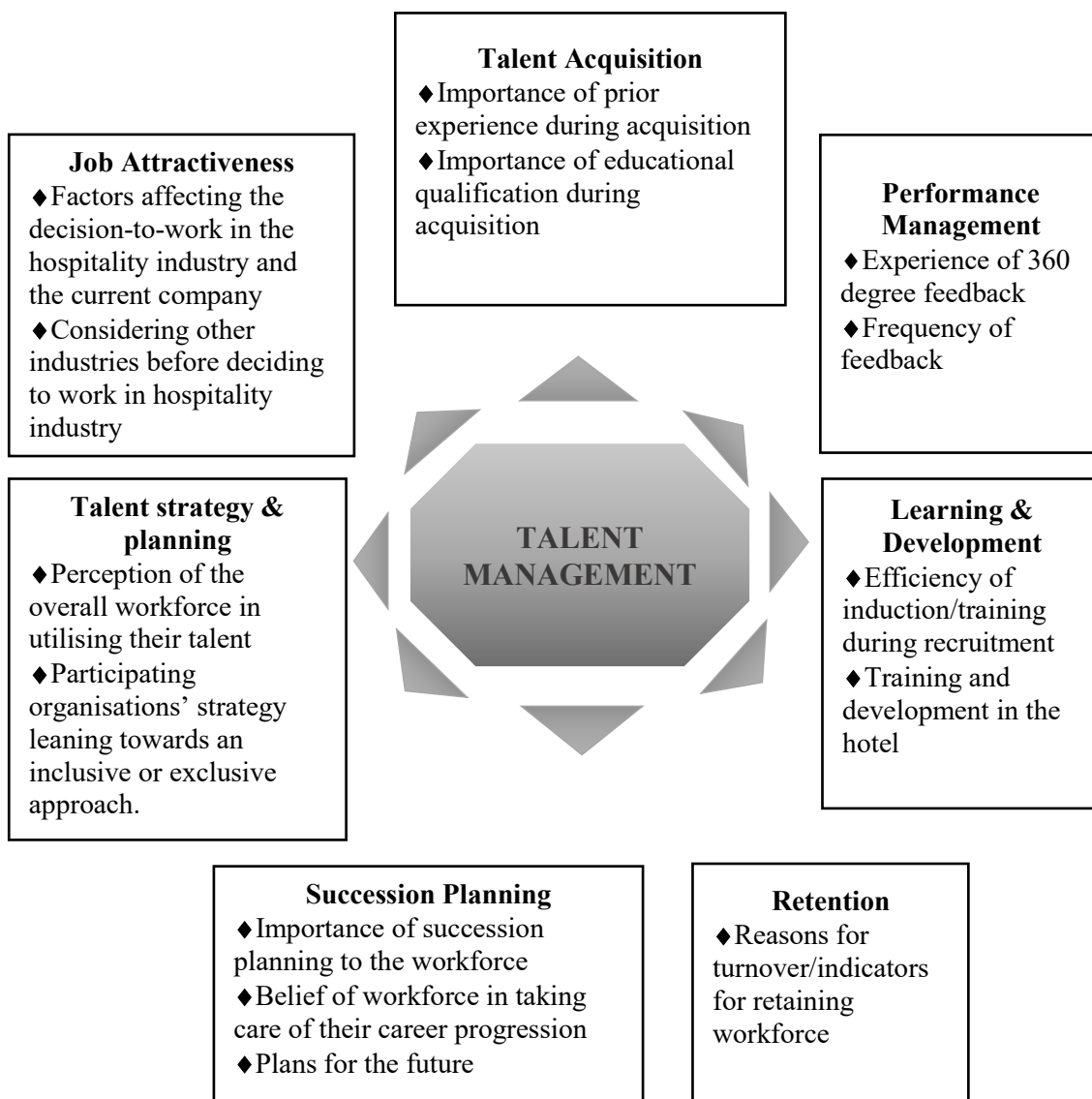
<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Belief of workforce in taking care of their career progression.
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<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Plans for the future.
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The preceding sections have detailed the TM practices explored in the study, which includes (1) talent strategy and planning, (2) recruitment and selection, (2a) job attractiveness, (2b) talent acquisition, (3) development, (3a) performance management, (3b) learning and development, (4) retention, and (5) succession planning. The figure below (Figure 3.1) displays all the TM practices and derived indicators from the extant literature for questionnaire design.



**Figure 3.1:** Talent management practices and the indicators for questionnaire design



Source: The author (2021)

### **3.3 Social capital dimensions**

#### **3.3.1 Structural social capital**

Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, p. 252) define structural SC as the “*overall pattern of connections between actors*”. It is seen as the degree of “*interconnectedness and closure*” between members of a network. (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998, p. 82). Structural SC concerns the network of relationships and not the quality of the relationships (Claridge, 2018). One of the most important facets of the structural dimension is the presence or absence of network ties between individuals (Scott, 1991; Songini, 2003; Li *et al.*, 2015). Structural SC is the most basic form of SC and the prime generator of SC, and it has influences on the other dimensions as well (cognitive and relational) (Gabarro, 1978; Gulati, 1995; Granovetter, 1985; Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998; Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998). Previous studies have emphasised that trust (relational dimension) and other variables in other dimensions evolve from network ties as they act as an antecedent to the other dimensions (e.g. Gabarro, 1978; Gulati, 1995; Granovetter, 1985).

The structural dimension of SC attempts to incorporate all the social interactions that occur between the various nodes that constitute a network, and it takes into account the properties of the network of relationships as a whole as well as the social system (Granovetter, 1985; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Garcia-Villaverde *et al.*, 2017). In this sense, the analysis of SC can be conducted through the perspective of network links and the configuration of the network (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Garcia-Villaverde *et al.*, 2017). Another important aspect of structural SC is the number of ties an individual possesses and how strong the ties are (Taylor, 2007). Structural SC facilitates the opportunity for different actors to exchange and transfer knowledge, and enhance

exchange opportunities (Ansari *et al.*, 2012). This makes it easier for the actors to engage in mutually beneficial collective action, which may lower transaction costs and improve social learning (Uphoff and Wijayaratna, 2000). Key facets of structural SC posited by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, pp. 252-253) are “*network ties, network configuration, and appropriable organisation*”.

### **3.3.1.1 Network ties**

Tsai and Ghoshal (1998) considered social interaction ties as channels which allows the flow of resource and information and enable an individual to gain access to the resources held by other actors or positioned within an organisation (Molina-Morales and Martinez-Fernandez, 2010). The presence of these ties allows combining and exchanging knowledge (Chou *et al.*, 2006). As Larson (1992) suggested, the increase in the social interactions undertaken by different actors (e.g. workforce in the hotel) would increase the intensity, frequency, and breadth of knowledge exchanged (Yli-Renko *et al.*, 2001). These ties will enhance the information exchange and, in turn, will lower the costs of information search. Ties provide the channels for information transmission. In other words, “*the access to know-how can be gained with the help of know-who, that is, information about who knows what*” (Gregersen and Johnson 2001; Lundvall, 2006, cited in Kaasa, 2009, p. 220).

The primary benefit suggested in the literature about social interaction is that it ceases the boundaries within and between organisations and connects the different actors, including managers, technicians, and employees from within the firms and different firms. As Lin (2001, p. 20) posited, the social ties located in certain hierarchical positions can assist an actor in accessing information about opportunities and choices unavailable otherwise.

The absence of these interactions can negatively affect an organisation by reducing the sources of knowledge and making it more difficult to access tacit knowledge or find high-value information (Molina-Morales and Martínez-Fernández, 2010).

Ryan (2011) introduced the terms vertical and horizontal SC, where the former encouraged hierarchical relations and the latter encouraged interaction between the equals (Aida *et al.*, 2009). Vertical SC is associated with social ties between actors with different backgrounds or social levels (different hierarchies in an organisation) who have access to valuable information, extensive knowledge and resources. Contrarily, horizontal relationships are associated with social ties between actors who have similar knowledge and resources and similar access to them (Gericke *et al.*, 2018; Ryan, 2011; Patulny, 2015). The study also has mixed Bourdieu’s economic capital classification along with testing the workforces’ access to information and resources related to work. This includes access to the following set of information: economic (financial assistance) (Bourdieu, 1986) and help during an emergency (Bourdieu, 1986; Vitolas, 2011).

The following indicators emerge from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Access to information regarding work <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- career growth options</li> <li>- additional training</li> <li>- external organisation regarding work</li> <li>- company goals</li> <li>- work-related information</li> <li>- Access to higher hierarchical staff (vertical networks).</li> <li>- resources at the workplace</li> </ul>
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<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Access to personal support <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- help during an emergency</li> <li>- financial assistance</li> </ul>
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### 3.3.1.2 Network configuration

In order to have efficient resource flow between actors, a network structure needs to be configured (Butler and Purchase, 2008). Structural embeddedness refers to measuring network size, centrality and network constraint among and between individuals (Scott, 1991). Network size is the “*number of ties in a network and is calculated by the sum of all ties of individual actors*” (Wasserman and Faust, 1994, cited in Lee, 2009, p. 254). Centrality is the “*integration or cohesion of a network*”, whereas constraint refers to the “*extent to which brokerage and structural holes exist*” (Burt, 1997, cited in Lee, 2009, p. 254). Individuals placed centrally in a network of social interaction are likely to have a higher potential to combine and exchange resources (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998). However, these individuals could incorrectly be rated as high performers even when they are not, as supervisors over appraise their performance (Bizzi, 2017).

Individuals positioned within a social network form cluster of friends, including acquaintances and the gaps between these clusters are holes in the structure of information flow (Burt, 2005; Burton *et al.*, 2010). According to Granovetter (1973), tie strength measures the intimacy of an actor’s relationships which explains the intensity of the actor’s interacting behaviour. Some scholars have suggested the need for both strong and weak ties in a network as the nature of these ties influences the operation and structure of networks (Burt, 1992; Granovetter, 1973; Jack, 2005; Johannisson, 1986, cited in KC *et al.*, 2019). Granovetter (1973) has provided the distinction between strong and weak ties where the former exists between actors with frequent interactions, such as close friends and the latter with distant social relationships and infrequent interactions, such as acquaintances or strangers.

Researchers have tested the efficiency and benefits of strong and weak ties in different contexts. Some researchers in their empirical studies have found that both strong and weak ties have a positive effect (e.g. Rowley *et al.*, 2000). Contrarily, some researchers have mentioned that strong ties are more instrumental (e.g. Jack, 2005), and some have found that weak ties have a more positive influence (e.g. Katzy *et al.*, 2011). Meanwhile, few studies have found the positive influence of weak ties and that strong ties have a negative influence (e.g. Perry-Smith, 2006). It is reported that both strong and weak ties have positives and negatives depending on the context examined (Zheng, 2010; Lin, 2001). Therefore, this study has examined the tie strength of the workforce within the participating hotel companies and explains the efficiency of both strong and weak ties in a hospitality setting.

The following indicator emerges from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Check the strength of ties of the actors for improved networking.
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### **3.3.1.3 Appropriable organisation**

The appropriable organisation refers to the idea that SC developed for one context (or purpose) may be used for another (Coleman, 1988; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Dodd, 2012). For example, trust between family affiliations can be transferred into the work context (Salvato and Melin, 2008), voluntary organisations initiated for one purpose used to aid other social causes (Coleman, 1998), development of personal relationships to business exchange (Salvato and Melin, 2008). This implies that the connections established among individuals in more of an informal context (e.g. during social events, trade unions) also may be relevant in the formal contexts (e.g. work-related) (Bolino,

Turnley and Bloodgood, 2002). The studies in the past have found the influence of workplace social events/activities on employee loyalty (Yao *et al.*, 2019), employee satisfaction (Israeli and Barkan, 2004), and employee performance (Tews *et al.*, 2013) in the hospitality industry. This study has explored the presence of the social events/activities in the participating companies and the workforces' level of participation in these functions. It has also explored whether these social activities/events fosters workforce networking and interweave between formal and informal relationships between individuals.

There are innumerable trade and labour unions in South Asia functioning for different industries, and the hospitality industry is not left out (International Labour Organisation, 2021). Previous studies found the positive and negative influence of trade unions in the hotel industry (e.g. Basnyat, Lovelock and Carr, 2016; Macaulay and Wood, 1992). This study examines the involvement of the hospitality workforce in external trade union associations. It also explores to what extent these unions interweave between formal and informal relationships between individuals working in the participating companies. Therefore, in this study, the researcher had tested the appropriability of the trade union associations and social events/ activities within the hotels.

The following indicators emerge from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Check the appropriability of specific functions for improved networking <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- External trade union association</li> <li>- Social events/activities within the hotel</li> </ul>
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### **3.3.2 Cognitive social capital**

Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) define cognitive SC as those resources providing shared representation, interpretations, and systems of meaning among parties. Gooderham (2007) defines cognitive SC as the shared language and codes that initiate the foundation for communication between actors. One of the key elements of this dimension is the shared goals and culture among members of a network. Shared goals refer to resources that arise from a code or paradigm shared among the actors within a network (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998). As Ouchi (1980, p. 138) noted, “*common values and beliefs provide the harmony of interests that erase the possibility of opportunist behaviour*”. What makes the cognitive dimension different from the structural dimension is that it is intangible as it relates to interpretations of a shared reality (Claridge, 2018). Key facets of cognitive SC posited by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, pp. 253-254) are “*shared vision*” (Tsai and Ghoshal; 1998; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Cohen and Prusak, 2001) and “*shared language and codes*” (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998).

#### **3.3.2.1 Shared language and codes**

As described by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, p. 253), “*to the extent that people share a common language, this facilitates their ability to gain access to people and their information and to the extent that their language and codes are different, this keeps people apart and restricts their access*”. Shared language and codes help create a common understanding (between the actors) of collective goals and the appropriate manner of acting in virtual communities (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) mentioned three ways shared language fosters combining and exchanging intellectual capital. Firstly, it enhances the ability of an actor to gain access to another



actor and their information. Secondly, it provides a common conceptual structure in order to evaluate the potential benefits of exchange and combination. Third, shared language stands for the overlap in knowledge and enhances different actors' capability to combine the knowledge they acquired through a social exchange (Chiu *et al.*, 2006). The idea of a common context can be extended to the use of shared narratives that enable actors to understand the work environment and their roles in it (Lesser and Stork, 2001). Shared language makes it easier for the actors to understand each other and help create a common vocabulary in their workplace. Moreover, it facilitates sharing ideas and improves the efficiency in communication between actors who belong to similar backgrounds or practical experiences (Chiu *et al.*, 2006). Cognitive SC is often manifested in the use of specific language and codes (e.g. certain vocabularies used within a business unit would not have any meaning outside the unit).

The following indicator emerges from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Examine if there are common terminologies among employees for efficient communication.
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### **3.3.2.2 Shared vision**

Scholars identify shared vision as resources that arise from a code or paradigm, shared among the actors within a network, facilitating a common understanding of the collective objectives (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998). The primary benefit of shared vision is that it facilitates fluent transmission; since the actors share vision, they also use the same language (Molina-Morales and Martinez-Fernandez, 2010). Unnecessary misunderstandings in communications can be avoided if each network member has the same perceptions about how to act with others. This will enhance the free

exchange of ideas and resources between the actors, which helps them see the potential value of combining and exchanging resources (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998; Molina-Morales and Martinez-Fernandez, 2010). Tsai and Ghoshal (1998, p. 467) view shared vision as “*a bonding mechanism that helps different parts of an organisation to integrate or to combine resources*”. Cohen and Prusak (2001) argued that shared values and goals connect the members within a network (e.g. an organisation), make cooperative action possible, and eventually be beneficial to the organisations (Lesser and Stork, 2001). As Tsai and Ghoshal (1998, p. 467) noted, “*shared vision embodies the collective goals and aspirations of the members of an organisation*”. Sharing a similar vision would make the organisation members become partners sharing or exchanging their resources (Chou *et al.*, 2006; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998).

The following indicator emerges from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Check whether the individuals share the same vision/ambition for the future of the company.
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### **3.3.3 Relational social capital**

Contrary to the structural SC dimension, the relational SC dimension relates to the qualities of networks or personal relationships (Gooderham, 2007; Cabrera and Cabrera, 2005). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) define relational SC as the kind of personal relationships actors develops through a history of interactions. Relational SC relates to the quality of relationships between the actors, considering the relations’ characteristics and attributes (e.g. trust). The most important facets of the relational dimension are relational trust (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998) and relational content through identification (Burt, 1992). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, pp. 254-256) identified the key aspects of relational SC as “*trust*” (Prusak and Cohen, 2001; Fukuyama, 1995; Putnam, 1995),

“*norms of reciprocity*” (Putnam, 2000; Coleman, 1990; Putnam, 1995), “*obligations and expectations*” (Coleman, 1990; Cheng *et al.*, 2012) and “*identification*” (Håkansson and Snehota, 1995; Merton, 1968).

### 3.3.3.1 Trust

Trust acts as a mechanism governing embedded relationships, which facilitates innovation and learning (Meeus *et al.*, 2001; Uzzi, 1996). Inter-organisational trust reduces the information asymmetries common in the inter-firm exchange and allows an open and honest sharing of information (Zaheer *et al.*, 1998; Wu, 2007). According to previous studies (e.g. Granovetter, 1985; Gulati and Garciulo, 1999; Tsai, 2001), the continuous interaction between two individuals makes their relationships more robust, and the actors are more likely to view each other as trustworthy. The likelihood of sharing resources rises when trust increases and becomes embedded in the relationships (Puhakka, 2006). Various researchers (e.g. Koka and Prescott, 2002; Doz, 1996) consider trust critical in creating and transferring knowledge and other resources.

Trust is described by Daskalakis and Kauffeld-Monz (2007) as confidence in the reliability of others and has been divided into three components: generalised trust (trust that people have in other people in general), specific trust (trust that an individual has towards another individual), and institutional trust (trust in different institutions) (Kaasa *et al.*, 2009). Individuals who trust and are trusted by others exchange information and knowledge resources without having a fear of being cheated or being taken advantage of by the other individual (Raza, 2012; Deroian, 2002). The absence of trust could result in difficulties understanding each other (Molina-Morales and Martínez-Fernández, 2010).

This research had tested the trust level of individuals in the participating organisations towards vertical, horizontal and external networks, which are work-related. The distinction between vertical and horizontal networks is already provided in section 3.2.1.1 (Aida *et al.*, 2009; Gericke *et al.*, 2018; Ryan, 2011; Patulny, 2015). Individuals in an external network have greater information and access (e.g. information on job opportunities, access to external training) than those not in these networks (Moynihan and Pandey, 2008). The external networks included in this study are the trade unions, regional government tourism departments, and professional associations.

The following indicators emerge from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	<p>Examine the level of trust towards vertical, horizontal and external networks</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Co-workers from the same department</li> <li>- Co-workers from a different department</li> <li>- Senior managers, including heads of departments</li> <li>- Hotel management board</li> <li>- Parent organisation</li> <li>- Professional bodies (e.g. Association for hospitality professionals)</li> <li>- Trade unions (e.g. Hotels and employees' union, hotel workers welfare association)</li> <li>- Regional government tourism department</li> </ul>
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### 3.3.3.2 Norms of reciprocity

According to Hazleton and Kennan (2000), *“one of the conditions of relational dimension, which is necessary, but not sufficient, is the degree of social system closure”* (Widén-Wulff and Ginman, 2004, p. 451). The effect of system closure causes the emergence of observable norms (Hazleton and Kennan, 2000). According to Dakhli and de Clercq (2004), norms relates to the social contract or unwritten rules. Although norms and trust are strongly correlated, norms are also referred to as trustworthiness (Dyer and Singh, 1998; Kaasa, 2009). The norms between individuals have a key role in forming the norms that influence the behaviour of firms (Kaasa, 2009). Shared norms assist in avoiding misunderstandings and facilitate cooperation (Kaasa, Kaldaru and Parts, 2007). One of the most important norms is reciprocity (Fountain, 1998; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998), where individuals help others and expect to get help in return when they need it. According to Dyer and Singh (1998), relations based on reciprocity reduce the time spent on monitoring and bargaining over agreements in a working environment. As noted by Kaasa (2009, p. 221), *“the norm of reciprocity assures that the amounts of information given to each other at a given point of time do not have to be equal- the information is expected to be returned in the future”*. The more the norms of civic behaviour, for instance, the norm of helping others, the better will be a firm’s performance (Dakhli and de Clercq, 2004; Kaasa, 2009).

The following indicator emerges from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Examine if reciprocity is a norm at the workplace.
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### 3.3.3.3 Obligations and expectations

Scholars found obligations and expectations as additional norms (Lee, 2009). Coleman (1990) differentiated between generalised norms and obligations and viewed obligation as expectations developed within particular relationships (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). In a closure structure, members in the network can trust one another to honour their obligations, which helps to reduce the uncertainty of their exchanges and enhances the individuals' ability to cooperate (Coleman, 1988). According to Svendsen (2006, cited in Lee, 2009, p. 257), "*bonding networks encourage moral obligations, intimate knowledge sharing and a sense of belonging*". According to Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, p. 255), "*obligations can act as a credit slip expected to be repaid*". Expectations are different in the sense that it is an anticipation or foresight (Nebus, 2006; Lee, 2009). Expectations can be associated with individuals' needs and wants in order for a repeatable experience (Tsai, 2000; Lee, 2009).

The following indicator emerges from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	Examine if the sense of obligations and expectations is a norm at the workplace.
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### 3.3.3.4 Identification

According to Bagozzi and Dholakia (2002, p. 11), identification refers to "*one's conception of self in terms of defining features of self-inclusive social category*". In other words, it measures the degree of connection between actors, allowing members to share experiences and stories (Hazleton and Kennan, 2000). Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998, p. 256) mentioned identification as the "*process whereby individuals see themselves as one with another person or group of people*". Shared social identity fosters a feeling of

belonging, solidarity, loyalty and citizenship behaviours in the group setting (Bergami and Bagozzi, 2000; Meyer *et al.*, 2002; Hsu and Hung, 2013) and can be beneficial in explaining the actors' willingness to maintain committed relationships (Dholakia *et al.*, 2004; Bagozzi and Dholakia, 2002).

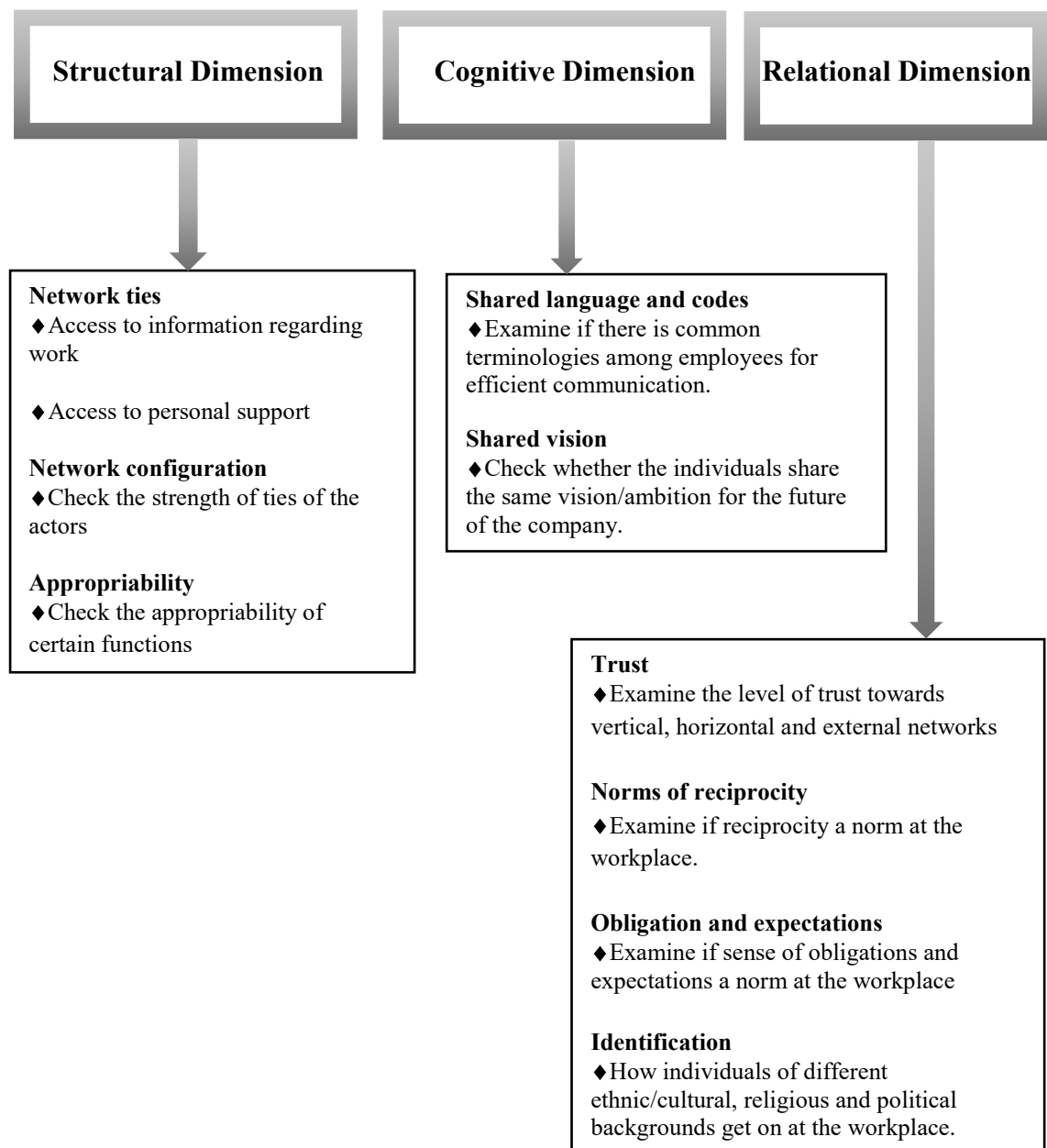
Shared identity acts as an antecedent for developing trust and shaping and reinforcing norms such as reciprocity, expectations and obligations (Holtkamp and Weaver, 2019; Portes, 1998; Portes and Sensenbrenner, 1993). When there is a common social identity, there is more likeliness for the workforce to interact, cooperate and trust others (Han and Brass, 2014). As Adler and Kwon (2002, p. 25) stated, "*individuals who share similar motivation and intuition for a communitarian identity help transform business towards members of a community with shared interests, common identity and commitment to the common good*". Therefore, distinct and contradictory identities within groups would cause significant barriers to information sharing, learning, and knowledge creation (Chiu *et al.*, 2006; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998).

The following indicator emerges from the extant research:

<b><i>Indicator</i></b>	How individuals of different ethnic/cultural, religious and political backgrounds get on at the workplace.
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The preceding sections have detailed the SC dimensions proposed by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998), which constitutes structural, cognitive and relational dimensions. The figure below (Figure 3.2) has displayed the SC dimensions, its key facets, and the derived indicators from the extant literature for questionnaire design.

**Figure 3.2:** Social capital dimensions, its facets, and the indicators for questionnaire design



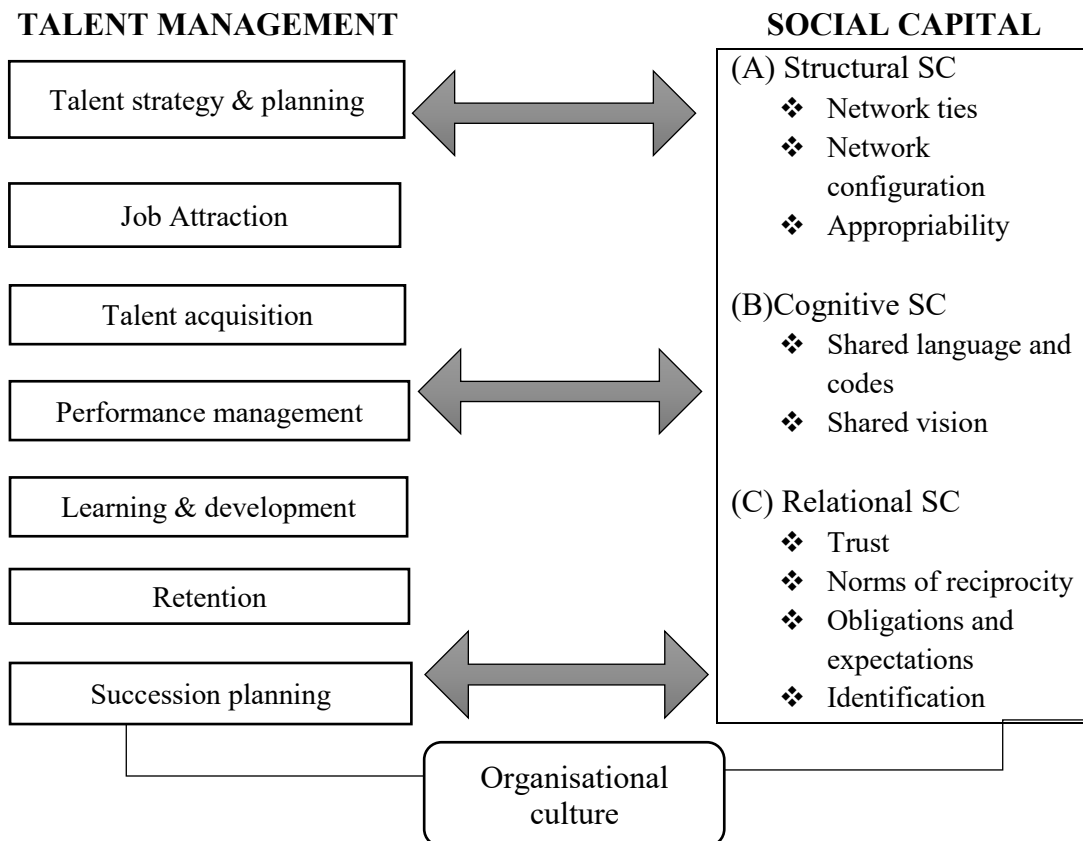
Source: The author (2021)



### 3.4 Talent management and social capital correlation

The preceding sections have produced a detailed exposition of the TM practices derived from an in-depth review of the literature, followed by a comprehensive description of the SC dimensions and variables proposed by Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998). One of the research aims is to examine whether there is an association between TM and SC. The research intends to analyse the association precisely by testing the correlation between TM practices and SC dimensions. The researcher has utilised the regional level data set to conduct this analysis (combined foreign hotels and combined domestic hotels in South Asia). In order to examine the association between TM and SC, the researcher has proposed a conceptual framework (Figure 3.3).

**Figure 3.3:** Talent management and social capital: A conceptual framework



Source: The author (2021)

### **3.5 Chapter conclusion**

In this chapter, the researcher has conceptualised each TM practice to examine the overall workforce experience. Section 3.2 has provided a detailed explanation of the TM practices repeatedly indicated in the scholarly works. The majority of the studies in the past have focussed on supervisory level staff and ordinary employees. They have omitted the management level staff and their experience of TM. For instance, if focussing on the hotel industry, a line manager could have the ambition to be a department director; a department director could be ambitious to become the General Manager. Therefore, the proposition here is that TM is applicable for the overall workforce, not just a particular hierarchy or department (McGuire, Polla and Heidi, 2017; Goh and Okumus, 2020; Yu and Lee, 2015). This is where acquiring the experience of the overall workforce becomes important.

Moreover, understanding an organisation's level of SC can only be achieved by having the representation of the overall workforce. SC is highly under-explored in the hospitality field, and in that the research on luxury hotels needs the most attention. However, most scholars view organisational SC as a crucial element for organisational competitiveness (Hitt and Duane, 2002). Many researchers recognised it as a beneficial organisational resource (e.g. Briena and Smallman, 2011; Akram *et al.*, 2016). The researcher has chosen Nahapiet and Ghoshal's conceptualisation of SC primarily due to its acceptability in the scholarly literature. This chapter has provided a detailed description of each dimension and facet of this conceptualisation. Section 3.4 has depicted a conceptual framework for testing the correlation between TM and SC. The next chapter explains the methods and procedures used in this investigation. It includes a comprehensive justification of the rationale behind certain methodological aspects of the study.



# CHAPTER 4

## METHODOLOGY

### 4.1 Introduction

This chapter comprises a detailed justification of the research design and the data collection approach carried out in the research. Following the introduction section, the next section (section 4.2) will encompass the research philosophy and approach undertaken in the research. The rationale for selecting case study locations is discussed in section 4.3. Section 4.4 presents the cases selected for the study and the process of gaining access to the selected companies. Section 4.5 refers to the research procedure, which details the rationale behind selecting a mono-method and mixed-methods approach for each studied phenomenon. Section 4.6 and section 4.7 provide detailed research study designs for the quantitative and qualitative data collection methods. This section discusses the techniques and instruments used for data collection, pilot testing procedures, sampling strategies, data collection process, and implemented analysis techniques. Section 4.8 provides a detailed account of the ethical considerations of the research. The chapter finishes with a conclusion section (section 4.9).

## 4.2 Research philosophy and approach

The researcher had read extensively to choose the appropriate philosophies and approaches to reach the research goals. The enquiry was based on the concepts of “ontology (*i.e.*, the way the researcher defines the truth and reality), epistemology (*i.e.*, the process in which the researcher comes to know the truth and reality) and methodology (*i.e.*, the method used in conducting the investigation)” (Guba and Lincoln, 1989, cited in Antwi and Kasim, 2015, p. 218). In order to construct a robust research design, the chosen research paradigm must be congruent with the researcher’s beliefs about the nature of reality (Ghezeljeh and Emami, 2009; Mills *et al.*, 2006).

**Research paradigm:** “Paradigms are conceptual and practical tools used to solve specific research problems; in other words, paradigms function as heuristics in social research” (Abbott, 2004, p. 42). The researcher has adopted a pragmatic approach for the country-level analysis, and there is strong justification for this. In other words, a pragmatic approach is adapted to explore the employee experiences of TM and the level of SC in individual companies in the country-level comparisons.

In the mixed methods research literature, pragmatism is considered the most appropriate paradigm (Tashakkori and Teddlie, 1998; Morgan, 2007; Scott and Briggs, 2009; Creswell and Clark, 2011). The approach recognises that every method has its limitations attached to it and that using different approaches can be complementary. Examining different TM practices and SC indicators requires objectivity and statistical variance, so a quantitative approach is appropriate as the initial method. Moreover, an exploration of these results by implementing a qualitative approach reassures and expands the knowledge. The qualitative method, in a way, complements the quantitative method in

this research. The researcher uses a single method (positivist approach) to conduct the regional level comparisons. The epistemological approaches adopted in this research are presented below.

**Epistemological approach:** The researcher's epistemological approach was inclined towards positivist research philosophy in the quantitative study. By adopting this approach, the researcher attains objective knowledge by hypothesising and then evaluating causal inferences about social phenomena that will be generalisable beyond the specific data analysed (Shankman, 1984; Lin, 1998). The fundamental assumption of positivist research is objective reality and facts, which can be known or approximated through selected research methods. It is commonly asserted that the positivist approach to research is deductive in that it tests a hypothesis or theory (Goetz and LeCompte, 1984; Patton, 1990). Contrarily, Bryman (2004) argues that positivism entails both a deductive and an inductive approach. With this approach, the researcher has tested the indicators derived from theoretical foundations (refer to Chapter 3) and constructed a foundation for the research. A positivist view was required to attain all the three aims of the research.

The researcher has adopted an interpretive approach in the qualitative study by not seeking objective truth but subjectively unravelling the patterns. This includes collecting multiple individual perspectives of the given study phenomena, and all versions of truth are shaped by the respondents' perception and understanding of the world. The qualitative study was conducted only for the country-level analysis to reassure and complement the quantitative results. The researcher intended to interpret the perception and unique insight of the workforce in different hierarchical positions and thereby understand differences in talent management practices and level of SC between domestic and foreign-owned firms in individual country contexts. The fundamental idea behind this was that reality is not

absolute; instead, it differs according to an individual's perceptions and experiences (Robson, 2002). In summary, the researcher has adopted a mixed methods research design by using positivist and interpretivist research goals for the country-level analysis. For the regional level analysis, the researcher adopted a single method research design with a positivist approach. When it comes to the third research aim (section 1.6), which tests the correlation between TM and SC, the researcher adopted a positivist approach with adopting a single method.

**Ontological approach:** In this study, the researcher adopted social ontology, where the purpose is to explore the underlying structures that affect individuals and groups, in other words, characteristics of social ontology. According to Carol (1978), social ontology can be taken in two senses: the study of the "*nature of social reality*" (which is the nature of the individuals, institutions and processes that compose society) or "*ontology socialised*" (a study of reality which reflects on the social roots where these realities are formulated) (Ikaheimo and Laitinen, 2011, p. 2). By understanding talent management practices and investigating the level of social capital from an employee perspective, the intent was to describe society and its different parts and processes. Social ontology comprises both human actions and attitudes but concurrently has an epistemically objective existence and is part of the natural world (Searle, 2006).

### **4.3 Study context and selection of case study locations**

As mentioned in the social capital literature (refer to section 2.11), social capital in its form and its impact tend to differ among countries, populations, regions and communities (Carpenter *et al.*, 2004). According to various scholars, countries, regions or communities with greater SC are better positioned to benefit from social and economic opportunities (Carpenter *et al.*, 2004). The level of social capital can vary for different settings, be it in different countries, rural or urban. Therefore, the research focused on multiple company settings where the level of SC could differ due to several factors such as organisational culture, company ownership, and national culture. As the study is based in South Asia, it was imperative to have companies selected from multiple locations to investigate the organisational practice of talent management in the South Asian region. As discussed in the literature review chapter (refer to section 2.4 and section 2.5), the scholars (e.g. Preece *et al.*, 2013; Almond *et al.*, 2005) have reported the different approaches foreign and domestically owned companies have adopted when it comes to TM. The next hurdle was to select the appropriate segment within the hotel industry for the research.

At the initial period of the study, the researcher has considered different segments in the hospitality industry (e.g. upscale and mid-scale). The researcher has visited a luxury hotel, up-scale hotel and a budget hotel in India at the early stages of the PhD to determine the appropriate segment to conduct the study. This was an informative visit, which included meetings with the senior managers to understand the amenities, organisational structure, and the company practices regarding the staff to guest ratio. Moreover, the researcher had meetings and conversations with industry specialists, including the Dean of one of India's most reputed hotel schools. The focus on the luxury hotel segment is mainly due to the increasing number of investments in these segments in the South Asian market. There are



also more foreign investments in the upscale and luxury hospitality category than any other segments in the South Asian market (Mohsin *et al.*, 2013).

The growth in the segment was predominantly higher in India (Tripath *et al.*, 2021), Sri Lanka (Kularatne *et al.*, 2019) and Maldives (Wong and Nasir, 2019) over the last one-two decades. However, recently there has been a hike in the number of foreign and domestic luxury hotels in countries such as Pakistan (Kanwal and Hoye, 2020), Bangladesh (Rahman *et al.*, 2019), Nepal (Basnyat *et al.*, 2021) and Bhutan (Wangchuk and Wetprasit, 2018). Afghanistan faces declining security perceptions resulting from political unrest over the last few decades, leaving tourists with a sense of unpredictability affecting the tourism and hospitality industry (World Economic Forum, 2017). As depicted in Chapter 1 (see section 1.6), recently, foreign companies have the same level of hotel investments compared to the domestically rooted companies in the South Asian market. Much of this is in the luxury and upscale hospitality segments. For example; In India, Marriott has increased their number of hotels in the recent past and has outnumbered one of the biggest Indian hospitality companies. Moreover, in a workplace with different hierarchies, departments and work teams, TM plays a crucial role (refer to section 2.14).

The research is focused on capital cities, and there is a clear rationale for this. “*Capitals remain a nation’s focal point - the centre of government power, frequently the main business, commercial, artistic and educational centre, and the symbolic centrepiece of the nation*” (Maitland, 2011, p. 1). Capital cities are viewed as a critical component of the national fabric of almost every country in the world (Maitland and Ritchie, 2007); however, there has been limited research undertaken based on tourism beyond a city by city basis (e.g., Law, 1996; Richards, 1996; Mazanec, 1997; Hall, 2002). National capital

cities provide an administrative and political base of government operations and business travels. National capitals are important when it comes to tourism due to their cultural, heritage and symbolic roles (Hall, 2002). They host several major national cultural events frequently and have a significant role in portraying, preserving, and promoting national heritage (Therborn, 1996). From a travel and tourism viewpoint, capital cities are often the entry point to a country, even for tourists not primarily visiting the capital (Simpson, 2012). As hosts to major national institutions that embody a nation's heritage, national capitals can attract domestic and international visitors (Hall, 2002). National capitals often attract migrant workers from all parts of a country and neighbouring countries in South Asia. Migration to capital cities occurs for many reasons; the major is economic reasons (Hugo, 2003).

Additionally, capital cities attract significant infrastructural developments. This includes the investments of luxury hotels by domestic and foreign companies considering the large inflow of business and tourism travellers (international and domestic tourists). There is an exception to this in the Maldives, which is a highly tourism-dependent country. Male, which is the capital city of Maldives, acts as a national administrative centre or an entry point to the islands. Apart from this, some countries have different capitals for different purposes. The legislative capital of Sri Lanka is Sri Jayewardenepura Kotte, whereas the executive, judicial and commercial capital is Colombo. On the other hand, the capital city of India is New Delhi; however, New Delhi acts as an administrative district of the National Capital Territory (NCT) of Delhi (Jain *et al.*, 2015). When selecting the capital cities as the study locations, the researcher considered these aspects. Therefore, Colombo Metropolitan Area (CMA)<sup>10</sup> has been selected as the case study location in Sri Lanka. This includes Sri Jayewardenepura, Colombo and the Colombo district's commercial

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<sup>10</sup> Mentioned as Colombo in the thesis for easiness in reading.

areas where the tourism and hospitality industry is flourishing (Ranagalage *et al.*, 2017). From India, it was imperative to include the whole National Capital Territory<sup>11</sup>, as the growth in the hospitality industry is not just confined to the administrative area but also the commercial areas of Delhi. In other words, the significant developments in the hospitality industry are happening in the NCT and are not just confined to New Delhi.

The differing classification of luxury in different countries and regions made it relevant to have a unified way of categorising luxury hotels. Therefore, the researcher has reviewed the literature on luxury hotels and produced a spectrum of luxury (refer to Table 2.5) in the literature review chapter (refer to section 2.13.1), based on the definitions and characteristics of the term luxury itself. The goal was to identify the luxury hotels in South Asia by looking at the physical amenities in the hotel and matching them with the set of criteria established. This selection method had been applied across South Asian capital cities, and the hotels that satisfy the criteria are shortlisted for the research. There are hotels classified as 4-star hotels in some countries but satisfy the criteria established and are classified as luxury hotels. Contrary to this, there are hotels in some countries in the 5- star or luxury hotel category as per the governmental and Tourism Ministry's criteria but does not satisfy the criteria to classify them as luxury hotels. Based on the pre-determined criteria, the total number of luxury hotels (foreign and domestic) in the capital cities is shown in Table 4.1.

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<sup>11</sup> Mentioned as Delhi in the thesis for easiness in reading.

**Table 4.1:** Luxury hotels in the South Asian capital regions

<i>Country</i>	<i>Study location</i>	<i>Foreign owned luxury hotels</i>	<i>Domestic owned luxury hotels</i>	<i>Total luxury hotels</i>
India	Delhi (NCT)	15	17	32
Sri Lanka	Colombo (CMA)	5	7	12
Nepal	Kathmandu	4	8	12
Bangladesh	Dhaka	6	6	12
Pakistan	Islamabad	2	1	3
Bhutan	Thimphu	2	1	3
Maldives	Male	1	0	1
Afghanistan	Kabul	0	1	1
<b>South Asia</b>		<b>37</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>80</b>

Source: The Author (2021)

Delhi, Colombo, Nepal and Bangladesh appeared to have the most number of domestic and foreign-owned hotels than the other capital cities in the sub-region. The researcher has selected Delhi (Figure 4.1) and Colombo (Figure 4.2) as the study locations and have specific reasons. As depicted in Table 4.1, Delhi was home to 15 foreign and 17 domestic hotels, whereas Colombo had 12 luxury hotels with 5 foreign and 7 domestic hotels. Both the cities have significant differences in social and economic conditions, although the growth in the hospitality and tourism sector could be said as a similarity between these cities (Tripath *et al.*, 2021; Kularatne *et al.*, 2019). There are 13 hotels in the pipeline in Colombo, which are expected to be opened by 2022. According to the Sri Lankan categorisation, the 13 new hotels are split between the four and five-star segments (Top Hotel News, 2020). Delhi already has the presence of almost all the major hospitality companies. However, it is reported by the global real estate consultant JLL (2020) that hotel investments face a sharp decline (44% decline in brand signings) in India in 2020 due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The overall hospitality industry is affected by the COVID-19 outbreak, not just the luxury segment (Jones and Comfort, 2020).

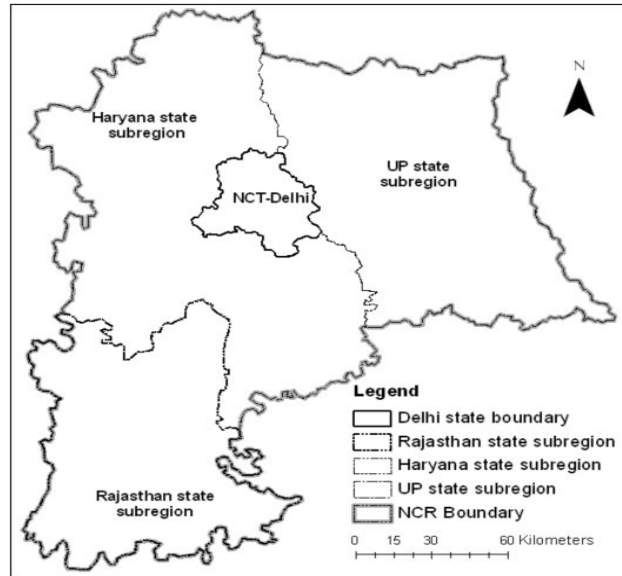
Moreover, both India and Sri Lanka reported to have the highest foreign tourist's arrivals<sup>12</sup> in the sub-region before the Easter bombings in Colombo and then the global pandemic (COVID-19), which has affected both the country's economies significantly (SLTDA, 2019; Jaipuria *et al.*, 2021).

The increase in urban growth can be said as a common characteristic between these two cities. The population residing in urban areas are 34% in India and 18% in Sri Lanka (World Bank, 2019). It is reported by World Bank (2019) that the urban growth rate is the highest in New Delhi and Colombo in these respective countries. Due to this, job creation and skills development initiatives appeared as major priorities for the policymakers in these cities (Oxford Policy Management, 2018). The increasing interest given by the central and state government to the hospitality and tourism industry was another similarity between these two countries. In India, since 2010, there has been an expansion in the government regulated institutes across the country which offers training, professional education and management level qualifications (Ministry of Tourism, 2021). In Sri Lanka, there are five government regulated training centres and the main training centre in Colombo. The highest level of qualification provided in these institutes is a national diploma in hospitality management (SLITHM, 2021). Moreover, recently there has been a rise in the number of private and public-funded hotel schools in Delhi and Colombo, which shows the interest among the young population to consider tourism and hospitality as their career option.

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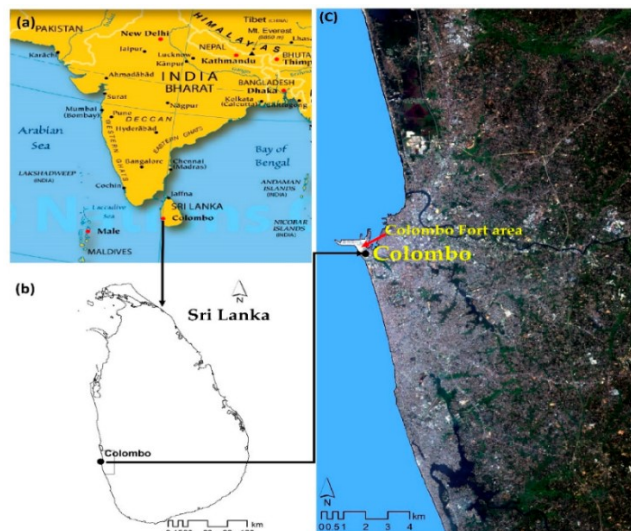
<sup>12</sup> Foreign tourists arrivals of South Asian countries in the year 2018: India (10.56m), Sri Lanka (2.3m), Maldives (1.4m), Nepal (1.17m), Bangladesh (0.27m), Bhutan (0.27m), Pakistan (17,823) (World Bank, 2018)

**Figure 4.1:** Location of Delhi (National Capital Territory)



Source: Jain *et al.* (2015)

**Figure 4.2:** Colombo Metropolitan Area



Source: Ranagalage *et al.* (2017)

#### 4.4 Selection of case studies

Case study approach is considered appropriate as this research addresses a contemporary phenomenon, which is largely exploratory and addresses the “*how*” and “*why*” questions regarding the studying phenomenon (Benbasat *et al.*, 1987; Yin, 1994; Chen *et al.*, 2015; Riveiro and Falkman, 2014). It was imperative to have at least one domestic and one-foreign owned hotel in multiple locations to achieve the research aims and objectives

(refer to section 1.5). Multiple cases enhance the methodological rigour of a study through “*strengthening the precision, the validity and stability of the findings*” (Miles and Huberman, 1994, p. 29). However, after detailed discussions and conversations with several hotel executives, the researcher carefully selected four case studies to be involved in the study. The research objectives demanded at least one foreign and one domestic company in each city. The researcher initially planned to conduct the study in two foreign and two domestic companies in each city. The issue with a small number of case studies is that it is difficult to establish a cause-effect connection to reach conclusions and generalise the findings (Queiros, Faria and Almeida, 2017). However, due to COVID-19, this was not practically possible. Therefore, one domestic and one foreign-owned company in each city was selected for the study.

The selected cases are intended to represent descriptive features of a broader set of cases (Seawright and Gerring, 2008). The cases were selected from the list of hotels (see Table 4.1) that fulfil the criteria to be classified as luxury hotels (refer to Table 2.5). This stage of the case selection was shaped by following the typicality criterion (Vitolas, 2011). One of the criteria the researcher gave importance to when selecting the organisations is the collaborative nature of the participating organisations. The intent behind the research and the assistance required was detailed to the key contacts in the respective countries to have transparency in the collaboration. Another criterion was to examine the presence of talent management practices at the participating organisation. This information was gathered from the organisational reports available online to understand the advertised talent management philosophies. This has helped to narrow down the companies to be contacted for the study. The participating companies were given certain pseudonyms: Sri Lankan foreign company (F1); Sri Lankan domestic company (D1); Indian foreign company (F2); Indian domestic company (D2). Some companies have multiple hotels that qualify to be

in the luxury category within the same city. The cases for the study are, therefore, the companies and not the individual hotels. In other words, the initiative was to explore the narrative of four leading hospitality companies in the world.

#### **4.4.1 Gaining access**

Access to the companies was one of the challenges in the researcher's overall research experience, and convincing the gatekeeper on the pros and cons of the research was indeed the most challenging task. There were two key contacts the researcher had in India and Sri Lanka who assisted in providing the contact details of the gatekeepers. The key contacts were highly reputed individuals in the hospitality sector in their respective countries with direct contacts with some of the companies in the established list (Table 4.1). A gatekeeper is described as someone who controls access to an institution or an organisation (Singh and Wassenaar, 2016). They are an integral part of an ethical process of seeking authorisation for research (Kay, 2019). The researcher contacted 18 hotels from the list of selected luxury hotels before finalising the current ones.

The primary concern of all of them who has denied access was related to COVID-19 challenges. The challenges included the reduced number of staff in certain hotels, redundancy of workforce, and national wide COVID related restrictions. Having an understanding of the gatekeepers' views is essential for maintaining access and negotiating with them (Devers and Frankel, 2000). The gatekeepers identified for this study were managers or the General Managers within the companies. They were provided with a detailed description of the research, including the time required for the data collection and ethical considerations. They were informed of the two stages included in the data collection, starting with questionnaire surveys. Moreover, the expected timescale



for analysing the surveys and producing the questions for the interviews was also discussed. This was important, as due to the challenges with COVID-19, the challenges were different every day, and circumstances could have changed. However, the gatekeepers gave a confident nod to the collaboration.

## **4.5 Research procedure**

The researcher has identified specific gaps from reviewing the TM and SC literature (Chapter 2). To fill these gaps and reach the objectives, the researcher decided to conduct the study in two countries in South Asia. Two companies each in Delhi and Colombo in the luxury hospitality sector (one foreign and one domestic), were appropriate to fulfil the research demands (section 4.3). This section provides a brief account of the research procedure to reach the objectives of this study. A more detailed explanation of the empirical materials used will be discussed in sections 4.6 and 4.7. The primary empirical material adopted in this study is quantitative surveys. The data acquired from the quantitative surveys have been utilised for three stages of examination, as depicted in Figure 4.3.

Firstly, to explore the differences in TM and SC in the South Asian regional level between foreign and domestic companies, the researcher has used a mono-method approach. The researcher has combined the quantitative data from two foreign hotels and two domestic hotels separately and conducted a regional level comparison on both TM practices and the level of SC (Figure 4.3b). The regional level data is also utilised to explore whether TM practices impact the nature and level of social capital and whether social capital has any effect on different TM practices (Figure 4.3c). This has been tested in both South Asian foreign and South Asian domestic companies separately.

**Figure 4.3:** Three examinations conducted with quantitative data

**(4.3a) Country-level comparison:** To conduct a country-level comparison of the foreign and domestic firms on both TM and SC. The Sri Lankan foreign company was compared with Sri Lankan domestic company; and Indian foreign company was compared with Indian domestic company.

**(4.3b) Regional level comparison:** To combine survey data from two foreign hotels and two domestic hotels in South Asia and conduct a regional level comparison on both TM practices and level of SC.

**(4.3c) Regional level examination (TM-SC correlation):** The relationship between TM and SC has been examined using the regional level data (combined foreign and combined domestic hotels in South Asia).

Source: The author (2021)

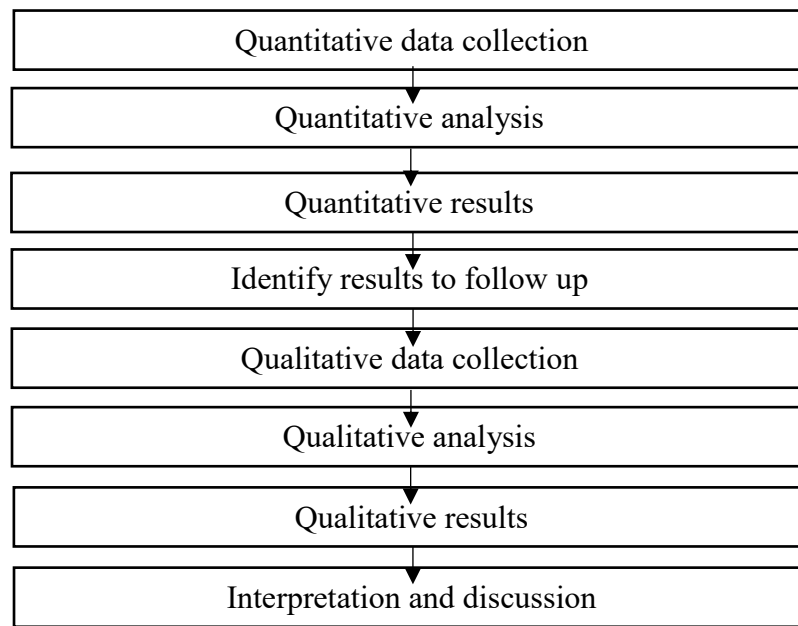
For the country-level analysis (Figure 4.3a), the researcher has adopted a mixed-methods approach. A mixed-methods approach provides a comprehensive understanding of the research problem that is often not provided sufficiently by mono-method research (Berg, 2001). Since the regional level comparison adopts a mono-method approach, the mixed-method approach for the country-level comparison provides a nuanced and detailed explanation of the studied phenomena. This has been adopted to overcome the potential bias resulting from using a single method in a study. Creswell *et al.* (2003, pp. 209-240) stated six strategies for a mixed-method research approach: “*the sequential explanatory strategy, sequential exploratory strategy, sequential transformative strategy, concurrent triangulation strategy, concurrent nested strategy, and concurrent transformative strategy*”.

The mixed-method approach in this study uses the sequential explanatory approach (Figure 4.4). Sequential explanatory design uses qualitative results to explain and interpret a quantitative study’s findings (Creswell, 2003). Therefore, this approach can

increase the validity and reliability of the research (Yin, 1994; Denzin, 1978). Since this design primarily begins with a quantitative method, investigators typically place greater emphasis on the quantitative methods (Creswell and Plano Clark, 2006), although priority could be given to the qualitative method or even equally (Kroll and Neri, 2009). In this study, the researcher has emphasised the quantitative study, and the qualitative study follows from the identified significant results of the quantitative phase.

The distinction of the different phenomena studied in each method is critical when adopting this strategy (Sale *et al.*, 2002; Slevitch, 2011). As depicted in Figure 4.3a, the quantitative data has been utilised to compare the workforces' experience of the talent management practices and explore the level of social capital between foreign and domestic companies in Delhi and Colombo separately. Further, in-depth qualitative semi-structured interviews have been conducted in individual companies, including staff at different hierarchies and departments. Interview questions have been identified from the results with statistically significant differences and anomalous findings from the quantitative phase (Aldridge *et al.*, 1999). The qualitative data is used to explore the same study phenomena, validate the quantitative results and explore the experiences, beliefs and perspectives of selected individuals working in the organisations.

**Figure 4.4:** Sequential explanatory strategy



Source: Creswell and Plano Clark (2006)

## 4.6 Quantitative research design

In recent years, there has been a significant increase in the use of quantitative methodology across various tourism and hospitality research areas (Assaf and Tsionas, 2019). Quantitative research generally involves collecting and measuring facts, observable data, and examining causal relationships (Denzin and Lincoln, 2011). The quantitative approach is essentially deductive in nature, which composes a range of methods that systematically investigate social phenomena using statistical or numerical data (Watson, 2015). The approach generally starts with developing a hypothesis, which describes the anticipated result, relationship or the expected outcome from the research questions (Polit and Beck, 2014). The quantitative method is used as a response to relational questions of variables within the research. The intention is to establish or confirm relationships and develop generalisations that would eventually be contributing to the theory (Leedy and Ormrod, 2001).

Some scholars argued that the quantitative approach represents a descriptive study and is considered simple and less interesting (Bauer, 2000). One of the weaknesses of quantitative research is its inability in explaining the empirical findings as to why they occurred. It is a common practice where researchers tend to end their reports with implications, in which they theorise the results and offer their ideas as further research recommendations (Walsh, 2003). The approach is incapable of explaining what lies behind relationships or explain people’s experiences, behaviours, or feelings (Truong *et al.*, 2020). The following sections explain each of the core elements used in the quantitative research design (Table 4.2).

**Table 4.2:** Core elements of quantitative method

<i>Overview</i>	<i>Quantitative method</i>
Focus	Workforce experience
Approach	Deductive
Sample size	Middle-large scale
Sampling strategy	Systematic random sampling
Pilot study	Small scale testing
Data collection method	Online survey using JISC
Data analysis	t-test, Chi-square test, Fisher’s exact test, spearman correlation, cross-tab, frequency test
Data analysis tools	SPSS (version 25) analytical tool
Theoretical foundations	Social capital, Talent management, Organisational culture
Ethical consideration	University code of ethics, Informed consent, Research ethics adherence

#### **4.6.1 Data collection method**

As the research requires primary data, developing an instrument is one of the most important tasks in the research process (Mehmood *et al.*, 2012). The researcher adopted questionnaires as the instrument to conduct the quantitative study. A questionnaire was developed for the data collection based on the indicators derived from the review of each TM practice and SC dimensions. Questionnaire surveys are one of the most commonly used quantitative techniques due to its ability in obtaining information about a given phenomenon through the formulation of questions that reflect individuals' opinions, perceptions, and behaviours (Queiros *et al.*, 2017).

The questionnaire was mainly based on two research areas; talent management and social capital, relating to the theoretical framework chapter (refer to Chapter 3). The questionnaire consisted of six sections: (i) decision to work in hospitality, (ii) educational qualification, (iii) experiences of training, development and performance management (centred specifically on TM), (iv) community life (centred specifically on SC), and (v) looking to the future. The last section (section vi) dealt with the socio-demographic profiles of the respondents. There was no sectional divide between the questions of the different study areas. The researcher tried to avoid a distinction between questions of two research areas, keeping in mind the easiness of filling out the survey for the participants and making their experience organic. Questions were prepared in English, as the gatekeepers mentioned that all the employees working in the four companies have basic English proficiency. Elementary level English skills are considered mandatory for hiring in all four participating companies. This is because the guests in these hotels may not just be the natives but also from foreign countries or even different states who speaks different

languages. As the researcher is from India, it helped prepare the questions with English vocabularies regularly used in the sub-continent.

The questionnaire was built on the JISC survey tool with 29 main questions and several sub-questions (Appendix B). Apart from participants' company, age, nationality, year of joining the company, the rest of the survey consisted wholly of closed questions where the respondent is offered a choice of replies (Brunt *et al.*, 2017). The researcher had employed a five-point Likert-type scale to elicit responses regarding the level of agreement, level of importance and level of trust (Chyung *et al.*, 2017). A five-point scale has been most recommended by researchers than the other scales, as this would reduce the participants' frustration level and increase the response rate and response quality (Babakus and Mangold, 1992; Sachdev and Verma, 2004; Hameed *et al.*, 2018). With the items which measured the degree of agreement (Q12, Q13, Q14, Q15, Q17, Q18, Q23), scale anchors ranged from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). With the level of importance (Q8), scale anchors ranged from 1 (very important) to 5 (not important). Additionally, a five-point Likert-type scale measured the degree of trust (Q16), where scale anchors ranged from 1 (fully trust) to 5 (fully distrust). All the rest were polar questions (yes or no), where the respondents had to choose one from it (Thai *et al.*, 2021). Questions derived from the TM and SC indicators depicted in the theoretical framework chapter (section 3.2) are depicted below in Table 4.3. Additionally, there were questions that collected the socio-demographic information of the respondents, including their employment background and migration history.

**Table 4.3:** Items related to the research area in the questionnaire

<i>Research area</i>	<i>Questions</i>
I. Talent management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Talent strategy &amp; planning (Q14g)</li> <li>- Recruitment &amp; selection: job attractiveness (Q3, Q8); talent acquisition (Q2, Q9)</li> <li>- Development: performance management (Q13); learning and development (Q10, Q11, Q12a, Q12b, Q12c, Q12d, Q14a, Q14b, Q14c, Q14d, Q14e, Q14h, Q19)</li> <li>- Retention (Q23a, Q23b, Q23c, Q23d, Q23e)</li> <li>- Succession planning (Q14f, Q23f, Q23g)</li> </ul>
II. Social capital	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Structural dimension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Network ties (Q17a, Q17b, Q17c, Q17d, Q18a, Q18b, Q18c, Q18d, Q18e)</li> <li>- Network configuration: Strength of ties (Q15a, Q7)</li> <li>- Appropriable organisation (Q14i, Q20, Q21, Q22)</li> </ul> </li> <li>b) Cognitive dimension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Shared language and codes (Q15h)</li> <li>- Shared vision (Q15i)</li> </ul> </li> <li>c) Relational dimension <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Trust and trustworthiness (Q16)</li> <li>- Norms and sanctions (Q15d)</li> <li>- Obligations and expectations (Q15b, Q15c)</li> <li>- Identity and identification (Q15e, Q15f, Q15g)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
III. Socio-demographic characteristics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Socio-demographic information: gender (Q24), age (Q25), nationality (Q26), job role (Q27), type of work employment (Q28), department of work (Q29).</li> <li>- Employment history (Q1)</li> <li>- Migration (Q4, Q5, Q6)</li> </ul>



#### **4.6.2 Pilot study**

One important aspect of developing a data collection instrument is testing its validity and reliability through pilot testing (Saunders *et al.*, 2009). After building the questionnaire on JISC online survey tool, the researcher has conducted pilot studies (Appendix A). This is to identify and address any inadequacies in the questions and validate the questionnaire's accuracy. Pilot studies are mini versions of a full-scale study to validate the efficiency of the online survey tool and its reliability (Teijlingen and Hundley, 2002; Bailey, 1994). A total of 4 pilot studies were conducted with two participants in India and two participants in Sri Lanka. The participants were employees within the Indian and Sri Lankan hospitality industries. The validity, reliability and clarity of the instruments were examined. The researcher has assessed the responses, collected the feedback from the respondents and made minor word replacements in the survey instruments for better understanding. Finally, these studies have enabled the researcher to note the approximate time taken to inform the potential participants in the information sheet. The approximate time expected to complete the survey was 8-12 minutes.

#### **4.6.3 Sample**

Sampling is considered an essential component of the data collection process. The quality of the sampling design strongly impacts a study's overall quality. Good quality in sampling design contributes largely to the study's methodological rigour and the generalisability of the results (Teeroovengadam and Nunkoo, 2018). During the study design, sample size calculation is vital for methodological and ethical reasons. Both small and large samples have their drawbacks where the former undermine the internal and external validity of a study, whereas the latter tend to transform minor differences into

statistically significant differences (Faber and Fonseca, 2014). Therefore the study attempted to have a balanced sample size, which is neither too small nor too large. Since the study required a sample from the four participating organisations from different departments and hierarchy levels, the researcher followed systematic random sampling, a type of probability sampling. Probability sampling allows every part of the population with a potential to be represented in the sample (Leedy and Ormrod, 2013). This eliminates any bias in the results and provides an overall understanding of the organisational culture (Schein, 1990; Bavik, 2016). Systematic random sampling is a sampling process that defines a process by which each sample is selected (Edgar and Manz, 2017). From the population ( $N$  members), every  $k$ th member is included as the study participant, where  $k$  is the interval between selected members of the list (Salkind, 2010).

The desired sample was a minimum of 10% and up to 15% of the total population. Due to the issue of confidentiality, the exact population size cannot be revealed. Especially during the pandemic, the tourism and hospitality industry has been affected significantly, which caused hotels to operate with minimal staff (Kaushal and Srivastava, 2021; Jones and Comfort, 2020). Companies worldwide have made tough decisions, including redundancies and pay cuts, which has caused high turnover (CIPD, 2020). Therefore, considering the situation's sensitivity, the researcher had decided not to include the population size in this thesis. The survey has commenced by selecting a random start and then taking every unit equally spaced to achieve a well-proportioned response from different department and hierarchy levels to eliminate the bias and inadequacy. This is also seen as a disadvantage of systematic random sampling where only the first participant is selected randomly, and for subsequent selections, there would be subjects who will have zero chance of selection (Acharya *et al.*, 2013).

A total of 245 questionnaires were returned. There is no wholly accepted cut-off in the academic sphere regarding an acceptable percentage of missing data in a data set for valid statistical inferences (Scandizzo, 2016; Dong and Peng, 2013). However, to avoid a potential bias in the statistical analysis, the researcher decided to remove the questionnaires with a missing rate of over 5%. The researcher follows Schafer's (1999) view, who asserted that a missing rate of less than 5% is inconsequential. Among the 245 questionnaires returned, 8 of them had a missing rate of over 5%. After applying listwise deletion of largely unattended responses and a validation check, a final sample size of 237 responses was used.

The researcher attained a minimum sample size of 10% and a maximum of 15% from each company. As there was minimalised staffing due to COVID-19, multiple hotels of D2 (from the selected list of hotels) have been included in the study to attain the minimum sample size. The final sample consisted of respondents of different ages, gender, hierarchy, and department to maximise variation and have an overall representation. The total usable questionnaires include 51 from F1, 97 from D1, 44 from F2, and 45 from D2. Table 4.4 below summarises the respondent profile in each participating company.

**Table 4.4:** Respondent profile

<i>Items</i>	<i>Characteristics</i>	<i>F1</i>	<i>D1</i>	<i>F2</i>	<i>D2</i>
<b>Total respondents</b>		51	97	44	45
<b>Gender</b>	Male	37	79	33	35
	Female	14	18	11	10
<b>Age</b>	20-25	4	10	18	20
	26-30	14	17	15	8
	31-35	9	12	6	6
	36-40	12	18	4	2
	41-45	4	12	1	4
	45-50	6	15	0	3
	50-55	1	12	0	2
	55-60	1	1	0	0
<b>Job role</b>	Managerial staff	24	46	19	20
	Supervisory level staff	9	35	12	14
	Ordinary staff member	18	16	13	11
<b>Department</b>	Executive offices	1	3	1	0
	HR dept.	3	5	8	1
	Front office dept.	10	11	11	26
	F&B dept.	10	10	6	7
	Marketing & sales dept.	6	13	3	2
	Purchase dept.	1	4	0	1
	Finance & accounting	2	9	3	1
	IT department	1	2	1	1
	Kitchen	4	11	5	0
	House keeping	5	7	4	1
	Engineering & Maintenance dept.	4	14	2	2
	Gardening, Laundry, Spa, pool, security	2	6	0	2
	Other dept.	2	2	0	1

#### 4.6.4 Distribution of questionnaire

The data collection was initially planned to start in April 2020; however, the significant challenge posed by COVID-19 caused the delay in the data collection. The gatekeepers and the people of their assistance had directly sent the online questionnaires to the respondents in all four companies. The researcher sent the invitation using email and WhatsApp with a link to the JISC survey platform. The survey platform remained open to allow sufficient access for the participants. The researcher had given the hotel

gatekeepers instructions on distributing the questionnaire to the whole workforce, including different departments and hierarchies. The questionnaire was distributed via emails and WhatsApp. The data collection was conducted between August 2020 and December 2020. The researcher kept a tab of the responses during the data collection to ensure the questionnaires were distributed evenly to different departments and hierarchies.

#### **4.6.5 Data analysis**

The data was entered into IBM's SPSS Statistical Software (version 25.0) for analysis. The data was entered initially as separate data files for each company's response. This was later merged into different categorisation as per the demand of the research objectives (Figure 4.3). For the country-level and regional level comparison of TM and SC (Aim 1 & Aim 2 of the research), independent sample T-tests, Chi-square tests, Fisher's exact tests, cross-tabulation, and frequency tests were utilised depending on the nature of the data set and the particular research question.

With the ordinal data, the researcher had employed independent sample t-tests. A t-test is a type of statistical test that is used to compare the means of two groups. T-tests are divided into two types; independent t-test and paired t-test (Kim, 2015). "*Independent t-test is used when the two groups under comparison are independent of each other, and paired t-test is used when two groups under comparison are dependent on each other*" (Kim, 2015, p. 540). This inferential statistic allows the researcher to determine whether there is a statistically significant difference between the two independent mean groups (foreign company respondents and domestic company respondents) regarding their experiences of TM and level of SC.

With the categorical variables (nominal), the researcher had used Chi-square tests, Fisher's exact tests, cross-tabulation, frequencies and percentages. Pearson's chi-square test is a non-parametric test that has been widely used to test the association (statistical significance) between two categorical responses (Shih and Fay, 2017). There are certain advantages and disadvantages of using a chi-square test. The advantages include its robustness regarding the distribution of the data, the depth of information that could be derived from the test, and the flexibility in handling data from multiple group studies (McHugh, 2013). On the other side, the limitation includes the sample size requirements and the difficulty in interpretation when there are more than 20 categories in the independent or dependent variable (McHugh, 2013). Chi-square test can only be applied when the data: “1) are a simple random sample, 2) are of sufficient sample size so that there are adequate expected cell counts, and 3) are independent of each other” (Hess and Hess, 2017, p. 877).

Traditionally, the minimum expected cell count is 5, and if there is any cell value less than 5, chi-square is not favourable (Howell, 2014). However, in the modern statistical literature, it is acceptable if the cell value is 5 or more in at least 80% of the cells, with no cells having an expected count less than 1 (McHugh, 2013). For the contingency tables, which do not qualify the criteria for conducting a Chi-square test, fisher's exact test is employed regardless of the sampling plan. Further, post-hoc Cramer's V tests were conducted to measure the strength of association between the variables when a significant chi-square result was obtained. Cramer's V is applied to contingency tables that are larger than  $2 \times 2$  tables (Chen, 2011). For all these analyses, a p-value less than 0.05 is considered significant (Basray *et al.*, 2021). Frequency tests and cross-tabulations have also been conducted for categorical variables (Ahmed *et al.*, 2021).

Contingency tables were utilised to examine and derive the relationship between ordinal and categorical variables. Subsequently, compare the results from different company types within-country and regionally. Spearman rank correlation tests were conducted to examine the proposed TM-SC conceptual model (Figure 3.3). The correlation and strength of the relationship between each proposed TM practice and SC dimensions and its variables were analysed using this test (Aim 3 of the research). The variables tested were predominantly ordinal, and Spearman rank correlation is often used for measuring and testing the association between two continuous or ordered categorical responses (Shih and Fay, 2017). For the Spearman rank correlation tests, a p-value less than 0.05 is considered significant, and less than 0.01 is considered highly significant (Shrestha and Maharjan, 2018).

#### **4.7 Qualitative research design**

Qualitative research methodology is often employed when the problem is not understood adequately, and there is an existing desire to explore the problem thoroughly (Rutberg and Bouikidis, 2018). A qualitative approach was adopted to supplement the gaps or anomalous results from the country-level quantitative data analysis. Therefore, this is a further explanation as to why they were there. It involves the systematic collection, arrangement, and interpretation of textual data derived from verbal conversations or personal observations (Lincoln and Guba, 1985; Britten *et al.*, 1995). The generic process of this phase is inductive in nature, where the researcher constructs the abstractions, concepts, hypotheses, and theories from the data collected (Atieno, 2009). Critics of qualitative research argue about the inefficiency of a qualitative study in extending the findings to wider populations with the same level of certainty of a quantitative study (Walsh, 2003). This is mainly because of the small sample size and because the qualitative

study findings are not tested to discover whether they are statistically significant or due to chance (Atieno, 2009). The following sections explain each of the core elements used in the qualitative research design (Table 4.5).

**Table 4.5:** Core elements of qualitative method

<i>Overview</i>	<i>Quantitative method</i>
Focus	Workforce experience, beliefs and perspectives
Approach	Inductive
Sample size	Middle-large scale
Sampling strategy	Purposeful sampling
Pilot study	Small scale testing
Data collection method	Semi-structured interviews
Data analysis	Deductive content analysis
Theoretical foundations	Social capital, Talent management, Organisational culture
Ethical consideration	University code of ethics, Informed consent Research ethics adherence

#### **4.7.1 Data collection method**

There are four main sources in the qualitative method of data collection: observation, interviewing, documentary sources, and visual data (Creswell, 1998). There are several sub-classifications to these data collection methods according to various dimensions (Mehmetoglu, 2004). The technique used for conducting the qualitative method in this study is semi-structured interviews. The researcher acts as the primary instrument for data collection rather than through questionnaires or machines. As mentioned earlier, the researcher had derived the follow-up questions for the interviews from the anomalous results from the survey analysis. Therefore, there were predetermined questions prepared



for the interviews. However, the researcher did not want the process to be too rigid and instead had a semi-structured interview format. A structured interview makes it challenging to obtain detailed data, as the interviewer and the interviewee will not have the option to be flexible with their questions and answers (Almeida *et al.*, 2017). The semi-structured interviews intended to understand the workforce experiences, opinions, perceptions and the suggested solutions for the studied phenomena. The semi-structured interview method enhances the reciprocity between the interviewer and interviewee and enables the interviewer to probe further and ask follow-up questions based on the participants' responses (Galletta, 2012; Rubin and Rubin, 2005; Kallio *et al.*, 2016).

Based on the quantitative data analysis findings, the researcher had prepared open-ended questions for the interviews. There were two phases in collecting the qualitative data; from participating organisations and industry experts. To have an unbiased outcome, the interviews had to be conducted with respondents from different hierarchies from the participating organisation (refer to section 2.4). There were some differences in the questions to the managers compared to the questions to the supervisory and ordinary level employees. The two sets of finalised questions are depicted in Appendix D and Appendix F. There were a total of 17 questions for both sets of interviews. The derived findings from the quantitative analysis motivated to ask different questions to the managers on TM. These questions were mostly based on the company policies and the company instructions on TM. There were a total of 7 questions that were different between the two sets of interview questions. For example, to the ordinary level and supervisory level staff, the researcher asked: *“Do you see the need to have a higher educational degree to get recruited and to have a career progression?”* (Q11). Whereas, to the managers, the researcher asked: *“How important is educational qualification when applying for a job in your company”* (Q11).

The researcher has also probed further and asked a few follow-up questions based on the participant's responses, which is an advantage of conducting semi-structured interviews. For example, the researcher asked: "*Do you think the social clubs and social events help you build a personal relationship with the employees?*" (Q4). For which, some respondents responded with just a "Yes". The response motivated the researcher to ask further: "*Is there any changes you would prefer to see in the social clubs/events in the hotel which will help improve the connection between the staff?*" (Q4a). These impulsive questions made the respondents further open up on the studied phenomena.

Additionally, there were findings from the quantitative data which required unbiased opinions and clarifications, which demanded the study to include industry experts in the sample. In phase 2 of the data collection, semi-structured interviews were conducted with one industry expert in each country. The finalised questions for the industry experts are depicted in Appendix G, which includes a total of 7 questions. The industry experts were chosen to shed light on governmental and institutional policies, labour situation in specific countries, issues of trade unions, and the key differentiation of foreign and domestic organisations. The questions were generic and not related to the specific participating organisations. For example, the research asked: "*Any specific changes the rise in the foreign companies have brought to the Indian/Sri Lankan hospitality industry in general when it comes to dealing with the workforce?*" (Q5). The following section provides an account of the pilot studies conducted to refine the interview questions and test their reliability.

#### 4.7.2 Pilot testing

Pilot studies were conducted in March 2021 using convenience sampling and field testing method. Questions for participating organisations were tested with an individual who is an employee in a hotel in India. Both the interview sets (for managers and for other staff) were tested in this study. A convenient sample was selected here to conduct the pilot testing (Connelly, 2008). The questions for industry expert was tested using field testing with one of the potential study participants. Field-testing is a pilot testing technique where the testing of the preliminary interview guide is conducted with the potential study participants (Kallio *et al.*, 2016). There were no amendments made to the questions for industry experts. One of the interviews highlighted a question (for the supervisors/employees) that could have been highly sensitive for the respondents. Subsequently, the question has been reworded to include in the final draft. Moreover, two of the questions for the managers had a repetitive nature; therefore, they were merged as a single question. The questions included for the pilot studies for employees are depicted in Appendix C and managers in Appendix E. The researcher evaluated the approximate time required for the interviews to inform the potential participants. The potential participants at the selected companies were informed that the interviews would take between 30 and 60 minutes, whereas, for the industry experts up to 20 minutes.

### 4.7.3 Sampling

In a qualitative study, a larger sample size could dilute an individual's voice and cause the problem of breadth over depth (Hammarberg *et al.*, 2016). A large sample size can also affect the effectiveness of analysing the data, creating problems in applying the derived findings (McGinley *et al.*, 2021). The samples are selected considering their ability to provide substantial information (Hellström, 2008; Slevitch, 2011). Qualitative research often adapts a non-probability sampling strategy to select the population rather than a more statistically representative approach (Ritchie and Lewis, 2003; Nachmias *et al.*, 2014). For both the phases of data collection, a purposive sampling strategy was used to select the sample.

Purposeful sampling involves identifying people to be included in the sample, willing and available to provide information of a studied phenomenon by knowledge or experience (Cresswell and Plano Clark, 2011; Bernard, 2002; Etikan *et al.*, 2016). The most popular forms of purposive sampling are stratified, quota, cell and theoretical sampling, especially when multiple cases are included (Denieffe, 2020; Campbell *et al.*, 2020). The researcher has adopted quota sampling, and the primary reason for that was to ensure that the key participants were part of the sample (Campbell *et al.*, 2020). Quota sampling specifies categories and the minimum number required in each category (Mason, 2002; Campbell *et al.*, 2020). A total of 14 interviews were conducted in the qualitative research. The quota set for each phase and their motive is discussed below.

From the participating companies, participants were purposively selected from (i) different hierarchies of the workforce, (ii) different departments, especially at the supervisory and ordinary level, (iii) individuals with good command of the English language. The gatekeepers were instructed on the selection criteria mentioned above. They were also informed about the minimum quota required to fulfil the research demands. The minimum quota set was 3 participants from each company: one from the managerial level, one from the supervisory level, and one from the ordinary employee level. It was imperative to include employees from each hierarchy to get an overall understanding of the studied phenomenon (refer to section 2.5). Additionally, the researcher had specified the requirement of having respondents from multiple departments.

However, in F2 and D2, participants from all the three hierarchies were not attained due to COVID related reasons. The participants include 2 managers and 1 supervisory level staff from F2; and 2 supervisory and 1 managerial level staff from D2 (Table 4.6). Consequently, the researcher requested the gatekeeper to consider other criteria (different departments) and different managerial levels to have variance in the sample. For example, when it is 2 managers, the researcher has requested one manager from the executive level (senior management) and the other from the junior management level. Overall, this can be considered as a limitation in the sampling procedure of this study. However, this had not affected the study significantly, as there was still a diverse sample to make interesting findings. The researcher had conducted 12 interviews from the participating companies. This includes 3 interviews in each participating company. The participants' profiles from participating companies are presented in Table 4.6.

In the second phase of the data collection, interviewees were purposefully selected in their role as industry experts. The minimum quota required in this phase was one participant from each country. Therefore, the potential participants needed to be carefully assessed before selecting. The participant selected from India is a tourism and hospitality educator, whereas the participant from Sri Lanka is a hospitality entrepreneur and an international tourism consultant. There were two criteria in selecting the industry experts: 1) their ability to be unbiased, 2) their history, background and accomplishments related to hospitality, tourism and labour development. Due to issues of confidentiality, there cannot be any more information revealed about these participants. The participants' profiles of industry experts are presented in Table 4.7.

**Table 4.6:** Anonymised list of interviewed participants from the companies

Interview	Pseudonym	Company	Position	Gender	Nationality
1	Harshani	F1	Employee	Female	Sri Lankan
2	Sithara	F1	Supervisor	Female	Sri Lankan
3	Perera	F1	Manager	Male	Sri Lankan
4	Kumar	D1	Employee	Male	Sri Lankan
5	Mahela	D1	Supervisor	Male	Sri Lankan
6	Somachandra	D1	Manager	Male	Sri Lankan
7	Dev	F2	Supervisor	Male	Indian
8	Jai	F2	Manager	Male	Indian
9	Dharmendra	F2	Manager	Male	Indian
10	Varun	D2	Supervisor	Male	Indian
11	Abhay	D2	Supervisor	Male	Indian
12	Raveena	D2	Manager	Female	Indian

**Table 4.7:** Anonymised list of interviewed industry experts

Interview	Pseudonym	Gender	Nationality	Identity	Capacity
1	Aravinda	Male	Sri Lankan	Entrepreneur	Industry expert
2	Vishwanath	Male	Indian	Educator	Industry expert

#### **4.7.4 Interviews**

The qualitative data collection was severely affected by COVID-19. The initial plan was to conduct the surveys using online mediums and then travel to Delhi and Colombo for the face-to-face interviews using the approved research grant. However, due to the pandemic, the interviews were instead conducted using online mediums. By the time the interviews commenced, most of the industries in the world, including hospitality, had switched to online mediums for meetings and conferences. Therefore, the researcher did not face any issues concerning the medium for conducting the interviews. The interviews were conducted between March 2021 and April 2021. The gatekeepers had provided the contact details of all the participants to schedule the interviews. The interviews were conducted through online platforms including Microsoft Teams, WhatsApp and Skype. The interviews lasted between 40-60 minutes for participants from the participating companies. The interview with the industry expert in India lasted for 20 minutes. Due to personal reasons, the industry expert from Sri Lanka preferred to send the responses via email. All the participants had fluency in the English language; therefore, there were no difficulties observed in conveying their responses. Each interview was audio-recorded after requesting permission, irrespective of having signed consent from each participant. Post interviews, each recording were transcribed verbatim by the researcher for the analysis.

#### **4.7.5 Data analysis**

Scholars often criticise that when conducting qualitative research, most of the researchers' focus is mainly confined to the techniques used to conduct the data and neglecting a more significant aspect which is the data analysis (Mehmetoglu and Altinay,

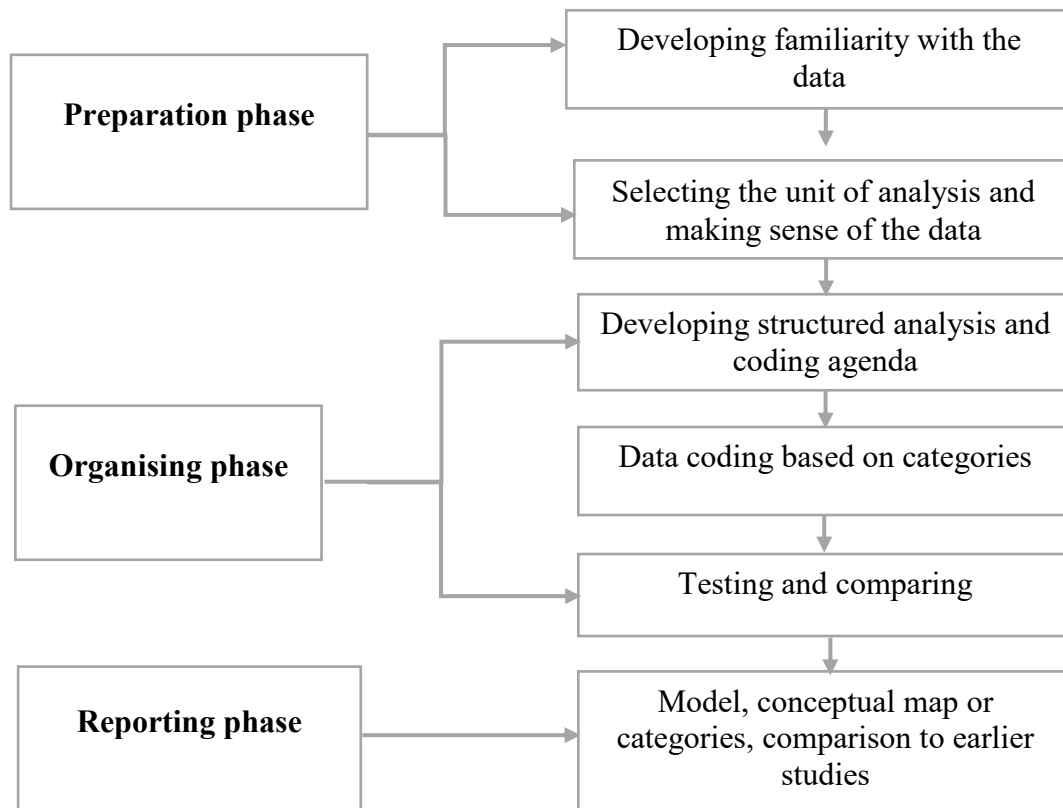
2006; Fielding and Lee, 1998; Sandelowski and Barroso, 2003). In this section, the researcher attempted to provide a detailed description of the methods used for data analysis. The interview data were analysed using a deductive content analysis method, as the analysis structure is operationalised based on previous knowledge (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008) and is guided based on theoretically derived categories (Kyngäs and Kaakinen, 2019; Najafi *et al.*, 2018). This approach was appropriate, as the qualitative interviews were conducted to provide depth to the quantitative findings from the country-level analysis of TM and SC, thereby supplementing the gaps or the interesting findings and extend knowledge. An advantage of content analysis is that it is sensitive towards content and context, facilitating flexibility in the research design for dealing with meaning and intention, and identifying critical processes (Krippendorff, 1980; Downe-Wamboldt, 1992; Pandey, 2018). On the other side, one significant limitation of content analysis is the subjectivity involved in coding (Deegan and Rankin, 1996; Guthrie *et al.*, 2004). Moreover, deductive content analysis is seen as ineffectual when identifying newly emerging themes (Matthes and Kohring, 2008). However, the intent of this study was not to identify themes or frames from the data; instead, the data was deductively analysed to develop clusters of data under each category for further analysis.

When employing this approach, the researcher used an organising framework (categories) that comprises each TM practice and SC dimension (Braun and Clarke, 2006; Bradley *et al.*, 2007; Azungah, 2018). Each TM practice and SC dimensions depicted in the theoretical framework chapter (refer to section 3.2) were part of the structured categorisation matrix. Therefore, a total of 16 predetermined codes were identified for the analysis. The researcher analysed the data manually and has followed the procedures suggested by Elo and Kyngäs (2008) (Figure 4.5). Despite the technological advances, manual techniques in content analyses are performed in many management studies in the



past (Morris, 1994) and present (e.g. Najafi *et al.*, 2018). The researcher decided to conduct the analysis manually for two reasons; firstly, because the sample size is not too large, and secondly, a context-sensitive evaluation was required to categorise the data (Lewis *et al.*, 2013).

**Figure 4.5:** The process of deductive content analysis



Source: Elo and Kyngäs (2008)

The researcher had read the scripts three times. The first reading was right after transcribing each interview. During the first reading, the researcher highlighted the parts of the text which were related to the predetermined codes. One of the primary decisions to be taken when conducting a content analysis is identifying the unit of analysis (Graneheim and Lundman, 2004). There were multiple units of analysis adopted in this

study, including workforce and participating organisations, to examine the studied phenomena (Mertens, 1998).

The researcher developed a structured analysis coding agenda where each code was highlighted with different colour highlighters. After transcribing all the interviews, the researcher conducted second reading for reanalysis and coded for correspondence with the identified categories (Elo and Kyngäs, 2008). Once data were coded into categories, the researcher had conducted the third reading and derived sub-categories to compare with the quantitative findings. The scripts in the categories and sub-categories were reported to compare, contrast and extend the quantitative findings. These scripts were also compared to the previous studies where applicable.

#### **4.8 Ethical considerations**

Ethical approval was granted in May 2020 by the **Social Science Research Ethics and Integrity Sub-committee** of the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Plymouth. The university's research ethics policy, code of practice of research and procedures were strictly followed. The research also adheres to the Economic and Social Research Council's principles of good practice and Research Ethics Framework (ESRC, 2020) and the ethical procedures involving human participants adopted by the Social Research Association (SRA, 2020). There were two separate participant information sheets and consent forms for the survey participants (Appendix H) and the interview participants (Appendix I). The participant information sheet contained information about the research aims, means to collect data, and the relevance of the research. From an ethical standpoint, information was provided about their right to withdraw, right not to answer

any questions, confidentiality and anonymity, data management plan, and their right to learn about the research outcomes.

The participant information sheet and consent form were attached on the first page of the questionnaire. If the participants choose “yes” to the first question at the right end of the page, they confirm that they have read the study description, are over 18, and agree to participate in the survey. If they choose “no”, then the survey will terminate. Each participant was given the participant information sheet and the consent form in a word document to read and sign before the interviews.

With the surveys, the respondents could withdraw until they have submitted the response. After submitting the survey, the data were anonymised, and it was not possible to withdraw afterwards. The respondents were allowed to withdraw from the interview once the outline had been shared. The researcher had given utmost importance to confidentiality and anonymity. In almost all the ethical guidelines for social researchers, confidentiality is considered one of the most important elements. It is considered a top priority to provide the research participants with the details on anonymisation and who will have access to the data; and the purpose of the data (Oliver, 2003; Wiles *et al.*, 2008).

The responses from the surveys were not individually reported in the thesis; it was tested and reported collectively without revealing the company names. None of the interview participants’ names, company names, job roles, or departments was mentioned in this thesis for non-identification and confidentiality. All interview participants were given a pseudonym in the thesis. The researcher used broader terms such as managerial level staff, supervisory level staff, and ordinary level staff to anonymise the exact job roles and departments.

At the beginning of each interview, the participants were explained briefly on the research topic. They were informed about their right to withdraw and their right not to answer any questions. Additionally, permission was asked to record the interviews and to include direct quotes from the interviews in the final thesis. Each participant was informed that their transcripts would be confidential, and when reporting in the thesis, the scripts would be anonymous. Finally, the researcher asked the participants if they had any questions regarding the research right before asking the first question.

#### **4.9 Chapter conclusion**

This chapter has presented the overall research design, empirical strategy and methods adapted for the study. The chapter presented the rationale for selecting the case study locations and the case studies. The researcher adopts a case study approach including one foreign and one domestic company from Delhi and Colombo. This chapter provides a brief account of the research procedure to reach the objectives of the study. The three stages of examination with quantitative data has been explained. The researcher has adopted a pragmatic approach (sequential explanatory strategy) for the country-level analysis, with a quantitative study followed by a qualitative study which results in richness in data which is the value of this approach. The researcher uses a positivist approach to conduct the regional level comparisons by deriving the results from only the quantitative data. The core elements used in the quantitative and qualitative research design are explained, including the data collection method, sampling strategies and data analysis techniques. A total of 237 surveys and 14 interviews were conducted. The interviews were conducted in two phases: 12 interviews with the participating companies' workforce and 2 with the

industry experts. There were 3 interviews each conducted in all four participating companies. Moreover, the issues with conducting the data collection and the pilot testing procedures are discussed in this chapter. Finally, a detailed account of the ethical considerations is depicted. The next chapter is the first of the three chapters, which present the results and discussions of this research.

# CHAPTER 5

## TALENT MANAGEMENT: REGIONAL AND WITHIN-COUNTRY COMPARISON

### 5.1 Introduction

This chapter assesses the overall workforce experience of TM in selected South Asian hospitality companies. The chapter documents the findings and analysis of the workforces' experiences of talent management through a regional and country-level comparison between foreign and domestic companies. To do so, the researcher has undertaken a quantitative study designed to test the experience of the overall staff on TM. Firstly, the data from two foreign South Asian companies and two domestic South Asian companies have been combined for a regional level comparison. This is followed by a nuanced exploration of TM in a country-level analysis. These results have been tested using interviews in the participating companies to see if it reinforces the survey findings or deviates. This chapter reports the detailed findings and discussions of comparing talent management in: foreign companies in South Asia (FSA) vs domestic companies in South Asia (DSA); foreign company in Sri Lanka (F1) vs domestic company in Sri Lanka (D1); foreign company in India (F2) vs domestic company in India (D2).

## 5.2 Talent strategy and planning

An independent t-test<sup>13</sup> was used to examine the difference in mean between the foreign and domestic companies on the level of acceptance of the respondents to the organisational strategies when it comes to their personal experience. Two sample means (domestic and foreign) are compared for each item to see if they are significantly different. This has been applied to regional level comparison (FSA and DSA) and country-level comparison (F1 & D1; F2 & D2) (Table 5.1). By conducting t-tests, the intention is to find if the variables reject the null hypothesis or fail to reject the null hypothesis<sup>14</sup>.

**Table 5.1:** Talent utilisation (regional and country-level)

To what extent do the respondents agree with the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My skills and talents are used appropriately by the company I work for	FSA	93	3.98	1.102
	DSA	139	3.72	1.015
	F1	51	3.88	1.177
	D1	96	3.71	0.994
	F2	42	4.10	1.008
	D2	43	3.74	1.071

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree

<b>FSA vs DSA</b> t= 1.840; p=0.067	<b>F1 vs D1</b> t= 0.947; p= 0.345	<b>F2 vs D2</b> t= 1.556; p= 0.124
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<sup>13</sup> In all the t-tests, Levene's test for equality of variances was used (Lim and Loh, 1996). This means if the p-value for the f test is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05, it is not significant and there is no violation, and the assumption of the equality of variance is still intact and can be used. However, if the p-value for the f test is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05, then it is significant, and there is a violation, and equal variances cannot be assumed (Kim, 2015).

<sup>14</sup> For all the t-tests, the null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) is that there is no significant difference between foreign and domestic companies. The alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is that the mean has a significant difference between the different types of companies.

### **5.2.1 Regional level comparison**

In the South Asian context (Table 5.1), the significance (p-value) for the t-test is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.067 > 0.05$ ); therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. In other words, the variable does not have a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. However, it is found that the mean score<sup>15</sup> is higher in foreign companies. This indicates that respondents from FSA have a greater belief in the organisational strategy when it comes to nurturing and maintaining talents at work than domestic companies.

### **5.2.2 Country-level comparison**

#### **5.2.2.1 Sri Lankan context**

As depicted in Table 5.1, in the Sri Lankan context, the significance for the t-test is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.345 > 0.05$ ); therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. In other words, the variable does not have a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. However, it is found that the mean score is higher in foreign companies. The results indicate that respondents from the foreign company in Sri Lanka have a greater belief in the organisational strategy when it comes to nurturing and maintaining talents at work than domestic company.

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<sup>15</sup> Strongly disagree: 1 to 1.80  
Disagree: 1.81 to 2.60  
Neither disagree nor agree: 2.61 to 3.40  
Agree: 3.41 to 4.20  
Strongly agree: 4.21 to 5



These results have been tested using interviews to see if it reinforces the above findings. Interviewees were asked to provide their opinion on whether they think they work in a department where they believe their talent lies and how the hotel manages their skills. Harshani (Employee at F1) revealed her desire to change her department if she gets an opportunity to work in a higher hierarchy level:

*“I am doing hotel management final year now. After my studies, I plan to start working in a different department in the same hotel, in the housekeeping department. If I get the chance to work as a supervisor or manager, I want to move to the housekeeping department. There are high performers who have or who will have good achievements in their career, but the rest of the people can't be ignored. So they need to be trained. I don't think the company is properly taking care of the talents. In my opinion, the overall training needs to be changed.”*

Sithara (Supervisor at F1) mentioned her desire to work in a different department where she believes her strength lies in:

*“I feel like I have more capacity to do sales or marketing. I have already spoken to my talent and culture manager. Transferring to a different department is not too easy. We don't have the option for cross-training either. Every staff wants to do it, but the hotel doesn't have that option. If they can provide the training to everyone, it would be really great. Otherwise, they should select the people and train them if they have limited resources. I think this is what the hotel is doing at the moment.”*

Perera (Manager at F1) explained the talent management approach of the company:

*“We have a system which we have discussed with the head of departments'. They should make proposals. We select the talent and create a performance pathway with specific targets within specific time frames. The department heads have to give feedback on the employees' performance level to the HR manager. Once this person is ready and signalled by the head of departments', we have an interview with the HR manager, General Manager and the head of departments.”*

All three responses show that F1 is practising an exclusive TM approach where the focus is on the high performers and training them to move up the ladder (Barron, 2008). As noted by Harshani, there are basic training for all the employees to an extent. However, she mentions the need to have a better approach to taking care of the not so high performers as they will feel neglected, which is why exclusive TM has received little consideration from an ethical and organisational justice standpoint in the business and management literature (Greenberg 1990; O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2019). The negative view of this approach could be due to the potential these practices have on marginalising the workforce leading to disengagement (O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2019). Both Harshani and Sithara mentioned their desire to move into a different department where they believe their talent lies, although both had revealed its difficulty. The findings also indicate the involvement of the Head of Departments (HOD), the HR department and senior management in these processes, which aligns with the study by Minbaeva and Colling (2013), Hatum (2010) and Smith *et al.* (2006), who mentioned the need of more involvement from the CEO's, top management and corporate HR in the strategic TM process.

Moving on to D1, Kumar (Employee at D1) mentioned that it was difficult for him when he started working in the hotel. However, he said that his personality has improved over time and that he feels comfortable in the job role:

*“First of all, this is my first job in hospitality. Yes. At first, I was a bit worried. There were certain things I wasn't sure if I had these talents. For example, speaking with guests, and in general, my personality has improved. I think if the employee is not seen as a talent by the company, then they might start feeling to have been neglected and start to push their team down.”*

Mahela (Supervisor at D1) mentioned his satisfaction with how the company deals with his talent. He mentioned the company strategy in managing talents:

*“For me, I think I have chosen the right path, but if someone thinks that he needs to change their career path, there are opportunities for doing this by contacting the L&D department. There will be a selected number of employees from each department whom the department head will recommend. Because rather than putting everyone into a training programme, HOD knows the performance level of each employee and the potential an individual has.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D1) revealed that the company intends to provide the opportunity for the whole workforce and then identify the high performers and give them further training to go up the ladder:

*“What I believe is that we have to give equal opportunity to everyone. But there are performers, and when you start seeing them, you have to identify them, nurture them and develop them to the next level. And that will also set the tone to everyone else that if you are a performer, you have the opportunity to climb the ladder.”*

Excerpts from Mahela and Somachandra prove that the company practices an exclusive TM approach where high performers are identified and further trained for career progression (Gallardo *et al.*, 2013). Kumar has mentioned the negative aspect of this approach where staff could feel that they have been neglected and can affect the harmony of the workplace. However, Somachandra mentioned that this approach could create healthy competition among the workforce to be in the talent pool. The findings also indicate the involvement of the HR department and the head of departments in these processes. The results from D1 support the literature that the company’s talent pool is not be left to the HR department alone and is also the responsibility of the other senior managers (Smith *et al.*, 2006; Hatum, 2010).

### 5.2.2.2 Indian context

In the Indian context (Table 5.1), the significance for the t-test is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.124 > 0.05$ ); therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. In other words, the variable (workforces' opinion on their talent utilisation) does not have a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. However, foreign company respondents in India have a higher agreement towards their company strategy on skill management than domestic company respondents. This indicates that respondents from foreign company in India have a greater belief in the organisational strategy when it comes to nurturing and maintaining talents at work than domestic company.

Looking at the interview responses from F2, Dev (Supervisor at F2) believes the company appropriately uses his talent. He further acknowledges that everyone gets equal opportunities to progress in their career, and those who exhibit high-performance move up the ladder:

*“I work in an area where my strength lies, and if I want to move within the hotel to a different department, there are options only if I have the special skills which are required for the role. Everyone is given equal opportunity at the initial stage, and those who utilise that opportunity to benefit the organisation should be given a chance to grow to the next level.”*

Jai (Manager at F2) had a similar response. He mentioned that everyone gets equal opportunities to prove their efficiency and that it is up to the managers to decide who their pick is. He revealed that this differentiation does not happen at the recruitment stage; it is solely based on the performance of the staff:

*“I just have to let my line manager know if I want to move into a different department. At the moment, I am supporting two of my subordinates to shift to another department. And I know I will lose them as my employees, but I have to*

*because the company's culture is that, and I can't say no to it. In terms of the company strategy in managing talents, how it works is that they initially give everybody the same training, notice who's shining and not shining and then starts differentiating. So the manager will get up and say next training will be paid, and someone who is willing to and shown potential to do better and wants to grow, wants to get promoted will be given that training. This differentiation doesn't happen at the recruitment stage."*

Similar to the responses from Dev and Jai, Dharmendra (Manager at F2) mentioned that:

*"The company gives opportunity to everyone fairly in terms to get trained and in terms of getting groomed and grow further in their career, but it is an individual's outlook towards achieving what they want to achieve and their goals in their lives. Then it is the line managers or department managers' call to find the star performers."*

The above excerpts suggest that the company is practising an exclusive TM approach where the workforce has been given equal opportunities to showcase their skills. The selection of the talent pool is based on the performance of these individuals. It is also evident that the selection of the talent was not happening at the recruitment stage. This process includes involvement from different managers to spot the talents and provide additional opportunities for them to flourish. This means that there are no structured management training programmes for recruits to progress in their career and that all the employees get equal opportunities at the workplace to showcase their talent. According to the studies by Sparrow *et al.* (2011) and Stahl *et al.* (2012), many organisations use a combination of inclusive and exclusive approaches. However, exclusive conceptualisation seems to be most preferred (Thunnissen *et al.*, 2013). This process can be seen as the closest to having an inclusive approach in the current business and management scenario.

Moving on to D2, Varun (Supervisor at D2) seeks his ideal department where he feels it is suitable for him. He feels confident about attaining this in the future by staying in the company. He mentioned the issues the talent selection process could cause:

*“I am also considering revenue management. I can certainly get into specific training for revenue or would have been able to work with the revenue manager also by contacting my HR or my L&D manager. Everyone is not seen the same in the hotel. Yes, in some ways, there is favouritism as well. There would be cases where people see potential in you and know that you can do better so, you get treated or handled differently. Yes, there is certain special treatment given to people that shouldn't be given if they don't deserve it.”*

Abhay (Supervisor at D2) mentioned that moving to a different department may not be manageable. He further added the role of head of departments in TM as they are the ones who are closely seeing the performance of the employees, not the HR or the senior managers:

*“It is not really easy to move to a different department. A few of my associates have also tried this, but it is not easy. If a person has been working as a steward for many years and he is performing well, rather than making him a supervisor, they recruit someone from outside who finish the studies from the company's educational institutions. If a person is working as a supervisor and wants to become an F&B manager, then HR would need the recommendation of the manager or the director of the same department. So, on the basis of the recommendation, the person will be recruited to a managerial position. Because HR is not aware of how a person is performing, but the managers I am working with within my department see me from close. So their recommendation matters immensely.”*

Raveena (Manager at D2) mentioned the importance of HR, L&D department and HOD in talent management. She revealed that the selection of the talent pool is based on the appraisals and that all the staff get the opportunity:

*“There is HR, L&D and the head of the department, all very important for TM. There are yearly and quarterly appraisals. So, all these people know who is good at what. Also, there is growth in all aspects; you can grow vertically and horizontally, which is something interesting for an Indian company to do. You may be working in a certain department, but you can shift to a different department and grow from there.”*

It is found from the above excerpts that the company is practising an exclusive TM approach with the inclusion of management training programmes as a talent pipeline for University graduates. However, the existing employees were found to be often ignored when it comes to career progression. It is interesting to note the usage of appraisals to identify the workforce strengths and weaknesses. The appraisal process appears to be where the refining is happening towards selecting the high performers. This aligns with the existing literature that high performers are expected to outperform their peers when it comes to skills and competency levels (Lopes, 2016), and high potential employees usually are believed to have the potential to advance at a faster pace whilst demonstrating different needs, motivations, and behaviours than an ordinary employee (Pepermans *et al.*, 2003). However, Varun and Abhay mentioned the difficulty in moving to a different department, although not impossible. The study found the presence of favouritism in the company, which sometimes can affect the selection of talented employees. From the perspective of TM, favouritism creates a situation where a talented individual can be rewarded and recognised based on the previous display of potential even if they stop developing their talent and stop contributing to the company's performance (Adamsen, 2016).

To sum up, all the four companies in the study are predominantly practising an exclusive approach. This adds to the literature where the scope of an inclusive approach is questionable (Wilcox, 2016) due to several factors, one being its cost (Swales *et al.*, 2014). The exclusive approach is considered the favourable TM approach in the hospitality industry with an assortment of individuals who have different reasons for working with different aspirations. However, all the companies except F2 have reported having structured management and supervisory trainee programmes focussing mainly on these selected individuals. This approach indicates adverse effects where a section of the

workforce would start feeling neglected. This aligns with the studies by O'Connor and Crowley-Henry (2019) and Kwon and Jang (2021), who posit that the exclusive TM practice can cause marginalisation, disengagement and could lead to favouritism (Adamsen, 2016). The foreign companies appear to be creating a higher chance for the existing employees to be in a management trainee programme or climb up the ladder based on their performance. This is possibly why the foreign company respondents from both countries have shown higher agreement that the company appropriately uses their skills and talents in the surveys.

### **5.3 Job attractiveness**

An independent t-test was used to understand the difference in mean between the foreign and domestic companies for each variable to understand the level of importance an employee gives to each factor while deciding to work in the current company. The variables tested are high level of uncertainty in the previous industry, social problems in the previous work, high level of interaction with people, improved job opportunities, better pay scale, attractive job profile, relaxed lifestyle, attractive work environment, fast-paced work environment, job performance based on good performance rather than seniority, wanting to make a fresh start in life, and chances of job promotion.

#### **5.3.1 Regional level comparison**

Of the 12 variables used to understand the reasons for working in FSA and DSA (Table 5.2), all the variables reject the null hypothesis, except variable k) wanting to make a fresh start in life, where there is no significant difference between the two types of companies. The rest of the 11 variables have a significant difference between their mean score. Of all



the 12 variables interpreted, all the variables relating to the domestic companies have a higher mean value when compared with those associated with the foreign-owned companies. This means that DSA is more attractive to the respondents than the FSA when it comes to attraction towards the industry.

**Table 5.2: Job attractiveness (South Asian context)**

Level of importance while deciding to work in hospitality	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
High level of uncertainty in previous industry <sup>a)</sup>	FSA	94	2.15	1.164
	DSA	130	3.13	1.377
Social problems in previous work environment <sup>b)</sup>	FSA	94	2.20	1.132
	DSA	129	3.12	1.420
High level of interaction with the people <sup>c)</sup>	FSA	94	1.63	.776
	DSA	140	2.12	1.122
Improved job opportunities <sup>d)</sup>	FSA	94	1.50	.600
	DSA	139	1.87	.923
Better pay scale <sup>e)</sup>	FSA	94	1.61	.736
	DSA	137	1.88	.887
Attractive job profile <sup>f)</sup>	FSA	94	1.60	.645
	DSA	140	1.83	.831
Relaxed lifestyle <sup>g)</sup>	FSA	93	2.08	1.096
	DSA	139	2.47	1.125
Attractive work environment <sup>h)</sup>	FSA	93	1.55	.700
	DSA	140	1.89	.895
Fast-paced work environment <sup>i)</sup>	FSA	93	1.72	.713
	DSA	139	2.06	.894
Job promotion based on good performance rather than seniority <sup>j)</sup>	FSA	94	1.52	.600
	DSA	140	1.89	.942
Wanting to make a fresh start in life <sup>k)</sup>	FSA	94	1.98	1.005
	DSA	138	2.17	1.111
Chances of job promotion <sup>l)</sup>	FSA	94	1.61	.659
	DSA	139	1.87	.850

Note: (1) Very important, (2) Important, (3) Neither important nor unimportant, (4) Less important, (5) Not important<sup>16</sup>

<sup>a)</sup>  $t = -5.766$ ;  $p = 0.000$

<sup>g)</sup>  $t = -2.631$ ;  $p = 0.009$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t = -5.390$ ;  $p = 0.000$

<sup>h)</sup>  $t = -3.129$ ;  $p = 0.002$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t = -3.712$ ;  $p = 0.000$

<sup>i)</sup>  $t = -3.109$ ;  $p = 0.002$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t = -3.430$ ;  $p = 0.001$

<sup>j)</sup>  $t = -3.389$ ;  $p = 0.001$

<sup>e)</sup>  $t = -2.428$ ;  $p = 0.016$

<sup>k)</sup>  $t = -1.314$ ;  $p = 0.190$

<sup>f)</sup>  $t = -2.293$ ;  $p = 0.023$

<sup>l)</sup>  $t = -2.540$ ;  $p = 0.012$

<sup>16</sup> Very important: 1 to 1.80

Important: 1.81 to 2.60

Neither important nor unimportant: 2.61 to 3.40

Less important: 3.41 to 4.20

Not important: 4.21 to 5

## **5.3.2 Country-level comparison**

### **5.3.2.1 Sri Lankan context**

Of the 12 variables used to understand the reasons for the working in F1 and D1 (Table 5.3), all the variables reject the null hypothesis, except variables e) wanting to make a fresh start in life, g) relaxed lifestyle, k) wishing to make a fresh start in life, where there is no significant difference between the two types of companies. Of all the 12 variables interpreted, all the variables relating to the domestic companies have higher mean values when compared with those associated with the foreign-owned companies. This means that D1 is more attractive to the respondents than the F1 when it comes to attraction towards the industry.

**Table 5.3: Job attractiveness (Sri Lankan context)**

Level of importance while deciding to work in hospitality	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
High level of uncertainty in previous industry <sup>a)</sup>	F1	51	2.57	1.237
	D1	96	3.10	1.395
Social problems in previous work environment <sup>b)</sup>	F1	51	2.53	1.222
	D1	95	3.15	1.458
High level of interaction with the people <sup>c)</sup>	F1	51	1.57	.806
	D1	97	2.19	1.149
Improved job opportunities <sup>d)</sup>	F1	51	1.33	.476
	D1	97	1.92	.943
Better pay scale <sup>e)</sup>	F1	51	1.57	.781
	D1	97	1.85	.870
Attractive job profile <sup>f)</sup>	F1	51	1.49	.543
	D1	97	1.89	.828
Relaxed lifestyle <sup>g)</sup>	F1	50	2.14	1.229
	D1	97	2.39	1.142
Attractive work environment <sup>h)</sup>	F1	50	1.44	.611
	D1	97	1.88	.881
Fast-paced work environment <sup>i)</sup>	F1	51	1.67	.766
	D1	96	2.08	.902
Job promotion based on good performance rather than seniority <sup>j)</sup>	F1	51	1.47	.612
	D1	97	1.97	1.005
Wanting to make a fresh start in life <sup>k)</sup>	F1	51	2.12	1.143
	D1	96	2.15	1.076
Chances of job promotion <sup>l)</sup>	F1	51	1.59	.779
	D1	97	1.85	.846

Note: (1) Very important, (2) Important, (3) Neither important nor unimportant, (4) Less important, (5) Not important

<sup>a)</sup> t= -2.302; p= 0.023

<sup>g)</sup> t= -1.234 p= 0.219

<sup>b)</sup> t= -2.718; p= 0.008

<sup>h)</sup> t= -3.132; p= 0.002

<sup>c)</sup> t= -3.416; p= 0.001

<sup>i)</sup> t= -2.804; p=0.006

<sup>d)</sup> t= -4.151; p= 0.000

<sup>j)</sup> t= -3.239; p=0.001

<sup>e)</sup> t= -1.903; p= 0.059

<sup>k)</sup> t= -0.148; p=0.883

<sup>f)</sup> t= -3.086; p= 0.002

<sup>l)</sup> t= -1.805; p=0.073

There were few surprising responses regarding the industry image in the Sri Lankan context. From the interview responses on employee attraction towards the Sri Lankan hospitality industry, the most prominent issue was gender diversity.

A female respondent Harshani (Employee at F1), recalled:

*“As a trainee, I worked in a different hotel company before starting here. There were some training especially for the female staff as there are not many females working in the industry. This is to increase the morale of the female staff with training every month. Some female staff are coming to the industry and withdrawing very soon because they will not be able to deal with the stress, especially with balancing family life and work. So the company train on how we can balance work and life. In Sri Lanka, culturally, hospitality jobs are for male staff. The community also has a different view on hospitality jobs.”*

Perera (Manager at F1) mentioned two issues relating to employee attraction in Sri Lanka.

One is the shortage of employees in the supervisory position and below, and the second is the shortage of female staff in the hospitality industry:

*“Well, I am constantly communicating with the local authorities like the vocational training centres. Apart from that nearly 20-30 hotel schools. Firstly, we have a heavy vacuum in Colombo now, mostly at the employee level, especially supervisory and below. Secondly, for the last 15 years, I have been trying to have more female employees coming into the hotel industry. The main reason is that most female staff from rural areas. The families have a very negative feeling when you are sending their daughters to work in hotels. They feel that it is a workplace that can tarnish their name, culture, and behaviours. Therefore, I used to go to girls schools so many times to promote the hotel industry. Female representation is very low in the hotel industry in Sri Lanka.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D1) echoed a similar view and that the negative image is affecting the industry immensely in attracting female staff:

*“Sri Lanka is a country with a 52% female population, the female representation in our industry is very low due to various reasons. The biggest reason for the female population to be not interested in the hotel industry is our working hours and that we sometimes finish the shift late at night. The other thing is social acceptance for females working in the hotel industry, especially in Sri Lanka. We still have old laws in our country, like a female cannot serve liquor behind the bar. The other thing is that you are exposed to so many people the moment you work in a hotel. In older days, there is a myth that good girls don't work in hotels. It is a thing in the past, but some people still have that mindset. To overcome this, the hotel companies have to be more creative by providing proper accommodation for female staff and having a proper transport system for them to go back home. Because for the industry, it is essential to have female representation. If you look at F&B, where we need a female representation of at least 30-40 per cent. We don't have that at the moment purely because of the working hours.”*

Aravinda (Industry expert in Sri Lanka) has acknowledged the industry issue of workforce shortage Sri Lankan hospitality sector is expecting with having new entrants in the coming years:

*“With a number of hotels in the pipeline, there will be a serious shortage of workforce in the coming years.”*

The lack of female representation is the most critical issue within the Sri Lankan hospitality industry from the excerpts above. It is reported that there is a shortage of staff at every hierarchical level and is expected to increase with having new foreign entrants in the coming years. Sri Lanka has the highest literacy rate for both male and female populations in the South Asian region (World Bank, 2019). Yet, there is approximately 6.6% of unemployed females in the country according to the 2018 data, which is far more than the unemployed male population of 2.8% (Sheikh and Loney, 2018). Sri Lanka is only behind Afghanistan regarding the total unemployed female population in the sub-region. Harshani mentioned the negative image of the hospitality industry in Sri Lanka. She recalled her initial experience working in the industry where there was specific training for the female staff to increase their morale and balance work and life. Both Harshani and Perera have mentioned the industry’s negative image in Sri Lanka, which is the barrier towards the lack of female candidates.

All the respondents have related this to the country’s national culture, where working in the hospitality industry would tarnish a woman’s name, culture and behaviour and that these jobs would affect their work-life balance. Altogether the respondents mentioned the factors that cause female underrepresentation as odd working hours and late-night shifts (Santero *et al.*, 2015), lack of proper transportation facilities (Peshave and Gupta, 2021),

lack of social acceptance and lack of work-life balance (Deery and Jago, 2015), government laws when it comes to specific job roles (e.g. bartender).

### **5.3.2.2 Indian context**

Of the 12 variables used to understand the reasons for the working in F2 and D2 (Table 5.4), nine variables failed to reject the null hypothesis, and three variables a) high level of uncertainty in the previous industry, b) social problems in the previous work environment, g) relaxed lifestyle, rejected the null hypothesis which implies that there is a significant difference between the two types of companies. Of all the 12 variables interpreted, all the variables relating to the domestic companies have higher mean values except variable f) attractive job profiles where respondents from the foreign company have a higher mean score. This means that D2 is more attractive to the respondents than the F2 when it comes to attraction towards the industry.

**Table 5.4: Job attractiveness (Indian context)**

Level of importance while deciding to join the company:	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
High level of uncertainty in previous industry <sup>a)</sup>	F1	43	1.65	1.237
	D1	34	3.21	1.395
Social problems in previous work environment <sup>b)</sup>	F1	43	1.81	1.222
	D1	34	3.06	1.458
High level of interaction with the people <sup>c)</sup>	F1	43	1.70	.806
	D1	43	1.98	1.149
Improved job opportunities <sup>d)</sup>	F1	43	1.70	.476
	D1	42	1.76	.943
Better pay scale <sup>e)</sup>	F1	43	1.65	.781
	D1	40	1.95	.870
Attractive job profile <sup>f)</sup>	F1	43	1.72	.543
	D1	43	1.70	.828
Relaxed lifestyle <sup>g)</sup>	F1	43	2.00	1.229
	D1	42	2.64	1.142
Attractive work environment <sup>h)</sup>	F1	43	1.67	.611
	D1	43	1.93	.881
Fast-paced work environment <sup>i)</sup>	F1	42	1.79	.766
	D1	43	2.02	.902
Job promotion based on good performance rather than seniority <sup>j)</sup>	F1	43	1.58	.612
	D1	43	1.72	1.005
Wanting to make a fresh start in life <sup>k)</sup>	F1	43	1.81	1.143
	D1	42	2.21	1.076
Chances of job promotion <sup>l)</sup>	F1	43	1.63	.779
	D1	42	1.93	.846

Note: (1) Very important, (2) Important, (3) Neither important nor unimportant, (4) Less important, (5) Not important

<sup>a)</sup> t= -5.895; p= 0.000

<sup>g)</sup> t= -2.952 p= 0.004

<sup>b)</sup> t= -4.719; p= 0.000

<sup>h)</sup> t= -1.378; p= 0.172

<sup>c)</sup> t= -1.417 p= 0.160

<sup>i)</sup> t= -1.410; p=0.162

<sup>d)</sup> t= -0.379; p= 0.706

<sup>j)</sup> t= -0.948; p=0.001

<sup>e)</sup> t= -1.671; p= 0.099

<sup>k)</sup> t= -1.817; p=0.075

<sup>f)</sup> t= 0.137; p= 0.891

<sup>l)</sup> t= -1.976; p=0.054

From the Indian context, all the three interview respondents had positive comments on on the image of the hospitality industry in India apart from working for long and odd hours. Varun (Supervisor at D2) revealed that:



*“Still, in certain parts of India, women are deemed to be housewives and are not expected to be in college or work. But in the hotel I work at, the female associates I work with are better placed than the men are. They are certainly given special treatment than the men, which I think is the right thing to do as society gives so many perks to men. Out of the 100 students who did hotel management with me, 80 were males, and only 20 were females.”*

Vishwanath (Industry expert in India) has acknowledged that there is a huge demand at the bottom of the pyramid in the hospitality industry in India:

*“There are more entry-level jobs today as compared to supervisors or managers. There are lesser jobs when you move up the ladder. The industry needs more people at the entry point, especially female staff, and that is probably why the domestic companies in specific are looking at acquiring the people from the underprivileged backgrounds and harnessing talents at that level.”*

In India, the shortage is mainly in entry-level positions, and domestic companies specifically are attracting and training individuals from underprivileged backgrounds to fill this gap. Varun has mentioned the practices in certain parts of India where women are not allowed to work or study. However, he mentioned that the female staff are placed better than men in his workplace. However, surprisingly he mentioned that out of 100 students who did a hotel management course with him, 80% were men, and the disparity is evident there. The researcher also experienced this when he visited a hotel school in India; the male to female ratio was drastically uneven. The above account shows a negative perception of the hospitality industry, with a section of the society believing that the industry is not fit for women. With one of the worst literacy rates in the sub-region and at the verge of the demographic dividend, this will be a challenge for the industry and the country. The data from 2018 shows that the unemployment percentage was the same for the male and female population in India at 5.3% (World Bank, 2019).

This adds to the literature on the attraction of female candidates to the hospitality industry, as it is minimal (Deery and Jago, 2015; Iverson, 2000; Segovia-Perez *et al.*, 2018; Remington and Kitterlin-Lynch, 2018; Calinaud, Kokkranikal and Gebbels, 2021). It is found from the current study that in the South Asian context, the primary challenge in attracting the female staff is the outlook of the general public on the industry, general outlook of the people on women working, government laws restricting female staff to work in certain departments, social acceptance, work-life balance, work timings, and transportation facilities. The inclusion of more female staff is reported to benefit all the companies in South Asia. In the South Asian context, the general perception of the people is still age-old. This is directly linked to the region's culture, where the opportunities in the past were scarce for women. The companies and the governments are incorporating policies and practices that encourage more and more female workforce to work in the hospitality industry. However, there are still laws in Sri Lanka that do not allow women to serve alcohol and work as bartenders. The study found these as barriers to increasing female representation in hospitality organisations.

## **5.4 Talent acquisition**

### **5.4.1 Importance of prior work experience during acquisition**

Questions were asked to understand the importance given for prior work experience by both types of companies in acquiring talents. First, a chi-square test has been conducted to understand if there is a significant difference between company type and employee acquisition process. The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) here is that there is no significant difference between company type and employee acquisition process. The alternative hypothesis is

that there is a significant difference. A cross-tabulation will report if prior work experience has a role in employee acquisition for FSA and DSA; F1 and D1; F2 and D2.

#### **5.4.1.1 Regional level comparison**

For the regional level comparison, the significance (p-value) for the Pearson Chi-square test (Table 5.6) is lesser than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), thus the null hypothesis can be rejected. Therefore there is a significant difference between company type and acquisition process. In other words, the acquisition process is entirely dependent on the the different South Asian foreign companies (foreign and domestic). Cramer's V was used to measure the association (Table 5.6). The value of Cramer's V is reported as 0.239. As the value is between 0.2 and 0.3, there is a moderate relationship between the two variables. Out of the 94 respondents from FSA who responded to the question (Table 5.5), 68 (72.3%) reported that they had prior experience in the hospitality industry before joining the hotel and 26 (27.7%) responded that they did not. Out of 141 respondents from DSA (Table 5.5), 68 (48.2%) reported that they had prior experience in the hospitality industry before joining the hotel and 73 (51.8%) responded that they did not. It is evident that FSA gives more importance to prior work experience when acquiring staff than DSA.

**Table 5.5:** Prior work experience (South Asian context)

			Did you work in the hospitality industry before joining the hotel?		Total
			Yes	No	
Which company?	FSA	Count	68	26	94
		Expected Count	54.4	39.6	94.0
		% within which company?	72.3%	27.7%	100.0%
	DSA	Count	68	73	141
		Expected Count	81.6	59.4	141.0
		% within which company?	48.2%	51.8%	100.0%
Total		Count	136	99	235
		Expected Count	136.0	99.0	235.0
		% within which company?	57.9%	42.1%	100.0%

**Table 5.6:** Prior work experience-Chi-Square Tests and Cramer's V (South Asia)

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Approximate Significance
Pearson Chi-Square	13.451 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000			
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	12.480	1	.000			
Likelihood Ratio	13.774	1	.000	.000	.000	
Fisher's Exact Test						
Linear-by-Linear assoc.	13.394	1	.000			
Phi	.239					.000
Cramer's V	.239					.000
N of Valid Cases	235					
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 39.60.						
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table						

#### 5.4.1.2 Country-level comparison

##### 5.4.1.2.1 Sri Lankan context

For Sri Lankan companies (Table 5.8), the significance (p-value) for the Pearson Chi-square test is lesser than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), therefore the null hypothesis can be rejected. This indicated that there is a significant difference between company type

and acquisition process. In other words, the acquisition process is entirely dependent on the different Sri Lankan companies. Cramer's V was used to measure the association (Table 5.8). The value of Cramer's V is reported as 0.316. As the value is above 0.3, there is a strong relationship between the two variables. Out of the 50 respondents from F1 who responded to the question (Table 5.7), 44 (88%) reported that they had prior experience in the hospitality industry before joining the hotel and 6 (12%) responded that they did not. Out of 97 respondents from D1 (Table 5.7), 55 (56.7%) reported that they had prior experience in the hospitality industry before joining the hotel and 42 (43.3%) responded that they did not. This indicates that the domestic company in Sri Lanka employs a significantly higher number of staff with no prior experience in the hospitality industry than the foreign company.

**Table 5.7:** Prior work experience (Sri Lankan context)

			Did you work in the hospitality industry before joining the hotel?		Total
			Yes	No	
Which company?	F1	Count	44	6	50
		Expected Count	33.7	16.3	50.0
		% within Which company?	88.0%	12.0%	100.0%
D1		Count	55	42	97
		Expected Count	65.3	31.7	97.0
		% within Which company?	56.7%	43.3%	100.0%
Total		Count	99	48	147
		Expected Count	99.0	48.0	147.0
		% within Which company?	67.3%	32.7%	100.0%

**Table 5.8:** Prior work experience-Chi-Square tests and Cramer’s V (Sri Lankan context)

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Approximate Significance
Pearson Chi-Square	14.697 <sup>a</sup>	1	.000			
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	13.309	1	.000			
Likelihood Ratio	16.303	1	.000			
Fisher's Exact Test				.000	.000	
Linear-by-Linear Assoc.	14.597	1	.000			
Phi	.316					.000
Cramer’s V	.316					.000
N of Valid Cases	147					
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 16.33.						
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table						

Comparing the survey results with the interview responses, Harshani (Employee at F1) recalled that the reason she was not asked for prior experience whilst recruitment is because she applied for a trainee position:

*“I joined as a trainee waitress, which doesn’t require any prior experience. So I gained the skills from working here, and now I am working here as a permanent employee.”*

Meanwhile, Sithara (Supervisor at F1) got recruited into the company without any prior experience in the industry at a supervisory level position. She believes it could be because she held a degree in business management:

*“I actually wanted to get into the industry; many of the hotels in Colombo didn’t accept me because I didn’t have any prior experience. Only my current hotel hired me and as a supervisor. I had prior experience in sales and marketing as I have already done a business management degree maybe that could be the reason. But I can see that when they hire for a certain job role, they look at previous experience.”*

Perera (Manager at F1) mentioned the balance they try to have when recruiting people with experience and fresher's in the industry:

*“Previous experience might be considered if hiring for a specific area of work; for example, if it a managerial position. Looking at the attrition rate, we should have a buffer. If there is a need for 10 room attendants, out of that, we may take five people who have the experience and balance 5 we will fill up with freshers.”*

Aravinda (Industry expert at Sri Lanka) mentioned the practice of the new foreign entrants in the Sri Lankan market where the experienced staff from the existing companies were attracted towards them (new entrants) when they (staff) were offered higher pay than they currently receive:

*“There is a very simple reason – Why waste time training new to industry individuals when you can poach experienced staff from the other hotels? This was evident when an Asian brand entered Colombo and took 99% of their employees from the existing firms with 20% higher salaries. This is not usually seen in other foreign brands who have been in the country for many years. They recruit like other domestic companies from outside the industry.”*

It is found from the above excerpts that previous experience counts for specific job roles or certain positions. Even though there are variances relating to skill requirements across organisations in the selection stage (Walsh and Taylor, 2007), previous employment and transferable skills are consistently acknowledged by scholars as crucial (Scott and Revis, 2008). However, the interview responses indicate that the company does not necessarily look for work experience whilst hiring supervisory and ordinary employees. There is a balance the company looks for when recruiting employees with previous experience and fresher's. For instance, Sithara started in a supervisory position in the front office department without previous experience in the industry. This has been described by Green (2020) as the common approach in acquiring employees by selecting the candidates with the potential to learn the job. However, 88% of the respondents

mentioned that they had prior experience in the hospitality industry whilst joining the organisation. This has validated Aravinda's (Industry expert in Sri Lanka) comments that new foreign entrants tend to acquire staff from the existing companies by paying higher salaries. It appears that these companies prioritise the previous experience of the staff, especially when they are starting off the business in a new territory. This aligns with the literature on foreign entrants' practices and their adverse effect on the domestic firms where the foreign companies can increase the payscale using the funds generated elsewhere, maybe in a developed country (Agrawal, 2005; Aitken and Harrison, 1999; Kurtishi-Kastrati, 2013).

Moving on to responses from D1, Kumar (Employee at D1) recalled:

*"I was able to get this job because I started as a trainee. Right now, I am not a trainee. It actually depends on the job role as well. If you are applying for a higher position as a supervisor or a manager, you might need 2 or 3 years of work experience."*

Kumar (Supervisor at D1) revealed that prior experience only counts when applying for specific positions or managerial positions:

*"It all depends on the specific requirements of the positions. Maybe for a managerial role, yes I think you have an advantage if you previously worked in the same industry."*

Somachandra (Manager at D1) mentioned the necessity of prior experience whilst hiring a managerial level staff. Although he revealed the general industry attitude in the Sri Lankan context whilst hiring is by looking at a candidate with the right attitude:

*"I think most of the hospitality managers will look at the attitude more than the experience because if you have the right attitude, then it is easier for them to adapt and learn. Now, if you are hiring a person for higher management, then of course experience counts."*



In summary, the respondents from D1 mentioned that prior work experience is not a criterion when employing supervisory and ordinary level employees. 56.7% of the respondents in the survey mentioned that they had prior experience in the hospitality industry whilst joining the organisation. This matches with the survey results that domestic company employ a significantly higher number of staff without prior work experience than the foreign company. However, for managerial level jobs, it appears to be a requirement. Otherwise, the candidate with the right attitude is selected more than considering years of experience. As Carless (2005) suggests, assessing applicants' perceived fit can recognise their potential job-related attitude during the recruitment stage.

#### **5.4.1.2.2 Indian context**

For Indian companies (Table 5.10), the significance (p-value) for the Pearson Chi-square test is lesser than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.018 < 0.05$ ), therefore the null hypothesis can be rejected. Thus, there is a significant difference between company type and acquisition process. In other words, the acquisition process is entirely dependent on the different Indian companies. Cramer's V was used to measure the association (Table 5.10). The value of Cramer's V is reported as 0.253. As the value is between 0.2 and 0.3, there is a moderate relationship between the two variables. Out of the 44 respondents from F2 who responded to the question (Table 5.9), 24 (54.5%) reported that they had prior experience in the hospitality industry before joining the hotel and 20 (45.5%) responded that they did not. Out of 44 respondents from D2 (Table 5.9), 13 (29.5%) reported that they had prior experience in the hospitality industry before joining the hotel and 31 (70.5%) responded that they did not. The study found that foreign company in India give more importance to prior work experience when acquiring staff than domestic company.

**Table 5.9:** Prior work experience (Indian context)

			Did you work in the hospitality industry before joining the hotel?		Total
			Yes	No	
Which company?	F2	Count	24	20	44
		Expected Count	18.5	25.5	44.0
		% within Which company?	54.5%	45.5%	100.0%
	D2	Count	13	31	44
		Expected Count	18.5	25.5	44.0
		% within Which company?	29.5%	70.5%	100.0%
Total		Count	37	51	88
		Expected Count	37.0	51.0	88.0
		% within Which company?	42.0%	58.0%	100.0%

**Table 5.10:** Prior work experience-Chi-square tests and Cramer's V (Indian context)

	Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (2-sided)	Exact Sig. (1-sided)	Approx. Sig.
Pearson Chi-Square	5.643 <sup>a</sup>	1	.018			
Continuity Correction <sup>b</sup>	4.663	1	.031			
Likelihood Ratio	5.712	1	.017			
Fisher's Exact Test				.030	.015	
Linear-by-Linear Association	5.579	1	.018			
Phi	.253					.018
Cramer's V	.253					.018
N of Valid Cases	88					
a. 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 18.50.						
b. Computed only for a 2x2 table						

Turning now on to the interview responses from F2, Dev (Supervisor at F2) mentioned the importance of prior experience if the recruitment is for specialised departments:

*“If it is a specialised department, for example, revenue management, finance or sales, it matters; otherwise it doesn't.”*

According to Dharmendra (Manager at F2), prior experience and educational qualifications matter. He added the need for hands-on experience more than an educational qualification when working in the hospitality industry:

*“It depends on what he has learned, which organisation has he worked at, how has he grown, and what has he gained as an individual. If you come out from an institute and don’t know anything about doing the job, then it is a problem. It really depends on the practical experience.”*

From D2, Varun (Supervisor at D2) took a career route which is the most common route to employment in hotel companies in India. He recalled:

*“So the company I work in has part ownership in the college I have studied and partly owned by the local government body. So the students expect that the company would select a major chunk of students because we have been bred with the company values and ethics in a certain fashion from the very start. A student also would expect the company to choose them because that is what they were aiming for; otherwise, they could have gone to a different institute. I joined the company straight away after college. In my college, we get nine months of hands-on training before we go on to the job. That will give you an upper hand. But I have seen people join without any prior experience as well. The company also recruits people from rural backgrounds and give training to them, and it partly comes under CSR activity. In turn, it helps a fellow associate who is coming from a rural or underprivileged background to be loyal to the brand.”*

Raveena (Manager at D2) mentioned the necessity of looking a job role when deciding a candidate need prior experience or not. However, she mentioned the importance of educational qualification during recruitment:

*“It depends on what position you are hiring. But yes, there are basic requirements like you need a college degree. Yes, I think the L&D team is very much in touch with the educational institutions in terms of recruiting people or put them in management training programmes or as front line employees.”*

Vishwanath (Industry expert in India) mentioned that the most common way to acquire staff is by approaching hotel schools. However, the domestic companies also recruit staff

from underprivileged backgrounds and train them to work in the industry. He suggested that the cost associated with this approach is higher:

*“Many companies try different models, but I think the time tested one is that they approach hotel schools. It could be a strategy to recruit employees with no experience in hospitality and train these raw talents. But let’s not forget that it costs a lot of money to train people and find them to leave the organisation. Many companies today are looking for people from underprivileged backgrounds so that there will be loyalty created and that they stay with the company for a longer period. This could be one way of looking at it.”*

The study found that foreign company in India recruit more staff with prior experience from the above scripts. Even though the domestic company does not emphasise prior experience, they are receiving graduates from their institutes with hands-on internship experiences, which will fill the gap for them. 68.9% of the respondents from D2 reported the hospitality industry as their first option when searching for a job. Interestingly, even after attaining a hospitality degree, most employees are recruited as management or supervisory trainee. This aligns with Johns and McKechnie’s (1995) views that hospitality education is problematic, providing graduates with a good breadth of theoretical knowledge but lack certain skills to operate effectively in the industry (Scott and Revis, 2008). However, it is interesting to note that the domestic company intentionally recruit employees from underprivileged rural backgrounds as part of their CSR activity. This practice could eventually benefit the company itself by gaining the loyalty of these employees. Greene (2020) has suggested this approach to be cheaper for the companies as they can pay these employees starting rates. Although this could cost them additional expenses as the newly hired employee would require an investment in their training and may not meet performance standards for some time (Greene, 2020). This matches the survey findings, which emphasise that the domestic company recruits more staff without prior experience.

## **5.4.2 Importance of educational background during acquisition**

Tests have been conducted to understand whether the educational background is a criterion in acquisition. This has been assessed on a regional and country-level basis.

### **5.4.2.1 Regional level comparison**

When looking at the formal educational qualification in FSA (Table 5.11), 93.7% of respondents have some level of formal educational qualification, and 6.3% of respondents do not have any formal qualification. 56.8% of respondents have qualifications above degree level, and 36.9% have a diploma and below qualifications. On the other hand, from DSA, 97.2% of respondents have some level of formal educational qualification, and 2.8% of respondents do not have any formal qualification. 40.9% of respondents have qualifications above degree level, and 56.3% have a diploma and below qualifications. The study found that foreign companies in South Asia have higher per cent of employees with a degree and above qualification. It is important to note that in the DSA, there are higher per cent of staff who have basic school qualifications and diplomas, whereas, in FSA, high per cent of staff have degrees or above qualifications compared to DSA.

### **5.4.2.2 Country-level comparison**

#### **5.4.2.2.1 Sri Lankan context**

When looking at the formal educational qualification in F1 (Table 5.11), 90.1% of respondents have some level of formal educational qualification, and 9.9% of respondents do not have any formal qualification. 35.2% of respondents have qualifications above degree level, and 54.9% have a diploma and below qualifications. On the other hand,

from D1, 95.9% of respondents have some level of formal educational qualification, and 4.1% of respondents do not have any formal qualification. 21.6% of respondents have qualifications above degree level, and 74.3% have a diploma and below qualifications. It appears that both F1 and D1 intend to acquire employees with formal qualifications in which F1 has a higher percentage of employees with a degree and above qualifications. It is important to note that majority of the respondents in the Sri Lankan hotels have diploma qualifications (above 40%) more than a degree and masters.

Looking into the interview responses, Harshani (Employee at F1) mentioned the need for higher educational qualification to get a promotion:

*“Yes, they check on the education to a certain level to start as a trainee, maybe not a degree, but a basic level of education is required. To get a promotion, you will need a higher educational qualification. I am doing my hotel management final year now.”*

Sithara (Supervisor at F1) mentioned that she did not have any educational qualification based on hospitality; however, she has a business management degree:

*“I don't think so. I haven't studied anything regarding hospitality, but I have a business management degree. Most of the people are coming to the industry after learning nothing regarding hospitality.”*

Perera (Manager at F1) argued that it is essential to look at what is available in the market. He acknowledged that only a basic level of education is needed to work in hospitality up to a certain level. He added that, with the higher educational qualification, the chances of getting promoted could be higher:

*“In the lower level, the only thing you need is skill level. Education level will not really matter. If the person has the basic education to understand what is right and wrong and basic English communication skills, then it is fine. In Sri Lanka, we have to rely on whatever is available in the market. For certain categories such as electricians, technicians we have to look at their skill level. We also welcome candidates with a basic educational level, such as a lower school qualification. If you have a qualification from a hotel school, it is more than enough to become a manager with some experience.”*

In summary, according to Perera, the company strategy is based on the current market in Sri Lanka. It is evident from the excerpts that only an elementary level educational qualification is necessary to start working in the company as trainee or employee level positions. This matches the survey findings, which reported that 90.1% of the workforce have some level of formal educational qualification. This relates to the high literacy rate of Sri Lanka (Work Bank, 2019). It is found from the excerpts that higher educational degrees enhance the chances of an individual getting promoted. However, more than higher educational qualifications, industry experience counts in the Sri Lankan hospitality sector regarding job promotions based on the current market. Sithara started working in the industry in a supervisory level position without prior work experience or any qualification related to hospitality. However, she held a business management degree qualification. Therefore a higher educational degree could potentially give the employees a head start. It is also based on the current situation in Sri Lanka, where the number of people opting for a higher degree is relatively less. This is evident from the survey reports, where only 35.2% of the respondents had degree-level qualifications and above. The majority of the workforce have a diploma qualification (41.2%) which appears to be the most commonly opted qualification.

From D1, Kumar (Employee at D1) mentioned that a higher education degree might not be the only criteria when recruiting someone in the company:

*“I did an advanced diploma in hotel management. Just with a higher educational degree, you may not be recruited.”*

However, Mahela (Supervisor at D1) argued that if someone has qualifications specifically in hospitality, there is a higher chance for that person to get recruited:

*“If you have a hospitality education, then you do have a higher chance of getting in. If you have two candidates, one with a qualification related to hospitality and the other with a general business management degree, the company will select the person who has a hospitality management degree.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D2) acknowledged that higher educational qualification could be helpful in order to have career growth in the industry:

*“Higher educational qualification will help when you want to go up the ladder. So it is important if anyone is looking for a career in the industry.”*

To sum up, the interview responses from D1 reveal that basic educational qualification is the only criteria to work for the company in an entry-level position. This matches the survey result, where 74.3% of the employees have a diploma and below qualification. Only 21.6% of respondents reported having qualifications above degree level. The majority of the workforce have a diploma qualification (48.5%) which appears to be the most commonly opted qualification. However, the findings indicated that it is important to have higher educational qualifications to have career growth within the industry. The results also suggest that someone with a hospitality management qualification has the upper hand during recruitment stages over other degree holders.



#### 5.4.2.2.2 Indian context

When looking at the formal educational qualification in F2 (Table 5.11), 97.7% of respondents have some level of formal educational qualification, and 2.3% of respondents do not have any formal qualification. 84.1% of respondents have qualifications above degree level, and 15.9% have a diploma and below qualification. On the other hand, from D2, 100% of respondents have some level of formal educational qualifications. 82.2% of respondents have qualifications above degree level, and 17.8% have a diploma and below qualifications. It is evident that both F2 and D2 have employees with a higher formal qualification in which D2 has a slightly higher percentage of employees with a degree and above qualifications. It is important to note that more than 80% of the respondents in both Indian hotels have qualifications above degree level.

Cross-checking the survey results from F2, Dev (Supervisor at F2) mentioned the importance of educational qualifications in joining the company:

*“I believe a bachelor degree in hospitality management is sufficient to grow up the ladder in the hospitality industry. If you are in operations and have a bachelor’s in hotel management and if you compare that with someone who has a master’s in hotel management, I don’t think there is much of a difference. If you do any other professional qualification like an MBA or a post-graduation degree in a specific field like culinary arts or revenue management, then you have an edge.”*

Jai (Manager at F2) had a similar opinion on this. He believes a hotel management degree is sufficient in working in his company for most of the job roles:

*“A hotel management degree is enough to be working in most departments in a hotel, including revenue management. Of course, there are departments such as the finance department, like a specialised department, where you can’t work after completing a hotel management degree for these you need specialised qualifications.”*

Dharmendra (Manager at F2) mentioned that prior experience of 10 years in the industry could overcome the lack of educational qualification; however, he emphasises that to get that first ten years of experience, individuals might have to attain an educational qualification:

*“I think education is very important and where you get your credentials from. Again looking at the foundation, if you have work experience of ten years behind you, education does not become that important. But up until ten years of your career, it is very important where you graduated from because that will decide the first ten years of your work life. If we are looking for a finance department employee, it is more of a knowledge (accounting) which is very specific. But for all the other job roles, they can have any other educational background. Having said that, the minimum requirement we are looking for is a hotel management graduate. Some domestic companies own hotel schools in India, and they give priority to people who graduate from these hotel schools, and they grow faster within the company as well.”*

From the above excerpts, it is found that educational qualification is a necessity to work in F2. However, as mentioned by Dharmendra, they welcome candidates who are from other disciplines and not just hospitality. He added that the minimum requirement they look for is a hospitality management degree. In summary, the company values educational qualification, especially within the hospitality discipline, when hiring an individual. This matches with the survey findings that 81.8% of the respondents from the company reported that they have a degree or above qualification. Meanwhile, 15.9% reported having diploma qualifications, and only 2.3% reported to have no formal qualifications. This approach of acquiring employees by selecting fully qualified individuals was described to have adverse effects from a company perspective. This acquisition process can make the workforce demand higher salaries and benefits at the recruitment stage or even after working there for a few years (Greene, 2020).

From D2, Varun (Supervisor at D2) has argued that hospitality educational qualification is not mandatory for a career in the industry. He mentioned that someone without a hospitality qualification or who has a qualification from other disciplines would have a similar starting point. The difference he mentioned is the overall exposure and having hands-on experience whilst studying the degree:

*“I have a hotel management degree from the institution partly funded by my hotel company. I have seen a lot of people who have started at the same level as I have, and they are also supervisors, and they have different educational backgrounds. I think the difference would be the kind of culture, grooming, and hands-on-trainings whilst studying. Even if I had a degree, I had to be trained. After graduation, there are campus placements where different companies acquire the best talents from the lot. But the company doesn’t select a lot of students. So for my batch, we were 160 students, only 30 students were selected by this company. One of the foreign companies picked the majority of the students but the priority was given to my company who partially funds the institution.”*

On the other hand, Abhay (Supervisor at D2) mentioned the general practice in the company as acquiring employees from their partnered hotel management institute and putting them on management or supervisory trainee programmes. He emphasised the ease in which these individuals can go up the ladder compared to someone who worked in the company for many years:

*“Our company has partnerships with the educational institutes where there are hotel management programmes and the graduates will get special training programmes later on after their course completion. They get special training for management training or supervisory level training. I think for these associates, career growth becomes easier. So because of this, the associates who are already working in the hotel for many years are suffering a lot. This is the reason someone who is working in a base level without a hospitality qualification is taking a lot of years to get promoted.”*

Raveena (Manager at D2) mentioned the importance given by her company for higher qualifications in hospitality during recruitment. However, she also mentioned that there

are examples where people without a hospitality background have risen their ranks and become senior managers:

*“A degree or a diploma in hospitality is generally required for you to work at any level in my company. But there are a lot of people who have risen through the ranks also without any higher education. A degree is still required, but you are still a raw talent even if you have a degree. There are initiatives where you pick individuals from hotel schools, and there are programmes to nurture them. But I know a number of people who are not from a hospitality background, they have a degree from some other background and are working in hotels, and are in senior leadership positions.”*

The above excerpts indicate that the company acquired part of the candidates for the management trainee programmes from their partnered hotel schools after their graduation. Varun mentioned that one of the top foreign companies had acquired the majority of the students to enrol on their management training programme. This relates to the exclusive practice where graduating students are given a tailored opportunity to progress in their careers. However, Abhay mentioned the disparity in this approach and how this creates a barrier for the existing employees without a hospitality qualification for career progression. It is found from the surveys that 82.2% of the respondents had a degree and above qualifications. This matches with the interview response. A higher education degree has become a norm when hiring individuals in a domestic company. It is also interesting to note the company funded hotel school graduates' upper hand in the management trainee programmes.

This section adds to the literature on the relevance of higher educational qualifications in the hospitality industry (Purcell and Quinn, 1996; Raybould and Wilkins, 2005). It is found that the requirement for educational qualification is directly linked to the market situation. Looking at the Sri Lankan context, the supply of candidates with higher education is limited; therefore, they will have to acquire what is available in the labour

market. On the other hand, in the Indian context, there is a high volume of supply in the supervisory and managerial level positions, with the majority of the employees with higher educational qualifications. There is a high demand in ordinary employee positions where none of these graduates would want to stay as ordinary employees for a longer period. This relates to the data from the World Bank (2019), where 15.3% of the total labour force with advanced qualifications is unemployed in India. This is reported at 7.1% in Sri Lanka.

**Table 5.11:** Formal education

<i>Level of education completed</i>	<i>FSA</i>	<i>DSA</i>	<i>F1</i>	<i>D1</i>	<i>F2</i>	<i>D2</i>
Completed school	7 (7.4%)	28 (19.7%)	7 (13%)	25 (25.8%)	0 (0%)	3 (6.7%)
Diploma	28 (29.5%)	52 (36.6%)	21 (41.2%)	47 (48.5%)	7 (15.9%)	5 (11.1%)
Degree	35 (36.8%)	42 (29.6%)	9 (17.6%)	11 (11.3%)	26 (59.1%)	31 (68.9%)
Masters	19 (20%)	16 (11.3%)	9 (17.6%)	10 (10.3%)	10 (22.7%)	6 (13.3%)
No qualification	6 (6.3%)	4 (2.8%)	5 (9.9 %)	4 (4.1%)	1 (2.3%)	0 (0%)
<b>Total</b>	<b>95</b>	<b>142</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>97</b>	<b>44</b>	<b>45</b>

Questions were asked in the surveys to understand the percentage of employees who have acquired skill development qualifications from different institutions. When looking at the Sri Lankan context, it is evident that formal educational qualification is not a necessity to work in the hotel industry in Sri Lanka due to the shortage in the supply of candidates with higher educational qualifications. This could be why most of the respondents from Sri Lankan companies have skill development qualifications/training from different institutions, including the company they work for (Table 5.12). When looking at the Indian context, a surprisingly high number of the workforce have a degree qualification and above. This could be the reason why very few staff in the Indian companies acquire additional skill development qualifications/training (Table 5.12).

**Table 5.12: Skill development qualifications**

<i>Level of education completed</i>	<i>FSA</i>	<i>DSA</i>	<i>F1</i>	<i>D1</i>	<i>F2</i>	<i>D2</i>
Skill development course/training programme/qualification by the company I work for	21 (22.1%)	49 (34.5%)	21 (41.2%)	40 (41.2%)	0	9 (20.5%)
Skill development course/training programme/qualification privately (even in other company)	20 (21.1%)	32 (22.5%)	20 (39.2%)	28 (28.9%)	0	4 (9.1%)
Skill development course/training programme/qualification by NGO	7 (7.4%)	11 (7.7%)	6 (11.8%)	11 (11.3%)	1 (2.3%)	0
Skill development course/training programme/qualification by state or central government	13 (13.7)	20 (14.1%)	13 (25.5%)	16 (16.5%)	0	4 (9.1%)

## 5.5 Performance management

Questions were asked on performance appraisals to understand the importance each of the companies gives to reviewing the performance of the employees and the agile nature of it. Two sample means (domestic and foreign) are compared for each variable to see if they are significantly different. This has been assessed on a regional and country-level basis (Table 5.13).

**Table 5.13: Performance management (regional and country-level)**

Thinking about the assessment programmes at the hotel, what do you think about the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I am receiving performance feedback from different managers <sup>a)</sup>	FSA	94	3.77	.988
	DSA	142	3.49	1.043
	F1	50	3.78	.996
	D1	97	3.52	.980
	F2	44	3.75	.991
	D2	45	3.42	1.177
Upward feedback from employees to managers is valued in my company <sup>b)</sup>	FSA	95	3.87	1.003
	DSA	142	3.61	1.084
	F1	51	3.90	.985
	D1	97	3.59	1.028
	F2	44	3.84	1.033
	D2	45	3.67	1.206
Formal/informal feedback between co-workers is a must in the company's culture <sup>c)</sup>	FSA	95	3.98	1.041
	DSA	140	3.79	.985
	F1	51	3.96	.979
	D1	96	3.74	.920
	F2	44	4.00	1.121
	D2	44	3.91	1.117
My performance is regularly assessed and I am given feedback frequently throughout the year using technology or in person <sup>d)</sup>	FSA	95	3.83	1.058
	DSA	142	3.68	1.034
	F1	51	3.82	1.053
	D1	97	3.69	.939
	F2	44	3.84	1.077
	D2	45	3.67	1.225

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree.

**FSA vs DSA**

<sup>a)</sup>  $t= 2.084$ ;  $p= 0.038$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t= 1.871$ ;  $p= 0.063$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t= 1.388$ ;  $p= 0.166$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t= 1.073$ ;  $p= 0.284$

**F1 vs D1**

<sup>a)</sup>  $t= 1.542$ ;  $p= 0.125$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t= 1.793$ ;  $p= 0.075$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t= 1.357$ ;  $p= 0.177$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t= 0.784$ ;  $p= 0.434$

**F2 vs D2**

<sup>a)</sup>  $t= 1.422$ ;  $p= 0.159$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t= 0.731$ ;  $p= 0.467$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t= 0.381$ ;  $p= 0.704$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t= 0.712$ ;  $p= 0.478$

**5.5.1 Regional level comparison**

When it comes to feedback from different managers (variable a), there is a significant difference in mean between different types of companies, and a majority of the respondents from the foreign company have a higher agreement to it. Apart from that, for the other three variables, foreign company respondents showed higher agreement to it, but no significant difference. Therefore, it can be asserted that respondents from FSA reported higher agreement about the feedback culture in their workplace (Table 5.13).

## 5.5.2 Country-level comparison

### 5.5.2.1 Sri Lankan context

None of the variables has a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in Sri Lanka. Interestingly, respondents from the foreign company in Sri Lanka have shown higher agreement for all four variables (Table 5.13). The majority of the respondents from both F1 and D1 reported that they are receiving multi-directional feedback. However, respondents from foreign company in Sri Lanka reported having a higher agreement about the feedback culture in their workplace. The interviews explain these results in more depth. According to Sithara (Supervisor at F1):

*“We can share our suggestions in the feedback, and we can also share and receive the feedback directly with the talent and culture manager as well.”*

Perera (Manager at F1) claimed that his company was the first in the Sri Lankan hospitality context to introduce new dimensions to feedback system by introducing a 360-degree feedback system:

*“The appraisal systems in my company is far more advanced than the appraisal policies of the domestic companies. We started a 360-degree appraisals system two years ago. At that time majority of the domestic companies were not practising a 360-degree appraisal system. These programmes create more transparency between the employer and the employee. For example, if you take the appraisal system, we do it annually and have a review every month.”*

From D1, Kumar (Employee at D1) recalled his experience of the most recent performance feedback procedure:

*“We had feedback recently. So my boss called us individually and mentioned her assessment of my performance. But before my boss mentioned what she thinks, she asked me what I think about my performance. Then after she gave her feedback on what she thinks about my performance.”*



Mahela (Supervisor at D1) acknowledged the 360-degree feedback culture in the company:

*“When it comes to constructive criticisms and feedback, I think the hotel welcomes it. And they give me feedback about my performance as well. This is something I really like and the reason why I like to work here as well.”*

From Somachandra’s (Manager at D1) comments, it is evident that a 360-degree feedback system is relatively a new approach to the company. He further mentioned that there need to have a calculated approach to providing feedback; otherwise, it will not be beneficial:

*“We have various ways of providing feedback. One is 360-degree feedback. Also, we have to be careful when we introduce these practices because sometimes we tend to overdo them.”*

The excerpts above show that the foreign companies brought the 360-degree feedback system to the Sri Lankan context. It is evident that the domestic company has adapted this approach; however, Somachandra has raised concerns about it not going over the board with the feedback system. It is found that the domestic company has recently picked up this culture and that it is still in the refining stage. This can be seen from the survey responses as well, where a higher number of respondents from F1 have mentioned having a 360-degree feedback culture in the company compared to D1. A 2017 survey by Deloitte shows that 79% of global executives rated agile performance management as a high organisational priority (Cappelli and Tavis, 2018).

#### **5.5.2.2 Indian context**

None of the variables has a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in India. The majority of respondents from both F2 and D2 reported that they are receiving multi-directional feedback. However, respondents from the foreign

company in India reported having higher agreement about the feedback culture in their workplace (Table 5.13).

The interviews can further explain these results. Dev (Supervisor at F2) revealed that there is a feedback culture within the company; however, he mentioned that it is only conducted once a year:

*“Once a year, we have an activity where we have to take a survey, and we have to rate in terms of how satisfied we are. I believe it is very important to have this because I believe that the company should know what your employees think or need. At the end of the day, it is the employees who are working for you and only if they are happy, then the company succeeds.”*

Jai (Manager at F2) mentioned that there is yearly feedback. Moreover, feedback is provided by the respective HOD, which is designed to monitor personal development in terms of career growth:

*“I can be honest with my feedback but need to see whom I am speaking to. Apart from that, the company follows a very interesting procedure. Apart from the yearly appraisal, my managers have a quarterly check-in with me to follow up on two things. Firstly, he checks how I am doing my job. Secondly, a follow up on my career plans, to see if I am progressing with my own development.”*

Dharmendra (Manager at F2) feels that not every employee in the hotel would require 360-degree feedback. He feels only someone who manages a team would need 360-degree feedback:

*“I think it is important to get 360, and I think it is important only to include a certain level of staff. I wouldn't want to give an outsourced employee or someone at the base level 360-degree feedback because the priority in life would be very different for that person. Whereas when you grow to managerial roles, 360 becomes more important. For someone who is managing a team, 360-degree feedback is very important.”*

The above excerpts suggest that the company has a 360-degree feedback culture for managers and above. Apart from that, there is an annual performance review for the overall workforce once a year. Dev (supervisory level staff) is getting the chance to give feedback about their work experience once every year. However, Jai (Managerial staff) is getting to provide the feedback once a year and also, he gets personalised feedback from their respective managers. Performance measurement and performance appraisals are seen as an essential part of the overall performance management of an organisation (Aguinis, 2009; Otley, 1999). It plays a significant role in making the employees feel that their training needs and development are being taken seriously by an organisation (Dhanalakshmi and Gurunathan, 2014). Therefore, it is essential to include the overall workforce into the appraisal system to enhance the overall performance of a company. These findings suggest that a well-structured performance appraisal for the overall workforce could be incorporated into the company strategies so the supervisory and ordinary employees do not feel left out.

Moving on to the responses from D2, Varun (Supervisor at D2) mentioned that there is a quarterly feedback system where the employees are required to fill a survey form about their experiences. However, he noted no organised feedback system where the staff get personalised feedback from the respective HOD's or the HR manager. He mentioned that the line managers would provide feedback although there is no upward feedback system.

*“Quarterly, there is a feedback survey to be filled where you say what went right and what went wrong, what could be improved, and any feedback/comments. Apart from this, there is no system where the HR or L&D manager ask you for your feedback about the managers. But managers do give feedback to the employees. Like recently, my line managers got feedback from their managers, and it is just one way. There is no upward feedback system in the company.”*

Abhay (Supervisor at D2) mentioned that the feedback is not frequently taken or given in the company. According to Raveena (Manager at D2):

*“The structure in the company is very open, people are free to speak whatever and everyone listens to it. It is very transparent. The employees are free to give feedback any time, but formal feedbacks are taken quarterly.”*

From the above excerpts, it can be understood that there is a quarterly feedback system. It appears that the feedbacks are given casually by the managers to the staff and that there is no organised system for this. It also indicates that there is no upward feedback system where the workforce can provide feedback about their respective managers. However, it appears that quarterly surveys are the only way to do this. The findings suggest that there should be a structured appraisal strategy where the focus should be on setting employees' performance targets, conducting appraisals, giving feedback, and assessing employees' developmental needs (CIPD, 2009). This matches with the survey findings where a higher number of respondents from F2 have mentioned having a 360-degree feedback culture in the company compared to D2.

This section lends support to the literature on performance appraisals (Horng and Lin, 2013; Deery and Jago, 2003; Nath and Raheja, 2001; Eyoun *et al.*, 2020). It is found that foreign companies brought in the idea of performance appraisals and 360-degree feedback specifically to the Sri Lankan and Indian context. As noted by Pyrrillis (2011), there is currently a search among the companies for innovative approaches rather than traditional annual performance reviews that provide meaningful feedback and improve the employee performance. The system appears to be still in the refining stage in the domestic firms, which is evident from the surveys and the interviews. However, the foreign company in India does not include the supervisory and ordinary level staff in their personalised appraisal system. The only way of a performance review for these staff is

through an annual survey. This is different in the foreign company in Sri Lanka, where both the supervisory level employees and ordinary staff are getting personalised feedback.

## **5.6 Learning and development**

### **5.6.1 Training and development programmes**

Questions were asked on training and development programmes to understand how much importance each company gives to them by exploring the employee experiences. Two sample means (domestic and foreign) are compared for each variable to see if they are significantly different.

#### **5.6.1.1 Regional level comparison**

When it comes to accessing online learning materials (variable c), the majority of the respondents from foreign companies have a higher agreement to it and have a significant difference between the two types of companies. For the other five variables, foreign company respondents showed higher agreement to it but with no significant difference (Table 5.14). Respondents from both FSA and DSA reported that they are receiving adequate training. However, the study found that FSA gives more priority to the learning and development programmes than DSA.

**Table 5.14: Training and development programmes (South Asian context)**

Thinking about the training and development programmes at the hotel what do you think about the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Regular development programmes are a must in a company's policy <sup>a)</sup>	FSA	95	4.15	.967
	DSA	142	3.91	1.097
I am encouraged by the company to obtain further academic/professional qualifications <sup>b)</sup>	FSA	95	3.65	1.089
	DSA	141	3.51	1.099
There are online learning materials that employees can access on demand <sup>c)</sup>	FSA	94	4.09	1.033
	DSA	141	3.74	1.093
I have the option of attending additional trainings and development programmes which will be sponsored by the company <sup>d)</sup>	FSA	95	3.77	1.134
	DSA	141	3.58	1.109
Training is available for my specific job role <sup>e)</sup>	FSA	95	3.91	1.112
	DSA	140	3.71	1.021
My company encourages me to join a professional association which facilitates training and development opportunities <sup>f)</sup>	FSA	94	3.56	1.083
	DSA	140	3.45	1.088

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree.

<sup>a)</sup>  $t = 2.208$ ;  $p = 0.029$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t = -0.158$ ;  $p = 0.875$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t = 1.993$ ;  $p = 0.048$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t = -0.408$ ;  $p = 0.684$

<sup>e)</sup>  $t = 0.399$ ;  $p = 0.691$

<sup>f)</sup>  $t = -0.281$ ;  $p = 0.779$

### 5.6.1.2 Country-level comparison

#### 5.6.1.2.1 Sri Lankan context

When it comes to the availability of online learning materials (variable c) and regular development programmes (variable a), the majority of the respondents from the foreign company have a higher agreement to it, and there is a significant difference. Regarding the remaining four variables, the respondents from the domestic company have a higher agreement to 3 variables (encouragement to acquire further educational qualification, options for additional training, encouragement to join external training associations). For

the remaining one variable (training for specific job roles), foreign company respondents reported having a higher agreement to it (Table 5.15).

Therefore, it is found that respondents from both F1 and D1 are receiving adequate training. It is found that respondents from foreign company in Sri Lanka have a higher agreement about 3 of the variables, and respondents from the domestic company have a higher agreement with the other 3 variables. The interviews explain these results in more depth.

**Table 5.15:** Training and development programmes (Sri Lankan context)

Thinking about the training and development programmes at the hotel what do you think about the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Regular development programmes are a must in a company's policy <sup>a)</sup>	F1	51	4.27	1.002
	D1	97	3.88	1.063
I am encouraged by the company to obtain further academic/professional qualifications <sup>b)</sup>	F1	51	3.57	1.153
	D1	97	3.60	1.027
There are online learning materials that employees can access on demand <sup>c)</sup>	F1	50	4.06	1.058
	D1	97	3.70	1.022
I have the option of attending additional trainings and development programmes which will be sponsored by the company <sup>d)</sup>	F1	51	3.53	1.155
	D1	97	3.61	1.095
Training is available for my specific job role <sup>e)</sup>	F1	51	3.76	1.210
	D1	97	3.69	.993
My company encourages me to join a professional association which facilitates training and development opportunities <sup>f)</sup>	F1	50	3.40	1.143
	D1	97	3.45	1.071

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree.

<sup>a)</sup>  $t= 2.208$ ;  $p= 0.029$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t= -0.158$ ;  $p= 0.875$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t= 1.993$ ;  $p= 0.048$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t= -0.408$ ;  $p= 0.684$

<sup>e)</sup>  $t= 0.399$ ;  $p= 0.691$

<sup>f)</sup>  $t= -0.281$ ;  $p= 0.779$

There were some interesting comments and views from the interview respondents regarding training and development programmes. Harshani (Employee at F1) mentioned that even though the company provides her with operational training, she is not receiving the necessary training to move up to a managerial position. She acknowledged the need to have improvements in the employee development programmes:

*“I don’t have a professional qualification from the hotel. Yes, we are getting training on the operations side. For me personally, I am looking to learn management level skills. I cannot just read the book and learn management skills; I need to do it practically. I am not getting that opportunity here. I got opportunities to learn things from my immediate manager because he is a very educated person. The company is not giving me the opportunity to learn what I want. The company has to improve their development process.”*

Sithara (Supervisor at F1) acknowledged that there are training programmes in the company. However, she mentioned that there are additional training programmes which are only available for certain staff and not for everyone:

*“We have training sessions once a while. I never got additional training opportunities. But there are selected few people and give them training for their succession. So only some of them have got it. External training is allowed, but we have to pay ourselves to do it. I find these training programmes useful.”*

Perera (Manager at F1) acknowledged the availability of basic operational training programmes. However, the additional training is only for staff who are high performers. He also mentioned the opportunity for acquiring additional educational qualifications, although it is available only for staff above middle management:

*“We have our operational training programmes. We have a joint programme with certain universities from outside SL where the courses are taken virtually. This is to develop the skill level of the middle management and employees whose job role requires a certain skill level, but not very low-level employees. Yes, we encourage the people to join the external training associations, and we sponsor certain people not a big volume but a small volume. We have also sent certain high performing employees to task force assignments.”*



In summary, from the above excerpts, there are basic operational training offered to all the levels of staff. Both Sithara and Perera have verified this. As noted by Harshani, ordinary level employees are neglected from getting additional training and the option of having additional qualifications. On the other hand, Sithara (from the Supervisory level) mentioned that she never got the opportunity for additional training and that only a few selected individuals received the additional training. Perera noted that the additional training is only available for selected high performers, and additional qualifications are only offered to staff above middle management. Both Harshani and Sithara mentioned their disappointment in not receiving additional training/qualifications. This is a negative of the exclusive TM approach where most of the workforce feels neglected not being in a talent pool who receives additional training to further move up in their career.

From D1, Kumar (Employee at D1) has acknowledged that he is receiving training from the company. However, he mentioned that on-the-job training is much more efficient than external training:

*“I am currently enrolled on a training qualification programme at the hotel. This training is specifically for the job role I am doing. But the training which they give you in the hotel is more personalised. When you go for training and classes, yes, you get the knowledge, but in the hotel training, you get the actual experience.”*

Mahela (Supervisor at D1) mentioned that the company training is intended to develop the existing knowledge of the workforce. He further mentioned the importance of more on-the-job training than external training as the external training might take away a lot of time from the workforce considering the high working hours in the hotel industry. He further mentioned the need to receive external training for career progression:

*“In the hotel, the main focus is to develop what you know and add more knowledge. The hotel training programmes are important because if you are working in a hotel, you have very little time to do something external which also applies to the external training. There is an external training happening now as well for some of the associates. There are also individuals from other companies enrolled in this training. Yes, I do think you need to get external training as well if you want to have a career progression.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D1) mentioned that the company prioritises vocational training within the company. The additional training or the external training are allocated for the high performers, which in some cases are sponsored as well:

*“The training programmes we have are vocational, so the employees get a vocational training certificate, and getting trained by a renowned hotel company is as good as getting a certificate from an institute. We normally provide adequate training for team members to succeed and progress in their careers if you have identified them as star performers. If someone feels like they need to take part in additional training outside the company, they can certainly do it. In certain cases, we also allocate our management team members to go for additional training, which the company pays.”*

From the responses, it is evident that the company prioritises on-the-job training and vocational training. The additional training/external training are allocated for the high performing individuals. However, it appears from the excerpts that even though there is training in the company, there is a need to have external training that is most often not sponsored by the company. These findings reaffirm that the company practices an exclusive TM approach.

#### **5.6.1.2.2 Indian context**

When it comes to receiving additional training and development programmes (variable d), the majority of the respondents from the foreign company have a higher agreement to it, and there is a significant difference between the two companies. For the rest five variables (regular development programmes, encouragement to acquire further

educational qualification, accessing online learning materials, training for specific job roles, encouragement to join external training associations), foreign company respondents showed higher agreement to it but no significant difference (Table 5.16). It is found that respondents from foreign company in India have a higher agreement to all the 6 variables on learning and development opportunities than domestic company. This implies that F2 gives more priority to the learning and development programmes compared to D2.

**Table 5.16:** Learning and development (Indian context)

Thinking about the training and development programmes at the hotel what do you think about the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Regular development programmes are a must in a company's policy <sup>a)</sup>	F2	44	4.00	.915
	D2	45	3.98	1.177
I am encouraged by the company to obtain further academic/professional qualifications <sup>b)</sup>	F2	44	3.75	1.104
	D2	44	3.32	1.235
There are online learning materials that employees can access on demand <sup>c)</sup>	F2	44	4.11	1.017
	D2	44	3.82	1.244
I have the option of attending additional trainings and development programmes which will be sponsored by the company <sup>d)</sup>	F2	44	4.05	1.056
	D2	44	3.52	1.151
Training is available for my specific job role <sup>e)</sup>	F2	44	4.07	.974
	D2	43	3.74	1.093
My company encourages me to join a professional association which facilitates training and development opportunities <sup>f)</sup>	F2	44	3.75	.991
	D2	43	3.44	1.140

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree.

<sup>a)</sup>  $t = 0.099$ ;  $p = 0.921$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t = 1.793$ ;  $p = 0.077$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t = 1.220$ ;  $p = 0.226$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t = 2.220$ ;  $p = 0.029$

<sup>e)</sup>  $t = 1.460$ ;  $p = 0.148$

<sup>f)</sup>  $t = 1.344$ ;  $p = 0.183$

From the interviews, Dev (Supervisor at F2) acknowledged that he is receiving regular training and additional training. He mentioned the importance of on-the-job training and learning from the managers:

*“Once you get in a role, you get to learn more about the job from the immediate managers. Plus, you have training once in a while. The external training is useful because employees and managers from other hotel companies come to these, so we get to interact with a larger audience.”*

Jai (Manager at F2) also acknowledged that he is receiving regular training. However, he mentioned that he is not receiving additional training and that these are only for selected individuals. From Dharmendra’s (Manager at F2) comments, it can be understood that the company has general training for the whole workforce plus additional training for the selected high performers:

*“Yes, there is general training for the whole workforce. Additionally, the company gives the staff time off to get external training, sometimes paid and sometimes not. The paid one is usually for the highly performing individuals.”*

From the excerpts, it appears that the company is practising an exclusive TM approach in which general training and development programmes are available for the whole workforce. Additional training is offered to only a few individuals who are high performers.

Moving on to the responses from D2, Varun (Supervisor at D2) mentioned that there are development programmes offered in the company. He mentioned the importance of aligning the company goals and the personal goal of an individual when it comes to training and development:

*“If a company hosts a development programme, it will be conducted based on the certain things that the company wants you to improve. So, in turn, people will also be able to meet their specifications or goals. There are development programmes in our company. I would say development programmes are necessary and should be there for people who want to grow. By participating in the development programmes within the company, the employees will be able to align his/her goals with the company’s perspective as well.”*

Abhay (Supervisor at D2) mentioned (refer to Section 5.4.2.2.2) that some existing employees feel neglected due to the segregation in the management trainee programmes. He further noted the importance of having similar training and development programmes for the whole workforce. Additionally, he mentioned the encouragement the company gives when it comes to external training:

*“I think the company should conduct the training programmes for all the associates who work within the hotel. I have been to the wine training externally, which was paid for by the company. So external training is always appreciated by the company.”*

Raveena (Manager at D2) acknowledged that regular training is happening in the company. She further mentioned the importance of accessing external training where it can provide knowledge and experience which cannot be acquired internally:

*“Training is done regularly. Sometimes external training can give you something which you don’t get internally; that’s where it becomes important.”*

To sum up, it is found that respondents from D2 are receiving regular training. As noted by Varun, it is crucial to align between the company goals and an individual’s goals when it comes to training and development. It appears that the company is practising an exclusive TM approach. However, it is different from the other three companies in the study. The talent pool selection starts from recruitment for this particular company, where candidates are chosen from the college after graduation to be in a management trainee programme (refer to Section 5.4.2.2.2). This talent pipeline creates more opportunities for them to progress in their career with rigorous training and development programmes for 1-2 years. As noted by Abhay, the negligence of the existing workforce is a negative side of this, as acquiring talent from outside could lead to ignoring or neglecting talents from within.

This section adds to the literature on exclusive talent management and organisational justice theory (Adams, 1965; Greenberg and Baron, 2003; Greenberg, 1990). It appears that equal opportunities are given to the employees at all the participating companies in terms of basic training. However, the respondents reported feeling neglected if they do not get into the talent pool and get additional career progression training. It appears that more than the selection from within the company, when an individual is selected just after graduation to be in a management or supervisory trainee programme, the existing staff feels even more neglected (see section 5.4.2.2.2). This adds to the existing knowledge of the drawback of the exclusive TM approach. As noted by various researchers, exclusive TM can create inequality gaps among the workers in organisations, which results in major ethical problems that would lead to adverse reactions from the segregated workforce (Anlesinya and Amponsah-Tawiah, 2020; Bjorkman *et al.*, 2013; Pfeffer, 2001).

### **5.6.2 Training after recruitment**

Questions were asked about the training after recruitment and how effective it was to make the employees engaged at work. Two sample means (domestic and foreign) are compared for each variable to see if they are significantly different. This has been assessed on a regional and country-level (Table 5.17).

**Table 5.17: Recruitment training (regional and country-level)**

Thinking about this training after recruitment, to what extent do you agree with the following statements? -	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Workplace training helped me to understand the expectations from me <sup>a)</sup>	FSA	95	3.88	1.100
	DSA	140	3.79	1.044
	F1	51	3.98	1.122
	D1	95	3.79	.977
	F2	44	3.77	1.075
	D2	45	3.78	1.185
Workplace training helped me to have my own decision-making capacity <sup>b)</sup>	FSA	95	3.84	1.133
	DSA	142	3.81	1.078
	F1	51	3.78	1.137
	D1	97	3.80	.986
	F2	44	3.91	1.137
	D2	45	3.82	1.267
Workplace training helped me to understand the company objectives as well as the future goals <sup>c)</sup>	FSA	95	3.98	1.148
	DSA	142	3.93	1.102
	F1	51	4.00	1.183
	D1	97	4.01	.963
	F2	44	3.95	1.120
	D2	45	3.76	1.351
Workplace training helped me to have an understanding of the other departments in the hotel <sup>d)</sup>	FSA	95	3.95	1.105
	DSA	141	3.86	1.119
	F1	51	4.02	1.122
	D1	96	3.85	1.036
	F2	44	3.86	1.091
	D2	45	3.87	1.290

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree.

**FSA vs DSA**

<sup>a)</sup> t= 0.694; p= 0.488

<sup>b)</sup> t= 0.221; p= 0.825

<sup>c)</sup> t= 0.332; p= 0.740

<sup>d)</sup> t= 0.604; p= 0.547

**F1 vs D1**

<sup>a)</sup> t= 1.068; p= 0.287

<sup>b)</sup> t= -0.110; p= 0.912

<sup>c)</sup> t= -0.057; p= 0.955

<sup>d)</sup> t= 0.895; p= 0.372

**F2 vs D2**

<sup>a)</sup> t= -0.021; p= 0.983

<sup>b)</sup> t= -0.340; p= 0.735

<sup>c)</sup> t= -0.757; p= 0.451

<sup>d)</sup> t= -0.012; p= 0.990

**5.6.2.1 Regional level comparison**

None of the variables has a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in South Asia (Table 5.17). It is found that respondents from both FSA and DSA benefited from workplace training during recruitment. The study found that respondents from FSA tend to have a higher agreement that workplace training helped

them understand the company expectations from them (variable a) and understand the other hotel departments (variable d). The respondents from FSA also have a higher agreement that workplace training helped them improve their decision-making capacity (variable b) and understand the company objectives and goals (variable c).

### **5.6.2.2 Country-level comparison**

#### **5.6.2.2.1 Sri Lankan context**

None of the variables has a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in Sri Lanka. (Table 5.17). It is found that respondents from both F1 and D1 benefited from workplace training during recruitment. The study found that respondents from F1 tend to have a higher agreement that workplace training helped them understand the company expectations from them (variable a) and understand the other hotel departments (variable d). At the same time, respondents from D1 have a higher agreement that workplace training helped them improve their decision-making capacity (variable b) and understand the company objectives and goals (variable c).

#### **5.6.2.2.2 Indian context**

None of the variables has a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in India. (Table 5.17). It is found that respondents from both F2 and D2 benefited from workplace training during recruitment. The study found that respondents from D2 tend to have a higher agreement that workplace training helped them understand the company expectations from them (variable a) and understand the other hotel



departments (variable d). At the same time, respondents from F2 have a higher agreement that workplace training helped them improve their decision-making capacity (variable b) and understand the company objectives and goals (variable c).

## **5.7 Retention**

### **5.7.1 Regional level comparison**

Questions were asked on how important each of the variables is to the respondents in order to retain them in the companies. Apart from variable d, none of the other variables has a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in South Asia (Table 5.18). In other words, the majority of the respondents from the foreign companies mentioned that they would stay in the company even if they do not enjoy the working environment if the payment covers their expenses. DSA has a higher percentage of respondents who a) would leave the company for a job in the hospitality industry with a better salary. FSA has a higher percentage of respondents who b) would leave the job if they find a better opportunity elsewhere in a different industry and e) would leave the company if they find a job where they can spend more time with family and friends. Both FSA and DSA have an equal percentage of respondents who would like to find a job with fixed working hours.

**Table 5.18: Turnover intentions (South Asian context)**

Thinking about your future, do you agree or disagree?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I will leave the job if I find a hospitality job with better salary elsewhere <sup>a)</sup>	FSA	95	3.51	1.138
	DSA	142	3.54	1.089
I will leave the job if I find a better opportunity elsewhere in a different industry <sup>b)</sup>	FSA	95	3.29	1.228
	DSA	142	3.27	1.129
I would like to find a job with fixed working hours <sup>c)</sup>	FSA	95	3.16	1.206
	DSA	140	3.16	1.084
I don't mind not enjoying my work if it covers my expenses <sup>d)</sup>	FSA	95	3.00	1.305
	DSA	140	2.64	1.206
I would like to find a job where I can spend more time with family and friends <sup>e)</sup>	FSA	94	3.49	1.152
	DSA	141	3.43	1.023

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree.

<sup>a)</sup>  $t = -0.252$ ;  $p = 0.802$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t = 0.175$ ;  $p = 0.861$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t = -0.042$ ;  $p = 0.966$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t = 2.155$ ;  $p = 0.032$

<sup>e)</sup>  $t = 0.396$ ;  $p = 0.693$

## 5.7.2 Country-level comparison

### 5.7.2.1 Sri Lankan context

Apart from variable b, none of the other variables has a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in Sri Lanka (Table 5.19). In other words, the majority of the respondents from the domestic company mentioned that they would leave the job if they find a better opportunity elsewhere in a different industry. For all the other four variables, the domestic company in Sri Lanka has a higher mean score. Therefore, the domestic company in Sri Lanka has a higher percentage of respondents who a) would leave the company for a job in the hospitality industry with a better salary, c) would like to find a job with fixed working hours, d) would stay with the company even if they don't mind enjoying the work as long as it covers their expenses, e) would leave the company if they find a job where they can spend more time with family and friends. The findings

indicate that the retention strategies of the foreign company are found to be more effective than the domestic company in the Sri Lankan context.

**Table 5.19:** Turnover intentions (Sri Lankan context)

Thinking about your future, do you agree or disagree?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I will leave the job if I find a hospitality job with better salary elsewhere <sup>a)</sup>	F1	51	3.29	1.270
	D1	97	3.68	.985
I will leave the job if I find a better opportunity elsewhere in a different industry <sup>b)</sup>	F1	51	2.90	1.285
	D1	97	3.39	1.036
I would like to find a job with fixed working hours <sup>c)</sup>	F1	51	2.61	1.185
	D1	96	3.25	1.026
I don't mind not enjoying my work if it covers my expenses <sup>d)</sup>	F1	51	2.57	1.330
	D1	96	2.60	1.174
I would like to find a job where I can spend more time with family and friends <sup>e)</sup>	F1	51	3.10	1.188
	D1	96	3.43	.960

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree.

<sup>a)</sup>  $t = -1.894$ ;  $p = 0.042$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t = -2.350$ ;  $p = 0.021$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t = -3.421$ ;  $p = 0.001$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t = -0.167$ ;  $p = 0.868$

<sup>e)</sup>  $t = -1.819$ ;  $p = 0.071$

The interviews explain these results in more depth. Harshani (Employee at F1) emphasise the importance of knowing the reason if an employee resigns from a company. She mentions that the primary reason for turnover is the negative company atmosphere and dissatisfaction in the workforce benefits:

*“I think if someone gives a resignation, it doesn't mean the managers shouldn't ask him the reasons for it. The managers need to know the reasons why they are leaving. If the managers can provide a solution, then the hotel can retain the staff. People rarely leave the job for obtaining education or personal reasons, generally in Sri Lanka. Most people leave the job because they are not happy with the company surrounding and benefits.”*

Sithara (Supervisor at F1) mentioned the need to focus on career progression, appraisals, salary increment and social events:

*“They should mostly focus on the career progression. People are always looking into their appraisals and promotions. When we have appraisals, we also expect that we will get a promotion. Promotion and salary increment would be the main thing. Other than that, social events also matter.”*

Perera (Manager at F1) has recalled what the management had been currently practising to retain the employees:

*“We are trying our best to retain the talents. We focus on the benefits, financial and non-financial benefits, also by creating a career development path. We have given extra benefits and payments to certain star employees to retain them within the hotel. We have provided an extraordinary pay scale and benefits to keep some talents. For the rest, we have tried to give a good level of compensations and benefits to them.”*

It is evident from the response from Harshani and Sithara that a positive company atmosphere, satisfaction in the company benefits, career progression, appraisals, salary increment and social events are some of the solutions for retaining employees (Saks, 2006; Kichuk, Brown and Ladkin, 2019; Jung and Yoon, 2015). According to Harshani, the company must know why an employee resigns and take necessary actions to keep them or take preventive measures. As noted by Perera, the company has given the focus on career development to retain the employees generally. As noted by Yang *et al.* (2012) and Cappelli (2008), many employees left their organisation for another because they were offered advancement in their career or were offered jobs with better employment conditions. Perera further mentioned that the company had gone one step ahead to retain the staff identified as ‘talent’ by increasing their pay scale and benefits.

From D1, Kumar (Employee at D1) mentioned the importance of recognition and career progression in retaining the staff. He further acknowledged the habit of the younger generation of moving to different workplaces in a short period. According to him, this practice does not benefit them as every workplace will be the same for the initial months/years, and they will not get a good work experience with this practice:

*“There are people who have gone the extra mile for the company. Yes, the team might give them the recognition. But sometimes you might not get the recognition from the higher management which you have earned. Maybe that person deserves a job promotion. That do make them feel that they are neglected, which I have seen a lot in the company. Especially for the younger generation, we have a problem in staying in one place. I don’t personally think that we should keep moving because if you keep moving, then from where you are going to get the proper experience. Every workplace is going to be the same for the initial months or years. If the company wants to keep the staff, they should feel satisfied and appreciated, and they would like to come to work. If nobody appreciates and recognises your work, you might start feeling why I am still working here. It will make you question yourself and your identity.”*

According to Mahela (Supervisor at D1), benefits, increments, and recognition are the most effective ways to retain employees. He further mentioned that to retain the employees; there should be a sense of loyalty from the workforce towards the company:

*“The more you stay in one company, the more loyal you become, the more loyal the employees it will be easier for the company to manage that business unit. I think to retain; the employees have to be looked after, give benefits apart from the salary.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D1) had an interesting view on this. He mentioned the change in the workforce perception based on different generations:

*“With the new generation, loyalty is not something you can always expect. There is nothing wrong with it. Once they learn the job, they see the other opportunities they will definitely go for that. As hospitality industry leaders, what we have to look at is to have a continuous supply. This is why you need to resort to fresh graduates or fresh school leavers. Because you can’t expect someone to be a waiter for 5 years, in the older generation, we have people who have been waiters for 15 years, but that will not happen with this generation. We will have employees who are performers and who are not so good performers in the team. It is also very important that you have a healthy balance of matured and fresh youngsters coming into the hotel. Because they are the ones who would bring new ideas and concepts.”*

In summary, indicators such as recognition, career progression, benefits and increments are the top priorities if the companies wish to retain the employees. As noted by Somachandra, even though turnover can be attached to higher costs, it is not necessary to eliminate it. As he mentioned, it is impossible to provide career progression to every staff. Therefore, the challenge is to find ways to acquire fresh talents. Multiple respondents indicate that the younger generation staff does not stay in one particular job for long unless they see a career progression. This aligns with Smith *et al.* (2018), who found generation Z employees to be more impatient as they would want to see their swift progression and, if not, are more likely to leave the company. Being a generation Z employee himself, Kumar emphasises the need to stay in a particular company to get good work experience as moving to different places would not help gain the experience past a certain level.

#### **5.7.2.2 Indian context**

It is interesting to note that all the five variables were found to have a significant difference between the types of companies in the Indian context (Table 5.20). For all the five variables, the foreign company in India has a higher mean score. Therefore, foreign company in India has a higher percentage of respondents who a) would leave the company for a job in the hospitality industry with better salary, b) would leave the job if they find

a better opportunity elsewhere in a different industry, c) would like to find a job with fixed working hours, d) would stay with the company even if they don't mind enjoying the work as long as it covers their expenses, e) would leave the company if they find a job where they can spend more time with family and friends. The findings indicate that the retention strategies of the domestic company are found to be more effective than the foreign company in the Indian context.

**Table 5.20:** Turnover intentions (Indian context)

Thinking about your future, do you agree or disagree?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I will leave the job if I find a hospitality job with better salary elsewhere <sup>a)</sup>	F2	44	3.75	.918
	D2	45	3.24	1.246
I will leave the job if I find a better opportunity elsewhere in a different industry <sup>b)</sup>	F2	44	3.75	.991
	D2	45	3.00	1.279
I would like to find a job with fixed working hours <sup>c)</sup>	F2	44	3.80	.878
	D2	44	2.98	1.191
I don't mind not enjoying my work if it covers my expenses <sup>d)</sup>	F2	44	3.50	1.089
	D2	44	2.73	1.283
I would like to find a job where I can spend more time with family and friends <sup>e)</sup>	F2	43	3.95	.925
	D2	45	3.44	1.159

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree.

a)  $t = 2.182$ ;  $p = 0.032$

b)  $t = 3.087$ ;  $p = 0.003$

c)  $t = 3.668$ ;  $p = 0.000$

d)  $t = 3.046$ ;  $p = 0.003$

e)  $t = 2.283$ ;  $p = 0.025$

Turning now on to the interview responses, Dev (Supervisor at F2) mentioned the need to prioritise the career growth of every staff:

*“The company should prioritise the career growth of every individual staff.”*

According to Jai (Manager at F2), the company should assist in providing accommodation facilities. He further mentioned the difference in pay scale between foreign and domestic companies where the former pays higher overall compared to the latter:

*“My company is very social, and they keep you happy. One of the things that can be done is provide some assistance in accommodation. If the hotel starts providing accommodation and takes the rent part of it, then it will be good. Domestic companies are not the best pay-masters compared to foreign companies. The ground level staff does not get paid much. Even at the supervisory level, pay is not that high.”*

Dharmendra (Manager at F2) emphasised that incorporation of fresh talents would be a benefit to the organisations and that retention is always not imperative:

*“Change is inevitable, and change is good. Even a General Manager has to move on after 2-3 years. Change is inevitable, and with fresh talents and fresh ideas, the outlook of things changes. I might have ten ideas, but the fresh talents coming in might be coming with a different perspective.”*

From the excerpts above, it is found that the prioritisation of career progression and increase in the ordinary and supervisory staff payscale have a positive effect on retention. Jai mentioned the need to have a well-planned accommodation facility for the employees to reduce their spending on accommodation which could help them save money on travel and accommodation. Contrary to this, from a management perspective, Dharmendra has mentioned the positives of turnover. This could incorporate fresh talents into the company where new perspectives can help the company grow.

From D2, Varun (Supervisor at D2) has mentioned that his company is not focussing well enough on the pay and benefits, which is important to retain the staff:



*“The companies around are becoming more revenue centric. I think the company should balance it out. I have seen this in my company as well. The cost-cutting has been done on the employee side, not the business side. Already domestic companies are not the best paymasters. There has been a lot of cost-cutting done on the employee side. If you want the employees to be happy, yes, it is a business at the end of the day, but you shouldn’t lose your focus on the employees.”*

Abhay (Supervisor at D2) mentioned neglecting the existing workforce with years of experience as the primary reason for staff turnover. However, he also mentioned the need to have a hike in the salary as in the Indian hospitality market, domestic companies are paying lesser than the foreign company, and this can lead to turnover:

*“What I personally feel as a drawback is that the job promotions are very slow. Especially for someone who is working as a regular employee, it takes him many years, which I find as a drawback, especially for the associates who are really performing well. Because of some advanced level training, individuals from outside will be recruited to the good positions. Associates who started working in the hotel from the base level find it difficult to get a promotion so fast. In terms of salary, the packages in my company are low compared to foreign companies. These two things should be taken into consideration. These two factors are the most effective and required things to grow in life, pay scale and job promotion. Most of the associates have been working in the company for 20-30 years. It is like a family business, which is why they don’t leave the job so easily. The progression level is very slow, but the rest of the considerations have always been there.”*

Raveena (Manager at D2) mentioned the need to focus on each employee’s strengths and weaknesses, and by doing that, the employees can be retained:

*“I think everyone has their strengths and weaknesses. As a manager, you will have to identify and understand it. Retaining all employees need to be done. Attention needs to be given to the skill set a person has.”*

It is evident from Abhay’s response that there is dissatisfaction among the existing employees, who have been working in the company for many years and are not considered for career succession. He further added that the existing staff are often ignored in the tailored management trainee programmes. Additionally, the disparity in pay scale compared to the foreign brands is also mentioned as a negative. Varun echoed this and

noted that the company pay scale could be one reason for turnover. However, the survey findings show that a significantly higher number of staff from the foreign company mentioned leaving the company for a higher salary elsewhere in a different company than the domestic company workforce. The family-like culture of the domestic company appears as the reason the majority of the staff stays with the company. These findings indicate that even though pay and benefits are a major factor in turnover, the sense of belonging and affection towards the workplace could retain the workforce. Understanding the strength and weaknesses of each staff is mentioned as another way of retaining the employees. This relates to performance appraisals and the inclusive talent management approach (Wilcox, 2016; Luthans and Jensen, 2002; Aguinis, 2009), where the focus is on each employee in a workplace. By doing this, the intention is to give them tailored development programmes which could retain them.

This section adds to the literature on the TM practice of retention. The recurring themes from all four companies in retaining employees are pay & benefits and career progression. This has been found to match the findings from previous research on the importance of issuing appropriate pay levels and benefits (Chan and Kuok, 2011; Dogru *et al.*, 2019; Bonn and Forbringer, 1992; Dwesini, 2019) and providing decent career opportunities (Kichuk, Brown and Ladkin, 2019; Khan *et al.*, 2011; Yang *et al.*, 2012) to retain employees in hospitality and tourism industry. A mixed opinion was reported regarding retention from the managerial level staff. One argument is that turnover is inevitable, and the most important thing is to increase the supply and incorporate fresh talents. The other opinion is that retention of the overall workforce is necessary and that the companies should proactively work towards this.

## 5.8 Succession planning

Questions were asked to understand the respondents' perspective on the importance of career progression and how efficiently the companies deal with it. Two sample means (domestic and foreign) are compared for each variable to see if they are significantly different. This has been assessed on a regional and country-level basis (Table 5.21).

**Table 5.21:** Succession planning (regional and country-level)

Thinking about your future, do you agree or disagree?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Having a progress in my career is important to me <sup>a)</sup>	FSA	95	4.13	1.074
	DSA	141	4.24	.933
	F1	51	4.25	1.163
	D1	96	4.17	.804
	F2	44	3.98	.952
	D2	45	4.40	1.156
I am not sure about my future <sup>b)</sup>	FSA	93	2.73	1.461
	DSA	140	2.36	1.133
	F1	51	2.27	1.387
	D1	96	2.30	1.058
	F2	42	3.29	1.367
	D2	44	2.50	1.285
Training is designed for the development of my career <sup>c)</sup>	FSA	95	3.89	1.077
	DSA	140	3.69	1.053
	F1	51	3.73	1.133
	D1	97	3.67	1.018
	F2	44	4.09	.984
	D2	43	3.72	1.141

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree.

### FSA vs DSA

<sup>a)</sup>  $t = -0.872$ ;  $p = 0.384$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t = 2.048$ ;  $p = 0.042$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t = 1.480$ ;  $p = 0.140$

### F1 vs D1

<sup>a)</sup>  $t = 0.484$ ;  $p = 0.630$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t = -0.124$ ;  $p = 0.902$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t = 0.303$ ;  $p = 0.763$

### F2 vs D2

<sup>a)</sup>  $t = -1.881$ ;  $p = 0.063$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t = 2.748$ ;  $p = 0.007$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t = 1.621$ ;  $p = 0.109$

### **5.8.1 Regional level comparison**

For variable b, there is a significant difference between foreign and domestic companies in South Asia. In other words, respondents from FSA have reported having slight uncertainty about their future (variable b), as the mean score indicated neither agree nor disagree. However, the mean score from DSA suggests that the majority of the respondents disagree that they are unsure of their future. Adding to this, respondents from DSA give greater importance to their career advancement compared to the FSA. Meanwhile, respondents from FSA have a greater belief in the internal training programmes for career progression than DSA.

### **5.8.2 Country-level comparison**

#### **5.8.2.1 Sri Lankan context**

None of the variables has a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in Sri Lanka (Table 5.21). Having said that, the respondents from F1 give greater importance to their career advancement than D1. Moreover, respondents from F1 have a greater belief in the internal training programmes for career progression than D1. Interestingly, respondents from both F1 and D1 disagree that they are uncertain about their future.

The interviews explain these results in more depth. The respondents were asked to recall their experience of receiving additional training for career progression. The intent was to understand if they belong to a talent pool and their opinion about having a talent pool in the company (if any). From F1, Harshani (Employee at F1) mentioned that she is not

receiving additional training and is unsure if she is in a talent pool. Sithara (Supervisor at F1) does not believe she is in a talent pool who are receiving additional training for career progression:

*“I would like to be in that talent pool, but I am not. I think we should be given more training for our career progression.”*

Perera (Manager at F1) acknowledged that not all the staff are getting similar training. He emphasises that the additional training is for people who are interested in it:

*“I cannot say all the employees, majority yes. Because certain people are over the age of 35, their eagerness to learn things is very much lower. They mainly want to find time to spend with their families. Rather than being involved in training, they prefer this. So we don’t push them too much. We have additional training for people who show more eagerness for career growth.”*

The above excerpts indicate that both Harshani and Sithara are not receiving additional training for their career progression even though they would like it. From a management perspective, Perera has mentioned that everyone interested in career progression has the opportunity to receive additional training. There is a mismatch between the responses from the employee and managerial level respondents. It is found that both the supervisory level employee and the ordinary employee wanted to have additional training for their succession but were unable to attain it.

Turning now on to the responses from D1, Kumar (Employee at D1) revealed that he is receiving basic training, which all the employees are receiving, and there is no additional training for him specifically:

*“I am not sure if I am in the talent pool or not. I am not receiving special treatments when it comes to training. But I don’t feel neglected when it comes to training.”*

Mahela (Manager at D1) believes that he is in that talent pool as his career graph so far has proven it:

*“I feel that I am in that pool as I was chosen as a management trainee as well. My career progression has been very good as of now. I joined as a trainee, and now I am a supervisor within 1.5 years with the help of on-the-job and additional training.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D2) mentioned that the senior managerial staff also have the opportunity to progress in their career. He further mentioned that there are specific training given to the HOD's to identify the star performers to eliminate the presence of favouritism in this process:

*“In management companies, we always have new opportunities for everyone. Even for a GM, for example, if you are a GM in a hotel, you can be a cluster GM looking after a couple of hotels or an area general manager, or you can advance to the corporate structure if there is a position available as a chief operating officer who looks after few properties where the GM's report to this person. Every manager is trained, and the department head is trained to see who the star performers are and who goes the extra mile. It is very clearly stated and communicated to all our employees so that they understand there is no favouritism, and this is only based on their performance.”*

Kumar does not believe that he belongs to that identified category, whereas Mahela mentioned that his career graph proves that he belongs. Somachandra noted that the training is given equally to all the employees until the star performers are found, and then they are groomed to climb up the ladder. He mentioned that there is training for the HOD's to identify the star performers with instructions to avoid favouritism. It appears that there is an organised system to identify the star performers in D1. Succession planning is not in place for all the staff as some employees are not getting assistance. As noted by Cannon and McGee (2007), hospitality companies predominantly focus on a small talent pool of top management (exclusive TM) when designing succession planning strategies (Kichuk, Brown and Ladkin, 2019).

### 5.8.2.2 Indian context

Apart from variable b, none of the other variables has a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in India (Table 5.21). There are significantly more respondents from foreign company who mentioned that they are uncertain about their future. Whereas in D2, the majority of respondents disagree that they are uncertain about their future. Adding to this, respondents from D2 gives greater importance to their career advancement compared to the F2. Having said that, respondents from F2 have a greater belief in the internal training programmes for career progression than D2.

Turning now on to the interview responses, Dev (Supervisor at F2) acknowledged that his career graph is going up. He mentions that talents are spotted to go to the next level; however, he added that there are no additional training opportunities for these star performers.

*“I feel like my career graph is growing up, but I don’t think I am getting any additional training. Yes, people are spotting talents, but they are not being given any special training. I worked as a regular employee in the department for eight months, and then I was promoted. This is why I am saying I am satisfied with the company in terms of career growth. I believe that when people get promoted, 15-20 % is due to their work, and the rest is basically the soft skills. So yes, I believe that if I enhance my soft skills and my managerial abilities, then that would help me move up to the next role.”*

Jai (Manager at F2) does not believe that he is in the talent pool. However, he expects to have a higher role within the next 3 years:

*“Certainly not. I don’t think I belong to that category. See, for me, I don’t get mentally down with it. My priority is to get the job done on time, and if you need to go above and beyond, great. All I know is I need a higher job role after three years.”*

To sum up, both the respondents have contrasting experiences on this. However, it is important to note that Dev is in a supervisory position, and Jai is in a managerial position. For Dev, he believes that his career graph is going up, and Jai had a similar view, although both Jai and Dev do not seem to be getting additional training to climb up the ladder. They do not agree that they belong to a talent pool; however, their career has been advancing since they joined the company.

Varun (Supervisor at D2) believes that he belongs to the talent pool of the company based on his career growth within a short period:

*“I definitely think so. It’s been about 6 months since I’ve completed my management training programme. Now there are other programmes which are coming up, and I have also been selected for that. I would definitely say yes, I am in the talent pool of the company.”*

Abhay (Supervisor at D2) believes that the emergence of hotel schools and hotel management degrees has created a new pathway for freshers to become managers immediately. He further mentioned that the existing employees are not getting that option and that they are suffering without enough opportunities which the management trainees are getting:



*“I am working as a supervisor right now, and suppose I want to be an assistant manager. I need the orientation and the training for that particular level, and I am not getting that currently in my company. A long time back we used to have a development programme where any employees could participate, increasing their chances of getting promotions. It was compulsory for associates who had spent at least two years in our company. But these have been discontinued, and I don’t know why. So the employees in the past have progressed well due to these practices. Now with the emergence of hotel schools in India and with the company-owned hotel school, we have different training within the company where the associates who have completed a hotel management degree get the opportunity to do management-level training, and they can directly become assistant managers or supervisors. But this option is not for the existing associates who have been working in the company for long. So for them, it is difficult.”*

Raveena (Manager at D2) mentioned that everyone in the hotel is in the talent pool for her. She acknowledged her career growth working in the company:

*“I don’t know if I am in the talent pool, but I have definitely risen in my job role. According to me, every employee is in the talent pool”.*

In summary, both Varun and Raveena had hotel management degrees and were selected from their respective colleges as management trainees in the company. For them, the career growth had been quicker as one is in the supervisory role and the other in a managerial position. However, Abhay, who had been working in the company for many years, had to wait for long for his next job role as a supervisor and revealed his displeasure with him not receiving the tailored succession route in the company. He mentioned that the discontinuation of the management trainee programme for the existing employees make it harder for them to grow in their career. The findings suggests to include the existing employees to the management and supervisory level trainee programmes. As Schuler and Tarique (2012) found in their study, individuals who have clarity in their career path and the assurance of their development will be more connected and engaged to their work and organisation.

This section adds to the literature on succession planning for the staff (Walsh and Taylor, 2007; Smith *et al.*, 2018; Goh and Okumus, 2020). It is found from the survey that more than half of respondents from both companies in Sri Lanka had plans for their future. Over half of the staff in domestic company in India have reported that they had plans for their future and over 30% of respondents from foreign company in India have reported so. The interview findings revealed that the majority of the employees are not receiving adequate training or mentoring on their succession. It could be debatable that career succession may not be possible for every staff in a company. However, as Goh and Okumus (2020) mentioned, it is important to have career counselling to provide information on the individuals' future career pathway through reliable management traineeships (e.g. graduate management traineeship programmes, supervisory trainee programmes, professional advancement programmes). The negligence of existing employees when it comes to management and supervisory level trainee programmes has also been found to be a concerning issue that the companies should address.

## **5.9 Chapter conclusion**

The study has extended the talent management literature by empirically measuring the TM practices and attributes from the workforces' experience. The crux of the thesis is the comparison between foreign and domestic companies, whether it is regional or country-level comparison. This chapter revealed that the scope of an inclusive approach is questionable. The exclusive approach appears to be the commonly used TM approach in the hospitality industry. The chapter has presented the potential adverse effects of the exclusive TM practices, especially in the South Asian context (Anlesinya and Amponsah-Tawiah, 2020; Bjorkman *et al.*, 2013; Pfeffer, 2001). The study also found the primary issues in attracting the workforce, the priority given by each company for prior work

experience and higher education when acquiring workforce. A significant finding reveals the connection between the labour-market situation and recruitment. Apart from this, the workforce experience of performance management, learning and development, retention, and succession planning has been compared between different types of companies. The comparison between the different company cultures has provided an insight into the differences in importance given to each practice and how beneficial they are in the hospitality context. For the country-level analysis, quantitative surveys along with the qualitative interviews provide a nuanced comprehensive understanding of the different practices of TM in the hospitality context. The chapter has established the findings which align with the previous scholarly works on the study topic and have derived the original contributions (theoretical and practical) the study is putting forward. This has been put together in the Conclusions chapter (Chapter 8). In chapter 6, the researcher presents a regional and country-level comparison of the level of SC possessed by the workforce in the participating companies.

# CHAPTER 6

## SOCIAL CAPITAL: REGIONAL AND WITHIN-COUNTRY COMPARISON

### 6.1 Introduction

This chapter tests the level and extent of social capital in selected South Asian hospitality companies. The chapter documents the findings and analysis of examining organisational social capital through a regional and country-level comparison between foreign and domestic companies. To do so, the researcher has undertaken a quantitative study designed to test the different indicators of SC. Firstly, the data from two foreign South Asian companies and two domestic South Asian companies have been combined for a regional level comparison. This is followed by a nuanced exploration of SC in a country-level analysis. These results have been tested using interviews in the participating companies to see if it reinforces the survey findings or deviates. This chapter reports the detailed findings and discussions of comparing social capital in: foreign companies in South Asia (FSA) vs domestic companies in South Asia (DSA); foreign company in Sri Lanka (F1) vs domestic company in Sri Lanka (D1); foreign company in India (F2) vs domestic company in India (D2).

## **6.2 Structural social capital**

### **6.2.1 Network ties**

An independent t-test was used to examine the difference in mean between the foreign and domestic companies for each variable to understand the network ties at work. Two sample means (domestic and foreign) are compared for each item to see if they are significantly different. This has been applied to regional level comparison (FSA vs DSA) and country-level comparison (F1 vs D1; D2 vs F2). By conducting t-tests, the intention is to find if the variables reject the null hypothesis or fail to reject the null hypothesis.

#### **6.2.1.1 Regional level comparison**

Of the nine variables used to understand the network ties, all the variables failed to reject the null hypothesis ( $p > .05$ ). There is no significant difference between FSA and DSA, and it is found that all the variables have the respondents agreeing to the statements. Of all the total nine variables interpreted, only two variables relating to the domestic companies have a higher mean value when compared with those associated with the foreign-owned companies. In testing variable i) information in getting access to external trade organisations, and variable e) help during emergencies, respondents from the domestic companies have shown higher agreement to it. The results can be interpreted as that overall, FSA has greater network ties than DSA (Table 6.1).

**Table 6.1: Network ties (South Asian context)**

To what extent do the respondents agree with the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Information regarding my work is made available to me <sup>a)</sup>	FSA	95	4.01	1.005
	DSA	142	3.91	.974
I am informed about the company goals <sup>b)</sup>	FSA	92	4.17	1.001
	DSA	142	4.01	.899
I know who to approach if I need help with access to most of the resources or services at the workplace <sup>c)</sup>	FSA	95	4.09	1.011
	DSA	142	4.06	.90
I can access my senior managers when needed and can share information and ideas with them <sup>d)</sup>	FSA	95	4.34	3.214
	DSA	141	4.04	.948
I have persons in the workplace, whom I can count on in case of an emergency <sup>e)</sup>	FSA	94	4.14	.899
	DSA	142	4.18	.828
In case I need a financial support (without interest) I know someone in the workplace who could help me <sup>f)</sup>	FSA	94	3.81	1.110
	DSA	142	3.76	1.003
In case I need help with additional training (internal training or external training), I know someone in the workplace who could help me achieve it <sup>g)</sup>	FSA	95	4.07	.981
	DSA	140	4.04	.909
In case I need assistance with knowing my career growth options (including new job vacancies etc.), I know the someone in the workplace who could help me <sup>h)</sup>	FSA	93	3.99	.961
	DSA	141	3.99	.882
In case I need to contact an external organisation regarding work (such as , employees union, regional government tourism dept.), I know someone in workplace who could help me <sup>i)</sup>	FSA	95	3.66	1.088
	DSA	140	3.79	0.973

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree.

<sup>a)</sup>  $t= 0.780$ ;  $p= 0.436$

<sup>f)</sup>  $t= 0.344$ ;  $p= 0.731$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t= 0.075$ ;  $p= 0.205$

<sup>g)</sup>  $t= 0.304$ ;  $p= 0.761$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t= 0.250$ ;  $p= 0.803$

<sup>h)</sup>  $t= -0.030$ ;  $p= 0.976$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t= 1.024$ ;  $p= 0.307$

<sup>i)</sup>  $t= -0.903$ ;  $p=0.367$

<sup>e)</sup>  $t= -0.331$ ;  $p= 0.741$

## **6.2.1.2 Country-level comparison**

### **6.2.1.2.1 Sri Lankan context**

As depicted in Table 6.2, the variables a) availability of information at work, b) information about company goals, c) information on whom to approach to access the resources at the workplace, d) access to senior managers, e) help during emergencies, have been found to have rejected the null hypothesis. For these variables, the significance (p-value) value for the t-test is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis can be rejected. This implies that these variables have significant differences in the mean score between the different types of companies. Even though there is a significant difference for the five variables, the majority of the respondents from both companies strongly agree or agree with the statements. Of all the nine variables interpreted, only one variable has a higher mean score with the domestic company respondents, and for the rest of the variables, foreign-owned company respondents have shown a higher mean. When testing variable i (information in getting access to external trade union associations), respondents from the domestic company have shown higher agreement to it. Considering the difference in mean score between the two, the results can be interpreted as that; overall, the foreign company has greater network ties than the domestic company in the Sri Lankan context.

**Table 6.2:** Network ties (Sri Lankan context)

To what extent do the respondents agree with the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Information regarding my work is made available to me <sup>a)</sup>	F1	51	4.27	.723
	D1	97	3.89	.888
I am informed about the company goals <sup>b)</sup>	F1	50	4.42	.673
	D1	97	3.97	.859
I know who to approach if I need help with access to most of the resources or services at the workplace <sup>c)</sup>	F1	51	4.35	.716
	D1	97	4.01	.810
I can access my senior managers when needed and can share information and ideas with them <sup>d)</sup>	F1	51	4.39	.532
	D1	96	4.01	.761
I have persons in the workplace, whom I can count on in case of an emergency <sup>e)</sup>	F1	50	4.48	.580
	D1	97	4.10	.684
In case I need a financial support (without interest) I know someone in the workplace who could help me <sup>f)</sup>	F1	51	3.88	1.070
	D1	97	3.76	.851
In case I need help with additional training (internal training or external training), I know someone in the workplace who could help me achieve it <sup>g)</sup>	F1	51	4.24	.790
	D1	97	4.02	.750
In case I need assistance with knowing my career growth options (including new job vacancies etc.), I know the someone in the workplace who could help me <sup>h)</sup>	F1	51	4.10	.878
	D1	97	4.00	.722
In case I need to contact an external organisation regarding work (such as , employees union, regional government tourism dept.), I know someone in workplace who could help me <sup>i)</sup>	F1	51	3.57	1.082
	D1	96	3.84	0.744

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree.

a)  $t = 2.564$ ;  $p = 0.008$

f)  $t = 0.690$ ;  $p = 0.492$

b)  $t = 3.233$ ;  $p = 0.002$

g)  $t = 1.625$ ;  $p = 0.106$

c)  $t = 2.542$ ;  $p = 0.012$

h)  $t = 0.728$ ;  $p = 0.468$

d)  $t = 3.190$ ;  $p = 0.002$

i)  $t = -1.623$ ;  $p = 0.109$

e)  $t = 3.326$ ;  $p = 0.001$

#### ◆ Access to information related to work (F1 and D1)

This section compares the survey results to the interview responses for 7 variables which include a) information regarding work, b) information on company goals, c) information on access to the resources in the workplace, d) access to the senior managers, g) information on access to external training, h) information on access to career opportunities, i) information on access to external trade unions.



Harshani (Employee at F1) commented her view on having a good connection with her colleagues for accessing work information:

*“Yes, there should be a good connection between the employees. Otherwise, I don’t think we can be happy at the workplace. In the hotel industry, management keeps changing with different GM’s. So different GM’s will bring in different policies, and the overall operations will be changed. So this will impact the employees.”*

Sithara (Supervisor at F1) mentioned the easiness of reaching out to her immediate manager. She mentioned:

*“It depends on the information that I want to grab. Usually, I talk to my immediate manager if I need any work information.”*

In contrast, Perera (Manager at F1) used his job role as an example to explain where he turns to when he needs information from different departments:

*“I will directly speak to the coordinator, who is the supervisory level staff. That person is the mediator between the HOD and the team. For certain things, I directly approach the HOD if it is a confidential or a personal matter. For matters related to operations, I will contact the coordinator who coordinates between the management and the employees because that person has all the information I need.”*

In summary, the above narratives from F1 highlight vertical and horizontal networks when it comes to accessing information (Ryan, 2011; Patulny, 2015). The vertical ties encourage contacting the immediate managers (Sithara) for information. Horizontal ties encourage contacting the supervisor and HOD by the manager (Perera) and connection between employees (Harshani). All the respondents agreed on the presence of a good network or connection within the workplace. This matches the survey findings that workplace connectivity and network ties are solid in the Sri Lankan foreign company. This indicates that the network structure in F1 is configured such that resource flows between actors occur efficiently (Chou *et al.*, 2006).

Turning now to the interview response from D1 (Domestic company in Sri Lanka), there were some similarities in the findings to F1. All the interview participants agreed about the presence of internal connections in the workplace to ease accessing information regarding work. As commented by Kumar (Employee at D1):

*“To access information regarding work, we have an intranet facility for junior executives and above. For trainees and non-executives, they don’t have that option. They will be notified about these training around a month before the training. They will also be notified about what’s happening in the relevant department and the hotel.”*

On the other hand, Mahela (Supervisor at D1) has mentioned the importance of the Learning & Development (L&D) department in knowing about things internally. He mentioned that he would reach out to a member of the L&D department:

*“If I would like to know things internally, we have an L&D department. So that’s the first place I would go to. They take care of the personal development of each individual. In our hotel, we have an L&D manager and an executive. I will be contacting either of them.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D1) has explained the structure incorporated by the company and how it helps in enhancing networking of the workforce:

*“How the structure is set in our company is that the GM of the hotel is the chief operating officer of the hotel. He sits at the centre. If it is specific department-related enquiries, then there are specific department-related heads whom staff can reach out to for any information. Even though we have department heads for each department, you are free to reach out to any department head, even if you are not from that department. As an employee, the communication flows both ways and in every direction. So I would say it is 360-degree communication.”*

From D1, it is evident from the above narrative that vertical and horizontal ties exist in the hotel when it comes to accessing information (Ryan, 2011; Patulny, 2015). According to Somachandra (Manager), the company promotes horizontal ties and that the company culture allows communication in every direction. However, Kumar mentioned his reliability on the intranet in accessing information. Mahela mentioned his reliability on L&D department in accessing information. This matches with the survey findings that the

workplace connectivity and network ties in the workplace are solid in the domestic company in Sri Lanka.

◆ **Access to outside work information/help during personal emergencies (F1 and D1)**

When it comes to access/help not related to work, in F1, there were similarities in the results from the interviews and the surveys. However, there are also certain concerns raised by some respondents. Harshani (employee at F1) reveals the presence of a welfare society in the workplace and her belief in the system:

*“In the hotel, there is a welfare society; they will help if there is a personal emergency. If I have a financial need, I believe I will receive help. Maybe not fully but at least in whatever ways they can.”*

Sithara (Supervisor at F1), on the other hand, mentioned the requirement of a personal relationship to ask for help outside work:

*“Sometimes it’s due to the personal relationship. You can’t go and ask everyone for help. With some employees, we have close relationships. To them, I ask for help.”*

Perera (HR Manager at F1) emphasises the importance of following the company rules and regulations in providing financial assistance personally to the staff. As per his company’s policy, providing financial assistance to the workforce is not allowed. He mentioned the adverse effects it can have on the company image. He suggests the importance of lending hand to the co-workers indirectly may be to find assistance for financial needs:

*“There are certain rules and regulations where we cannot provide financial assistance personally to the staff as this can tarnish the image of the company as well. Otherwise, lending a hand in a difficult situation is very important. You can help that person another way, maybe to find assistance to get that financial support through a bank loan. If it is something to do with education, we can provide a letter proving the person’s authenticity. I have got certain help from my colleagues as well as from the management.”*

In summary, the above excerpts from F1 suggest that even though providing direct financial assistance is not encouraged within the company policy, the respondents believe they would receive personal assistance from the workplace. The importance of personal relationships and organisational initiatives (workforce welfare society) was highlighted from these excerpts. Apart from the direct financial assistance, the employees are encouraged to contact the welfare society within the hotel for any other emergency. The interview responses match with the survey result on the agreement of the workforce in receiving information or support during emergencies from the workplace.

From D1, although there were positives mentioned by Somachandra (Manager in D1) on helping people outside of their workplace, certain concerns were raised by him. He identified helping mentality as a cultural norm in Sri Lanka or the South Asian region broadly:

*“It is cultural related. The culture in Sri Lanka or South Asia, in general, is such that you reach out more to your friends and work colleagues if you need help. I have worked in other countries as well. I have seen in these countries, people are reluctant and not sure whether people will help. But here, I think it is natural that you reach out to the people you work with. You should also look at the other side; some people take advantage and ask for favours all the time. This will be identified immediately, and people will have a different reaction to that.”*

Mahela (Supervisor at D1) has commented on the importance of giving a helping hand to colleagues. He has given an example of what the workforce has done as a group, which depicts the organisation's culture. He also mentioned the requirement of a personal relationship to ask for help outside work:

*“Recently, one of the employee’s relative passed away. We have collected some money from each department for that person. There have been instances my colleagues have asked me for help, and this is more personal, and the company is not involved in this.”*

This experience was echoed by another informant Kumar (Employee at D1), who mentioned:

*“In my workplace, I do have that kind of a relationship. I have someone to turn to in emergencies. Yes, some people would go out of their way, but I still don’t have a personal experience like that. I have seen this in my workplace a lot. There are people with different needs, and people who need help in their personal life; people are definitely helping each other in the hotel.”*

To sum up the excerpts from D1, all the participants indicate a strong network that matches the survey findings. One of the interviewees (Mahela) mentioned the collective effort of the workforce to help someone in need. The participants, on the whole, demonstrated a strong level of personal relationship within their workplace. This depicts agreement between the survey and interview findings, and there is strong evidence on the agreement of the workforce in receiving information or support during emergencies from the workplace.

#### **6.2.1.2.2 Indian context**

As shown in Table 6.3 below, only variable e (help during emergencies) has been found to have rejected the null hypothesis. This implies that this variable has a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. Of all the nine variables interpreted, only one variable relating to a foreign company has a higher mean value when compared with those associated with the domestically owned company. In testing variable i (assistance in getting access to external trade organisations), respondents from foreign company in India have shown higher agreement. The majority of the respondents strongly agree or agree with all the statements in both F2 and D2. However, considering the difference in mean score between the two, the results can be interpreted as that overall, the domestic company has greater network ties than the foreign company in the Indian context.

**Table 6.3: Network ties (Indian context)**

To what extent do the respondents agree with the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Information regarding my work is made available to me <sup>a)</sup>	F2	44	3.70	.723
	D2	45	3.96	.888
I am informed about the company goals <sup>b)</sup>	F2	42	3.88	.673
	D2	45	4.11	.859
I know who to approach if I need help with access to most of the resources or services at the workplace <sup>c)</sup>	F2	44	3.80	.716
	D2	45	4.18	.810
I can access my senior managers when needed and can share information and ideas with them <sup>d)</sup>	F2	44	4.27	.717
	D2	45	4.11	.265
I have persons in the workplace, whom I can count on in case of an emergency <sup>e)</sup>	F2	44	3.75	.580
	D2	45	4.33	.684
In case I need a financial support (without interest) I know someone in the workplace who could help me <sup>f)</sup>	F2	43	3.72	1.070
	D2	45	3.76	.851
In case I need help with additional training (internal training or external training), I know someone in the workplace who could help me achieve it <sup>g)</sup>	F2	44	3.89	.111
	D2	43	4.07	.076
In case I need assistance with knowing my career growth options (including new job vacancies etc.), I know the someone in the workplace who could help me <sup>h)</sup>	F2	42	3.86	.878
	D2	44	3.98	.722
In case I need to contact an external organisation regarding work (such as , employees union, regional government tourism dept.), I know someone in workplace who could help me <sup>i)</sup>	F2	44	3.77	1.082
	D2	44	3.66	0.744

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree

<sup>a)</sup> t= -1.012; p= 0.314

<sup>f)</sup> t= 0.291; p= 0.895

<sup>b)</sup> t= -.966; p= 0.337

<sup>g)</sup> t= 0.432; p= 0.468

<sup>c)</sup> t= 0.448; p= 0.118

<sup>h)</sup> t= 0.372; p= 0.618

<sup>d)</sup> t= 0.222; p= 0.825

<sup>i)</sup> t= 0.054; p= 0.665

<sup>e)</sup> t= 0.379; p= 0.010

#### ◆ Access to information related to work (F2 and D2)

Dev (Supervisor at F2) emphasises the presence of a training manager if he needs assistance in terms of his training and development needs. He also mentioned the importance of having senior managers as mentors. He mentioned his personal relationship with the GM and the importance of a mentor's expertise in accessing information:

*“In terms of information regarding training, there is a training manager, so whatever learning has to be done within the hotel is managed by him. Apart from that, if there is any technical need, I will go to my GM as he is also from the same work background as I am. I feel more comfortable and connected with him. Then as a person, I would say that he is like a mentor to me.”*

Like Dev, Jai (Manager at F2) acknowledges the importance of having a mentor at the workplace to provide information on career progression:

*“I will give an example; one of my colleagues wanted to move away from my department to operations department. But I am not the best person to mentor him as I am more of a numbers guy, not an operations guy. So I tried and linked him with a person who can guide him better.”*

Jai (Manager at F2) acknowledges the presence of an intranet, where he can access information on the training and other information:

*“So we have an intranet, we have our talent database, we build our profiles into that intranet which goes to the talent data basis. Any information I want to find, what trainings can I do, it’s the intranet that gives me a good base.”*

Similar to Jai, Dharmendra (Manager at F2) echoed the presence of the intranet within the company for employees to access training, development and other information:

*“So there is an intranet facility of the company which provides access to the worldwide chain that the management work with. The company has an engine, and we can log into it and get access to job training and information about job opportunities in India and internationally. It has almost all the information the employees can use to learn and develop.”*

Dharmendra (Manager at F2) further mentioned the importance of having a good connection between employees not only in their departments but also between departments:



*“It’s essential to have a good connection at a workplace to attain information since there are multiple departments in a hotel. If you don’t have different departments working together and if you don’t have people coordinating and talking to each other, it can’t function.”*

In summary, the above narratives from F2 highlight the importance of different actors in providing access to information. It highlights the importance of choosing the right mentor for the information on the desired career pathway. Even though respondents have mentioned the benefits of having L&D department and training managers, the importance of having the senior manager as a mentor is highlighted in the responses. Additionally, the benefit of having the intranet facility in accessing the information is also highlighted. All the respondents mentioned the presence of a good connection within the workplace and that this helps to access any information they need. This matches with the survey findings that workplace connectivity and network ties in the workplace are solid in the foreign company in India.

Turning now to the interview response from D2, the findings match the survey’s results in terms of agreement about their access to information at the workplace. Varun (Supervisor at D2) mentioned his different options if he needs to access information:

*“I could ask a fellow associate of mine or my immediate manager. In our hotel, I can also ask my HR or my L&D department. I can turn to my resident manager as well. There are no limits to that. In terms of seeking information, we have all the resources.”*

Similar to Varun, Abhay (Supervisor at D2) acknowledged the presence of a strong network between staff, which fosters the flow of information:

*“In case if we have any queries regarding career growth, we can contact our department heads, and the manager’s support is always there. We have an L&D team also. The HR department is always there too. They care about the associate’s wellbeing and their families.”*

Echoing the experience of both Varun and Abhay, Raveena (Manager at D2) emphasises the positives of the hotel structure, which allows connections in multiple directions within and between departments. She further added the benefit of the L&D department, where she can access any information regarding her training, development and career growth:

*“It depends on the information I need. The departments are structured very well. In terms of training, it depends on what training it would be, whether internal or external. The specific departments deal with the internal training with the help of the L&D team. In terms of external training, you speak to the L&D team. The company structure is very open. It is very inter and intra departmentally connected. The company gives an opportunity and the medium to do that.”*

From D2, it is evident that there is a presence of vertical and horizontal ties when it comes to accessing information. All the respondents noted the numerable options they have to access any resources at the workplace. Respondents from the supervisory levels (Varun and Abhay) have mentioned a good network between associates, immediate managers, HR and the L&D department. This is echoed by Raveena (Manager), who mentioned that the company structure is open and gives the opportunity and medium to have these networks. This matches with the survey findings that the workplace connectivity and network ties in the workplace are solid in the domestic company in India.

◆ **Access to outside work information/help during personal emergencies (F2 and D2)**

When it comes to accessing information/help during personal emergencies, there were similarities in the responses from F2. Dev (Supervisor at F2) mentioned the belief he has in his colleagues in terms of receiving help from them. Although he mentioned that he would not depend on his colleagues but his outside work friends/relatives if he is in an emergency:

*“If there is an emergency, the first people I would go to would not be my work colleagues, as I have friends and relatives for that. But I do believe that if I have to ask someone at the workplace, they would be ready to offer immediate assistance.”*

Jai (Manager at F2) recalls his personal experience in receiving help from the workplace when he had an emergency:

*“So when I was going through a difficult period in my life health-wise, thankfully, I had a couple of friends in the same organisation who helped me throughout. It was a good support system. They made sure I was taken care of. I went to a hospital and got admitted and got good treatment. Even when I got discharged, I used to get meals from the hotel directly.”*

Dharmendra (Manager at F2) acknowledges the different channels for the workforce to exchange their personal difficulties and has emphasised the company’s role in supporting the employees in their needs:

*“We have got WhatsApp groups, and we have contact numbers exchanged. People have all channels to report, and we do support when they have any personal emergency”.*

In summary, the findings from F2 demonstrated enough evidence to say there are enough channels to access help during emergencies. All three respondents have mentioned that they are offered immediate assistance if they need assistance outside work during an emergency. This matches with the results from the survey. There is enough evidence to establish that the workforce receives information or support during personal emergencies from the workplace.

Moving on to D2, all the respondents acknowledged the importance of helping each other in their personal needs/emergencies. Varun (Supervisor at D2) mentioned the influence of his company’s values and ethics which make the staff help one another:

*“I have personally helped a few of my colleagues who were in little financial strain or other personal issues. Help is everywhere; you just have to look for it. I would say it’s a personal thing and also it’s the company’s initiative. Because I have seen people who used to don’t care about others, and in time they changed due to my company values and ethics.”*

Abhay (Supervisor at D2) recalled a similar experience:

*“Yes, definitely, if suddenly someone has an emergency and the person need to go home, we will definitely support them.”*

This view was echoed by Raveena (Manager at D2):

*“Yes, if there are any emergencies, staff do help each other because, at the end of the day working in my company, everyone becomes closer like family. So they do tend to help.”*

From D2, there was enough evidence to say that both survey results and interview responses match each other. However, Varun points out the importance of personal relationships in accessing help/information from individuals during these situations. He further added the influence of the company’s values and ethics on having a helping mentality between co-workers. Both Abhay and Raveena acknowledged the support between the staff in case of a need/emergency outside work.

This section extends the social capital literature by indicating the use of technology (e.g. intranet facility) to provide information to the staff in all four companies. It is found that this feature is only available to staff from certain hierarchy in some companies, especially the domestic companies. This can be said as a negative of this feature where not every staff is getting the information efficiently. Therefore, the research suggests that the including the non-executive employees on the intranet could potentially lead to a non-partial way of dealing with the employees as the information on the company initiatives, progress, and opportunities are informational to everyone. Although the reliance on technology on accessing information can potentially improve organisational efficiency,

the question here is how the technological interventions can take away the elements that may foster social capital at the workplace. It is also important to note that if there is an emergency where someone needs personal assistance, personal relationships (strong ties) becomes a necessity. The intranet facility can provide information on work, operational assistance, training and developments. However, when it comes to receiving assistance regarding personal matters, maintaining connections and mentorship appears to be necessary.

## **6.2.2 Network configuration**

### **6.2.2.1 Tie strength**

An independent t-test was used to examine the difference in mean between the foreign and domestic companies for the variable to understand the network configuration at work. The network structural configurations of social capital reflect the strength of the collaboration ties between the co-workers (Lin, 2001). Respondents were asked about whether they have friends within the work team. If the respondents indicate that they have friends within the workplace, then it is a strong tie. If it is not, then it is of a weak tie (Meyerson, 1994). An independent t-test has been conducted to understand the differences by applying it to FSA vs DSA; F1 vs D1; and D2 vs F2 (Table 6.4).

**Table 6.4: Tie strength (regional and country-level)**

To what extent do the respondents agree with the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I have friends within the work team	FSA	95	4.11	.844
	DSA	141	4.12	.906
	F1	51	4.25	.796
	D1	96	4.05	.863
	F2	44	3.93	.873
	D2	45	4.27	.986

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree

**FSA vs DSA**  
t= -0.131; p= 0.896

**F1 vs D1**  
t= 1.393; p= 0.166

**F2 vs D2**  
t= -1.697; p= 0.093

### 6.2.2.1.1 Regional level comparison

In the South Asian context, the significance (p-value) for the t-test is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.896 > 0.05$ ); therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. In other words, the variable does not have any significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. The mean is 4.11 for FSA, which means the majority of respondents agree that they have friends within the work team, whereas respondents from DSA have a mean score higher (4.12), which means that majority of the respondents agree to the statement. This means that the respondents from domestic companies in South Asia have slightly stronger ties with co-workers than the foreign companies.

### 6.2.2.1.2 Country-level comparison

#### 6.2.2.1.2.1 Sri Lankan context

In the Sri Lankan context (Table 6.4), the null hypothesis cannot be rejected with a p-value greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.166 > 0.05$ ). In other words, the variable does not

have any significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. The mean is 4.25 for F1, which means the majority of respondents strongly agree that they have friends within the work team. In contrast, respondents from D1 have a lower mean score (4.05) which means that the majority of the respondents agree with the statement. However, employees in both F1 and D1 shows a higher agreement that they have friends within the workplace. The study implies that the respondents from a foreign company in Sri Lanka have stronger ties within the workplace with co-workers than the domestic company.

The interviews explain these results in more depth. Harshani (Employee at F1) has commented that she has friends at the workplace. However, it is interesting to note that when it comes to the working environment, she mentions the importance of maintaining the same relationship with all the co-workers:

*“I have friends in the workplace, but it is a business at the end of the day. Yes, I have a bond with certain co-workers. But I have to keep one standard to all the staff.”*

Sithara (Supervisor at F1) mentioned that she has friends within the workplace. However, she highlighted that there should be a limit to friendship. According to her, there should be a professional relationship with everyone:

*“Yes. There should be a friendship up to some extent. But we should be professional always. To work peacefully and maintain a good relationship, we have to be friendly with the other employees.”*

Perera (Manager at F1) acknowledges the importance of having friendship at the workplace:

*“Friendship is 100% important. I have friends at the workplace. At the end of the day, the staff has to enjoy the work.”*

In summary, these findings from F1 indicate that the company has a culture of promoting friendship between co-workers. However, what can be highlighted from the above excerpt from Harshani and Sithara is that there should be a cordial, professional relationship of the same standard with everyone. This aligns with the study by Katzy *et al.* (2011), who found that weak ties have a more positive influence in a collaborative organisational context. The above narratives match the survey results that there are stronger ties between co-workers in the foreign company in Sri Lanka.

Turning now to D1, Kumar (Employee at D1) believes in balancing professional relationships and friendship. He recalled the issues between certain staff and that how friendship could be a tool in fixing these issues:

*“Friendship is necessary but not overboard friendship. It has to be professional as well. In my team, we had certain issues where people were satisfied being in a certain group and didn’t want certain people to be in that group. This is where friendship comes into play.”*

He further added about the importance of friendship in building trust between the co-workers:

*“I think it’s best if you are friends with your teammates. If there is only a professional relationship, you won’t be sure if you trust that person. So if you know the person very well and if you have an understanding of each other and the entire team and know each other’s strengths and weaknesses, then you will be able to help each other.”*



According to Mahela (Supervisor at D1), there is a need for friendship at the workplace as he believes it can create a better work environment when the co-workers are friends with each other:

*“In my point of view having a friendship at the workplace is very important, the more friends you have, the easier it is going to be for you to get something done. Also, the work environment will be better. It will feel like coming to work every day if the work environment is good. It will be like you are coming to meet your friends and spend time with your friends even though you have a workload.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D1) responded with a mix of both Kumar’s and Mahela’s viewpoints. He acknowledges the importance of finding the right balance and the importance of friendship, especially in a hospitality setting in Sri Lanka where working hours are longer when compared to other industries:

*“I think you have to find the right balance. Friendship is important, especially if you are working in the hospitality industry. It is good to have a good understanding and bonding with your colleagues. In our industry, it is not an 8-hour shift; it is 10-12 hours sometimes. So if you are not happy in that 12 hours, the productivity will not reach the level that is expected.”*

In Summary, Kumar and Somachandra mentioned the importance of finding the right balance of professional relationships and friendship. However, all three respondents have mentioned the benefits that friendship between co-workers can bring to the workplace. As noted by Kumar, friendship can foster trust between employees, which a professional relationship sometimes would fail to. Previous studies have emphasised that trust (relational dimension) and other variables in other dimensions evolve from social interactions as they act as an antecedent to the other dimensions (e.g. Gabarro, 1978; Gulati, 1995; Granovetter, 1985). The above narratives match with the survey results that there are stronger ties between co-workers at the domestic company in Sri Lanka. Kumar has mentioned the issues with having groups that create barriers for other people from

entering it. This aligns with several studies of the adverse impact (Morrow 1999; Szreter 2000; Ko, 2021; Kroll and Tantardini, 2019) that the groups/teams with more SC may cause to exclude outsiders.

#### **6.2.2.1.2.2 Indian context**

In the Indian context (Table 6.4), the null hypothesis cannot be rejected with a p-value greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.093 > 0.05$ ). In other words, the variable does not have any significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. The mean is 3.93 for F1, which means the majority of respondents strongly agree that they have friends within the work team, whereas respondents from D1 have a higher mean score (4.27) which means that the majority of the respondents strongly agree with the statement. This implies that the respondents from the domestic company in India have stronger ties within the workplace with co-workers than the foreign company.

Now moving on to the interview responses from F2, Dev (Supervisor at F2) acknowledges that the friendship culture is prevalent in his workplace. He further adds that being friends will help in overcoming the barriers in communication between the co-workers:

*“Personally, I believe there has to be a bonding and a friendship, and it is there in my workplace. Whenever there is a friendly atmosphere at work, you feel more motivated to work. You will also feel that there are no barriers in communication, and you can approach anyone if you need help regarding something.”*

Jai (Manager at F1) mentioned the presence of a friendship culture in his workplace and that how it benefits the company:

*“In my workplace, friendships are encouraged. I think it also stems from the top-down where managers might encourage that sort of friendship attitude across the hotel. It’s sort of the culture that goes through. I have worked in multiple hotels now, and I have a career span of 10 years. I can see the difference in hotels where there are good friendships and hotels which always operates on a professional basis.”*

Although he accepts the benefits of having friendships at the workplace, there are also certain negatives where if two colleagues are good friends, they tend not to do the right thing. Therefore, he mentions the importance of having a friendship but being professional when it comes to the workplace:

*“But sometimes, if you have that friendly attitude, you don’t do the right thing. I would say friendship is important, but eventually, it is a workplace, so it is important to have that right balance.”*

This particular view was echoed by Dharmendra (Manager at F2), where over friendship can affect professionalism and eventually impact a person’s conscience when deciding what is right and what is wrong:

*“It is a thin line; emotionally as human beings, we tend to like to become friends at work. But professionally, if the staff becomes friends, it kind of deviates and makes you hide each other’s mistakes, which should not happen. There is no problem with getting along with each other, but you need to have that courage of saying both what is right and what is wrong.”*

The result is somewhat counterintuitive where the managers (Jai and Dharmendra) of the company expect the employees to have friendships but have also mentioned its negatives. They think having friendships affects a person’s conscience to do the right thing. They believe that friendships can sometimes cause people to favour each other, which they think is inappropriate for running a hospitality business.

Moving on to D2, Varun (Supervisor at D2) mentioned the importance of having a balance between friendship and professional relationship:

*“I will say there should be a balance. If you turn a little too over-friendly, then you might overlook the professional side of your relationship. Having said that, it’s good to be friends and meet your workmates outside of work as this strengthens the relationship as a team.”*

According to Abhay (Supervisor at D2), there is a friendship culture within the company:

*“You have to be good friends, but obviously, we have to respect the hierarchy. Being a supervisor, sometimes we have to be commanding also. But the friendly atmosphere is always there, which will make everyone comfortable. Because in India we have long working hours could be 12-14 hours in one day especially in the hotel industry. If the hotel is busy, we will work 14 hours a day. We probably spend more time in our workplace than our home. Yes, sometimes some of the associates become very friendly, and they share their problems, and that might make it easier for them to concentrate on work.”*

Raveena (Manager at D2) believes friendship is important just for a person’s wellbeing and not particularly important in the work environment. She emphasises the necessity of maintaining a relationship with the co-workers as acquaintances for a healthy work environment but not necessarily friendship:

*“Having friends at work is a good thing in terms of the work environment, your happiness quotient. I don’t think it can affect the work environment if you are not best friends with colleagues. You can stay as acquaintances and have a healthy work environment. I think it is more important to have a healthy work relationship with someone rather than be very close friends.”*

Overall, these results suggest that there is a mixed opinion on having friendship at a workplace. Varun emphasises the importance of having a balance between professional relationships and friendship. On the other hand, Abhay mentioned the importance of friendship but highlighted that friendship may not always be possible with different hierarchies as they have to be commanding at some point. According to him, friendship

is essential in the workplace due to the long working hours in the Indian hospitality industry. Raveena had a different view and mentioned the importance of a healthy work relationship as acquaintances rather than having close friendships.

This section adds to the social capital literature on tie strength (Granovetter, 1973; Burt, 1992; Jack, 2005). From a management perspective, having a professional relationship is much valued than a personal friendship. It is reported that when there is an overboard friendship between the co-workers, it can affect their conscience to detent right and wrong. Therefore it is suggested that more than having a personal friendship (strong ties), a professional relationship or relationship as an acquaintance (weak ties) is are more instrumental in the hospitality industry working environment. From the workforces' perspective, if the co-workers are friends (strong ties), it can build a sense of trust and ease in the workplace (Jack, 2005). Especially in South Asia, where the work shifts are much longer than the regular 8-10 hours, the friendship element can help employees have a relaxed work environment. Several scholars mentioned the need for both strong and weak ties in a network because the nature of these ties influences the operation and structure of networks (Granovetter, 1973; Burt, 1992; Jack, 2005; Johannisson, 1986). The findings also confirm Lin's (2001) propositions of SC: the strength-of-strong ties and the strength-of-weak ties.

## **6.2.3 Appropriability of the work-related functions/activities**

### **6.2.3.1 Appropriability of trade unions**

Cross-tabulation has been conducted to understand the permissive behaviour of companies towards trade union associations and the effect it on the decision making of the employees. The groups have been reduced in the categorical variable from five groups (strongly disagree, disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree, strongly agree) to three groups (strongly disagree or disagree, neither agree nor disagree, agree or strongly agree). This has been done to have a better meaningful interpretation of the findings.

#### **6.2.3.1.1 Regional level comparison**

The responses from FSA and DSA have been cross-tabulated individually (Table 6.5). From FSA, 37 reported that they have a membership at a trade union association, and 54 responded that they do not. Of the 37 respondents who have membership in an external trade union association, 6 respondents strongly disagree or disagree that their company has allowed the employees to join these associations, whereas 14 respondents neither agree nor disagree that the company has permitted the employees to join these associations. However, the majority of the respondents reported their responses as strongly agree or agree (17). On the other hand, of the 54 respondents who do not have a membership at a trade union association, 9 respondents strongly disagree or disagree that their company has permitted them to join these associations, whereas 13 respondents neither agree nor disagree that the company has allowed the employees to join these associations. However, the majority of the respondents reported their response as strongly agree or agree (32). From the data, it is evident that most of the respondents strongly agree

or agree about the company policy with permission to join the trade union association. A total of 49 respondents out of the total 91 have reported that they strongly agree or agree about the company policy, out of which only 17 of them have external trade union membership. Out of 27 respondents who neither agree nor disagree with the permissive nature of the company, 14 of them have a membership. On the other hand, out of 15 respondents who strongly disagree or disagree with the company's permissive policy, 6 of them have a membership.

From DSA, 74 reported that they have a membership at a trade union association, and 56 responded that they do not. Of the 74 respondents who have membership in an external trade union association, 12 respondents strongly disagree or disagree that their company has permitted the employees to join these associations whereas, 20 respondents neither agree nor disagree that the company has allowed the employees to join these associations. However, the majority of the respondents reported their responses as strongly agree or agree (42). On the other hand, of the 56 respondents who do not have a membership at a trade union association, 18 respondents strongly disagree or disagree that their company has permitted them to join these associations whereas, 16 respondents neither agree nor disagree that the company has permitted the employees to join the trade union associations. However, the majority of the respondents reported their response as strongly agree or agree (22). It is evident that most of the respondents strongly agree or agree about the company policy with permission to join the trade union association. According to the data, 64 respondents out of the total 140 have reported that they strongly agree or agree about the company policy, out of which 42 of them have external trade union membership. Out of 36 respondents who neither agree nor disagree with the permissive nature of the company, 20 of them have a membership. On the other hand, out of 30

respondents who strongly disagree or disagree with the company's permissive nature, 12 of them have a membership.

**Table 6.5:** Connection to trade union associations (South Asian context)

<b>Company</b>				<b>My company permits me to join external trade unions</b>			<b>Total</b>
				<b>Strongly disagree or Disagree</b>	<b>Neither agree nor disagree</b>	<b>Strongly agree or Agree</b>	
FSA	Do you have membership/s subscription to an external trade union association?	Yes	Count	6	14	17	37
			Expected Count	6.1	11.0	19.9	37.0
		No	Count	9	13	32	54
			Expected Count	8.9	16.0	29.1	54.0
	Total		Count	15	27	49	91
			Expected Count	15.0	27.0	49.0	91.0
DSA	Do you have membership/s subscription to an external trade union association?	Yes	Count	12	20	42	74
			Expected Count	17.1	20.5	36.4	74.0
		No	Count	18	16	22	56
			Expected Count	12.9	15.5	27.6	56.0
	Total		Count	30	36	64	130
			Expected Count	30.0	36.0	64.0	130.0



### **6.2.3.1.2 Country-level comparison**

#### **6.2.3.1.2.1 Sri Lankan context**

The responses from F1 and D1 have been cross-tabulated separately (Table 6.6). From F1, 31 reported that they have a membership at a trade union association, and 19 responded that they do not. Of the 31 respondents who have membership in an external trade union association, 6 respondents strongly disagree or disagree that their company has permitted the employees to join these associations whereas, 11 respondents strongly agree or agree that the company has permitted the employees to join these associations. However, the majority of the respondents reported their responses as neither agree nor disagree (14). On the other hand, of the 19 respondents who do not have a membership at a trade union association, 4 respondents strongly disagree or disagree that their company has permitted them to join trade union associations. From the group of respondents, 6 reported that they strongly agree or agree with the statement. However, the majority of the respondents (9) reported their responses as neither agree nor disagree. It is evident that out of 50 respondents, only 17 believes that the company policy is to allow the staff to join the external trade organisation; however, only 11 of them have a membership. Surprisingly, the majority of the respondents (62%) have a membership at external trade unions; however, only 34% of the employees agreed that the company permits them to join these unions. The majority of the respondents (14) noted that they neither agree nor disagree that the company allows joining the external trade union associations. This could be due to the fear of the employees that the responses might get back to the company. It could also be due to a lack of communication from the company to the workforce, and they are unsure if the company allows it.

**Table 6.6:** Connection to trade union associations (Sri Lankan context)

Company				My company permits me to join external trade unions			Total	
				Strongly disagree or Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly agree or Agree		
F1	Do you have membership/s	Yes	Count	6	14	11	31	
			Expected Count	6.2	14.3	10.5	31.0	
	subscription to an external trade union association?	No	Count	4	9	6	19	
			Expected Count	3.8	8.7	6.5	19.0	
	Total			Count	10	23	17	50
				Expected Count	10.0	23.0	17.0	50.0
D1	Do you have membership/s	Yes	Count	7	16	35	58	
			Expected Count	9.6	15.3	33.1	58.0	
	subscription to an external trade union association?	No	Count	8	8	17	33	
			Expected Count	5.4	8.7	18.9	33.0	
	Total			Count	15	24	52	91
				Expected Count	15.0	24.0	52.0	91.0

The interviews explain these results in more depth. Harshani (Supervisor at F1) emphasised that the company does not allow them to join the trade union associations:

*“No, I don’t think this management will accept it. There are some unions we don’t want to be part of. Sometimes, if you want to get something sorted from the management or argue a management decision, we cannot do that by ourselves, so that is where the unions will be useful. In Sri Lanka, most people are using unions in a bad way. There is both good and bad in it. The unions have to be in the company and the employee side. This has to be balanced.”*

Sithara (Supervisor at F1) does not feel the need for membership in an external union. However, she feels it would be good to have a union within the company, which is not currently in place:

*“We don’t have any unions within the company. Personally I would prefer it. Because sometimes, if we request something ourselves, it doesn’t happen. So if we have a union we can get these things sorted through that. I mean, if there is a union inside the hotel. I am not interested in outside hotel unions.”*

From the managerial viewpoint, Perera (Manager at F1) mentioned that there is no objection from the management for the workforce to join an external trade union association. However, he mentioned the adverse impacts of the workforce having memberships at these unions:

*“There is no objection to an employee joining a labour union. But we don’t encourage much. The management is not against it, but we limit certain involvement with trade unions. When some people get involved in an issue that can be solved in a discussion, it sometimes goes into a labour action. This can create labour unrest.”*

The excerpt above highlights that the company does not encourage the workforce to be unionised externally as they have concerns about being misguided by certain unions. Perera mentioned the company practice in limiting the involvement of the workforce in the unions. On the other hand, Harshani noted that the company does not allow the workforce to join the external unions. Meanwhile, Sithara does not feel the need for an external union; instead, she finds the need for an internal union association within the company. These findings suggest that there is not much encouragement from the company to join an external trade union association. This is evident in the responses from both the employee and supervisory level informant.

Turning now to the domestic company in Sri Lanka, 58 informants from D1 reported that they have a membership at a trade union association, and 33 responded that they do not. Of the 58 respondents who have membership in an external trade union association, 7 respondents strongly disagree or disagree that their company has permitted the employees to join these associations whereas, 35 respondents strongly agree or agree that the

company has allowed the employees to join these associations. However, the majority of the respondents reported their responses as neither agree nor disagree (16). On the other hand, of the 33 respondents who do not have a membership at a trade union association, 8 respondents strongly disagree or disagree that their company has permitted them to join these associations, 8 of them reported that they neither agree nor disagree with the statement. However, the majority of the respondents (17) reported their responses as strongly agree or agree. From the data, it is evident that out of 91 respondents, 52 believes that the company policy is to allow the staff to join the external trade organisation; however, only 35 of them have a membership.

The most surprising aspect of the data is that majority of the staff reported that the company does not have an objection to having the workforce unionised externally (57% of the total respondents). A majority of the staff reported that they have a membership at external trade unions (64% of the total respondents). Still, 26% of the employees reported that they neither agree nor disagree that the company allow them to join trade union associations. This has been explored further in the interviews.

Kumar (Employee at D1) mentioned his ambiguity in whether the company allows him to join these external unions. However, he mentioned that he is part of a union within the hotel.

*“I am not sure if the company allows joining the external trade unions. But I am part of the internal union within the hotel.”*

Mahela (Supervisor at D1) emphasises that the companies cannot resist the workforce from joining the trade union associations. He further mentions the negatives of the external unions:

*“According to the SL labour law, the companies can’t have an objection to having the employee’s joining the trade union associations. But from my point of view, I will say it is unnecessary, but if you look at the Sri Lankan context, they actually don’t serve the purpose. They are more politically driven rather than employee-oriented. There are some areas that employees need help in, but the unions are not focussed on raising their voice because they don’t tally with their political agenda.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D1) mentioned a cordial relationship the company has with external trade unions. He believes both trade unions and the company can work together for the benefit of the employees. However, he feels that the unions should emphasise working together with the local and governmental authorities. He acknowledges that some employees might be more comfortable talking to the unions about their problems so that the unions will approach the management with it, and he mentioned it as a benefit to the company as well:

*“We work very closely with the external trade unions. Both parties have the same intention. Trade unions are there to see if they can work with the management to improve the staff’s livelihood. Especially in Sri Lanka, I think the trade unions should also work with the government to see what they can do to improve the staff’s livelihood. It is not always the employer who can do something such as things related to regulatory matters. The employer alone can only do so much. The benefit of external trade unions is that sometimes the employees’ feel more comfortable talking to them than the management. So we get more information when we have our regular meetings with the trade unions of what the team members are thinking and what their issues are.”*

Aravinda (Industry expert in Sri Lanka) mentioned that the trade unions in Sri Lanka are negative to the industry and primarily to the employees:

*“In theory, trade unions can be very good for employees and should ensure owners and managers are fair and equitable. However, the extent of politicisation of these unions in Sri Lanka has meant that they are mostly negative to the industry and employees themselves.”*

From the above excerpt, there were some positive and mostly negative comments on the external trade unions. Kumar showed uncertainty in the company’s stand in an employee joining an external trade union. Mahela mentioned the adverse impact these unions could potentially cause. He noted that the company does not have the authority to restrict the workforce from joining a trade union association as per the Sri Lankan labour law. Although both these responses depict that the company tries to limit the influence of the external trade unions within the workplace. However, Somachandra mentioned positives about the external trade unions from the management’s standpoint. He further mentioned the need for the unions to work with the local and central government as he believes certain employee needs cannot be fulfilled by the companies alone. This needs to be done at a governmental level. The response from the informant at the managerial level shows evidence of the company’s view on employees joining the trade unions.

#### **6.2.3.1.2.2 Indian context**

The responses from F2 and D2 have been cross-tabulated separately (Table 6.7). As per the data from F2, of the 41 informants who responded to the question, only 6 reported that they have a membership at a trade union association, and 35 responded that they do not. Of the 6 responses with membership in an external trade union association, all the 6 respondents strongly agree or agree that their company has permitted the employees to join these associations. On the other hand, of the 35 respondents who do not have a trade union membership, 5 respondents strongly disagree or disagree that their company has permitted them to join these associations whereas, 4 respondents neither agree nor

disagree that the company has allowed the employees to join these associations. However, the majority of the respondents reported their response as strongly agree or agree (26). From the data, it is evident that the majority of the respondents have permission from the company to join the trade union association. The data shows that 32 out of 41 of the total respondents strongly agree or agree to the permissive nature of the company; only 26 of them have a membership. On the other hand, out of 5 respondents who strongly disagree or disagree with the company's permissive policy, none have a membership. Out of 4 respondents who reported neither agree nor disagree about the company policy, none of them has external trade union membership. This is evident from the survey results as well, where only 6 respondents have a membership at the trade union associations from the 32 respondents who mentioned the permissive behaviour of the company.

**Table 6.7:** Connection to trade union associations (Indian context)

Company				My company permits me to join external trade unions			Total
				Strongly disagree or Disagree	Neither agree nor disagree	Strongly agree or Agree	
F2	Do you have membership/s	Yes	Count	0	0	6	6
			Expected Count	.7	.6	4.7	6.0
	subscription to an external trade union association?	No	Count	5	4	26	35
			Expected Count	4.3	3.4	27.3	35.0
	Total		Count	5	4	32	41
			Expected Count	5.0	4.0	32.0	41.0
D2	Do you have membership/s	Yes	Count	5	4	7	16
			Expected Count	6.2	4.9	4.9	16.0
	subscription to an external trade union association?	No	Count	10	8	5	23
			Expected Count	8.8	7.1	7.1	23.0
	Total		Count	15	12	12	39
			Expected Count	15.0	12.0	12.0	39.0

Looking into the interview responses from F1, all three informants from F2 have mentioned the negatives of external trade union associations.

Dev (Supervisor at F2) does not have a high opinion about the external trade unions:

*“Within my company, I don’t think these trade union associations have much of an influence. In my experience of working in the industry for over 3 years, I have never had any interaction with them. I am aware of some of these unions, but I don’t see them doing anything for the workforce.”*



Jai (Manager at F2) mentioned the international companies' policies, where people cannot join external trade unions after reaching certain managerial levels/positions. He further mentions that his company does not encourage the staff to unionise externally. He also mentions his experience with an internal union in his previous work in a domestic hotel in India:

*“The trade union situation in India was extremely complicated till a while back simply because international chains possibly mandate that after a certain level/position, they can't join these trade union associations. That has nothing to do with the company I work for. It has more to do with Indian laws. The supervisors and the employees are open to it, their contracts are not that strict, but this is the case for managerial contracts. Even with the domestic chain I worked at, the contract is quite tight. Trade unions in India tend to get political, and companies don't necessarily support it.*

Dharmendra (Manager at F2) echoed a similar view:

*“I think trade unions in India are very selfish minded. It's one way; it's their benefit against the organisations. Trade unions are more of a virus right now in India and not an advantage.”*

The single most striking observation to emerge from the interview response was the restriction of the managerial level staff (Jai and Dharmendra) in participating in the external trade unions. This is evident from the survey results, where only 6 respondents have a membership at the trade union associations. More than two-thirds of the participants (32 respondents) reported the permissive behaviour of the company. Interestingly, from a company standpoint, there is not much encouragement given to the workforce to join the external trade unions, which is evident in the survey responses. Jai mentioned the company's policy restricting staff from a certain hierarchy (Managerial staff) to join these unions. However, staff from the supervisory level and ordinary employees can join these unions. This had been counter checked (see Table 6.7). Among

the 6 respondents who have a union membership, 3 are from the managerial level. The rest 3 are the supervisory and ordinary level staff.

Turning now to the domestic company in India, of the 39 informants who responded to the question, 16 reported that they have a membership at a trade union association, and 23 responded that they do not. Of the 16 respondents who have membership in an external trade union association, 5 respondents strongly disagree or disagree that their company has allowed the employees to join them whereas, 4 respondents neither agree nor disagree that the company has permitted the employees to join these associations. However, the majority of the respondents reported their responses as agree strongly agree (7). On the other hand, of the 23 respondents who do not have a membership at a trade union association, 10 respondents strongly disagree or disagree that their company has permitted the employees to join trade union associations. From the group of respondents, only 5 reported that they agree or strongly agree with the statement. However, the majority of the respondents (8) reported their responses as neither agree nor disagree. From the data, it is evident that out of 39 respondents, 12 reported that the company policy is to allow the staff to join the external trade organisation; however, only 7 respondents have the membership. On the other hand, out of the 15 respondents who do not believe the company gave the employees their permission to join these unions, 5 of them have memberships at these associations.

From the interviews, Varun (Supervisor at D2) acknowledged the presence of the internal hotel labours union, which is managed and governed by the employees themselves. He mentioned the company's permissive behaviour when it comes to the employees being unionised externally:

*“As far as I’ve seen, we have an internal hotel labours union wherein people are enrolled, and the employees govern it, and the management of the company listens to them very proactively. As far as an external trade union is concerned, I haven’t really seen people going out for them, possibly because the internal association is in such a way that most of the things are carried out in a way it should be. So there is no need to go for an external trade union association. If I want to join an external union, the company wouldn’t have any problem with it because they always encourage finding new things that could help the company grow.*”

Abhay (Manager at D2) mentioned the negatives of trade unions:

*“I don’t personally feel like I want to be a part of it. On a personal note, sometimes, there are manipulations also happening. We have a union within the hotel but, of course, up to a certain level. Once the associates progress to an executive level, then he is out of the trade union. So the internal trade unions are there till the supervisory level.”*

Raveena (Manager at D2) mentioned that she was not very comfortable answering this question specifically pointed towards her hotel company. However, she said a few things generally about external trade unions in India, especially the importance of the unions working with the management for the betterment of the employees:

*“I am not very comfortable answering that question. But I think the workers union is helpful in many ways because it stands for the employees. It does bring in a lot of unity in terms of the employees. But I think the most important thing for them is to work with the management in terms of better functioning of the hotel because if both management and the trade unions work in tandem, then things will work out, and there won’t be any negative aspects to it.”*

According to Vishwanath (Industry expert in India):

*“In India, the trouble is that we have unionisation only at a certain level. It is at the bottom of the pyramid. I think it is a good way to make one’s voice heard. But beyond that, I don’t see any particular purpose of unionisation.”*

It is evident from the survey findings that it is common for the workforce from the domestic company (still less than 50%) to join the external trade union associations. These results also suggest a presence of internal unions within the hotels of the domestic company, which is not a prevalent practice in foreign companies in India. The informants from the interviews mentioned the permissive behaviour of the company in having the workforce being unionised externally. However, only around 50% of the workforce have a membership at these external unions. It can be assumed that this may be due to the presence of the internal employee unions; there is less attraction towards the external unions. It is interesting to note that hotels' internal unions are only available to the ordinary level employees and not the supervisors and managers. When looking at the distribution of the 16 respondents (see Table 6.7) who are part of an external union, it is surprising to see that 7 of them are from the managerial level, 7 from the supervisory level and only 2 from the ordinary level. This may be because only the ordinary employees have a union internally, which could be why it is mostly the executive level staff who have memberships at these external unions.

This section adds to the minimal literature on the role of trade unions in hospitality industry (Basnyat, Lovelock and Carr, 2016; Macaulay and Wood, 1992). It is found that external trade unions do not have any role in fostering social capital in an organisational context. The domestic companies in Sri Lanka and India have reported the presence of internal unions within each hotel. However, this has been only available to staff from supervisors and below. It is found that the presence of an internal union could potentially foster social capital between ordinary level employees. Still, the primary goal of these unions is to be a listener to the employee needs and present it to the management. It is found that the workforce at domestic companies in both India and Sri Lanka have a higher

percentage of the workforce who have memberships at external unions than their foreign counterpart.

A more precise measurement was required to understand the distribution of different hierarchy levels reported to have the membership at an external trade organisation. The null hypothesis ( $H_0$ ) here is that there is no difference between the job role and the decision to join an external trade union association. Whereas the alternative hypothesis ( $H_a$ ) is that there is a difference between the job role and the decision to join an external trade union association. The Chi-square test was used to determine the significance with  $\alpha$  value of 0.05.

When looking at the Sri Lankan context, For F1 (Table 6.9), the significance (p-value) for the chi-square test is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.525 > 0.05$ ). Therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. In this case, the null hypothesis is that there is no significant difference between the job roles and the decision to join an external trade union association, and it has to be accepted. As shown in Table 6.8, employees from the supervisory level have the highest percentage (77.8%) of respondents within the job roles who have a membership at a trade union association, even though it is underrepresented with only 7 respondents. On the other hand, for D1 (Table 6.9), the significance (p-value) for the Pearson Chi-square test is higher than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.909 > 0.05$ ). Therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected and that there is no significant difference between job roles and the decision to join an external trade union association. As shown in Table 6.8, employees from the ordinary level staff have the highest percentage (68.8%) of respondents within the job roles who have a membership at a trade union association. In both the foreign and domestic companies in Sri Lanka, the decision to join external

associations is completely independent of the employees' job roles. As the result is non-significant in both the companies, there is no need to look into the effect size.

**Table 6.8:** Job role versus decision to join trade unions (Sri Lankan context)

Company				Do you have membership/subscription to an external trade union association?		Total	
				Yes	No		
F1	Job role	Managerial staff	Count	14	10	24	
			Expected Count	14.7	9.3	24.0	
			% within Job role	58.3%	41.7%	100.0%	
	Supervisor	Count	7	2	9		
		Expected Count	5.5	3.5	9.0		
		% within Job role	77.8%	22.2%	100.0%		
	Ordinary staff member	Count	9	7	16		
		Expected Count	9.8	6.2	16.0		
		% within Job role	56.3%	43.8%	100.0%		
	Total	Count	30	19	49		
		Expected Count	30.0	19.0	49.0		
		% within Job role	61.2%	38.8%	100.0%		
D1	Job role	Managerial staff	Count	28	16	44	
			Expected Count	28.2	15.8	44.0	
			% within Job role	63.6%	36.4%	100.0%	
	Supervisor	Count	20	12	32		
		Expected Count	20.5	11.5	32.0		
		% within Job role	62.5%	37.5%	100%		
	Ordinary staff member	Count	11	5	16		
		Expected Count	10.3	5.7	16.0		
		% within Job role	68.8%	31.3%	100%		
					59	33	92
					59.0	33.0	92.0
					64.1%	35.9%	100%

**Table 6.9: Chi-Square tests (Sri Lankan context)**

Company		Value	df	Asymptotic Significance (2-sided)
F1	Pearson Chi-Square	1.290 <sup>a</sup>	2	.525
	N of Valid Cases	49		
D1	Pearson Chi-Square	.190 <sup>a</sup>	2	.909
	N of Valid Cases	92		

**F1:** 1 cell (16.7%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 3.49.

**D1:** 0 cells (0.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 5.74.

On the other hand, in the Indian context, since the expected count is less than 5 in both F2 and D2 (Table 6.10), where in F2 there is 3 cells with expected count less than 5 and in D2, 2 cells have an expected count less than 5. So the standard Pearson chi-square test cannot be used; instead, Fisher's exact tests result is used. For F2, the p-value is 1.000 (Table 6.11), which is way greater than the standard  $\alpha$  value of 0.05; therefore, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. In this case, the null hypothesis is that there is no difference between the job roles and the decision to join an external trade union association, and it has to be accepted. F2 has a somewhat equal distribution of participating employees in different job roles. As shown in Table 6.10, employees from the supervisory level have the highest percentage (90.9%) of respondents within the job roles who do not have a membership at a trade union association. On the other hand, for D2, the p-value of Fisher's exact test is 0.218 (Table 6.11). As the p-value is greater than 0.05, the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. There is no significant difference between job roles and the decision to join an external trade union association in the domestic hotel in India. D2 has a somewhat equal distribution of participating employees in different job roles. As shown in Table 6.10, employees from the ordinary staff levels have the highest percentage (81.8%) of respondents within the job roles who have a membership at a trade union association. In both the foreign and domestic companies in India, the decision to join

external associations is completely independent of the employees' job roles. As the result is non-significant in both the companies, there is no need to look into the effect size.

**Table 6.10: Job role versus decision to join trade unions (Indian context)**

Company				Do you have membership/subscription to an external trade union association?		Total
				Yes	No	
F1	Job role	Managerial staff	Count	3	16	19
			Expected Count	2.7	16.3	19.0
			% within Job role	15.8%	84.2%	100.0%
		Supervisor	Count	1	10	11
			Expected Count	1.6	9.4	11.0
			% within Job role	9.1%	90.9%	100.0%
		Ordinary staff member	Count	2	10	12
			Expected Count	1.7	10.3	12.0
			% within Job role	16.7%	83.3%	100.0%
		Total	Count	6	36	42
			Expected Count	6.0	36.0	42.0
			% within Job role	14.3%	85.7%	100.0%
D1	Job role	Managerial staff	Count	7	11	18
			Expected Count	6.9	11.1	18.0
			% within Job role	38.9%	61.1%	100.0%
		Supervisor	Count	7	6	13
			Expected Count	5.0	8.0	13.0
			% within Job role	53.8%	46.2%	100%
		Ordinary staff member	Count	2	9	11
			Expected Count	4.2	6.8	11.0
			% within Job role	18.2%	81.8%	100%
		Total	Count	16	26	42
			Expected Count	16.0	26.0	42.0
			% within Job role	38.1%	61.9%	100%



**Table 6.11: Fisher's Exact Test (Indian context)**

Company		Value	Exact Sig. (2-sided)
F1	Fisher's Exact test	.453	1.000
	N of Valid Cases	42	
D1	Fisher's Exact test	3.129	.218
	N of Valid Cases	42	

**F2:** 3 cells (50.0%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 1.57

**D2:** 2 cells (33.3%) have expected count less than 5. The minimum expected count is 4.19

### **6.2.3.2 Appropriability of social events/activities**

#### **6.2.3.2.1 Regional level comparison**

Cross-tabulation has been conducted between the involvement in social events/activities and whether these events allow fostering the network within the workplace. This has been conducted in FSA and DSA (Table 6.12). From FSA, 55 reported that they participate in these events, and 37 responded that they do not. Of the 55 respondents who participated in these social activities, 51 reported that the employees could increase their network within the hotels while participating in it. At the same time, 4 respondents do not accept that they have the opportunity at these events. On the other hand, of the 37 respondents who did not participate in these activities, 9 respondents reported that the employees have the opportunity to increase their network within the hotels while participating in the social events, whereas 28 respondents do not accept that they have that opportunity at these events. From DSA, 102 reported that they are involved in the social events, and 95 responded that they do not. Of the 102 respondents who are involved, 95 reported that the employees can increase their network within the hotels while participating in these events. Whereas, 7 respondents do not accept that they have the opportunity at these events. On

the other hand, of the 24 respondents who do not participate in the social events, 10 respondents reported that the employees could increase their network within the hotels while participating in the social events, whereas 14 respondents do not accept that they have that opportunity at these events.

**Table 6.12:** Appropriability of social events/activities (South Asian context)

				Does these social events allow you to interact and exchange information with employees within your department, employees from different departments of the hotel, which includes senior managers?		Total
				Yes	No	
Company						
FSA	Are you involved in any social events/activities for employees?	Yes	Count	51	4	55
			Expected Count	35.9	19.1	55.0
	No	Count	9	28	37	
		Expected Count	24.1	12.9	37.0	
	Total	Count	60	32	92	
		Expected Count	60.0	32.0	92.0	
DSA	Are you involved in any social events/activities for employees?	Yes	Count	95	7	102
			Expected Count	85.0	17.0	102.0
	No	Count	10	14	24	
		Expected Count	20.0	4.0	24.0	
	Total	Count	105	21	126	
		Expected Count	105.0	21.0	126.0	

### **6.2.3.2.2 Country-level comparison**

#### **6.2.3.2.2.1 Sri Lankan context**

Firstly, the responses from F1 and D1 have been cross-tabulated (Table 6.13). From F1, 40 reported that they are involved in social events, and 10 responded that they do not. Of the 40 respondents who are involved, 38 reported that the employees could increase their network within the hotels whilst participating in it, whereas, 2 respondents do not accept that they have the opportunity at these events. On the other hand, of the 10 respondents who do not participate, 2 respondents reported that the employees have the opportunity to increase their network within the hotels whilst participating in the social events, whereas, 8 respondents do not accept that they have that opportunity at these events. So in total, of the 50 respondents, 10 reported that these events do not allow them to interact and exchange information with different actors in their workplace, and 40 responded that they do.

**Table 6.13:** Appropriability of social events/activities (Sri Lankan context)

Company				Does these social events/activities allow you to interact and exchange information with employees within your department, employees from different departments of the hotel, which includes senior managers?		Total
				Yes	No	
F1	Are you involved in any social events/activities for employees?	Yes	Count	38	2	40
			Expected Count	32.0	8.0	40.0
	No	Count	2	8	10	
		Expected Count	8.0	2.0	10.0	
	Total	Count	40	10	50	
		Expected Count	40.0	10.0	50.0	
D1	Are you involved in any social events/activities for employees?	Yes	Count	72	6	78
			Expected Count	65.9	12.1	78.0
	No	Count	4	8	12	
		Expected Count	10.1	1.9	12.0	
	Total	Count	76	14	90	
		Expected Count	76.0	14.0	90.0	

Moving on to the interview responses, Harshani (Employee at F1) mentioned the importance of these events:

*“These social events give an opportunity to gather and talk to staff from other departments. So we can share our ideas and have a chat with them. But the activities should be changed frequently, and there should be new events. Because some people have different skills right so if the company is hosting the same events/activities, then these people will not be interested in participating.”*

Sithara (Supervisor at F1) also had a good experience at these social events in terms of networking between the co-workers:

*“Of course, when we are working, we just focus on the work. But when we have social events, that’s when we can have a personal conversation. That’s where we identify each other more. Sometimes it would be great if our families could participate in these events.”*

Similar to Harshani and Sithara, Perera (Manager at F1) also had a good experience being part of social events/activities:

*“Social events created bonding between the employer and the employees. Sometimes these events can take away certain frustrations. This will also help build morale.”*

All the three interview respondents from F1 mentioned that social events/activities help them to engage and exchange with the staff in their department and other departments. This matches with the survey results where 80% of the survey informants (Table 6.13) agreed that the social events/activities assist in interacting and exchanging information with different actors in their workplace. Harshani further added the importance of changing the events frequently as this would benefit the overall workforce and not make anyone feel left out. Sithara mentioned the importance of inviting the staff families as well to these events. The survey response indicates that 20% of the employees do not participate in these events.

From D1, 78 reported being involved in these events, and 12 responded that they do not. Of the 78 respondents who are involved, 72 of them reported that the employees could increase their network within the hotels whilst participating in the events, whereas 6 respondents do accept that they have the opportunity at these events. On the other hand, of the 12 respondents who do not participate, 4 respondents reported that the employees could increase their network within the hotels whilst participating in it, whereas 8 respondents do not accept that they have that opportunity at these events. So in total, of the 90 respondents, 14 reported that these events do not allow them to interact and

exchange information with different actors in their workplace and, 76 responded that they do.

Focussing on the interview responses from D1, Kumar (Employee at D1) acknowledges the easiness these events bring in socialising with individuals from different hierarchies:

*“There are managers and employees who take part in the social events. In my experience, these social events had helped me to talk to the managers freely. I think these events bring unity.”*

Mahela (Supervisor at D1) mentioned the importance of these events and how efficient these events are for building relationships in his workplace, especially with individuals from different hierarchies:

*“When there are social events/activities, you get the chance to meet the managers and the other employees. You participate in these events just as colleagues. Our company does a good job in organising these events. So you get to mingle with people, including the General Manager.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D1) mentioned that these events could create bonding between the staff:

*“Normally, we have annual events, whether it is sports activities, gatherings, or award ceremonies. These are more for team building. This is when the staff gets time out of work to get together with their team. Not only within the department but also with the other department staff as well.”*

All the three interview respondents from D1 mentioned that social events/activities help them to engage and exchange with the staff in their department and other departments. A total of around 90% of the survey respondents mentioned that they participated in these events. Of the 90 respondents, 76 (85%) of them responded to have the opportunity to interact and exchange information and ideas between co-workers. Therefore both survey and interview findings indicate that the social events/activities fosters SC in D1.

#### **6.2.3.2.2.2 Indian context**

The responses from F2 and D2 have been cross-tabulated (Table 6.14). From F2, 15 reported that they are involved in the social activities at the hotel, and 27 responded that they do not. Of the 15 respondents involved in these events, 13 reported that they could increase their network whilst participating, whereas 2 respondents do not agree with it. On the other hand, of the 27 respondents who are not involved in these events, 7 respondents reported that the employees have the opportunity to increase their network within the hotels whilst participating, whereas 20 respondents do not agree with it. So in total, of the 42 respondents, 22 reported that these events do not allow them to interact and exchange information with different actors in their workplace, and 20 responded that they do.

**Table 6.14:** Appropriability of social events/activities (Indian context)

				Does these social events allow you to interact and exchange information with employees within your department, employees from different departments of the hotel, which includes senior managers?		Total
				Yes	No	
Company				Yes	No	Total
F2	Are you involved in any social events for employees?	Yes	Count	13	2	15
			Expected Count	7.1	7.9	15.0
		No	Count	7	20	27
			Expected Count	12.9	14.1	27.0
	Total		Count	20	22	42
			Expected Count	20.0	22.0	42.0
D2	Are you involved in any social events for employees?	Yes	Count	23	1	24
			Expected Count	19.3	4.7	24.0
		No	Count	6	6	12
			Expected Count	9.7	2.3	12.0
	Total		Count	29	7	36
			Expected Count	29.0	7.0	36.0

Cross-checking the survey findings with the interview responses, Dev (Supervisor at F2) acknowledged that the social events/activities provide a platform for him to connect with different managers. He further added the difference between domestic companies and foreign companies when it comes to these events:

*“I think whilst participating in the social events/activities, I can connect with the staff we don’t work with who may be from a different department. In general, my company is already doing a great job with social activities. I have also worked in domestic companies, so I would like to see this culture implemented across domestic companies. I would like them to learn from the foreign brands on this.”*



Jai (Manager at F2) emphasised the importance of social events/activities in having a cordial relationship with co-workers. He recalls his experience of working in a domestic company previously where he had a different experience:

*“After I joined this company I realised it is very important to have these social events or gatherings. I’ve previously worked in a domestic company, the company was employee-friendly, but both companies have a very different way of handling the same situation. My company is more social with frequent meetings and lunches. This helps people to interact outside work more frequently. The cultural background makes a huge difference. India has different work culture, and the large factor is the difference in the national culture of the company. As far as the foreign company is concerned, there is consistency in the social events/activities.”*

Dharmendra (Manager at F2) acknowledged the importance of work social events in creating a connection between the co-workers:

*“In our company, there are many initiatives in terms of social activities. I think this is very important in the industry we work in, and the employees must get into that social connect to work outside their comfort zone.”*

In summary, the above narratives from all three informants show their experiences of participating in the social events and how these have helped create a connection between co-workers from different departments and hierarchies. The excerpts from Dev and Jai stresses their experience working in domestic and foreign companies and the difference between the two regarding providing a platform for socialising. Dev mentioned the need for domestic companies to adapt the practices of foreign companies when it comes to social events/activities. This view was echoed by Jai where he emphasised that the foreign company he works in provides a better platform and more opportunities for the employees to socialise and bond with each other. However, the findings from the survey do not match with these interview responses, as from 42 respondents from the company, only 15 of them mentioned participating in any social activities. More than 50% of the respondents reported that they do not get the opportunity to socialise, interact and exchange information with their co-workers in these events.

From D2, 24 reported being involved in social events, and 12 responded that they do not. Of the 24 respondents who are involved, 23 reported that the employees could increase their network within the hotels whilst participating, whereas 1 respondent did not agree to it. On the other hand, of the 12 respondents who are not involved in these events, 6 respondents reported that the employees could increase their network within the hotels whilst participating, whereas 6 respondents do not accept that they have that opportunity at these events. So in total, of the 36 respondents, 7 reported that these events do not allow them to interact and exchange information with different actors in their workplace, and 29 responded that they do.

Moving on to the interview responses from D2, Varun (Supervisor at D2) acknowledged the necessity of social events to facilitate good relationships between co-workers and get a break from the monotony of work. He further added the need for more frequency of these events within the company and with novel approaches:

*“I think that the social events do help build a good relationship. Firstly, I believe that when such social activities are happening, you get out of the monotony of work. I would say more of these events should be there rather than having once a month. Having novel ideas in these activities would be good as the interests of people evolve.”*

Abhay (Supervisor at D2) echoed the experience of Varun and mentioned the importance of social events in creating a bond between co-workers:

*“We have different events such as inter hotel and intra hotel tournaments. We have tournaments and competitions, including all the company hotels in Delhi. So when we practice and spend time for this together, it can create a bond.”*

Raveena (Manager at D2) had a similar view of Varun and Abhay where these events can take away the stress of work and can create connections between co-workers from other departments:

*“The social events might help to have an interdepartmental connection. Sometimes you don’t get to meet everyone at work often. But at these events, you get to meet these people.”*

From D2, the responses from the interviews match with the survey findings that the social events/activities allow the overall workforce to interact and exchange information between staff from within the company. Over 80% of the survey participants indicated that these events allow them to interact and exchange information with different actors in their workplace. This resonates with the interview responses. However, it is interesting that Varun (Supervisor at D2) mentioned the need for more frequency in these events. This was also mentioned by the foreign company respondents (Dev and Jai) from their experience of working in domestic companies in the past. It is evident from the survey findings that almost two-thirds of the participants (66%) take part in these social events. Therefore, it is important to note that there is a need to have more of these events in the domestic companies than the foreign companies.

This section adds to the minimal literature on the appropriability of social events/activities on social capital. It is found that the work social events do have an influence in fostering social capital in an organisational context. The results show that social events/activities in F1, D1 and D2 allow the workforce to improve their network within the workplace. However, from F2, there were contradicting findings between survey results and interviews where surveys indicate that majority of the workforce does not get the opportunity to socialise, interact and exchange information with their co-workers in these events/activities. Contrarily, the interview findings depict that there is enough opportunity for the workforce to build relationships at these events.

## 6.3 Cognitive social capital

### 6.3.1 Shared languages and codes

There were tests undertaken to examine the presence of shared languages and codes and compare the difference in mean between the foreign and domestic companies. As noted by Chiu *et al.* (2006), shared language helps share ideas and enhances the efficiency in communication between people with similar backgrounds or practical experiences.

**Table 6.15:** Shared language (regional and country-level)

Thinking about the people that you work with, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
There are common terminologies among employees, which facilitates our tasks	FSA	95	4.07	.802
	DSA	139	4.16	.828
	F1	51	4.22	.610
	D1	94	4.07	.779
	F2	44	3.91	.960
	D2	45	4.33	.905

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree

**FSA vs DSA**

t= -0.777; p= 0.438

**F1 vs D1**

t= 1.120; p= 0.264

**F2 vs D2**

t= -2.146; p= 0.035

### **6.3.1.1 Regional level comparison**

The variable (presence of common terminologies) does not have any significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in the regional level comparison ( $0.438 > 0.05$ ). However, it can be highlighted that the mean score is slightly higher in the DSA ( $4.07 < 4.16$ ) (Table 6.15). To sum up, both FSA and DSA tend to have an environment where social interaction through common language is encouraged. However, it is found to be slightly higher in the domestic companies.

### **6.3.1.2 Country-level comparison**

#### **6.3.1.2.1 Sri Lankan context**

The variable (presence of common terminologies) does not have any significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in Sri Lanka ( $0.264 > 0.05$ ). However, it can be highlighted that the mean score is slightly higher in the foreign company ( $4.22 > 4.07$ ) (Table 6.15). To sum up, both the companies in Sri Lanka tend to have an environment where social interaction through a common language is encouraged. However, it is found to be slightly higher in the foreign company. The country in the recent past has had decades of conflict based on the ethnic groups who speak different languages (Tamil and Sinhala) (Herath, 2015). It is found from the research that there is a common language culture within the companies. It was highly sensitive to ask which language is commonly used in the participating companies. Some of the interview respondents (Sithara and Perera) mentioned Sinhala as the national language and that it is the preferred spoken language in the hotel along with English. The question that arises

here is whether this means the Tamil population (who cannot speak Sinhala) are ignored when it comes to acquisition due to the language barrier.

#### **6.3.1.2.2 Indian context**

The variable (presence of common terminologies) do have a significant difference ( $0.035 < 0.05$ ) in the mean score between the different types of companies in India. The mean score for F2 is 3.91, which means the majority of respondents agree that the employees use common terminologies that facilitate their tasks. On the other hand, respondents from D2 have a mean score higher (4.33), which means that the majority of the respondents strongly agree with the statement. To sum up, both the companies in India tend to have an environment where social interaction through common language is encouraged. There is a significant difference found between the responses from the two companies. The majority of the respondents from the foreign company agree that they have common language or terminologies at the workplace whereas, respondents from the domestic company strongly agree that there is a presence of common terminologies among the staff. This could be because many staff have been working in the domestic company for 25 years (from Raveena's response), making it easier for them and the newly recruited staff to adapt.

### 6.3.2 Shared vision

Tests have been conducted to understand the level of collective aspiration of the employees towards the company's vision. This has been assessed on a regional and country-level (Table 6.16). As noted by Tsai and Ghoshal (1998), shared vision enhance the free exchange of ideas and resources between the actors, which helps them see the potential value of combining and exchanging resources.

#### 6.3.2.1 Regional level comparison

The variable does not have a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in the regional level comparison ( $0.230 > 0.05$ ). It can be highlighted that the mean score is slightly higher in the DSA ( $4.07 < 4.16$ ) (Table 6.16). To sum up, the respondents in the FSA tend to have a slightly higher level of collective aspiration for the future of the company compared to the domestic counterpart.

**Table 6.16:** Shared vision (regional and country-level)

Thinking about the people that you work with, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My co-workers and I share the similar ambition for the future of the company	FSA	95	4.05	.892
	DSA	141	3.90	.988
	F1	51	4.24	.710
	D1	96	3.97	.876
	F2	44	3.84	1.033
	D2	45	3.76	1.190

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree

**FSA vs DSA**

$t= 1.204; p= 0.230$

**F1 vs D1**

$t= 1.870; p= 0.063$

**F2 vs D2**

$t= 0.361; p= 0.719$

### 6.3.2.2 Country-level comparison

#### 6.3.2.2.1 Sri Lankan context

The variable does not significantly differ in the mean score between the different companies in Sri Lanka ( $0.063 > 0.05$ ). However, it can be highlighted that the mean score is slightly higher in F1 ( $4.24 > 3.97$ ) (Table 6.16). To sum up, the respondents in the foreign company in Sri Lanka tend to have a higher level of collective aspiration for the company's future than the domestic counterpart.

Moving on to the interview findings, from F1, Harshani (Employee at F1) and Sithara (Supervisor at F1) mentioned that not all the staff are aware of the company goals and vision. Still, both of them confirmed that they are aware of the company vision. This aligns with the survey responses that the majority of the workforce is aware of the company vision.

From D1, Kumar (Employee from D1) and Mahela (Supervisor from D1) agreed that the company goals are informed to them. Mahela commented:

*“Yes, everyone is told about the goals at the induction, and we do have training programmes that we have to do. During this, we go through our mission, vision and goals. It is a repetitive thing we do every week.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D1) recalled the practices in the hotel when it comes to communicating the goals and vision to the overall workforce:



*“The entire team is involved in setting goals. They are setting the strategies to achieve these goals, and they present them to the higher management. Once the strategy is finalised, the communication has to go top-down to everyone in the hotel. There should be a continuous dialogue whether the strategy is in line with the goal or if you need to make some adjustments. And every month, there will be a review.”*

From the excerpts above from D1, there is enough evidence to authenticate that there is a structured practice within the company to give information on the company goals/vision to the workforce. This aligns with the survey responses, which indicate that the workforce shares a similar ambition for the company’s future.

#### **6.3.2.2.2 Indian context**

The variable does not have a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies in India ( $0.719 > 0.05$ ). It is interesting to note that the mean score is slightly higher in F2 ( $3.84 > 3.76$ ) (Table 6.16). To sum up, the respondents in the foreign company in India tend to have a higher level of collective aspiration for the company’s future compared to the domestic counterpart.

Moving on to the interview responses at F2, Dev (Supervisor at F2) acknowledged that all the staff are made aware of the short and long term goals at the HR sessions:

*“All the employees are aware of the short term and long term goals. We have HR sessions in which we discuss it.”*

There was a similar response from Jai (Manager at F2):

*“Every time the goals change, we will be notified. Every time they change something, they make sure to put that on the intranet and make sure there are webinars about it. They make sure the managers get training about it, and the managers train the middle managers, and the middle managers train the employees.”*

However, there was a contradicting statement by Dharmendra (Manager at F2) where he mentioned that not all the workforce are informed about the company goals/vision:

*“Up to supervisory level, yes. But below that, a room attendant or kitchen steward might not know the company goals.”*

The survey findings depict an agreement among the employees at F2 that they share a similar vision for the company. However, there was a slightly lower mean score (3.84), irrespective of the fact that there is an agreement towards the statement. Dev and Jai mentioned that they are informed about the company goals and that all the company staff are aware of them. Dharmendra acknowledges that every employee above the supervisory level is aware of the company goals but not the ordinary employees. This could be why the mean score is lower where ordinary employees who participated in the surveys may not feel informed about the company goals.

From D2, Varun (Supervisor at D2) mentioned that not every company goals were informed to the employees; however, certain financial goals were known to the overall workforce:

*“I think every company’s goal is to achieve higher revenues. They would probably want to conduct cost-cutting, better financial management etc. These are probably things that every employee knows. Every company goals are not informed to the employees.”*

Abhay (Supervisor at D2) acknowledged that he is informed of the company goals:

*“Yes, definitely. Whenever we get the training programmes, we are made aware of it by the managers.”*

Raveena (Manager at D2) emphasises the importance of informing each employee about the company goals. She acknowledges that each employee at the company has the provision to know this information:

*“Yes, I think it is extremely important that each and every person from top to bottom be aware of the short term and long term goals, the vision of the company. If someone wants to know this, everyone has access to it. You don’t need to go and ask someone for it. You just need to log in to the intranet and check. It is also regularly discussed with employees.”*

In summary, it is clear from the response from Varun and Abhay that up to the supervisory level, all the staff are aware of the company goals. Varun acknowledged that all the employees might not be aware of the company goals. Raveena mentioned that all the employees can check this on the intranet and that this information is regularly discussed with the employees. It is important to note here that ordinary employees do not have the provision to the intranet. This could potentially be why the mean score for the survey is slightly low irrespective of the fact that there is an overall agreement to the statement. Even though the survey findings show an agreement from the overall workforce of their knowledge on the company goals, the mean score is far from strongly agreeing.

These findings add new knowledge to the literature on shared vision within the hospitality industry. The results suggest that in all four participating companies, the ordinary level employees are not notified of the respective company’s short-term and long-term goals. The company’s goals and vision are regularly notified to the supervisory and managerial level, and the ordinary level employees are ignored in this. The potential impact of this segregation could be studied in future research.

## **6.4 Relational social capital**

### **6.4.1 Trust**

An independent t-test was used to explore the difference in mean between the foreign and domestic companies for each variable to understand the respondents' level of trust towards different actors, authorities and institutions. Two sample means (domestic and foreign) are compared for each variable to see if they are significantly different.

#### **6.4.1.1 Regional level comparison**

Table 6.17 shows the company, number of responses, mean and standard deviation between FSA and DSA. Of the eight items used to understand the level of trust of the workforce in FSA and DSA, three variables were found to have rejected the null hypothesis ( $p < .05$ ). In contrast, the other five variables failed to reject the null hypothesis ( $p > .05$ ). In other words, it is found that there is a significant difference in mean when it comes to a) trust towards co-workers within the same department, d) trust towards the hotel management, and h) trust towards the regional government tourism board. However, respondents from FSA and DSA have reported that they fully or partially trust all the actors, authorities or institutions mentioned in the survey options. It is found that respondents from FSA have more trust towards most actors, authorities and institutions, except for trade union associations, where respondents from DSA have shown more trust in these institutions. The most surprising aspect of the data is that the respondents from foreign companies have significantly more trust in their management and parent organisation than domestic companies. There was a need for

further exploration on this, but first, this had to be tested in the country-level contexts to see if there were any similarities to these findings.

**Table 6.17:** Level of trust (South Asian context)

To what extent do you trust the following?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Co-workers from my department <sup>a)</sup>	FSA	95	1.37	.620
	DSA	140	1.60	.737
Co-workers from a different department <sup>b)</sup>	FSA	92	1.65	.782
	DSA	141	1.91	.755
Senior managers <sup>c)</sup>	FSA	95	1.51	.617
	DSA	140	1.74	.801
Hotel management <sup>d)</sup>	FSA	95	1.42	.594
	DSA	141	1.86	.923
Parent organisation <sup>e)</sup>	FSA	93	1.55	.700
	DSA	141	1.65	.802
Professional training associations <sup>f)</sup>	FSA	94	1.71	.728
	DSA	141	1.92	.829
Trade/labour union associations <sup>g)</sup>	FSA	95	2.24	1.079
	DSA	140	2.18	.931
Regional government tourism department <sup>h)</sup>	FSA	95	1.91	.759
	DSA	141	2.13	.980

Note: (1) Fully trust, (2) Partially trust, (3) Neither trust nor distrust, (4) Partially distrust, (5)

Distrust<sup>17</sup>

<sup>a)</sup>  $t = -2.601$ ;  $p = 0.010$

<sup>e)</sup>  $t = -1.022$ ;  $p = 0.308$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t = -2.509$ ;  $p = 0.013$

<sup>f)</sup>  $t = -1.989$ ;  $p = 0.048$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t = -2.367$ ;  $p = 0.019$

<sup>g)</sup>  $t = 0.481$ ;  $p = 0.631$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t = -4.427$ ;  $p = 0.000$

<sup>h)</sup>  $t = -2.023$ ;  $p = 0.044$

### 6.4.1.2 Country-level comparison

#### 6.4.1.2.1 Sri Lankan context

Of the eight items used to understand the level of trust of the workforce in F1 and D1 (Table 6.18), all the variables failed to reject the null hypothesis except trust towards the

<sup>17</sup> Fully trust: 1 to 1.80

Partially trust: 1.81 to 2.60

Neither trust nor distrust: 2.61 to 3.40

Partially distrust: 3.41 to 4.20

Fully distrust: 4.21 to 5

hotel management ( $0.01 < 0.05$ ). This implies that only this variable has shown a significant difference in mean between F1 and D1. For this variable, the mean score is 1.59 for F1, which means the majority of respondents fully trust their hotel management. At the same time, respondents from D1 have a mean score of 1.98, which means that the majority of respondents partially trust their hotel management. This has been tested further with the help of interviews with the workforce. The respondents from F1 and D1 have reported that they fully or partially trust all the actors, authorities or institutions mentioned in the survey options. It is found that respondents from F1 have slightly more trust towards most actors, authorities and institutions, except for trade union associations, where respondents from D1 have shown more trust in these institutions. Interestingly, the mean scores from F1 and D1 indicate that the respondents partially trust the external trade unions. However, respondents from the domestic company have shown slightly higher trust towards these unions.

The most surprising aspect of the data is that there is significantly more trust the workforce from F1 has towards their management than the workforce from D1 towards their management. Although there is no significant difference, the mean score for trust towards the parent organisation is also higher towards the foreign company than their domestic counterpart. These two variables (trust towards hotel management & trust towards parent organisation) have been explored further using interviews.

**Table 6.18:** Level of trust (Sri Lankan context)

To what extent do you trust the following?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Co-workers from my department <sup>a)</sup>	F1	51	1.53	.731
	D1	95	1.72	.794
Co-workers from a different department <sup>b)</sup>	F1	51	1.92	.821
	D1	96	2.06	.723
Senior managers <sup>c)</sup>	F1	51	1.69	.678
	D1	95	1.92	.846
Hotel management <sup>d)</sup>	F1	51	1.59	.669
	D1	96	1.98	.929
Parent organisation <sup>e)</sup>	F1	50	1.72	.809
	D1	96	1.81	.812
Professional training associations <sup>f)</sup>	F1	50	1.88	.718
	D1	96	2.03	.760
Trade/labour union associations <sup>g)</sup>	F1	51	2.45	1.189
	D1	96	2.28	.855
Regional government tourism department <sup>h)</sup>	F1	51	1.92	.771
	D1	96	2.20	.913

Note: (1) Fully trust, (2) Partially trust, (3) Neither trust nor distrust, (4) Partially distrust, (5) Distrust

<sup>a)</sup>  $t = -1.389$ ;  $p = 0.167$

<sup>e)</sup>  $t = -0.654$ ;  $p = 0.514$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t = -1.073$ ;  $p = 0.285$

<sup>f)</sup>  $t = -1.162$ ;  $p = 0.247$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t = -1.670$ ;  $p = 0.097$

<sup>g)</sup>  $t = 0.903$ ;  $p = 0.369$

<sup>d)</sup>  $t = -2.660$ ;  $p = 0.009$

<sup>h)</sup>  $t = -1.840$ ;  $p = 0.068$

Moving on to the interview responses from F1, Sithara (Supervisor at F1) agrees that she has a higher trust towards a foreign company. She mentioned the efficiency of her company in appraisals which makes her trust the company:

*“I agree to that. When things such as appraisals are happening on time, we trust in them.”*

Perera (Manager at F1) mentioned that the trust factor is because the foreign companies have tested their practices in various countries and have come to a standardised process when it comes to dealing with the workforce:

*“When a company is multinational, they have subsidiaries all over the world. These companies bring all these experiences to one particular point and have this culture in all their subsidiaries in different countries. Most of the domestic companies are only limited to Sri Lanka. So, the attitude and the way they behave is much more localised. I think this is the difference.”*

He further mentioned the presence of state of the art features when it comes to training, developmental programmes and CSR activities in foreign companies:

*“If you take foreign companies, there are virtual based training programmes, abroad educational programmes, CSR activities and much more. I think the local companies do not have these facilities.”*

Global standardisation of foreign company practices is highlighted to foster trust towards these companies. It is also highlighted that the foreign company gives more importance to appraisals and more opportunities to the employees than the domestic companies.

Turning now to D1, Kumar (Employee at D1) mentioned that he trusts his company more than the foreign companies. Mahela (Supervisor at D1) noted that he trusts his parent company. He was reluctant to agree that foreign company management and their parent organisation are more trustable than domestic companies. He recalled his experience of working in a foreign company previously which had senior managers from different countries. He does not believe these individuals understand the Sri Lankan context. He further mentions that the most important factor is the management and not the parent organisation, which elevates the trust:



*“I worked in a foreign company before coming to this hotel. I had trust towards the foreign company as well. I think it depends on the company you chose to work for and the stability of the company. Also, if you have more local managers in the management team, they understand more about the local community than foreigners. It doesn’t matter if it is a foreign company or a locally owned company; it all depends on whether the management understands the local scenario. For example, I previously worked in a foreign company, and there were many foreigners at the higher management level. But they had a lot of Sri Lankans in the middle and lower management levels. So it was easier for these middle managers to manage the employees since these they knew how they can get the work done from the employees.”*

Somachandra (Manager at D1) emphasised the nature of the people in Sri Lanka to be more attracted to foreign companies. He further added that this could be due to the exposure these companies acquire from different countries, so people perceive it as something which would benefit them:

*“I think people have a perception that if you work for a foreign brand, you get better care and benefits. This might be because these companies are more structured and have tried and tested. They have 100’s of hotels worldwide. People are more inclined to work in a foreign company environment because they think they are better off and have better security because of the international exposure. But there are a lot of domestic companies here, and if you take our hotel, we have the same kind of acceptance in the market as any foreign company.”*

Aravinda (Industry expert in Sri Lanka) rejected the generalisation of which (foreign or domestic) is more trustable. He gave a few examples:

*“In my opinion, it depends on the hotel and its management. It isn’t easy to generalise which is more trustable. I have known several hotels in Sri Lanka where the employees at most levels completely distrust the foreign management company. This contributed to the throwing out of the upmarket foreign brand from Colombo. On the other hand, at a training seminar I conducted at an Indian owned hotel in Colombo, it appeared to me that there was significant trust in the parent company and management at this hotel.”*

The excerpt above highlights a sense of cultural identity attached to working in a domestic company compared to a foreign one. This aligns with the findings by Peltokorpi *et al.* (2019) that domestic employers and those that show domestic organisational characteristics will be more attractive to the host country's national employees. Both Kumar and Mahela have mentioned that they trust their company more than the foreign companies in Sri Lanka. Looking at the response from Mahela, he mentioned his opposing view on people from foreign countries being at the senior managerial positions of foreign hotels in Sri Lanka. He mentioned the importance of having management who understand the Sri Lankan context, and that is why he trusts his company (domestic company) more.

However, in the survey, the foreign company respondents show significantly higher trust towards their hotel management. Somachandra acknowledges that people are more inclined to work in foreign companies than domestic companies. He mentioned that international exposure could be one of the reasons people trust these companies more. He further noted that the lines are blurring now and that the foreign and domestic companies have had the same level of acceptance recently in the Sri Lankan market. However, Aravinda (industry expert in Sri Lanka) suggested that it is not possible to generalise which (foreign or domestic) is more trustable. According to Aravinda, it all depends on the company and the management. Table 6.19 depicts the factors found in this research for the respondents to trust the foreign parent company & management and domestic parent company & management.

**Table 6.19:** Trust towards parent company and management (Sri Lankan context)

<i>Trust towards foreign parent company &amp; Management due to:</i>	<i>Trust towards domestic parent company &amp; Management due to:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The multinational exposure of foreign companies</li> <li>- Appraisals happening on time in the foreign companies</li> <li>- The incorporation of state of the art facilities and technological advancement in training and development programmes</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The cultural identity (organisational characteristics)</li> <li>- The presence of host country nationals' at the senior and middle managerial positions.</li> </ul>

#### 6.4.1.2.2 Indian context

In the Indian context (Table 6.20), all the variables failed to reject the null hypothesis except trust towards the hotel management ( $0.01 < 0.05$ ). This implies that only this variable has shown a significant difference in mean between F2 and D2. For this variable, the mean score of F2 is 1.23, and D2 is 1.60. Even though there is a significant difference between the two, majorities of the respondents indicated that they fully trust the respective company management. The respondents from F2 and D2 have reported that they fully or partially trust all the actors, authorities or institutions mentioned in the survey options. It is found that respondents from F2 have slightly more trust towards most actors, authorities and institutions. However, respondents from D2 have shown more trust towards their parent organisation and towards trade union associations. Interestingly, the mean scores from F2 and D2 indicate that the respondents partially trust the external trade unions. Although respondents from the domestic company have shown slightly higher trust towards these unions, there is no significant difference between the two companies. The most surprising aspect of the data is that there is significantly higher trust the workforce

from F2 has towards their management than the staff at D2. Even though there is no significant difference, the mean score for trust towards the parent organisation is higher in the domestic company than the foreign company. The results from the two variables (trust towards hotel management & trust towards parent organisation) have been compared with the interview responses.

**Table 6.20:** Level of trust (Indian context)

To what extent do you trust the following?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Co-workers from my department <sup>a)</sup>	F2	44	1.18	.390
	D2	45	1.36	.529
Co-workers from a different department <sup>b)</sup>	F2	44	1.34	.608
	D2	45	1.58	.723
Senior managers <sup>c)</sup>	F2	44	1.30	.462
	D2	45	1.36	.529
Hotel management <sup>d)</sup>	F2	44	1.23	.424
	D2	45	1.60	.863
Parent organisation <sup>e)</sup>	F2	43	1.35	.482
	D2	45	1.31	.668
Professional training associations <sup>f)</sup>	F2	44	1.32	.698
	D2	45	1.69	.925
Trade/labour union associations <sup>g)</sup>	F2	44	2.00	.889
	D2	44	1.95	1.056
Regional government tourism department <sup>h)</sup>	F2	44	1.89	.754
	D2	45	2.00	1.108

Note: (1) Fully trust, (2) Partially trust, (3) Neither trust nor distrust, (4) Partially distrust, (5) Distrust

<sup>a)</sup> t= -1.766; p= 0.081

<sup>e)</sup> t= 0.303; p= 0.763

<sup>b)</sup> t= -1.675; p= 0.098

<sup>f)</sup> t= -0.955; p= 0.342

<sup>c)</sup> t= -0.571; p= 0.570

<sup>g)</sup> t= 0.218; p= 0.828

<sup>d)</sup> t= -2.594; p= 0.012

<sup>h)</sup> t= -0.567; p=0.572

Moving into the interview responses, Jai (Manager at F2) mentions that he trusts his company. However, he further reveals that domestic companies are more trustable than foreign companies in India. He gave specific reasons for that:

*“In terms of the company looking out for employees, I never had any challenge with the company I work for now. I worked with a domestic company, and I never had a trust problem with this company as well. In fact, if you look at the way some domestic companies operate, it’s all built on trust. Employees stay with them because they trust, and they don’t stay for the money. Domestic companies are the lowest payers in the industry. But they gain the trust of the employees. It is great to start the career with a domestic company and then move to a foreign company, earn all the money you want to, but make sure you retire at a domestic company. Because there is a lot of trust between each other and the management at the domestic companies. The HR policies at most domestic companies are not as evolved as the foreign companies. Foreign companies tend to protect their employees based on certain policies and procedures. They are more worried about not following the law at times as well. Because they know that it will damage their reputation if they get into any trouble as a foreign company. With domestic companies, it is more difficult to lose your job there because they tend to forgive incompetence. It is easier for me to lose my job at a foreign company. Because everything depends upon performance. It is more of family culture in domestic companies.”*

Dharmendra (Manager at F2) recalls the way domestic companies dealt with the situation better than the foreign companies during COVID-19:

*“I would use COVID-19 as an example. Domestic companies have been able to do a better job than international companies in India. Compared to foreign companies, they didn’t have pay cuts or turnover. In our industry, what we felt is that the domestic chains have handled the situation in a much better manner”.*

It is evident from the excerpts above that there is a higher pay scale and clarity in the HR policies and procedures in the foreign companies compared to the domestic. However, the respondents have mentioned that the trust factor towards the domestic company is mainly due to their family culture, which leads to giving chances to the staff and their tendency to support the employees at difficult periods.

From D2, Varun (Supervisor at D2) trusts a domestic brand over foreign brands, and he has certain reasons for it:

*“In Indian culture, anything foreign is valued more, and anything that is domestic isn’t given much value. But I think that the domestic companies are strongly bred companies. Indian workforce is better adaptable to domestic companies. Foreign companies would have policies as per their norms, as per their culture, as per their preferences or how they follow the things in their countries. When a foreign company comes into India, they come with a set of rules that are possibly very difficult to adapt to.”*

Abhay (Supervisor at D2) mentioned the importance of job support and that he is receiving it in his company:

*“If there is more support, there is more trust. I get good support here within my company.”*

Raveena (Manager at D2) acknowledged the family-like culture of domestic companies in India:

*“There are many domestic companies in India where employees have been working for more than 25 years, and I know they do get other opportunities, but they do stick through because they have a family-like bond with the brand they work for.”*

Vishwanath (Industry expert in India) acknowledge that the advanced HR documentation of foreign companies could be a reason for them to possess the trust of the workforce:

*“The companies from developed countries are more prepared with the HR documentation and have an international experience that most Indian companies would lack. They appear to be more prepared in terms of what the employees want. There were very few hospitality companies in India before 1991 until the economy opened up. What has happened is that people who have been working in domestic hospitality companies for a long time did not want to change their job. But of late, there are many opportunities for young people, so they might want to change companies frequently and look at different cultures.”*

The excerpts above suggest that the domestic company in India is more trustable than the foreign company. Trust among individuals and organisations ensures that individuals will neither exploit weaknesses nor act against each other (Granovetter, 1985). Varun believes that the workplace of a domestic company is more adaptable for local staff. He further mentioned the difficulty in adapting to the foreign company policies and procedures which are foreign to the workforce. However, numerous scholars posit that foreign firms tend to give more attention to talent management (Mills, 1998; Zupan and Kase, 2005). Abhay mentioned the support he gets from his company, which makes him trust his company (domestic). Raveena recalled the number of staff who worked in the company for 25 years and more due to the family-like culture adopted by the company. According to Vishwanath, the liberalisation of the Indian economy in 1991 has allowed many foreign companies to enter the Indian market; however, some employees stayed with the domestic company until now. This shows certain trust employees have towards domestic companies. As noted by Vishwanath, incorporating well-prepared HR documentation is one of the major reasons foreign companies have been successful in the Indian market when it comes to receiving trust from the workforce. Table 6.21 depicts the reasons found in this research for the respondents to trust the foreign parent company & management and domestic parent company & management.

**Table 6.21:** Trust towards parent company and management (Indian context)

<i>Trust towards foreign parent company &amp; Management due to:</i>	<i>Trust towards domestic parent company &amp; Management due to:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The clarity in HR policies and procedures</li> <li>- Higher pay scale than the domestic companies</li> <li>- The culture of having more affinity towards a foreign product or company than a locally bred company</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- The family culture</li> <li>- The tendency to give chances to the staff</li> <li>- The job security and support during the difficult period</li> <li>- The cultural identity</li> <li>- The easiness in adapting to the work environment</li> </ul>

#### **6.4.2 Norms of reciprocity**

An independent t-test was used to explore the difference in mean between the foreign and domestic companies for the variable to understand if exchanging favours is seen as a norm. Many scholars view reciprocity as the most important norm (Fountain, 1998; Kaasa, 2009; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998), where individuals act for the benefit of others and expect to get help in return when they are in need. Table 6.22 shows the company, number of responses, mean and standard deviation between FSA and DSA; F1 and D1; F2 and D2.



**Table 6.22:** Norms of reciprocity (regional and country-level)

Thinking about the people that you work with, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
I can ask for help and exchange favours with my colleagues	FSA	95	4.07	1.064
	DSA	141	4.11	.903
	F1	51	4.18	1.108
	D1	96	4.14	.841
	F2	44	3.95	1.011
	D2	45	4.07	1.031

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree

- ❖ FSA vs DSA:  $t = -0.309$ ;  $p = 0.758$
- ❖ F1 vs D1:  $t = .252$ ;  $p = 0.802$
- ❖ F2 vs D2:  $t = -0.518$ ;  $p = 0.606$

#### 6.4.2.1 Regional level comparison

In the South Asian level analysis, the variable does not have any significant difference in mean between the different companies. However, it can be highlighted that the mean score is slightly higher in DSA ( $4.07 > 4.11$ ). This implies that exchanging favours and help is a norm in both FSA and DSA, with a higher mean score reported by foreign company respondents.

#### 6.4.2.2 Country-level comparison

##### 6.4.2.2.1 Sri Lankan context

In the Sri Lankan context, there is no significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. Although, it is important to note that the mean score is slightly higher in F1 ( $4.18 > 4.14$ ). Exchanging favours and help is a norm in both companies, with a higher mean score reported by foreign company respondents.

#### 6.4.2.2 Indian context

In the Indian context, there is no significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. However, it can be highlighted that the mean score is slightly higher in D2 (3.95 < 4.07). Therefore exchanging favours and help is a norm in both companies, with a higher mean score reported by domestic company respondents.

#### 6.4.3 Obligations and expectations

An independent t-test was used to explore the difference in mean between the foreign and domestic companies for each variable to understand the level of reciprocity and expectations at the workplace between actors. This has been applied to the South Asian context (FSA and DSA) and country-level comparison (F1 and D1; D2 and F2) (Table 6.23).

**Table 6.23:** Obligations and expectations (regional and country-level)

To what extent do the respondents agree with the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
My co-workers will cover a shift for me if needed <sup>a)</sup>	FSA	95	4.18	.934
	DSA	141	4.11	.908
	F1	51	4.39	.723
	D1	96	4.09	.859
	F2	44	3.93	1.087
	D2	45	4.13	1.014
Me and my co-workers support each other at work <sup>b)</sup>	FSA	94	4.31	.762
	DSA	141	4.14	.930
	F1	51	4.55	.610
	D1	96	4.11	.857
	F2	43	4.02	.831
	D2	45	4.20	1.079

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree

##### FSA vs DSA

<sup>a)</sup> t= 0.595; p= 0.552

<sup>b)</sup> t= 1.443; p= 0.150

##### F1 vs D1

<sup>a)</sup> t= 2.113; p= 0.036

<sup>b)</sup> t= 3.212; p= 0.002

##### F2 vs D2

<sup>a)</sup> t= -0.905; p= 0.368

<sup>b)</sup> t= -0.863; p= 0.390

### **6.4.3.1 Regional level comparison**

In the regional level analysis (Table 6.23), for both the variables (a) my co-workers will cover a shift for me if needed, (b) me and my co-workers support each other at work, there is no significant difference in the mean scores between different types of companies. However, the mean scores show that the respondents from FSA have a slightly higher level of reciprocity at the workplace. This also implies that the FSA employees have more expectations and consider the act of reciprocity an obligation at the workplace compared to the DSA.

### **6.4.3.2 Country-level comparison**

#### **6.4.3.2.1 Sri Lankan context**

In the Sri Lankan context (Table 6.23), for variable a, the significance (p-value) for the t-test is lesser than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.036 < 0.05$ ), therefore the null hypothesis can be rejected. In other words, the variable does have a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. The mean for F1 is 4.39, which means the majority of respondents strongly agree that the co-workers will cover a shift for them. This implies the sense of solid expectation the respondents have from their co-workers. On the other hand, respondents from D1 have a mean lower (4.09), which means that the majority of the respondents agree with the statement. For variable b, the significance for the t-test is lesser than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.002 < 0.05$ ); therefore, the variable does have a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. The mean for F2 is 4.55, which means the majority of respondents strongly agree that the co-workers support each other at the workplace. This implies the sense of obligation the workforce has at the

workplace. On the other hand, respondents from D2 have a mean lower (4.11), which means that majority of the respondents agree with the statement. To sum up, the respondents in F1 have a significantly higher level of reciprocity at the workplace. This also implies that the employees at F1 have significantly more expectations and consider the act of reciprocity an obligation at the workplace compared to the domestic company.

#### **6.4.3.2.2 Indian context**

In the Indian context (Table 6.23), for both the variables (a) My co-workers will cover a shift for me if needed, (b) me and my co-workers support each other at work, there is no significant difference in the mean scores between different types of companies. However, the mean scores show that the respondents from D2 have a slightly higher level of reciprocity at the workplace. This implies that the D2 employees have more expectations and consider the act of reciprocity an obligation at the workplace compared to the F2.

#### **6.4.4 Identification**

This section intended to examine the difference in mean between the foreign and domestic companies for each variable to understand if there is a sense of common identity with the workforce. When there is a common social identity, there is more likeliness for the workforce to interact, cooperate and trust others (Han and Brass, 2014). Two sample means (domestic and foreign) are compared for each variable to see if they are significantly different (Table 6.24).

**Table 6.24:** Identification (regional and country-level)

To what extent do the respondents agree with the following statements?	Company	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
People of different ethnic/cultural backgrounds get on well together <sup>a)</sup>	FSA	94	4.29	.771
	DSA	141	4.17	.836
	F1	51	4.51	.612
	D1	96	4.16	.786
	F2	43	4.02	.859
	D2	45	4.20	.944
People of different religion get on well together <sup>b)</sup>	FSA	93	4.31	.884
	DSA	139	4.22	.834
	F1	50	4.50	.735
	D1	94	4.17	.785
	F2	43	4.09	.996
	D2	45	4.33	.929
People of different political views get on well together <sup>c)</sup>	FSA	95	4.02	.850
	DSA	141	4.14	.858
	F1	51	4.18	.767
	D1	96	4.13	.824
	F2	44	3.84	.914
	D2	45	4.18	.936

Note: (1) Strongly disagree, (2) Disagree, (3) Neither agree nor disagree, (4) Agree, (5) strongly agree

**FSA vs DSA**

<sup>a)</sup>  $t= 1.084$ ;  $p= 0.280$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t= 0.776$ ;  $p= 0.439$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t= -1.064$ ;  $p= 0.288$

**F1 vs D1**

<sup>a)</sup>  $t= 2.793$ ;  $p= 0.006$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t= 2.453$ ;  $p= 0.015$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t= 0.369$ ;  $p= 0.713$

**F2 vs D2**

<sup>a)</sup>  $t= -0.917$ ;  $p= 0.361$

<sup>b)</sup>  $t= -1.171$ ;  $p= 0.245$

<sup>c)</sup>  $t= 0.428$ ;  $p= 0.089$

**6.4.4.1 Regional level comparison**

In the regional level analysis (Table 6.24), all the three variables do not have any significant difference between the companies. However, the respondents from FSA have reported a slightly better relationship among co-workers with different cultural/ethnic backgrounds and different religion. The respondents from DSA have shown slightly higher agreement regarding relationships between people with different political views. To sum up, the respondents in the FSA tend to have a slightly better inclusive attitude when it comes to having employees with different social identities than the DSA.

#### **6.4.4.2 Country-level comparison**

##### **6.4.4.2.1 Sri Lankan context**

In the Sri Lankan context (Table 6.24), for variable a, it does have a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies ( $0.006 < 0.05$ ). The mean for F1 is 4.51, which means the majority of respondents strongly agree that people of different ethnic/cultural backgrounds get on well together. On the other hand, respondents from D1 have a mean lower (4.16), which means that majority of the respondents agree with the statement. It can be highlighted that the mean score is significantly higher with the foreign company respondents. For variable b, it does have a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies ( $0.015 < 0.05$ ). The mean for F1 is 4.50, which means the majority of respondents strongly agree that people of different religions get on well together. On the other hand, respondents from D1 have a mean lower (4.17), which means that majority of the respondents agree with the statement. Therefore, it is found that the mean score is significantly higher with the foreign company respondents. For variable c, it does not have a significant difference in mean between the different types of companies. However, it can be highlighted that the mean score is slightly higher in the foreign company ( $4.18 > 4.13$ ). In summary, the respondents from F1 have reported significantly better relationships between individuals of different ethnic backgrounds and religions. Moreover, the respondents from F1 have reported a slightly better relationship when it comes to the relationship between people with different political views. To sum up, the respondents in the foreign company in Sri Lanka tend to have a better inclusive attitude when it comes to having employees with different social identities than the domestic company.

#### 6.4.4.2.2 Indian context

In the Indian context (Table 6.24), all three variables do not have any significant difference between the companies. However, the mean score is slightly higher in the domestic company for all the three variables (4.02 < 4.20), (4.09 < 4.33) and (3.84 < 4.18). To sum up, the respondents in the domestic company in India tend to have a better inclusive attitude when it comes to having employees with different social identities than the foreign company.

This section adds to the literature on relational social capital (Kim *et al.*, 2013; Ghorbanzadeh *et al.*, 2021). In a regional context, respondents from foreign South Asian companies have shown higher evidence of fostering relational social capital than the domestic South Asian companies. From a country-level analysis, it is found that respondents from the foreign company in Sri Lanka have a higher trust level towards their workplace and co-workers, higher agreement on exchanging help and favours, have more expectations and high practice of reciprocity, and finally have a more cordial working relationship between people of different ethnic/cultural background, religion and political affiliations. This implies that respondents from foreign company in Sri Lanka have higher relational social capital than domestic company. Whereas, from the Indian context, it is found that respondents from the domestic company have a higher trust level towards their workplace and co-workers, have higher agreement on exchanging help and favours, have more expectations and high practice of reciprocity, and finally have a more cordial working relationship between people of different ethnic/cultural background, religion and political affiliations. This implies that the domestic company in India has a higher relational social capital than the foreign company. Therefore, in summary, it proves that

irrespective of whether a company is foreign-owned or domestic-owned, all it matters is the particular company culture when it comes to fostering relational social capital.

## **6.5 Chapter conclusion**

The study has extended the social capital literature by empirically measuring the theorised model of social capital (proposed by Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998) within a hospitality context. The chapter highlighted the differences in the level of SC in foreign and domestic companies regionally and country-level. The findings depict the level of network ties within the participating companies. Apart from this, the impact of strong and weak ties in a hospitality context is explored. This has provided an insight into the influence of strong ties and weak ties in the hospitality context. The appropriability of external trade union associations and work social events are explored. A significant finding revealed that external trade unions do not have any role in fostering social capital in an organisational context, whereas the company social events/activities positively influence fostering social capital in an organisational context. The study suggests an internal labour union within the hotels which would assist in dealing with the workforces' issues and foster SC among the workforce. Apart from this, the presence of shared language, shared vision, trust, obligations and expectations, norms of reciprocity and trust has been compared between the workforces in different types of companies. Additionally, the chapter provides a differentiation on the factors which leads to workforce trust towards a foreign and domestic parent company and management. For the country-level analysis, quantitative surveys along with the qualitative interviews provide a comprehensive understanding of the level of SC and the factors which help or hinder it in the hospitality context. The chapter has established findings that align with the previous scholarly works on the study topic and have derived the original contributions (theoretical and practical) the study is



putting forward. This has been put together in the Conclusions chapter (Chapter 8). In Chapter 7, the researcher presents a regional-level analysis of the correlation between TM and SC in the hospitality context.

# CHAPTER 7

## TALENT MANAGEMENT - SOCIAL CAPITAL CORRELATION

### 7.1 Introduction

When it comes to the assessment of employee reactions to TM programs, scholars tend to focus on the employee attitudes towards the organisation (e.g. satisfaction, engagement, organisational commitment, perceived justice) or the attitude towards the individuals own role within the organisation (e.g. psychological contract fulfilment, commitment towards development) (Murillo and King, 2019). One of the under-researched areas in this field is the relationship between talent management and social capital. The related studies usually explore the mediating or moderating role of organisational SC in individual organisational attributes and functions related to TM (Mostafa, 2019; Kroll and Tantardini, 2019). This chapter explores the association between talent management practices and social capital indicators within South Asian foreign (FSA) and South Asian domestic (DSA) hotel companies. The chapter provides an in-depth exploration of the impact of each talent management practice on social capital formation and vice versa. In section 7.2, the researcher has explained each test and its implications. Spearman rank-order correlation<sup>18</sup> has been used to evaluate whether there

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<sup>18</sup> **Positive values**

Strong: 0.5 to 1.0

Moderate: 0.3 to 0.49

Weak: 0.1 to 0.29

Very weak or None: 0 to 0.09

**Negative values**

Strong: -1.0 to -0.5

Moderate: 0.49 to -0.3

Weak: 0.29 to -0.1

Very weak or None: -0.09 to 0

is a correlation between the testing variables. By conducting the tests, the intention is to find if the variables accept the null hypothesis or if it accept the alternate hypothesis<sup>19</sup>.

## 7.2 Testing the correlation

### 7.2.1 Talent strategy and planning (TM) ↔ Network ties (SC)

The first analysis set examined the correlation between talent strategy/planning (TM) and network ties at the workplace (SC). The variable tested for talent strategy/planning intended to explore the workforce perception of how their skills and talents are utilised (Table 7.1). The 6 variables on network ties have been combined into one scale (Table 7.2). The 6 variables intended to explore the network of ties the workforce has to access different information.

**Table 7.1:** Talent strategy and planning (variable)

<b>Talent strategy and planning (strongly disagree → Strongly agree)</b>
1. My skills and talents are used appropriately by the company I work for

**Table 7.2:** Network ties (variables)

<b>Network ties (strongly disagree → Strongly agree)</b>
1. I know who to approach if I need help with access to most of the resources or services at the workplace.
2. I have persons in the workplace, whom I can count on in case of an emergency.
3. In case I need a financial support (without interest) I know someone in the workplace who could help me.
4. In case I need help with additional training (internal training or external training), I know someone in the workplace who could help me achieve it.
5. In case I need assistance with knowing my career growth options (including new job vacancies etc.), I know someone in the workplace who could help me.
6. In case I need to contact an external organisation regarding work (such as employees union, regional government tourism dept.), I know someone in workplace who could help me.

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<sup>19</sup> The null hypothesis (H<sub>0</sub>) is that there is no relationship between the variables, and the alternative hypothesis (H<sub>a</sub>) is that there is a relationship between the variables.

For FSA (Table 7.3), the correlation coefficient is 0.631, indicating a strong positive correlation between talent strategy/planning and network ties. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), therefore there is enough evidence to accept the alternate hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). Consequently, it can be concluded that there is a strong positive relationship between talent strategies and network ties. For DSA (Table 7.4), the correlation coefficient is 0.522, indicating a strong positive correlation between talent strategy/planning and network ties. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), therefore, it can be concluded that there is a strong positive relationship between talent strategies and network ties. The results indicate that efficient talent strategy and planning enhances the network ties within the workplace when it comes to both foreign and domestic companies.

**Table 7.3:** Talent strategy and planning ↔ Network ties (FSA)

			Talent strategy	Network ties
Spearman's rho	Talent strategy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.631**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	93	89
	Network ties	Correlation Coefficient	.631**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	89	91

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

**Table 7.4:** Talent strategy and planning ↔ Network ties (DSA)

			Talent strategy	Network ties
Spearman's rho	Talent strategy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.522**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	139	137
	Network ties	Correlation Coefficient	.522**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	137	139

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

## **7.2.2 Talent strategy and planning (TM) ↔ Trust (SC)**

The next set of analyses tested the correlation between talent strategy/planning (TM) and trust towards a) senior managers, b) hotel management board and c) parent organisation. The variable on talent strategy/planning tend to understand the employee experience on utilising their skills and talents (Table 7.1).

### **7.2.2.1 Talent strategy and planning ↔ Trust towards senior managers**

For FSA (Table 7.5), the correlation coefficient is 0.155; however, the significance (p-value) is higher than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05, which signals that there was no relationship at all between talent strategy and trust for senior managers. This implies that talent strategy does not enhance the trust towards senior managers in foreign companies. For DSA (Table 7.6), the correlation coefficient is 0.287, which signals a weak positive correlation between talent strategy and trust towards senior managers. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.001 < 0.05$ ), therefore there is enough evidence to accept the alternate hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a weak positive relationship between talent strategy and trust towards senior managers. This implies that if the workforce is content with the company utilising their skills or talents, this elevates their trust towards the senior managers; however, the correlation was only weak.

**Table 7.5:** Talent strategy and planning ↔ Trust towards senior managers (FSA)

			Talent strategy	Trust towards senior managers
Spearman's rho	Talent strategy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.155
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.138
		N	93	93
Trust towards senior managers	Trust towards senior managers	Correlation Coefficient	.155	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.138	.
		N	93	95

**Table 7.6:** Talent strategy and planning ↔ Trust towards senior managers (DSA)

			Talent strategy	Trust towards senior managers
Spearman's rho	Talent strategy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.287**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001
		N	139	137
Trust towards senior managers	Trust towards senior managers	Correlation Coefficient	.287**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
		N	137	140

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

### **7.2.2.2 Talent strategy and planning ↔ Trust towards hotel management board**

For FSA (Table 7.7), the correlation coefficient is 0.317, which signals a moderate positive correlation between talent strategies and trust towards the hotel management board. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.002 < 0.05$ ), therefore there is enough evidence to accept the alternate hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). Therefore, there is a moderate positive relationship between talent strategies and trust towards the hotel management board. For DSA (Table 7.8), the correlation coefficient is 0.336, which signals a moderate positive correlation between talent strategies and trust towards the

hotel management board. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 (0.000 < 0.05), so is significant. Therefore, there is a moderate positive relationship between talent strategy/planning and trust towards the hotel management board. The analysis indicates that when it comes to foreign and domestic companies, if the workforce is content with the company utilising their skills or talents, this elevates their trust towards the hotel management board.

**Table 7.7:** Talent strategy and planning ↔ Trust towards hotel management board (FSA)

			Talent strategy	Trust towards Hotel management board
Spearman's rho	Talent strategy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.317**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.002
		N	93	93
Trust towards hotel management board	Trust towards hotel management board	Correlation Coefficient	.317**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.
		N	93	95

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

**Table 7.8:** Talent strategy and planning ↔ Trust towards hotel management board (DSA)

			Talent strategy	Trust towards hotel management board
Spearman's rho	Talent strategy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.336**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	139	138
Trust towards hotel management board	Trust towards hotel management board	Correlation Coefficient	.336**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	138	141

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

### 7.2.2.3 Talent strategy and planning ↔ Trust towards parent organisation

For FSA (Table 7.9), a weak positive correlation was found between talent strategy/planning and trust towards parent organisation (correlation coefficient: 0.221). The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.034 < 0.05$ ), therefore there is enough evidence to accept the alternate hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). Therefore, there is a weak positive relationship between talent strategy and trust towards parent organisation. For DSA (Table 7.10), the correlation coefficient is 0.264, which signals a weak positive correlation between talent strategy/planning and trust towards parent organisation. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.002 < 0.05$ ), therefore there is enough evidence to accept the alternate hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). Therefore, there is a weak positive relationship between talent strategy and trust towards parent organisation. The results indicate that when it comes to both the foreign and domestic companies, if the workforce is content with the company utilising their skills or talents, this elevates the trust they have for the parent organisation; however, the correlation was only found to be weak.

**Table 7.9:** Talent strategy and planning ↔ Trust towards parent organisation (FSA)

			Talent strategy	Trust towards parent organisation
Spearman's rho	Talent strategy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.221*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.034
		N	93	92
	Trust towards parent organisation	Correlation Coefficient	.221*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.034	.
		N	92	93

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).



**Table 7.10:** Talent strategy and planning ↔ Trust towards parent organisation (DSA)

			Talent strategy	Trust towards parent organisation
Spearman's rho	Talent strategy	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.264**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.002
		N	139	138
	Trust towards parent organisation	Correlation Coefficient	.264**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.002	.
		N	138	141

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

### 7.2.3 Performance management (TM) ↔ Network ties (SC)

This section explores the correlation between performance management (a talent management practice) and network ties (a social capital indicator). The 4 variables on performance management have been combined into one scale (Table 7.11). The 6 variables utilised to explore the network ties have been depicted in Table 7.2.

**Table 7.11:** Performance management (variables)

Performance management (strongly disagree → Strongly agree)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. I am receiving performance feedback from different managers</li> <li>2. Upward feedback from employees to managers is valued in my company</li> <li>3. Formal/informal feedback between co-workers is a must in the company's culture</li> <li>4. My performance is regularly assessed and given feedback frequently throughout the year using technology or in person</li> </ol>

For FSA (Table 7.12), the correlation coefficient is 0.609, which signals a strong positive correlation between performance management and network ties. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), therefore there is enough evidence to accept the alternate hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a strong positive relationship between performance appraisals and network ties. For DSA (Table

7.13), the correlation coefficient is 0.441, indicating a moderate positive correlation between performance management and network ties. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), therefore there is enough evidence to accept the alternate hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). Therefore, it can be concluded that there is a moderate positive relationship between performance management and network ties. The results indicate that performance management enhances the network ties within the workplace when it comes to both foreign and domestic companies.

**Table: 7.12:** Performance management ↔ Network ties (FSA)

			Network ties	Performance management
Spearman's rho	Network ties	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.609**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	91	91
	Performance management	Correlation Coefficient	.609**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	91	95

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

**Table: 7.13:** Performance management ↔ Network ties (DSA)

			Network ties	Performance management
Spearman's rho	Network ties	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.441**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	139	139
	Performance management	Correlation Coefficient	.441**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	139	142

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

## 7.2.4 Performance Management (TM) ↔ Trust (SC)

Tests have been conducted to evaluate whether there is a correlation between a) feedback within co-workers and trust between co-workers, b) feedback from different managers and trust towards senior managers, c) upward feedback and trust towards senior managers (Table 7.14).

**Table 7.14:** Performance management ↔ Trust (variables)

<b>Performance management (strongly disagree → strongly agree)</b>		<b>Trust (fully distrust → fully trust)</b>
a) Formal/informal feedback between co-workers is a must in the company's culture	↔	Trust between co-workers
b) I am receiving performance feedback from different managers	↔	Trust towards senior managers
c) Upward feedback from employees to managers is valued in my company	↔	Trust towards senior managers

### 7.2.4.1 Feedback between co-workers ↔ Trust between co-workers

For FSA (Table 7.15), the correlation coefficient is 0.23, indicating a weak positive correlation between feedback from co-workers and trust. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.026 < 0.05$ ), therefore there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). In other words, the weak positive correlation which is observed between feedback from co-workers and trust is statistically significant. Therefore, even though it's only weak, there is some relationship between feedback from co-workers and trust between the co-workers. The results indicate that when it comes to foreign companies, efficient feedback between co-workers enhances

their trust; however, the correlation was only found to be weak. For DSA (Table 7.16), the correlation coefficient is 0.15, which signals a weak positive correlation between feedback from co-workers and trust. The significance (p-value) is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.081 > 0.05$ ); therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. In other words, the weak positive correlation which is observed between feedback from co-workers and trust is not statistically significant. Therefore, there is no significant correlation between co-workers feedback and trust between the co-workers in DSA.

**Table 7.15:** Feedback between co-workers ↔ Trust between co-workers (FSA)

			Formal/informal feedback between co-workers is a must in the company's culture	To what extent do you trust the following? - Co-workers from my department
Spearman's rho	Formal/informal feedback between co-workers is a must in the company's culture	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 . 95	.229* .026 95
	To what extent do you trust the following? - Co-workers from my department	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	.229* .026 95	1.000 . 95

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**Table 7.16:** Feedback between co-workers ↔ Trust between co-workers (DSA)

			Formal/informal feedback between co-workers is a must in the company's culture	Co-workers from my department
Spearman's rho	Formal/informal feedback between co-workers is a must in the company's culture	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 . 140	.149 .081 138
	To what extent do you trust the following? - Co-workers from my department	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	.149 .081 138	1.000 . 140

### 7.2.4.2 Feedback from different managers' ↔ Trust towards senior managers

For FSA (Table 7.17), the correlation coefficient is 0.16, indicating a weak positive correlation between feedback from different managers and trust towards senior managers. The significance (p-value) is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.124 > 0.05$ ); therefore, the weak positive correlation which is observed between feedback from different managers and trust towards senior managers is not statistically significant. For DSA (Table 7.18), the correlation coefficient is 0.14, which signals a weak positive correlation between feedback from different managers and trust towards senior managers. The significance (p-value) is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.110 > 0.05$ ), the weak positive correlation which is observed between feedback from managers and trust for senior managers is not statistically significant. Therefore, there is no significant correlation between feedback from different managers and trust towards senior managers in both FSA and DSA.

**Table 7.17:** Feedback from different managers ↔ Trust towards senior managers

(FSA)

			I am receiving performance feedback from different managers	To what extent do you trust the following? - Senior managers
Spearman's rho	I am receiving performance feedback from different managers	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.160
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.124
		N	94	94
	To what extent do you trust the following? - Senior managers	Correlation Coefficient	.160	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.124	.
		N	94	95

**Table 7.18:** Feedback from different managers ↔ Trust towards senior managers

(DSA)

			I am receiving performance feedback from different managers	To what extent do you trust the following? - Senior managers
Spearman's rho	I am receiving performance feedback from different managers	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.136
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.110
		N	142	140
	To what extent do you trust the following? - Senior managers	Correlation Coefficient	.136	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.110	.
		N	140	140

#### 7.2.4.3 Upward feedback ↔ Trust towards senior managers

For FSA (Table 7.19), the correlation coefficient is 0.09, indicating no relationship at all (very weak correlation) between upward feedback and trust towards senior managers. For DSA (Table 7.20), the correlation coefficient is 0.29, which signals a weak positive correlation between upward feedback and trust towards senior managers. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.001 < 0.05$ ). In other words, the weak positive correlation which is observed between upward feedback and trust for senior managers is statistically significant. Therefore though it is only weak, some connection is found between upward feedback and trust towards senior managers.

**Table 7.19:** Upward feedback ↔ Trust towards senior managers (FSA)

			Upward feedback from employees to managers is valued in my company	To what extent do you trust the following? - Senior managers
Spearman's rho	Upward feedback from employees to managers is valued in my company	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 . 95	.092 .377 95
	To what extent do you trust the following? - Senior managers	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	.092 .377 95	1.000 . 95

**Table 7.20:** Upward feedback ↔ Trust towards senior managers (DSA)

			Upward feedback from employees to managers is valued in my company	To what extent do you trust the following? - Senior managers
Spearman's rho	Upward feedback from employees to managers is valued in my company	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 . 142	.286** .001 140
	To what extent do you trust the following? - Senior managers	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	.286** .001 140	1.000 . 140

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

### 7.2.5 Learning and development (TM) ↔ Network ties (SC)

Tests have been conducted to evaluate whether there is a correlation between learning-development and network ties. The 5 variables on learning and development have been

combined into one scale (Table 7.21). The variables on network ties have been combined into one scale (Table 7.2).

**Table 7.21:** Learning and development (variables)

<b>Learning and development (strongly disagree → strongly agree)</b>	
1.	Regular development programmes are a must in the company policy
2.	I am encouraged by the company to obtain further academic/professional qualifications
3.	There are online learning materials that employees can access on demand
4.	I have the option of attending additional trainings and development programmes which will be sponsored by the company
5.	Training is available for my specific job role

For FSA (Table 7.22), the correlation coefficient is 0.620, indicating a strong positive correlation between learning-development and network ties. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). In other words, the strong positive correlation which is observed between learning-development and network ties is statistically significant. The analysis indicates that when it comes to foreign companies, the more the learning and development programmes, the higher the network ties. For DSA (Table 7.23), the correlation coefficient is 0.463, which signals a moderate positive correlation between learning-development and network ties. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). In other words, the moderate positive correlation which is observed between learning-development and network ties is statistically significant. The analysis indicates that when it comes to domestic companies, the more the learning and development programmes, the higher the network ties.



**Table 7.22:** Learning and development ↔ Network ties (FSA)

			Network ties	Learning and development
Spearman's rho	Network ties	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.620**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	91	91
Learning and development	Learning and development	Correlation Coefficient	.620**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	91	95

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

**Table 7.23:** Learning and development ↔ Network ties (DSA)

			Network ties	Learning & development
Spearman's rho	Network ties	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.463**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	139	139
Learning & Development	Learning & Development	Correlation Coefficient	.463**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	139	142

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

### 7.2.6 Learning and development (TM) ↔ shared vision (SC)

This section evaluated whether there is a correlation between workplace training and shared vision (Table 7.24). This is in relation to understanding the correlation between learning and development (talent management practice) and shared vision (social capital indicator).

**Table 7.24:** Learning & development ↔ shared vision (variables)

Learning and development (strongly disagree →strongly agree)	Shared vision (Strongly disagree → Strongly agree)
Workplace training helped me to understand the company objectives as well as the future goals	My co-workers and I share the similar ambition for the future of the company

For FSA (Table 7.25), the correlation coefficient is 0.37, indicating a moderate positive correlation between training and shared vision. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). In other words, the moderate positive correlation observed between training and shared vision is statistically significant. This analysis indicates that when it comes to foreign companies, workplace training impacts the employees' shared vision. For DSA (Table 7.26), the correlation coefficient is 0.34, indicating a moderate positive correlation between training and shared vision. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ), therefore there is enough evidence to reject the null hypothesis and accept the alternate hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). In other words, the moderate positive correlation observed between training and shared vision is statistically significant. This analysis indicates that when it comes to domestic companies, workplace training has a positive impact on the employees' shared vision.

**Table 7.25:** Learning and development ↔ Shared vision (FSA)

			Workplace training helped me to understand the company objectives as well as the future goals	My co-workers and I share the similar ambition for the future of the company
Spearman's rho	Workplace training helped me to understand the company objectives as well as the future goals	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.372**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	95	95
	My co-workers and I share the similar ambition for the future of the company	Correlation Coefficient	.372**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	95	95

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

**Table 7.26:** Learning and development ↔ Shared vision (DSA)

			Workplace training helped me to understand the company objectives as well as the future goals	My co-workers and I share the similar ambition for the future of the company
Spearman's rho	Workplace training helped me to understand the company objectives as well as the future goals	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	1.000 . 142	.341** .000 141
	My co-workers and I share the similar ambition for the future of the company	Correlation Coefficient Sig. (2-tailed) N	.341** .000 141	1.000 . 141

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

### 7.2.7 Learning and development (TM) ↔ Trust (SC)

This is in relation to understanding the correlation between learning and development (talent management practice) and trust (social capital indicator). The 5 variables on learning and development have been combined into one scale (Table 7.21). The 5 variables on trust have been combined into one scale (Table 7.27).

**Table 7.27:** Trust (variables)

Trust (Fully distrust → Fully trust)
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Co-workers from my department</li> <li>2. Co-workers from a different department</li> <li>3. Senior managers including head of departments</li> <li>4. Hotel management board</li> <li>5. Parent organisation</li> </ol>

For FSA (Table 7.28), the correlation coefficient is 0.326, which signals a moderate positive correlation between learning-development and trust. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.001 < 0.05$ ). In other words, the moderate positive correlation which is observed between learning-development and trust is statistically significant. The analysis indicates that when it comes to foreign companies, the learning and development programmes positively impact the level of trust of the workforce. For DSA (Table 7.29), the correlation coefficient is 0.315, which signals a moderate positive correlation between learning-development and trust. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.000 < 0.05$ ). In other words, the moderate positive correlation which is observed between learning-development and trust is statistically significant. The result of this analysis indicates that when it comes to domestic companies, the learning and development programmes positively impact the level of trust of the workforce.

**Table 7.28:** Learning and development  $\leftrightarrow$  Trust (FSA)

			Learning & development	Trust
Spearman's rho	Learning & development	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.326**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.001
		N	95	95
	Trust	Correlation Coefficient	.326**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.001	.
		N	95	95

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

**Table 7.29:** Learning and development ↔ Trust (DSA)

			Learning & development	Trust
Spearman's rho	Learning & development	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.315**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.000
		N	142	141
	Trust	Correlation Coefficient	.315**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	.
		N	141	141

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

### 7.2.8 Retention (TM) ↔ Network ties (SC)

Spearman rank-order correlation has been used to evaluate whether there is a correlation between network ties at work and turnover intentions. This is in relation to understanding the correlation between network ties (which is a social capital indicator) and retention (which is a talent management practice). To understand the retention factors, it is important to understand the turnover intentions of the workforce in each company. The 4 variables on turnover intention have been combined into one scale (Table 7.30). The 6 variables on network ties have been combined into one scale and are depicted in Table 7.2.

**Table 7.30:** Turnover intention indicators (variables)

Turnover intention indicators (strongly disagree → Strongly agree)
1. I will leave the job if I find a hospitality job with better salary elsewhere
2. I will leave the job if I find a better opportunity elsewhere in a different industry
3. I would like to find a job with fixed working hours
4. I would like to find a job where I can spend more time with family and friends

For FSA (Table 7.31), the correlation coefficient is 0.18, which signals a weak positive correlation between network ties at work and turnover intentions. The significance (p-value) is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.091 > 0.05$ ); therefore the null hypothesis cannot

be rejected. In other words, the weak positive correlation observed between network ties at work and turnover intentions is not statistically significant. Therefore it can be concluded that there is no significant correlation between network ties at work and turnover intentions in FSA. This implies that the network ties at the workplace do not have any impact on the turnover decisions of the foreign company workforce. For DSA (Table 7.32), the correlation coefficient is -0.006, indicating no correlation between network ties at work and turnover intentions. Therefore, there is no correlation between network ties at work and turnover intentions in DSA. This implies that the network ties at the workplace do not have any impact on the turnover decisions of the domestic company workforce.

**Table 7.31:** Retention ↔ Network ties (FSA)

			Network ties	Turnover intentions
Spearman's rho	Network ties	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.179
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.091
		N	91	90
	Turnover intentions	Correlation Coefficient	.179	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.091	.
		N	90	94

**Table 7.32:** Retention ↔ Network ties (DSA)

			Network ties	Turnover intentions
Spearman's rho	Network ties	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.006
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.941
		N	139	136
	Turnover intentions	Correlation Coefficient	-.006	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.941	.
		N	136	139

### 7.2.9 Retention (TM) ↔ Network configuration (SC)

Spearman rank-order correlation has been used to evaluate whether there is a correlation between tie strength (friendship at the workplace) and turnover indicators (Table 7.30). This is in relation to understanding the correlation between network configuration (which is a social capital indicator) and retention (which is a talent management practice).

For FSA (Table 7.33), the correlation coefficient is -0.12, which signals a weak negative correlation between friendship at the workplace and turnover intentions. The significance (p-value) is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.268 > 0.05$ ); therefore, the weak negative correlation observed between feedback between co-workers and trust is not statistically significant. For DSA (Table 7.34), the correlation coefficient is 0.04, which signals no correlation between friendship at the workplace and turnover intentions. The significance (p-value) is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.643 > 0.05$ ); therefore the null hypothesis cannot be rejected. Therefore it can be concluded that tie strength (friendship at the workplace) does not impact the turnover intentions of the domestic company workforce in FSA and DSA.

**Table 7.33:** Retention ↔ Network configuration (FSA)

			I have friends within the work team	Turnover intentions
Spearman's rho	I have friends within the work team	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.116
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.268
		N	95	94
	Turnover intentions	Correlation Coefficient	-.116	1.000
Sig. (2-tailed)		.268	.	
N		94	94	

**Table 7.34: Retention ↔ Network configuration (DSA)**

			I have friends within the work team	Turnover intentions
Spearman's rho	I have friends within the work team	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.040
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.643
		N	141	138
	Turnover intentions	Correlation Coefficient	.040	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.643	.
		N	138	139

**7.2.10 Retention (TM) ↔ Trust (SC)**

This is in relation to understanding the correlation between the level of trust (Table 7.27) and turnover intentions (Table 7.30). For FSA (Table 7.35), the correlation coefficient is 0.080; however, the significance (p-value) is higher than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05, which signals no relationship at all between trust and turnover indicators. For DSA (Table 7.36), the correlation coefficient is 0.178, indicating a weak positive correlation between trust and turnover indicators. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.04 < 0.05$ ), therefore there is enough evidence to accept the alternate hypothesis ( $H_a$ ). It can be concluded that there is a very weak positive correlation between trust and turnover indicators. Overall, no relationship was found between trust and retention.



**Table 7.35: Retention ↔ Trust (FSA)**

			Turnover intentions	Trust
Spearman's rho	Turnover intentions	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.080
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.445
		N	94	94
	Trust	Correlation Coefficient	.080	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.445	.
		N	94	95

**Table 7.36: Retention ↔ Trust (DSA)**

			Turnover intentions	Trust
Spearman's rho	Turnover intentions	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.178*
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.037
		N	139	138
	Trust	Correlation Coefficient	.178*	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.037	.
		N	138	141

\*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

### 7.2.11 Retention (TM) ↔ Identification (SC)

This is in relation to understanding the correlation between identification (which is a SC indicator) and turnover intention indicators (Table 7.30) for both FSA and DSA (Table 7.38 and Table 7.39). The 3 variables on identification have been combined into one scale (Table 7.37). The correlation coefficient is 0.008 for FSA and -0.04 for DSA. For both the analyses, the significance (p-value) is greater than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05, which signals no correlation between shared identification and turnover decisions.

**Table 7.37: Identification (variables)**

(Strongly disagree → Strongly agree)	
1.	People of different ethnic/cultural backgrounds get on well together
2.	People of different religion get on well together
3.	People of different political views get on well together

**Table 7.38: Retention ↔ Identification (FSA)**

			Identification	Turnover intentions
Spearman's rho	Identification	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.008
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.939
		N	95	94
	Turnover intentions	Correlation Coefficient	.008	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.939	.
		N	94	94

**Table 7.39: Retention ↔ Identification (DSA)**

			Identification	Turnover intentions
Spearman's rho	Identification	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	-.041
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.632
		N	141	138
	Turnover intentions	Correlation Coefficient	-.041	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.632	.
		N	138	139

**7.2.12 Succession planning (TM) ↔ Trust (SC)**

This is in relation to understanding the correlation between trust (Table 7.27) and succession planning (which is a talent management practice). For FSA (Table 7.40), the correlation coefficient is 0.295, which signals a weak positive correlation between succession planning and trust. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.004 < 0.05$ ). In other words, the weak positive correlation observed between succession planning and trust is statistically significant. For DSA (Table 7.41), the correlation

coefficient is 0.231, which signals a weak positive correlation between succession planning and trust. The significance (p-value) is less than the  $\alpha$  value 0.05 ( $0.006 < 0.05$ ). In other words, the weak positive correlation observed between succession planning and trust is statistically significant. The results indicate that if the workforce is content with the succession planning tailored by the company, this can enhance their level of trust towards the co-workers, managers, hotel management board and parent organisation.

**Table 7.40:** Succession planning ↔ Trust (FSA)

			Trust	Training is designed for the development of my career
Spearman's rho	Trust	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.295**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.004
		N	95	95
	Training is designed for the development of my career	Correlation Coefficient	.295**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.004	.
		N	95	95

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

**Table 7.41:** Succession planning ↔ Trust (DSA)

			Trust	Training is designed for the development of my career
Spearman's rho	Trust	Correlation Coefficient	1.000	.231**
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.	.006
		N	141	139
	Training is designed for the development of my career	Correlation Coefficient	.231**	1.000
		Sig. (2-tailed)	.006	.
		N	139	140

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

### **7.3 Chapter conclusion**

This is the first study that directly examines the correlation between talent management practices and social capital indicators. The findings from each correlation test have been summarised in Table 7.42. Overall, the results show that TM does have an impact on enhancing SC in the workforce. There are two significant findings that are derived from this chapter. Firstly, the findings indicate the positive impact talent strategy, performance management and learning and development have on network ties. Secondly, the positive impact learning and development practices has on network ties, shared vision and trust. This has been validated in both FSA and DSA. In summary, these results provide significant contributions to the talent management and social capital literature. The findings highlight the TM practices, which can have a positive impact, adverse impact and no impact on the social capital of the workforce (refer to Table 7.42). The findings established in this chapter are original contributions to the theoretical knowledge in the TM and SC studies. In Chapter 8, the researcher presents the significant results that emerged from the study, the theoretical and practical contributions, and finally, the limitations of this study and directions for further research.

**Table 7.42:** Summary of findings

	<b>Variables</b>	<b>Foreign SA</b>	<b>Domestic SA</b>
I.	Talent strategy and planning (TM) ↔ Network ties (SC)	Strong positive correlation	Strong positive correlation
II.	Talent strategy and planning (TM) ↔ Trust towards senior managers (SC)	No correlation	Weak positive correlation
	Talent strategy and planning (TM) ↔ Trust towards hotel management board (SC)	Moderate positive correlation	Moderate positive correlation
	Talent strategy and planning (TM) ↔ Trust towards parent organisation (SC)	Weak positive correlation	Weak positive correlation
III.	Performance Management (TM) ↔ Network ties (SC)	Strong positive correlation	Moderate positive correlation
IV.	Feedback between co-workers (TM) ↔ Trust between co-workers (SC)	Weak positive correlation	No correlation
	Feedback from different managers (TM) ↔ Trust towards senior managers (SC)	No correlation	No correlation
	Upward feedback (TM) ↔ Trust towards senior managers (SC)	No correlation	Weak positive correlation
V.	Learning-development (TM) ↔ Network ties	Strong positive correlation	Moderate positive correlation
VI.	Learning-development (TM) ↔ Shared vision (SC)	Moderate positive correlation	Moderate positive correlation
VII.	Learning-development (TM) ↔ Trust	Moderate positive correlation	Moderate positive correlation
VIII.	Turnover intentions (Retention: TM) ↔ Network ties (SC)	No correlation	No correlation
IX.	Turnover intentions (Retention: TM) ↔ Network configuration (SC)	No correlation	No correlation
X.	Turnover intentions (Retention: TM) ↔ Trust (SC)	No correlation	Weak positive correlation
XI.	Turnover intentions (Retention: TM) ↔ Identification (SC)	No correlation	No correlation
XII.	Succession planning (TM) ↔ Trust (SC)	Weak positive correlation	Weak positive correlation

# CHAPTER 8

## CONCLUSION

### 8.1 Introduction

The overall purpose of this research was to explore the topic of talent management and social capital in developing economies. The study contained three aims: (i) to investigate the current TM policies and practices implemented in hospitality firms in South Asia and whether there are differences based on a company's culture; (ii) to assess the character and level of SC prevalent in the hospitality work environment in South Asia; and, (iii) to examine the association between talent management and social capital. The study sought to distinguish between foreign and domestic companies' approaches to TM. The crux of the study is the workforces' perceptions and experiences of TM and the level of SC that the workforce possesses. The researcher incorporated the overall workforce in the study, not just focussing on a particular hierarchy or department (established in Section 2.5).

Two companies each in Delhi and Colombo in the luxury hospitality sector (one foreign and one domestic) were selected to be in the sample (refer to Section 4.3). The primary empirical material adopted in this study is quantitative surveys. The data collected from the quantitative surveys were used for the regional and country-level investigations and to test the association between TM and SC. A more detailed exploration was required for the country-level investigation. Therefore, the researcher has adopted a mixed-methods approach that includes interviews based on the results from the surveys (Yin, 1994; Creswell, 2003).

This chapter will first briefly present the key findings of the study under each research objective. The following sections will present the theoretical and practical implications of the research. Finally, the chapter will provide a brief account of the study's limitations, the proposed directions for future research, and a reflection on the research journey.

## **8.2 Summary of key findings**

This section consists of the most significant findings from the study. The findings reveal the role of the parent company, managers and individual hotel management board in efficient TM practices and SC formation. The key findings under each of these factors and the similarities and differences in the existing literature are mentioned in Table 8.1. The following sub-sections elaborate on the key findings related to each objective under each aim.

**Table 8.1:** Factors influencing talent management and social capital

<b>ORGANISATIONAL CULTURE</b>	
<i>Findings</i>	<i>Similarities/differences to literature</i>
<b>Role of Managers</b>	
<p>Exclusive TM practices appear to be the commonly used strategy. The study highlights the crucial role of HOD's in spotting and recommending the talents. The involvement of different managers is found crucial in the exclusive TM practices to reduce favouritism and marginalisation. This is reported to be majorly seen during appraisals and job promotions.</p>	<p>This aligns with Smith <i>et al.</i> (2006), Hatum (2010) and Minbaeva and Colling (2013), who posit that the company talent pool is now too important to be left to the HR department alone and is also the responsibility of the other top managers. The issue of favouritism (e.g. Adamsen, 2016) and marginalisation .g. (O'Connor and Crowley-Henry, 2019) in exclusive TM approach is noted by researchers.</p>
<p>The study found the role of managers in fostering trust and shared vision within the workplace. The study found the exclusion of ordinary level employees from accessing the intranet facility. This highlights the crucial role of middle managers in providing information (e.g. career succession, training, and company goals) and resources to ordinary level employees. Moreover, the study found the role of middle managers in fostering trust among the workforce (Figure 8.2).</p>	<p>This aligns with the study by Valentino (2004) and Brien (2006), who found the importance of middle managers in uniting the workforce and transmitting the organisational culture across the whole workforce.</p>
<b>Role of parent organisation</b>	
<p>The findings show significant differences in TM practices between foreign and domestic companies where the former has more advanced practices overall. However, the domestic companies are not far behind. The advancements are in the standardised foreign company practices such as performance management and learning and development.</p>	<p>This aligns with the study by Tatoglu <i>et al.</i> (2016) on the TM practices in Turkish local companies and Multinational Enterprises (MNE), where the MNE's are found to have a more robust system of TM. Moreover, the findings by Latukha (2014), who studied TM in the Russian domestic and foreign organisations posit that TM is an unpopular concept in domestic organisations.</p>
<p>The findings emphasise the initiatives of domestic companies in attracting talents. Domestic companies in South Asia appear to create more opportunities to nurture fresh talents by investing in hotel schools and skills development centres. Domestic companies appear to be more attractive to the host nationals' generally in the South Asian context.</p>	<p>This differs from Latukha's (2016) findings, who found the challenges posed by foreign companies to domestic companies when it comes to acquiring talents.</p>



<p>The availability of intranet facilities is limited to the supervisors and managers in all the participating companies. However, this is not found to have an adverse effect on other employees accessing work-related resources. The study found that having a personal relationship (strong ties) is found to be beneficial when it comes to assistance regarding personal matters, ease in the workplace, and mentorship. The study found the benefits of both strong and weak ties in a hospitality work environment.</p>	<p>This aligns with the study by Jack (2005), which found that if the co-workers are friends (strong ties), it can build a sense of trust and ease in the workplace. This differs from the study by Katzy <i>et al.</i> (2011), who found that weak ties have a more positive influence in a collaborative organisational context. The current study supports Granovetter (1973), Burt (1992), and Johannisson (1986), who mentioned the need for both strong and weak ties in a network because the nature of these ties influences the operation and structure of networks.</p>
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**Role of individual hotel management board**

<p>Domestic companies reported to have internal trade unions within each hotel permitted by their management which foreign company hotels lack. The findings suggest the need for an internal union within each hotel, which would provide an alternative for the workforce from joining the external trade unions which is found to have no influence on fostering SC in a hospitality context and has potential adverse impacts.</p>	<p>As Koodimara (2016) mentioned, the primary interest of trade unions is the welfare and economic improvements of workers and not about the productivity and economic performance of the companies. This could be why the management reported to have a negative opinion on external unions. However, some respondents lack knowledge about the unions, and some refuse to comment on it. This links to the unawareness of the employees about the external trade unions noted by Koodamara (2016). The current study does not reject the idea of unionism in fostering social capital, which is suggested by scholars (e.g. Jarley and Johnson, 2003); however, a more confined and refined approach is suggested from the findings.</p>
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**8.2.1 To examine and compare the experience of the overall workforce on current TM practices in foreign and domestic owned hospitality companies regionally**

The study highlights that foreign company respondents in South Asia appear to have more belief in their respective company’s talent strategies. The results indicate that domestic companies in South Asia are more attractive for the respondents than foreign companies. The results indicate that foreign companies appear to give more importance to prior work experience when acquiring employees than domestic companies in South Asia.

It is important to note that in the DSA, a higher per cent of the workforce have basic school qualifications and diplomas, whereas, in the FSA, a high per cent of the workforce have degrees or above qualifications compared to DSA. When it comes to development practices, it appears that foreign companies give more emphasis on performance appraisals than domestic companies. Additionally, for learning and development, it is found that foreign companies were providing better training and development programmes to the workforce.

The majority of the respondents from both FSA and DSA have indicated their desire to move to a workplace with fixed working hours to have a good work-life balance. It is found that the respondents from domestic South Asian companies are not content with their pay and could result in seeking employment with the foreign companies who offer better pay. The workforce at FSA reported to have uncertainty about their future, whereas the respondents from DSA mentioned they have clarity in their future. Adding to this, respondents from DSA give greater importance to their career advancement compared to the FSA. Meanwhile, respondents from FSA have a greater belief in the internal training programmes for career progression than DSA.

### **8.2.2 To examine and compare the overall workforce experience of current TM practices in foreign and domestic owned hospitality companies in individual countries**

The study highlights that foreign company respondents in both India and Sri Lanka appear to have more belief in their respective company's talent strategies. The study revealed that the scope of an inclusive approach is questionable. The exclusive approach is considered the favourable TM approach in the hospitality industry. All four companies

reported to have structured management and supervisory trainee programmes focussing mainly on these selected individuals. Exclusive TM approaches indicate to have adverse effects where a section of the workforce starts feeling neglected. This links with the drawback of the exclusive TM approach, which creates inequality gaps among the workers in organisations, which results in major ethical problems (Anlesinya and Amponsah-Tawiah, 2020) and potential adverse reactions from the excluded majority (Bjorkman *et al.*, 2013; Pfeffer, 2001; Swailes and Blackburn, 2016). The involvement of HR, department heads, and other senior managers are found to reduce favouritism and marginalisation in the exclusive TM approach. This aligns with Smith *et al.* (2006), Hatum (2010) and Minbaeva and Colling (2013), who posit that the company talent pool is now too important to be left to the HR department alone and is also the responsibility of the other top managers.

The study found that in all the four companies, the female staff are hugely underrepresented, especially in the Sri Lankan companies. The attraction of female staff is one of the most crucial challenges in the hospitality industry in South Asia. This aligns with the census reports from both the countries in South Asia, where in India, the total female workforce representation is 9.1% and in Sri Lanka, 5-6% (Gupta, 2019). Even though there are plenty of opportunities in the hospitality industry, female representation is still scarce. It is reported by both the company respondents that they have been taking initiatives to overcome this.

The study found that previous experience is considered vital for managerial positions in both the Sri Lankan companies. For recruitment of supervisory level and below, it is not found to be a requirement. Conversely, there is a significantly higher number of staff in the domestic Indian company without any previous work experience. However, the

interview responses show that this is mainly due to the flow of graduates from the company-funded hotel management institute, where they receive hands-on training. In general, the study found that foreign company in Sri Lanka and India give more importance to prior work experience when acquiring employees than the domestic company.

It is important to note that majority of the respondents in the Sri Lankan companies have diploma qualifications (above 40%) more than degree and masters (refer to Table 5.11). It is important to note that more than 80% of the respondents in both Indian companies have qualifications above degree level. Most of the respondents from Sri Lankan companies have reported to have skill development qualifications/training from different institutions, including the company they work for (refer to Table 5.12). When looking at the Indian context, a surprisingly higher number of the workforce has a degree qualification and above. This could be the reason why very few staff in the Indian companies acquire additional skill development qualifications/training. There is a high demand for ordinary employee positions in the Indian context where none of these graduates would want to stay as ordinary employee for a longer period. This relates to the World Bank (2019) data, where 15.3% of the total labour force with advanced qualifications is unemployed in India. This is reported at 7.1% in Sri Lanka (refer to Table 1.2).

It is found that foreign companies brought structured performance appraisals and 360-degree feedback to the Sri Lankan and Indian context. The system appears to be still in the refining stage in the domestic firms, which is evident from the surveys and the interviews. However, the foreign company in India does not include supervisory level staff and ordinary staff in their personalised appraisal system. The only way of having a

performance review for these staff is through an annual survey. This is different in the foreign company in Sri Lanka, where both the supervisory level employees, as well as ordinary staff are getting personalised feedback.

In the Sri Lankan context, the survey responses indicate that the foreign company has given emphasis on basic regular training for the workforce. Whereas, when it comes to additional training and qualifications, the domestic company focussed more on these. From the Indian context, the survey responses indicate that foreign company prioritises training and development of the workforce than the domestic company. However, the practices in the domestic company in India is different from the other three companies in the study. The talent pool selection starts from recruitment for this particular company, where candidates are chosen from the college after graduation to be in a management trainee programme. This creates more opportunities for these individuals to progress in their careers with rigorous training and development programmes for 1-2 years. As posited by Schuler and Tarique (2012), individuals who have clarity in their career path and the assurance of their development will be more connected and engaged to their work and, in turn, towards the organisation.

The recurring factors from all four companies in retaining employees are pay, benefits and career progression. This has been found to match previous research on the importance of issuing appropriate pay levels (Chan and Kuok, 2011; Dogru *et al.*, 2019; Bonn and Forbringer, 1992; Dwesini, 2019) and providing decent career opportunities (Kichuk, Brown and Ladkin, 2019; Khan *et al.*, 2011; Yang *et al.*, 2012) to retain employees in the hospitality and tourism industry.

The study found that the majority of respondents from all four companies have career aspirations. Interestingly, the majority of respondents from all the companies except the foreign Indian company have reported that they have future plans. Moreover, there is acceptance from respondents of all the four companies that they believe in the company trainings for their progression. Contrarily, the interview findings revealed that the majority of the employees are not receiving adequate training or mentoring for their succession. It could be debatable that career succession may not be possible for every staff in a company. Goh and Okumus (2020) mentioned the importance of career counselling to provide information on the individuals' future career pathway through reliable management traineeships (e.g. graduate management traineeship programmes, professional advancement programmes). The negligence of existing employees when it comes to management and supervisory level trainee programmes has also been found to be a concerning issue that the companies should address.

### **8.2.3 To measure social capital dimensions and thereby understand and compare the level of SC in foreign and domestic owned hospitality firms regionally**

The study highlights that the foreign companies have greater network ties from a regional analysis than the domestic companies in South Asia. The findings indicate that domestic companies have stronger ties than foreign companies in South Asia when it comes to network strength. The findings depict that a greater percentage of domestic company respondents have a shared language in the workplace. The study found that a higher percentage of foreign companies' respondents have a shared vision for the company. Moreover, the respondents from foreign South Asian companies have shown more substantial evidence of fostering relational social capital than the domestic South Asian companies.

#### **8.2.4 To measure social capital and thereby understand and compare perceptions of the level of SC in foreign and domestic owned hospitality firms in individual countries**

In the Sri Lankan context, the results can be interpreted as that overall, the foreign company has greater network ties, whereas, in the Indian context, the domestic company has greater network ties. The reliance on the intranet to acquire information appears to be one of the interesting findings. However, this is only limited to supervisory level and above and in some companies just for the managerial level staff. The intranet can provide information on work, operational assistance, training and development. However, for receiving assistance regarding personal matters, maintaining connections and mentorship appears to be necessary. The absence of these interactions can negatively affect an organisation by reducing the sources of knowledge. Moreover, there will be difficulties when it comes to accessing tacit knowledge or high-value information (Molina-Morales and Martínez-Fernández, 2010).

When it comes to tie strength, the foreign company has stronger ties in the Sri Lankan context, whereas, in the Indian context, the domestic company has stronger ties. The study found that in the Sri Lankan context, the foreign company has a higher presence of a shared language, whereas, in the Indian context, the domestic company has a higher presence of a shared language. These findings could be directly linked to the findings from examining structural social capital where foreign company reported to have higher network ties and tie strength in Sri Lanka, whereas it is higher in the domestic company in India. This is in line with the existing understanding that structural SC is a prime generator of SC, and it influences cognitive and relational dimensions (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998; Gabarro, 1978; Gulati, 1995; Granovetter, 1985). The study found that in both

Indian and Sri Lankan contexts, a higher percentage of foreign company respondents have a shared vision for the company.

The study findings add to the literature on relational social capital (Kim *et al.*, 2013; Ghorbanzadeh *et al.*, 2021). The findings imply that foreign company in Sri Lanka has higher relational social capital than the domestic company. Whereas, from the Indian context, the study implies that domestic company in India has higher relational social capital than the foreign company. Therefore, in summary, the research findings indicate that irrespective of whether a company is foreign-owned or domestic-owned, all that matters is the particular company culture when it comes to fostering relational social capital.

#### **8.2.5 To evaluate the workforce experiences of TM and examine whether these impact the formation of SC in South Asian foreign and South Asian domestic hospitality firms separately**

The study found a clear positive correlation between participants who are content with the companies utilising their talents and those who exhibit higher network ties in both FSA and DSA. This implies that if the workforce is content with a company's talent strategy, this can increase their network ties at the workplace. The study found that the incorporation of efficient talent strategy fosters trust within the workforce. It is important to note that talent strategy does not enhance the trust towards senior managers in FSA. However, there is evidence that efficient talent strategy impacts the trust towards senior managers in DSA. Efficient talent strategy does have a weak but positive impact on the trust towards the hotel management board and the parent organisations in both FSA and DSA.



A clear positive correlation was found between the staff who have participated in the performance appraisal and those who exhibited higher network ties. This implies that performance management has positively impacted the network ties within the workforce. When it comes to the impact of performance management on trust, only two analyses reported some correlation. The results suggest a weak but positive impact of co-workers' feedback on trust between co-workers in FSA. Upward feedback appears to impact the trust towards the senior managers in DSA positively. Taken together, there is not enough evidence to suggest that performance management has an impact on the level of trust.

The study found that learning and development practices have a direct positive influence on network ties, shared vision and trust in both FSA and DSA. This implies that when there are efficient and frequent learning and development practices in the TM system of a company, this can lead to the actors having more ties, a shared vision and potentially an increase in overall trust within the work setting. Efficient succession planning is found to influence the trust the workforce has towards the work setting. This implies that providing career routes to staff can build the trust they have towards their workplace.

#### **8.2.6 To assess the level of SC and examine whether they impact the workforce experiences of TM practices in South Asian foreign and South Asian domestic hospitality firms separately**

A few interesting findings emerged from examining the impact of social capital on talent management practices. Firstly, a weak positive correlation was found between individuals with high trust towards the senior managers and those who participated in upward feedback in DSA. This implies that individuals with higher trust towards the senior managers will show more involvement in upward feedback. This aligns with the study by

Dirks and Ferrin (2001) and Nicolaou, Ibrahim and van Heck (2013), who found the role of trust in performance management. They have found the ease of providing negative feedback if there is trust involved. However, no relationship was found from the tests between shared vision and performance management. The result differs from Barzelay and Campbell (2003) and Oslen and Eadie (1982), who mentioned the benefits shared vision would bring to performance management (Tandardini and Kroll, 2015). Social capital indicators such as network ties, network configuration, trust, and identification have been found to have no impact on retaining the workforce.

### **8.3 Theoretical contributions**

One of the most significant contributions of this research was distinguishing the workforces' experiences and perception of TM in foreign and domestic companies. This adds to the empirical research conducted on the influence of organisational cultural differences on TM (Kontoghiorghes, 2016; Latukha and Selivanovskikh, 2016; Glenn, 2012; Kravariti and Johnston, 2019). The studies in the past have concentrated more on an individual country and individual company context. The research suggests that the TM practices in the foreign companies in South Asia are more advanced than the domestic companies. The findings show that certain performance management practices, online learning portals and HR documentations are practices foreign companies brought to the South Asian market when it comes to the hospitality industry.

This research extends the work of Sparrow *et al.* (2011), Stahl *et al.* (2012), and Thunnissen *et al.* (2013) on the practicality of inclusive TM and the impact of exclusive

TM (Anlesinya and Amponsah-Tawiah, 2020; Pfeffer, 2001). The findings suggest that inclusive TM is not a well-received concept within hospitality practitioners and that the exclusive TM is the preferred approach by hospitality companies. The research recognises that the TM approach adopted (inclusive or exclusive) reflects individual talent management practices (e.g. performance management, succession planning). This research also provides an original contribution to the field of exclusive TM and organisational justice theory by providing a distinction within the exclusive TM approach. The researcher has identified two differing practices of exclusive approach to TM and the impact of both. Firstly, by only including the existing workforce in the selection of talent pool. Alternatively, the inclusion of the new recruitments from hospitality schools in a tailored management/supervisory trainee programme. The latter is practised more by the domestic firms which have investments and associations with some of the best hotel schools in the respective countries. Various researchers have already established that employees feel neglected if they do not get into the talent pool. However, the findings from this study posit that more than the selection from within the company setting, when an individual is selected just after graduation to be in a management or supervisory trainee programme, the existing employees feel even more neglected. This study adds to the existing body of research, which indicates the negative influence of exclusive TM on employees (Anlesinya and Amponsah-Tawiah, 2020; Bjorkman *et al.*, 2013; Pfeffer, 2001).

The research adds to the literature on the attraction of female candidates to the hospitality industry (Deery and Jago, 2015; Iverson, 2000; Segovia-Perez *et al.*, 2019; Remington and Kitterlin-Lynch, 2018; Calinaud, Kokkranikal and Gebbels, 2020). Findings contribute to the existing theoretical understanding of the challenges in attracting the

female population towards the hospitality industry in South Asia. The primary challenges identified in Sri Lanka are the general public's outlook on the hospitality industry, government laws restricting female staff to work in certain departments, social acceptance, work-life balance, odd work timings, and transportation difficulties. The primary challenges identified in India are the general public's outlook on the hospitality industry, the general outlook of the people on women working, and social acceptance.

There is an ongoing debate on the requirements for recruiting in the hospitality industry (Walsh and Taylor, 2007; Scott and Revis, 2008; Powell and Wood, 1999). The study reveals that the requirement for a higher academic qualification is directly linked to the labour market situation in specific countries.

Retention has been identified as one of the hospitality industry's biggest challenges, and turnover has been identified as the most persistent problem by several researchers (Walsh and Taylor, 2007; Richardson, 2010; Barron, 2008; Rutherford and O'fallon, 2007). The findings of this study offer two contradicting perspectives on employee turnover. Firstly, turnover is inevitable, and the most important thing is to increase the supply and incorporate fresh talents. The other perspective is that retention of the overall workforce is necessary and that the companies should proactively work towards this.

This study adds to the limited knowledge on tie strength in a hospitality workplace. The results suggest that from a management perspective, it is reported that when there is an overboard friendship between the co-workers, it can affect the workers' conscience to

detent right and wrong. Therefore it is suggested that more than having a personal friendship (strong ties), a professional relationship or relationship as an acquaintance (weak ties) is only required in the hospitality context. From the workforces' perspective, strong ties have a more positive influence (build a sense of trust and ease in the workplace) than having weak ties.

The study adds to the minimal literature on the role of trade unions in the hospitality industry (Basnyat, Lovelock and Carr, 2016; Macaulay and Wood, 1992). It is found that the external trade unions do not have any role in fostering social capital in an organisational context, whereas a presence of internal unions could enhance SC among the workforce. The domestic companies in both Sri Lanka and India have reported the presence of internal unions within each hotel. However, this is only accessible for ordinary level staff. Interestingly, the workforce at domestic companies in both India and Sri Lanka have higher percentages who have membership at external unions than their foreign counterparts. Further analysis shows that the decision to join external associations is completely independent of the employees' job roles in all the four participating companies. The findings suggest that in certain companies, more than the ordinary level employees, the supervisory and managerial level staff reported to have a higher percentage who have memberships at the external trade union associations.

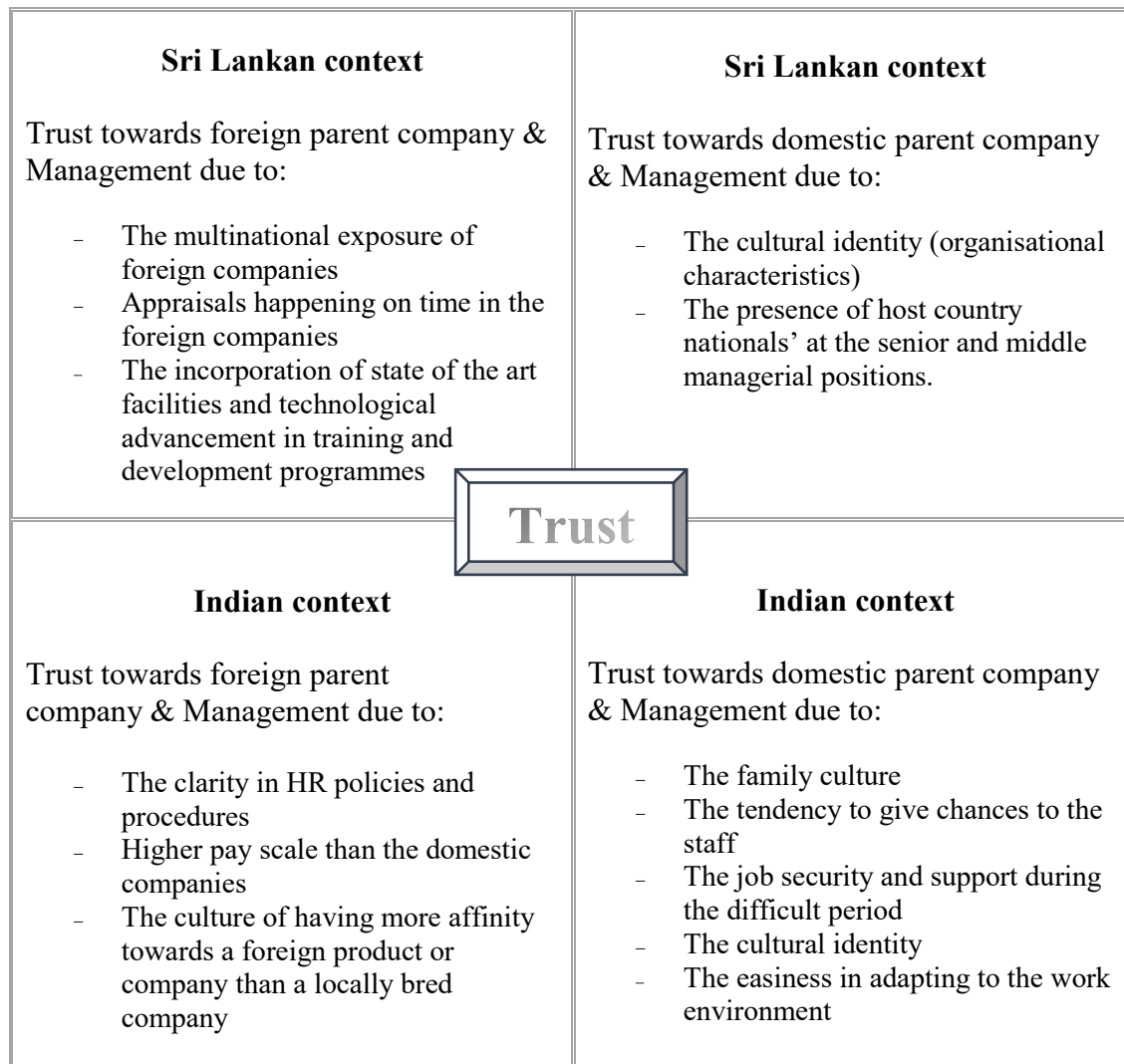
Several studies focus on the influence of social events/activities on outputs such as employee loyalty, employee satisfaction and employee performance in the hospitality industry (Yao *et al.*, 2019; Israeli and Barkan, 2004; Tews *et al.*, 2013). The study adds to the minimal literature on the role of work social events/activities on SC in the hospitality industry (Basnyat, Lovelock and Carr, 2016; Macaulay and Wood, 1992). The findings suggest that the company social events/activities do influence in fostering social

capital in an organisational context. The majority of the survey respondents in all the companies except foreign company in India have reported that these events within the company allow them to improve their network within the workplace. However, the interview responses from the foreign company in India do not match with the survey responses, and it indicates that these events enhance SC within the workforce.

The results suggest that in all four participating companies, ordinary level employees are not notified of the company's short-term and long-term goals. The companies regularly notify their goals and vision to the supervisory and managerial level, and the ordinary level employees are ignored in this. As it is found that the ordinary level employees have no access to the intranet facilities (refer to section 8.2.4), this may hinder the formation/maintenance of SC among this section of the workforce. As mentioned in the literature, this could potentially create a barrier to freely exchange their ideas and resources, which helps them to become partners and see the potential value of combining and exchanging resources (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998; Chou *et al.*, 2006; Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998; Molina-Morales and Martina-Fernandez, 2010). These findings add new knowledge to the literature on shared vision within the hospitality industry.

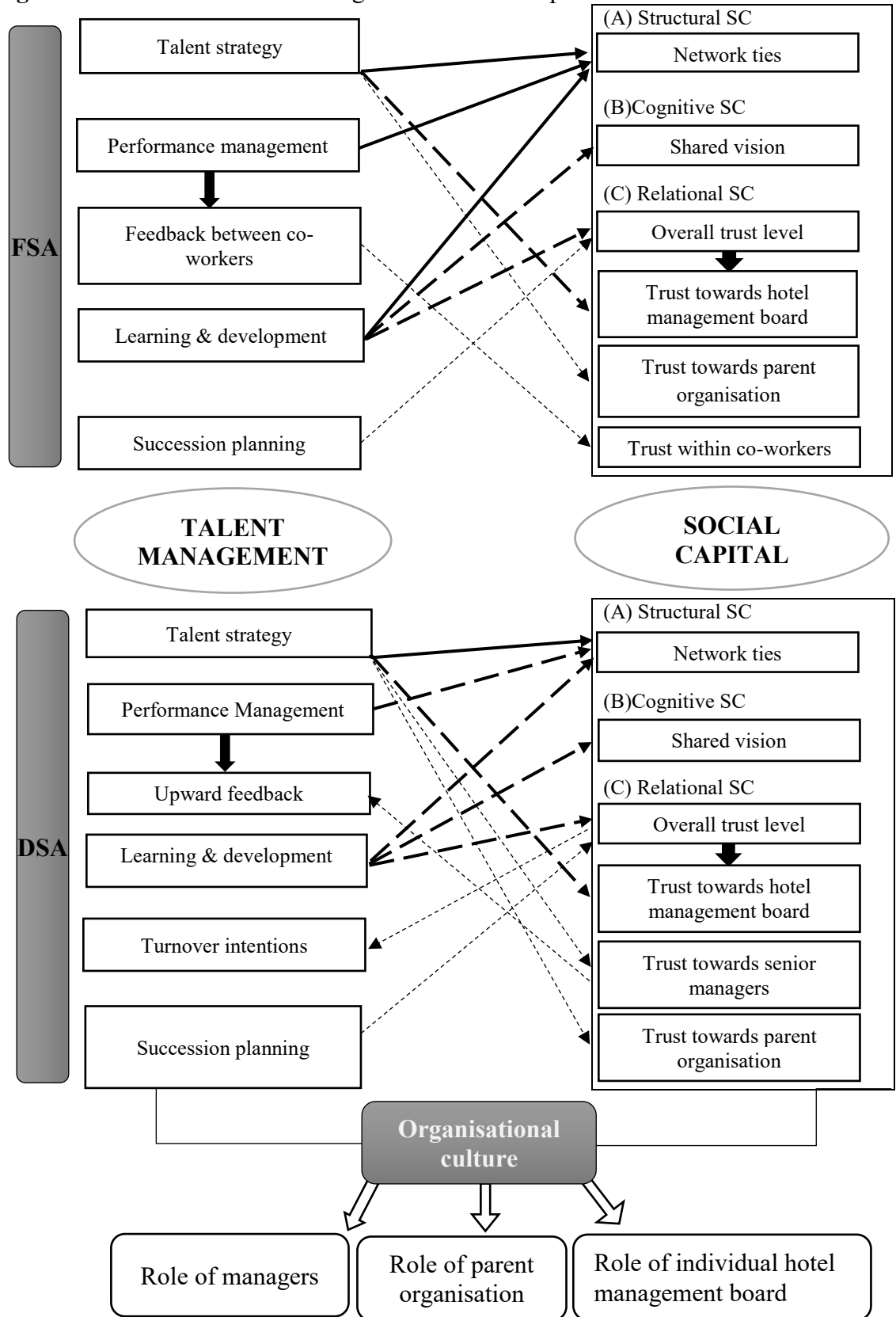
The results provide a theoretical contribution to understanding the workforce trust towards a foreign and domestic parent company and management. The research adds to the limited body of research documenting the factors influencing workforces' trust towards the foreign-owned and domestic owned companies (Figure 8.1).

**Figure 8.1:** Factors influencing the trust of workforce towards foreign owned and domestic owned companies



Correlation tests were conducted based on the conceptual framework (refer to Figure 3.3), which tested the association between each TM practice and the SC dimensions. The amended conceptual framework (Figure 8.2) includes the TM-SC tests, which depict variance in the degree of correlation between the variables based on company ownership types (foreign and domestic). The theoretical contributions of this model are explained in detail below.

**Figure 8.2: Amended Talent Management – Social Capital framework<sup>20</sup>**



<sup>20</sup> Strong positive relation: —————>  
 Moderate positive relation: - - - - ->  
 Weak positive relation: ······>



The study posits that efficient TM practices can act as a tool in building social capital in a hospitality workplace. The research postulates the overarching influence of organisational culture in this association, with direct influence from managers, parent organisations and individual hotel management boards (depicted in Table 8.1). The study found that efficient TM strategy, performance management, and learning and development practices that the organisations adopt have a positive influence on enhancing the network ties within the workplace. This implies that if the workforce is content with a company's talent strategy and development practices, this can increase their network ties at the workplace. The primary benefit suggested in the literature about network ties is that these ties allow combining and exchanging knowledge (Chou *et al.*, 2006; Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998; Yli-Renko *et al.*, 2001; Lin, 2001). Previous studies have emphasised that trust (relational dimension) and other variables in other dimensions evolve from network ties (structural dimension) as they act as an antecedent to the other dimensions (e.g. Gabarro, 1978; Gulati, 1995; Granovetter, 1985). The absence of these ties can negatively affect an organisation by reducing the sources of knowledge and making it more difficult to access tacit knowledge or find high-value information (Molina-Morales and Martínez-Fernández, 2010).

Learning and development practices within the talent management cycle are found to directly influence fostering the quantity and quality of networks in the workplace. The research posits this as the most important TM practice due to its direct positive association to all three SC dimensions that Nahapiet and Ghoshal (1998) postulated (structural, relational and cognitive dimensions of SC). The study found that learning and development practices have a direct positive influence on network ties, shared vision and trust in the workplace. This implies that when there are efficient and frequent learning and development practices in the TM system of a company, this can lead to the actors

having more ties, a shared vision and potentially an increase in overall trust within the work setting. In this way, the organisations can build SC in the workplace. Therefore, excluding staff from the learning and development could result as a barrier in building SC in a hospitality workplace. This highlights the importance of an inclusive TM approach where the inclusion of the overall workforce could foster SC which would indeed be beneficial to any organisation. Moreover, the findings suggest that the workforce desires a more inclusive approach. However, an exclusive approach is the most preferred among hospitality employers and the practicality of an inclusive approach is questionable. The primary barrier to implementing inclusive TM is its cost, as this can be expensive initially. Secondly, providing a career route for every employee is a barrier to implementing the inclusive TM approach. From an organisational standpoint, providing regular learning and development for the overall workforce can be time-consuming and may take away a considerable amount of working hours. These factors lead organisations to prioritise an exclusive approach over one that is inclusive.

Efficient succession planning is found to influence the trust the workforce has towards the work setting. This implies that providing career routes to staff can build the trust they have towards their workplace. Therefore, if employees do not perceive there to be career succession, this can hinder the level of trust towards their colleagues, managers and employing organisations. Various researchers (e.g. Koka and Prescott, 2002; Doz, 1996) consider trust critical in creating and transferring knowledge and other resources. The likelihood of sharing resources rises when trust increases and becomes embedded in the relationships (Puhakka, 2006). The absence of trust could result in difficulties understanding each other, increasing the fear of being cheated or being taken advantage of by co-workers (Molina-Morales and Martínez-Fernández, 2010; Raza, 2012; Deroian, 2002). The direct influence of succession planning on the trust level of the workforce

depicts the importance of succession planning in the TM cycle. Other than learning and development, and succession planning, none of the TM practices directly influence overall trust.

Talent management is generally viewed as a practice-oriented concept, and the theoretical underpinnings of TM are often not explicitly documented. The philosophy of TM has been explained using certain theories such as human capital theory (e.g. De Vos and Dreis, 2013), person-organisation fit theory (e.g. Mensah and Bawole, 2018), organisational support theory (e.g. Mensah, 2019), psychological contracts (e.g. Höglund, 2012; Festing and Schafer, 2014) and social exchange theories (e.g. Gelens et al., 2014; King, 2016). This research posited a theoretical understanding of TM using a social capital perspective (Iles et al., 2010; Crane and Hartwell, 2019). The tests of association between TM and SC (refer to Figure 8.2) has provided an in-depth understanding of how TM can be theoretically explained through the lens of SC theory (Nahapiet and Ghoshal, 1998). By doing this, the research has provided an original contribution to management and sociology literature and specifically to the talent management and organisational social capital literature. The researcher has included the overall workforce in the study to increase the generalisability of the findings. The theoretical contribution of this research is the validation of the direct influence of TM on SC formation, which highlights the importance of TM in a hospitality setting and ways of improving these practices. This is explained further in the practical contributions sections below (section 8.4), which depicts how organisations could improve TM practices based on the study findings. The amended conceptual model (Figure 8.2) depicts the findings from the TM-SC association from different organisational cultural contexts, which can be a reference point for future studies.

## **8.4 Practical contributions**

The study established the adverse impacts exclusive TM approach could cause to workforces' psychological wellbeing. The findings suggest that the workforce desires a more inclusive approach. There is a connection between the inclusive practices and the positive psychology movement mainly because the former fits in well with the latter through their emphasis on allowing or providing assistance for all employees to flourish and succeed (Luthans and Jensen, 2002). However, this can be expensive initially, although, with a well-structured approach, this could potentially reduce the turnover and costs associated with it and retain all the employees with varied talents (Walsh and Taylor, 2007; Richardson, 2010). It is practically not possible to get a career route for every employee; however, the findings show that the workforce demands career progression after certain years of work experience. So the companies are left out with two options, one to deal with the dissatisfied employees leaving the organisation or include everyone with personalised career growth training so that the employees get an indication that the company is putting efforts to help them grow.

It appears that equal opportunities are given to the employees in all the participating companies in terms of basic training. However, the suggestion from an inclusive perspective is to understand each employee's talents, strengths and weaknesses and give personalised training to each individual. General training to everyone can only enhance the skills of the particular employees who already have the talent. A more personalised approach can bring the best out of each individual, and therefore they will not feel neglected. The findings of this study allow the hospitality practitioners to understand the workforces' perception of the inclusive and exclusive TM strategy. This will assist in incorporating a balanced approach and just not one way.

The study identified that the talent pool selection (e.g. tailored trainee programmes) happens at different stages in different companies. In one of the companies, this selection happens at the recruitment stage itself; in others, it happens during performance appraisal. The company which practices selection during recruitment has been found to have adverse impacts which could marginalise the existing employees. However, selection during performance appraisals could be affected by favouritism, which sometimes can negatively affect the talent pool selection. In these companies, it appears that the line manager/department head is responsible for recommending the individuals to a higher position or a management trainee programme. This is where the involvement of different managers (e.g. Human Resource Manager, General Manager) needs to be there. Companies need to look into these aspects when selecting their talent strategy.

The findings suggest that participating domestic companies have invested heavily in talent nurturing in both India and Sri Lanka. This is evident from their investments in hotel management schools and skill development institutes. These initiatives intend to prevent the companies from falling into a precarious position regarding skills shortage. Therefore, these companies are better positioned to acquire the best talents (through college placements). The labour market situation is different in India and Sri Lanka, where the former has an overflow of candidates for supervisory and above positions and a limited supply in the ordinary levels. In contrast, Sri Lanka has limited supply in the supervisory and above position and overflow in the ordinary levels. The hospitality companies, educational institutions, national and local governments should collaborate and proactively work towards minimalising the skill gaps considering the demand and supply in certain hierarchies and departments.

In general, external trade unions are found to have an adverse effect on the workforces' social capital. The primary intention of these unions is not to enhance interpersonal relationships but to assist the employee issues. Even though the trade unions can potentially build SC among the workforce, the politicisation of these unions appears to have an adverse impact on the SC in both India and Sri Lanka. It is found that the domestic companies in India and Sri Lanka have an internal union for ordinary level employees. The finding suggests separate internal unions for ordinary employees and for the executive-level employees to deal with their issues without it going out of the company, which could also be an avenue to foster SC.

## **8.5 Limitations of the research**

The study has fulfilled its aims; however, the researcher identified a few limitations in the thesis. From the case study selection standpoint, the researcher had selected the cases based on the criteria established from reviewing the luxury hotel segment. Only a few studies have sought to establish the features of luxury in hospitality, and most of these are not based on quantifiable aspects. Rather than only adopting the physical features of luxury, the study could have incorporated multiple intangible features such as quality in service, décor, which is a limitation of the study. The study has established minimum benchmark criteria for luxury but did not consider several contemporary features of luxury hotels (e.g. valet, providing luxury cars).

Another study limitation is the representativeness of the study sample. Although the quantitative study has achieved a balanced sample size of 10% and a maximum of 15% from each company, the total sample size attained from the study is slightly lesser than expected. A final sample size of 237 responses was used for the study. However, the

desired sample size was 300-325, with responses from 20% of staff from each participating company. On a positive note, there was a balanced sample from all four participating companies. This is illustrated in Table 4.4, where staff from different gender, ages, job roles and departments were included in the surveys. This may be considered as a positive outcome of the employment of a systematic random sampling technique, where the sample selection is not entirely random but partially deliberate.

When it comes to the interviews, the researcher was unable to satisfy all the criteria in selecting the participants. Especially in the foreign and domestic company in India, participants from all three hierarchies were not attained due to COVID related reasons. The participants include 2 managers and 1 supervisory level staff from F2; and 2 supervisory and 1 managerial level staff from D2 (Table 4.6). Consequently, the researcher requested the gatekeeper to consider other criteria (different departments) and different managerial levels to have variance in the sample. For example, when it is 2 managers, the researcher has requested one manager from the executive level (senior management) and the other from the junior management level. Overall, this has caused a slight issue of representativeness as there was no representation from the ordinary staff level in the interviews (from F2 and D2).

Prior to commencing the data collection, four hotels were selected to participate in the study based on the criteria established. The reduced staff numbers due to the pandemic prompted the researcher to take an alternative path to conduct the study. This was to select multiple hotels from the domestic company in India that qualify to be in the luxury category within the same city. However, this has not significantly affected the study proceedings as the initiative was to explore the narrative of four leading hospitality companies globally and not particular hotels.

Limitations must also be acknowledged regarding the study's generalisability. When it comes to the case selection process, the objectives demanded the inclusion of at least one foreign and one domestic company in each city. The researcher initially planned to conduct the study in two foreign and two domestic companies in each city. However, due to COVID-19, this was not practically possible and it was decided to focus on one foreign and one domestic company in each city. The issue with a small number of case studies is that it is difficult to establish a cause-effect connection to reach conclusions and generalise the findings (Queiros, Faria and Almeida, 2017). This has slightly affected the generalisability of the research findings, where multiple companies within foreign and domestic ownership would have helped to generalise the research findings more conclusively.

In addition, this has caused issues in generalising the research findings to a wider population. Having certain points of similarity in selecting the case studies (criteria of luxury hotels) has helped to generalise the research findings to an extent. However, there are limitations in generalising the research findings to all the foreign companies in South Asia as the TM practices of a Far East Asian MNC could be different from a Western MNC. Within Western MNC's, the practices can vary between US-owned and European-owned companies. The issue of generalisability affects domestic hotels in particular, where they are not governed by a global set of pre-established rules, regulations, strategies, and practices as in the case of foreign MNC's. Although the organisational culture of different foreign companies and different domestic companies might vary, the challenges faced by these companies in dealing with the workforce are likely to be similar. Therefore, the methodological procedures and the research findings could be a reference point for future studies based on other countries in South Asia and other regions.



Additionally, some limitations associated with the study's validity need to be acknowledged. English is a second language for the majority of the study participants. Even though basic English proficiency is a requirement for the employees' working in the participating companies, the level of proficiency was different for each employee. The researcher, therefore, was careful in drafting the survey questions to make them elementary and easily understandable. Despite the effort, this could have affected some of the responses. The researcher considered translating the survey questions in Hindi (in the Indian context) and Sinhala (in the Sri Lankan context), which are the widely spoken languages in the study regions. However, the hotel gatekeepers advised that even though these are widely spoken in the region, there are employees whose native language is Tamil or Bengali, so they may not necessarily be able to read Hindi or Sinhala. As mentioned in the thesis, national capitals are a melting pot for many countries (see section 4.3), and Delhi and Colombo are no different. India has 22 official languages (Mohanty, 2006), and Sri Lanka with 2 official languages and English is considered the link language (Liyanage and Canagarajah, 2014). Thus, translating the questionnaire into different languages is likely to have excluded certain staff members also affecting the validity of the sample. In practice however, language did not appear to be a challenge for the interviews as the researcher was able to interpret and explain the questions further when needed.

Moreover, the significant challenge posed by COVID-19 caused the delay in the data collection. The initial plan was to conduct the surveys using online mediums and then travel to Delhi and Colombo for the face-to-face interviews. The interviews were instead conducted using online mediums, which has not affected the credibility of the data collected. However, the researcher preferred to personally be in the field to conduct the

interviews, which could have enhanced the conversation flow. This can be said as another limitation of the study.

Nevertheless, even though the pandemic has affected the sample size and the sample selection process, the efficiency of the data was not affected. This was evident from the survey responses, and especially in the interviews where the participants were very candid. The use of mixed methods has also helped enhance the validity of the findings. The qualitative study has helped interpret, justify and probe further the quantitative findings. This has enhanced the reliability and validity of the research findings (Yin, 1994; Denzin, 1978).

## **8.6 Recommendations for future research**

Although there has been an increase in talent management research in the last decade, many uncharted research areas need further exploration. The research on TM primarily focusses on the organisational benefits, and the study on employee benefits (e.g. psychological, mental health) of efficient TM is still limited.

Apart from the current TM practices, there is a need for agile practices, which many companies are already practising in businesses such as Information Technology and Marketing (Cappelli and Tavis, 2018). Hospitality is still following the waterfall techniques when it comes to talent management. A more practical oriented research underpinning the TM literature focussing on incorporating novel TM practices could benefit hospitality organisations across the world.

The literature review has identified a lack of scholarly categorisation on standardised criteria that classify luxury hotels based on tangible and intangible factors. The previous scholarly works have put forward this as a limitation to incorporate cross-country and multi-country analyses. This current research has derived a set of criteria that can be classified as the minimum benchmark criteria to qualify a luxury hotel by solely looking at the physical amenities (tangible features). Research on establishing a luxury hotel classification system incorporating both tangible and intangible factors would benefit future academic works to underpin their studies based on this classification.

One of the research findings posits that structural social capital acts as a prime generator of SC, and it influences cognitive and relational dimensions, which is previously established by several academics (Tsai and Ghoshal, 1998; Gabarro, 1978). However, there is room for this to be further explored in a contemporary management scenario, as it is limited. Conducting detailed research in this area would further enhance the conceptual understanding of social capital in an organisational context.

One of the important yet under-explored areas in this current research is the employee sense of identification within organisations, particularly with the individuals who are migrants, where there can be several barriers to fostering SC. With the increase in global and regional migration, further in-depth exploration of this research area could contribute to the social capital theory and cumulative causation theory (Massey *et al.*, 1998).

The findings of this study have documented the interrelationships between TM and SC. It is recommended that further research could be conducted to explore the functioning role of TM in facilitating SC for community development objectives. The interview responses from this study notify that domestic companies have been acquiring

employees' from underprivileged backgrounds/rural backgrounds and provide skill development for them. Therefore, a comprehensive study that includes the influence of TM functions (e.g. talent acquisition, learning and development, skills development) on SC formation and the mediating role of SC in upward social mobility and, in turn, community development is recommended.

There is a need for more scholarly works on TM and OSC in South Asian countries, especially in emerging countries that are currently in or reaching demographic dividend in the near future. This is a once in a century opportunity for these countries to increase economic growth (as established in section 1.6). Therefore, more empirical and theoretical research is required in countries such as Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, India, Bhutan, Nepal, and the Maldives, which would benefit the workforce and the organisations alike. This current research can be used as a reference point in future studies on TM and OSC based on foreign and domestic companies in different industries. The theoretical and methodological underpinnings and the findings could be utilised in future studies across different countries and disciplines.

## **8.7 Research and reflexivity**

The researcher had laid hands on the topic of TM during the Undergraduate years, where talent management was the researcher's dissertation topic. This had been carried forward in the Master's dissertation, where the study was based on the UK context. During this period, the researcher identified the scarcity of scholarly works studying TM in emerging economies, which several academics mentioned (e.g. Beamond *et al.*, 2016; Cooke, 2017; Sparrow, Scullion and Tarique, 2014). The incorporation of SC theory into the research

has widened the parameters which assisted in shaping the future study ideas of the researcher for societal contributions.

During the PhD journey, there were decisions made that the researcher would have done differently in hindsight. The most significant one is when it comes to developing the data collection instrument. The researcher could have conducted preliminary interviews with the senior managers to understand the company policies of TM. The preliminary interview response along with the literature review would have helped the survey questions be much more specific. The survey response would then form the questions for the interviews. However, having completed the study, this decision has not affected the significance of the research findings. Just like the whole world is affected by COVID-19, it had a substantial impact on this PhD journey as well. Overall, doing a PhD has been the most satisfying and rewarding experience personally. There were numerous skills procured along the way (e.g. critical thinking, data analytic skills) which would benefit the researcher in pursuing a career in academia.

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# Appendices

## Appendix A: Pilot questionnaire

### I. Decision to work in hospitality

Which hotel do you work? <i>(please specify the city as well)</i>					
1. What year did you start working at the hotel?					
2. Did you work in the hospitality industry before joining the hotel?					Yes/No
3. Did you consider working in other industry before working in hospitality?					Yes/No
4. Have you always lived in the city where the hotel is based? (please specify yes or no) If yes, go to question 7. If no, go to question 5.					Yes/No
5. Did you move to the current city to find a better job?					Yes/No
6. Did you move to work in the hospitality industry?					Yes/No
7. Do any of your colleagues live in your neighbourhood?					Yes/No
8. Thinking of your decision-to-work in hospitality, please rate the importance <sup>21</sup> of each factor:					
	VI	I	SI	LI	NI
a) High level of uncertainty in previous industry					
b) Social problems in previous work environment					
c) High level of interaction with the people					
d) Improved job opportunities					
e) Better pay scale					
f) Attractive job profile					
g) Relaxed lifestyle					
h) Attractive work environment					
i) Fast paced work environment					
j) Job promotion based on good performance and not seniority					
k) Wanting to make a fresh start in life					
l) Chances of job promotion					

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<sup>21</sup> Very Important: VI  
 Important: I  
 Somewhat Important: SI  
 Less Important: LI  
 Not Important: NI

## II. Education

9. What qualification (s) do you have?	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed school <input type="checkbox"/> Completed skill development course/qualification by the company I work for <input type="checkbox"/> Completed skill development course/qualification privately (even in other hotels) <input type="checkbox"/> Completed skill development course/qualification by NGO <input type="checkbox"/> Completed skill development course/qualification by state/central government <input type="checkbox"/> Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> No qualification <input type="checkbox"/> Other
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10. Did you obtain any qualifications after joining the company?	Yes/No
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## III. Working in hospitality, your experience with training, development and performance management

11. Have you received workplace training after recruitment?	Yes/No
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12. Thinking about this training after recruitment, to what extent do you agree <sup>22</sup>with the following statements?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) Workplace training helped me to understand the expectations from me					
b) Workplace training helped me to have my own decision-making capacity					
c) Workplace training helped me to understand the company objectives as well as the future goals					
d) Workplace training helped me to have an understanding of the other departments in the hotel					

13. Thinking about the training, development and assessment programmes at the hotel what do you think about the following statements?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) I am receiving performance feedback from different managers					
b) Upward feedback from employees to managers is valued in my company					
c) Formal/informal feedback between co-workers is a must in the company's culture					
d) My performance is regularly assessed and given feedback frequently throughout the year using technology or in person					

<sup>22</sup> Strongly Disagree: SD  
 Disagree: D  
 Neither Agree Nor Disagree: NAND  
 Agree: A  
 Strongly Agree: SA

14. Thinking about the training, development and assessment programmes at the hotel what do you think about the following statements?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) Regular development programmes are a must in the company policy					
b) I am encouraged by the company to obtain further academic/professional qualifications					
c) There are online learning materials that employees can access on demand					
d) I have the option of attending additional trainings and development programmes which will be sponsored by the company					
e) Trainings are developed for my specific job role					
f) Trainings are designed for the development of my career					
g) My skills and talents are used appropriately by the company I work for					
h) My company encourages me to join professional association which facilitates training and development opportunities					
i) My company permits me to join trade unions					

#### IV. Community life

15. Thinking about the people that you work with, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) I have friends within the work team					
b) My colleagues will cover a shift for me if needed					
c) Me and my colleagues support each other at work					
d) I can ask for help and exchange favours with my colleagues					
e) People of different ethnic/cultural backgrounds get on well together					
f) People of different religion get on well together					
g) People of different political views get on well together					
h) There are common terminologies among employees, which facilitates our tasks					
i) My colleagues and I share the similar ambition for the future of the company					

16. To what extent do you trust<sup>23</sup> the following?

	FT	PT	NTND	PDT	FDT
a) Colleague from my department					
b) Colleague from a different department					
c) Senior managers including head of departments					
d) Hotel management board					
e) Parent organisation					
f) Professional associations					
g) Trade union associations					
h) Regional government tourism department					

17. Thinking about your working conditions, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) I can access my senior managers when needed and can share information and ideas with them					
b) Information regarding my work is made available to me					
c) I am informed about the company goals					
d) I know who to approach if I need help with access to most of the resources or services at the workplace					

18. Thinking about the people that you work with, to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) I have persons in the workplace, whom I can count on in case of an emergency					
b) In case I need a financial support (without interest) I know someone in the workplace who can help me					
c) In case I need help with additional training (internal training or external training), I know someone in the workplace who can help me attain it					
d) In case I need assistance with knowing career options (including new job vacancies etc.), I know the concerned person in the workplace who can help me					
e) In case I need to contact an external organisation regarding work (such as trade union, employees union, regional government tourism dept.), I know someone in workplace who can help me					

19. Do you have membership/subscription to a professional body which provides training and development opportunities (Association for hospitality professionals etc.)?	Yes/No
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<sup>23</sup> Fully Trust: FT  
 Partially Trust: PT  
 Neither Trust Nor Distrust: NTND  
 Partially Distrust: PDT  
 Fully Distrust: FDT

20. Do you have membership/subscription to an external trade union association (hotels and employees' union, hotel workers welfare association etc.)?	Yes/No
---	--------

21. Are you involved in any social clubs for employees within the hotel? (Employee social clubs, CSR initiatives, Employee social events etc.)	Yes/No
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22. Does these social clubs allow you to interact and exchange information with employees within your department, employees from different departments of the hotel, which includes senior managers?	Yes/No
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**V. Looking to the future**

23. Thinking about your future, please tick one box for each of the following statements to say whether you agree or disagree.

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) I will leave the job if I find a hospitality job with better salary elsewhere					
b) I will leave the job if I find a better opportunity elsewhere in a different industry					
c) I would like to find a job with fixed working hours					
d) I don't mind not enjoying my work if it covers my expenses					
e) I would like to find a job where I can spend more time with family and friends					
f) Having a progress in my career is important to me					
g) I am not sure about my future					

**VI. About you**

24. Are you male or female?	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
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25. What is your age?	
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26. What is your nationality?	
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27. What is your job role/current position?	<input type="checkbox"/> Managerial staff <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinary staff member <input type="checkbox"/> Other
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28. Type of work contract	<input type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time <input type="checkbox"/> Casual worker
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29. Which department are you working?	<input type="checkbox"/> Executive offices (GM office, operations managers' office etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> HR department <input type="checkbox"/> Front office department <input type="checkbox"/> Food and beverage department <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing, sales and marketing communication <input type="checkbox"/> Materials department (purchase) <input type="checkbox"/> Finance, accounting and control department <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology/systems <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen (food production department) <input type="checkbox"/> House keeping <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering and maintenance department <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening, laundry, spa, pools, safety and security <input type="checkbox"/> Other department
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## Appendix B: Finalised questionnaire

### I. Decision to work in hospitality

Which hotel do you work? <i>(please specify the city as well)</i>					
1. What year did you start working at the hotel?					
2. Did you work in the hospitality industry before joining the hotel?					Yes/No
3. Did you consider working in other industry before working in hospitality?					Yes/No
4. Have you always lived in the city where the hotel is based? (please specify yes or no) If yes, go to question 7. If no, go to question 5.					Yes/No
5. Did you move to your current location to find a better job?					Yes/No
6. Did you move to work specifically in the hospitality industry?					Yes/No
7. Do any of your co-workers live in your locality?					Yes/No
8. Thinking of your decision-to-work in hospitality, please rate the importance <sup>24</sup> of each factor:					
	VI	I	SI	LI	NI
a) High level of uncertainty in previous industry					
b) Social problems in previous work environment					
c) High level of interaction with the people					
d) Improved job opportunities					
e) Better pay scale					
f) Attractive job profile					
g) Relaxed lifestyle					
h) Attractive work environment					
i) Fast paced work environment					
j) Job promotion based on good performance rather than seniority					
k) Wanting to make a fresh start in life					
l) Chances of job promotion					

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<sup>24</sup> Very Important: VI  
 Important: I  
 Somewhat Important: SI  
 Less Important: LI  
 Not Important: NI



## II. Educational qualification

9. What qualification (s) do you have?	<input type="checkbox"/> Completed school <input type="checkbox"/> Skill development course/qualification by the company I work for <input type="checkbox"/> Skill development course/qualification privately (even in other hotels) <input type="checkbox"/> Skill development course/qualification by NGO <input type="checkbox"/> Completed skill development course/qualification by state/central government <input type="checkbox"/> Diploma <input type="checkbox"/> Degree <input type="checkbox"/> Masters <input type="checkbox"/> No qualification <input type="checkbox"/> Other qualification
--	---

10. Did you obtain any qualifications after joining the company?	Yes/No
--	--------

## III. Working in hospitality, your experience with training, development and performance management

11. Have you received workplace training after recruitment?	Yes/No
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12. Thinking about this training after recruitment, to what extent do you agree <sup>25</sup>with the following statements?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) Workplace training helped me to understand the expectations from me					
b) Workplace training helped me to have my own decision-making capacity					
c) Workplace training helped me to understand the company objectives as well as the future goals					
d) Workplace training helped me to have an understanding of the other departments in the hotel					

13. Thinking about the assessment programmes at the hotel, what do you think about the following statements?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) I am receiving performance feedback from different managers					
b) Upward feedback from employees to managers is valued in my company					
c) Formal/informal feedback between co-workers is a must in the company's culture					
d) My performance is regularly assessed and given feedback frequently throughout the year using technology or in person					

<sup>25</sup> Strongly Disagree: SD

Disagree: D

Neither Agree Nor Disagree: NAND

Agree: A

Strongly Agree: SA

14. Thinking about the training and development programmes at the hotel, what do you think about the following statements?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) Regular development programmes are a must in the company policy					
b) I am encouraged by the company to obtain further academic/professional qualifications					
c) There are online learning materials that employees can access on demand					
d) I have the option of attending additional trainings and development programmes which will be sponsored by the company					
e) Trainings are developed for my specific job role					
f) Trainings are designed for the development of my career					
g) My skills and talents are used appropriately by the company I work for					
h) My company encourages me to join professional associations (e.g. Association for hospitality professionals etc.) which facilitates training and development opportunities					
i) My company permits me to join trade unions (e.g. Hotels and employees' union, hotel workers welfare association etc.)					

#### IV. Community life

15. Thinking about the people that you work with, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) I have friends within the work team					
b) My co-workers will cover a shift for me if needed					
c) Me and my co-workers support each other at work					
d) I can ask for help and exchange favours with my co-workers					
e) People of different ethnic/cultural backgrounds get on well together					
f) People of different religion get on well together					
g) People of different political views get on well together					
h) There are common terminologies among employees, which facilitates our tasks					
i) My co-workers and I share the similar ambition for the future of the company					

16. To what extent do you trust<sup>26</sup> the following?

	FT	PT	NTND	PDT	FDT
a) Co-workers from my department					
b) Co-workers from a different department					
c) Senior managers					
d) Hotel management board					
e) Parent organisation					
f) Professional associations					
g) Trade union associations					
h) Regional government tourism department					

17. Thinking about your working conditions, to what extent do you agree with the following statements?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) I can access my senior managers when needed and can share information and ideas with them					
b) Information regarding my work is made available to me					
c) I am informed about the company goals					
d) I know who to approach if I need help with access to most of the resources or services at the workplace					

18. Thinking about the people that you work with, to what extent do you agree with the following statement?

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) I have persons in the workplace, whom I can count on in case of an emergency					
b) In case I need a financial support (without interest) I know someone in the workplace who can help me					
c) In case I need help with additional training (internal training or external training), I know someone in the workplace who can help me attain it					
d) In case I need assistance with knowing career options (including new job vacancies etc.), I know the concerned person in the workplace who can help me					
e) In case I need to contact an external institution regarding work (such as trade union, employees union, regional government tourism dept.), I know someone in workplace who can help me					

19. Do you have membership/subscription to a professional body which provides training and development opportunities (Association for hospitality professionals etc.)?	Yes/No
--	--------

<sup>26</sup> Fully Trust: FT  
 Partially Trust: PT  
 Neither Trust Nor Distrust: NTND  
 Partially Distrust: PDT  
 Fully Distrust: FDT

20. Do you have membership/subscription to an external trade union association (hotels and employees' union, hotel workers welfare association etc.)?	Yes/No
---	--------

21. Are you involved in any social clubs for employees within the hotel? (Employee social clubs, CSR initiatives, Employee social events etc.)	Yes/No
--	--------

22. Does these social clubs allow you to interact and exchange information with employees within your department, employees from different departments of the hotel, which includes senior managers?	Yes/No
--	--------

### V. Looking to the future

23. Thinking about your future, please tick one box for each of the following statements to say whether you agree or disagree.

	SD	D	NAND	A	SA
a) I will leave the job if I find a hospitality job with better salary elsewhere					
b) I will leave the job if I find a better opportunity elsewhere in a different industry					
c) I would like to find a job with fixed working hours					
d) I don't mind not enjoying my work if it covers my expenses					
e) I would like to find a job where I can spend more time with family and friends					
f) Having a progress in my career is important to me					
g) I am not sure about my future					

### VI. About you

24. Are you male or female?	<input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female
-----------------------------	--

25. What is your age?	
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26. What is your nationality?	
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27. What is your job role/current position?	<input type="checkbox"/> Managerial staff <input type="checkbox"/> Supervisor <input type="checkbox"/> Ordinary staff member <input type="checkbox"/> Other
---	--

28. Type of work contract	<input type="checkbox"/> Full time <input type="checkbox"/> Part time <input type="checkbox"/> Casual worker
---------------------------	--

29. Which department are you working?	<input type="checkbox"/> Executive offices (GM office, operations managers' office etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> HR department <input type="checkbox"/> Front office department <input type="checkbox"/> Food and beverage department <input type="checkbox"/> Marketing, sales and marketing communication <input type="checkbox"/> Materials department (purchase) <input type="checkbox"/> Finance, accounting and control department <input type="checkbox"/> Information Technology/systems <input type="checkbox"/> Kitchen (food production department) <input type="checkbox"/> House keeping <input type="checkbox"/> Engineering and maintenance department <input type="checkbox"/> Gardening, laundry, spa, pools, safety and security <input type="checkbox"/> Other department
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## Appendix C: Pilot interview questions for ordinary staff/supervisors

1	If you want to access an information about something related to work (could be about additional training, career growth opportunities or contacting an external organisation regarding work) where do you turn to? Why?
2	If you have an emergency (could be financial, illness to a family member etc.), would you expect someone in your workplace to help you? Have you received any of these help? Have you helped anyone in these situations?
3	How important is friendship at workplace in your opinion?
4	Do you think the social clubs and social events help you to build a personal relationship with your co-workers?
4a	Is there any changes you would prefer to see in the social clubs/events in the hotel which will help improve the connection between the staff?
5	Does the company allow you to join the external trade union association? What is your personal opinion on trade union associations? What do you think are the benefits and disadvantages of a workforce being unionised?
6	It is found from my survey that respondents from foreign company has more trust towards their parent organisation and the hotel management board? Why do you think that is/ Do you agree to that?
7	If you have helped one of your colleague (could be professional/personal), would you be expecting him/her to reciprocate for the help you have given?
7a	Overall, would you agree that the employees in the hotel are quite close and support each other? Why do you think so?
7b	Does social identities (common language, common religion, common political ideologies etc.) play any role in unifying or dividing the employees within the hotel?
8	Are you aware of the goals of the hotel/company? Do you think all the employees in the hotel are aware of the company goals? If not, why?
9	Do you think you work in a department/ area of work your strength lies in? If you don't what can you do?
9a	Do you think there is a selected number of staff in each department who are looked after, nurtured and maintained to climb up the ladder? If so, do you believe it is the right way to be?
10	How much importance do you think the company gave to your prior work experience in hospitality industry for recruitment?
11	Do you see the need to have a higher educational degree to get recruited and to have a career progression?
12	How important it is do you think to have a skill development training qualification from the hotel you work at? Why not just the qualification from the outer agencies such as an NGO or government institutions?
13	Can you explain the performance feedback system in the hotel?

14	Do you think you belong to a pool of employees in the hotel who is receiving additional trainings for career progression?
15	Does the company allow to join the external professional training associations? What is your personal opinion on these associations? Do you think these trainings are better than the trainings at the hotel for your career progression?
16	According to the survey I have conducted within the hotel industry in South Asia, majority of the employees reported that the company encourages them to obtain further education. But only a few went on to obtain one. Why do you think this is? Is this a lack of interest in career progression or are these qualifications not necessary for their career progression?
17	What would make you resign from your current job?

## Appendix D: Finalised interview questions for ordinary staff/supervisors

1	If you want to access an information about something related to work (could be about additional training, career growth opportunities or contacting an external organisation regarding work) where do you turn to? Why?
2	If you have an emergency (could be financial, illness to a family member etc.), would you expect someone in your workplace to help you? Have you received any of these help? Have you helped anyone in these situations?
3	How important is friendship at workplace in your opinion?
4	Do you think the social clubs and social events help you to build a personal relationship with your co-workers?
4a	Is there any changes you would prefer to see in the social clubs/events in the hotel which will help improve the connection between the staff?
5	Does the company allow you to join the external trade union association? What is your personal opinion on trade union associations? What do you think are the benefits and disadvantages of a workforce being unionised?
6	It is found from my survey that respondents from foreign company has more trust towards their parent organisation and the hotel management board? Why do you think that is/ Do you agree to that?
7	If you have helped one of your colleague (could be professional/personal), would you be expecting him/her to reciprocate for the help you have given?
7a	Overall, would you agree that the employees in the hotel are quite close and support each other? Why do you think so?
7b	Does social identities (common language, common religion, common political ideologies etc.) play any role in unifying or dividing the employees within the hotel?
8	Are you aware of the goals of the hotel/company? Do you think all the employees in the hotel are aware of the company goals? If not, why?
9	Do you think you work in a department/ area of work your strength lies in? If you don't what can you do?
9a	Do you think there is a selected number of staff in each department who are looked after, nurtured and maintained to climb up the ladder? If so, do you believe it is the right way to be?
10	How much importance do you think the company gave to your prior work experience in hospitality industry for recruitment?
11	Do you see the need to have a higher educational degree to get recruited and to have a career progression?
12	How important it is do you think to have a skill development training qualification from the hotel you work at? Why not just the qualification from an outer agencies such as an NGO or government institutions?
13	Can you explain the performance feedback system in the hotel?



14	Do you think you belong to a pool of employees in the hotel who is receiving additional trainings for career progression?
15	Does the company allow to join the external professional training associations? What is your personal opinion on these associations? Do you think these trainings are better than the trainings at the hotel for your career progression?
16	According to the survey I have conducted within the hotel industry in South Asia, majority of the employees reported that the company encourages them to obtain further education. But only a few went on to obtain one. Why do you think this is? Is this a lack of interest in career progression or are these qualifications not necessary for their career progression?
17	What should the company prioritise to make the employees stay in the hotel in your opinion?

## Appendix E: Pilot interview questions for managers

1	If you, as a manager want to access information about something related to work (could be about additional training may be for you or for your employees, career growth opportunities or contacting an external organisation regarding work) where do you turn to?
2	If you have an emergency (could be financial, illness to a family member etc.), would you expect someone in your workplace to help you? Have you received any help? Have you helped anyone in these situations?
3	How important is friendship at workplace in your opinion?
4	To what extent do company social clubs/ events allow to improve these networks (personally and for the other employees in the hotel)?
4a	Is there any changes you would prefer to see in the social clubs/events in the hotel which will help improve the connection between the staff?
5	Does the company allow the workforce to join the external trade union association? How closely are you connected with trade union associations as a company? What is your personal opinion on trade union associations?
6	It is found from my survey that respondents from foreign companies has more trust towards their parent organisation and the hotel management board? Do you agree? Why do you think that is?
7	If you have helped one of your colleague (could be professional/personal), would you be expecting him/her to reciprocate the help you have given?
7a	Overall, would you agree that the employees in the hotel are quite close and support each other? Why do you think so?
7b	Does social identities (common language, common religion, common political ideologies etc.) play any role in unifying or dividing the employees within the hotel?
8	Do you think all the employees in the hotel are aware of the company goals? If not, why? Is it important for the employees to know the short term and long term goals of the hotel?
9	Can you explain the company strategy in nurturing and maintaining employees at workplace (Talent pool etc.)?
9a	Do you think there is a selected number of staff in each department who are looked after, nurtured and maintained to climb up the ladder? How involved are you in these selections?
10	Can you explain the employee acquisition criteria in the hotel? How important is prior experience in hospitality industry for recruitment?
11	The survey I have conducted shows that the domestic companies recruits significantly more employees without any experience in hospitality. Do you agree to this?
12	How important is educational qualification when applying for a job in your company?
13	How connected is the hotel with the local skill training institutes/colleges/ NGO?
13a	Is it mandatory for the employees to attain skill development qualifications from within your hotel company? Why do you think this is important?

14	To what extent does a performance feedback system benefit the employees and in turn the company?
15	Is there similar training for all the employees or is there a different pool of employees who receives additional trainings for career progression?
16	Does the company allow to join the external professional training associations? What is your personal opinion on these associations?
17	According to the survey I have conducted within the hospitality industry in South Asia, majority of the employees reported that the companies encourages them to obtain further education. But only a few went on to obtain one. Why do you think this is? Is this a lack of interest in career progression or are these qualifications not necessary for their career progression?
18	As the manager, do you think it is important to retain all the employees or just the talented employees? If you want to retain all the employees, what are you doing for it?

## Appendix F: Finalised interview questions for managers

1	If you, as a manager want to access information about something related to work (could be about additional training may be for you or for your employees, career growth opportunities or contacting an external organisation regarding work) where do you turn to?
2	If you have an emergency (could be financial, illness to a family member etc.), would you expect someone in your workplace to help you? Have you received any help? Have you helped anyone in these situations?
3	How important is friendship at workplace in your opinion?
4	To what extent do company social clubs/ events allow to improve these networks (personally and for the other employees in the hotel)?
4a	Is there any changes you would prefer to see in the social clubs/events in the hotel which will help improve the connection between the staff?
5	Does the company allow the workforce to join the external trade union association? How closely are you connected with trade union associations as a company? What is your personal opinion on trade union associations?
6	It is found from my survey that respondents from foreign companies has more trust towards their parent organisation and the hotel management board? Do you agree? Why do you think that is?
7	If you have helped one of your colleague (could be professional/personal), would you be expecting him/her to reciprocate the help you have given?
7a	Overall, would you agree that the employees in the hotel are quite close and support each other? Why do you think so?
7b	Does social identities (common language, common religion, common political ideologies etc.) play any role in unifying or dividing the employees within the hotel?
8	Do you think all the employees in the hotel are aware of the company goals? If not, why? Is it important for the employees to know the short term and long term goals of the hotel?
9	Can you explain the company strategy in nurturing and maintaining employees at workplace (Talent pool etc.)?
9a	Do you think there is a selected number of staff in each department who are looked after, nurtured and maintained to climb up the ladder? How involved are you in these selections?
10	Can you explain the employee acquisition criteria in the hotel? How important is prior experience in hospitality industry for recruitment?
11	How important is educational qualification when applying for a job in your company?
12	How connected is the hotel with the local skill training institutes/colleges/ NGO?
12a	Is it mandatory for the employees to attain skill development qualifications from within your hotel company? Why do you think this is important?
13	To what extent does a performance feedback system benefit the employees and in turn the company?

14	Is there similar training for all the employees or is there a different pool of employees who receives additional trainings for career progression?
15	Does the company allow to join the external professional training associations? What is your personal opinion on these associations?
16	According to the survey I have conducted within the hospitality industry in South Asia, majority of the employees reported that the companies encourages them to obtain further education. But only a few went on to obtain one. Why do you think this is? Is this a lack of interest in career progression or are these qualifications not necessary for their career progression?
17	As the manager, do you think it is important to retain all the employees or just the talented employees? If you want to retain all the employees, what are you doing for it?

## Appendix G: Interview questions for industry experts

1	It is found from my survey that respondents from foreign companies in Sri Lanka/ India has more trust towards their parent organisation and the hotel management board? Do you agree? Why?
2	Does social identities (common language, common religion, common political ideologies etc.) play any role in unifying or dividing the employees within the hotel industry in Sri Lanka/India?
3	What is your personal opinion on trade union associations (external) in Sri Lanka/India? What do you think are the benefits and disadvantages of a workforce being unionised?
4	If I say the government (training institutes etc.), local colleges and NGO's have right talent nurturing strategies, would you agree to it? What changes would you suggest?
5	Any specific changes the rise in the foreign companies have brought to the Indian/Sri Lankan hospitality industry in general when it comes to dealing with the workforce?
6	Do you think domestic companies still has an upper hand in their organisational characteristics to attract the best employees or you think the foreign companies adapted well into the Sri Lankan/Indian context to attract the best of the talents?
7	Do you see a shortage of skilled talent in Sri Lanka/India to satisfy the needs of the hoteliers OR do you think there is excessive talent and shortage of required job roles to satisfy the needs?

## **Appendix H: Participant information sheet and consent form for surveys**

UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH  
FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES  
PLYMOUTH BUSINESS SCHOOL

### **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET (QUESTIONNAIRE)**

#### **Invitation**

You are being invited to take part in a PhD research study. This research is being done by Rohit Reji George from the Faculty of Arts and Humanities at the University of Plymouth. Before you decide, you need to understand why the research is being done and what it would involve for you. Please take the time to read the following information carefully.

**Title of research:** Social capital and talent management: a comparative analysis of foreign and domestic owned hotel companies in South Asia.

#### **Personal contact details:**

Name of the researcher: Rohit Reji George

Email: [rohit.rejigeorge@students.plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:rohit.rejigeorge@students.plymouth.ac.uk)

#### **What is the research about?**

The research is overlooking the impact of working in hospitality industry and how it affects an employees' social life and well-being. This is a detailed study on understanding the social and economic benefits for individuals' working in hospitality industry, their motivations, concerns, decision making influencers and aspirations for the future. More specifically, it will examine the individuals' sense of belongingness at the work space, the influencers which helps them have a well-balanced social life in and out of workspace, and to understand the extent in which training and development programmes benefit the individual as well the company. In particular it focuses on understanding the differing relationship patterns within employees as well as employees and the hotel. This research seeks to investigate the relationships (if any) between social capital and talent management in the developing country context, with special reference to foreign and domestic owned luxury hotels in South Asia. In particular, it investigates the influence of talent management practices and policies on social capital formation in the hospitality industry in India and Sri Lanka. This research intent to draw conclusions about manifestation of SC in the context of hospitality industry and its relationship with different TM policies and practices. This research will contribute to the existing literature significantly by offering new lens on the issues, challenges and solutions on social capital and talent management.

This research will contribute significantly to the South Asian hotel industry in particular and similar economies by providing an understanding about the best practices as well as the challenges businesses are facing when it comes to talent management. The research

will offer recommendations to the hotel industry in general which could influence relevant policy-making and to make certain amendments in talent management practices. This will also give an understanding about the personal relationships and networks, social well-being and social life of the employees' working in the hotel industry in South Asia.

### **How will I gather data?**

The research will be conducted in a total of four hotels; two in New Delhi and two in Colombo. This includes one foreign owned and one domestic owned hotel in the respective cities. The research adapts a two stage data collection method.

Stage one: The first stage is the quantitative questionnaire. The data will be collected using Jisc online survey tool with a minimum of 15% of the staff working in the hotels. This will be roughly around a total sample size of 200-300 employees including all the four hotels.

Stage two: The second stage is semi-structured interviews. Data will be collected through qualitative semi-structured interviews (via Skype) with at least 3 managers in each hotel. The researcher will also interview two of the most reputed industry experts both in India and Sri Lanka. Therefore the total in-depth interview count will be up to 14.

### **What will you have to do if you agree to take part?**

If you are happy to take part after reading this information sheet, please fill in the consent questions (you will only be able to proceed to the survey if you have given consent to participate). You will be asked to complete an online survey which will take you 8-12 minutes at a time and date convenient to the participant. Once you complete the survey, please press submit.

### **What are the possible disadvantages, side effects or risks, of taking part in this study?**

There are no anticipated risks to you as a research participant. You may not want to take part in this study if you are not comfortable talking about your work and your social life.

### **What are the possible advantages of taking part in this study?**

It is anticipated that the final report will be made available to all participants. You may find the project interesting and enjoy answering questions about the research. Once the study is finished it could provide you certain information, which is useful to your knowledge about the industry you work in.

### **Ethical Protocol**

The University's Research Ethics Policy, Code of Practice of Research and procedures may be viewed by accessing the following link:

[https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/12/12337/General\\_Research\\_Ethics\\_Policy\\_final\\_draft\\_V1.0\\_.pdf](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/12/12337/General_Research_Ethics_Policy_final_draft_V1.0_.pdf)



### **Informed Consent**

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and it is up to you whether you wish to participate. You must be informed about the purpose and implications of the research.

### **Right to Withdraw**

You are allowed to withdraw from participation once you have seen the questionnaire. You can withdraw from the study, whether before it starts or while you are participating. It won't be possible to withdraw after the survey has been conducted and once you have submitted the response as the responses will be anonymised by the researcher.

### **Debriefing**

There will be an opportunity to learn about the outcomes of the research. You may obtain information on my progress and request copies of outputs at any time by contacting the researcher through the contact details. The researcher should provide an account of the purpose of the study. This will be provided at the outset of the survey.

### **Confidentiality and Anonymity**

The researcher will not be revealing names of the participants or the company names at any point in the thesis and it will be difficult to identify individuals by anyone including their colleagues/employers. The researcher may write about what the findings are in reports, conference papers, journals and books. Results of the research will be published but you will not be identified in any report or publication. You can ask for feedback about the findings if you would like. The expected number of responses from each department from all the 4 companies will make it difficult for anyone to determine the identity of the participants. All participants will be given a pseudonym or sequence number for the purposes of reporting, and any potentially identifying information removed to ensure confidentiality. Only the researchers will have access to the data. No data will be transferred outside of the University.

### **Protection from Harm**

You have the right to have a third party of their choice present through the course of the data collection, and of their right to refuse to answer any question(s) and to terminate from the survey/interview at any time. If you have any complaints about the project in the first instance you can contact any member of the research team. If you wish to complain to University of Plymouth about how your personal information has been processed you can do so using a GDPR complaint form and send it directly to the University's Data Protection Officer via post or [dpo@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:dpo@plymouth.ac.uk).

### **Data Management Plan (Storage, archival, sharing of data, security and retention)**

Research data sharing or publishing is undertaken in accordance with the University's Information Security Classification Policy and any additional ethical, legal, contractual and funder requirements (see section 3.2). This will involve ensuring that: a) the data is complete and relevant; b) consent to archive, share or publish the data has been obtained from rights holder and participants; and c) the data has been suitably documented and prepared for publication, e.g., by anonymising personal information. The data will be

deposited in the University repository. Research data will be organised and documented to ensure its future discovery and reusability. The data will be archived/exported from JISC online surveys and the data will be removed from JISC Online Surveys on to the University of Plymouth's secure One Drive system (which will be stored for a maximum of 10 years). Research data is retained for longer than 10 years where an increased retention period is required to meet legal, statutory, contractual or funder requirements. Any citation of statements/answers by respondents in the thesis will be anonymous. Full transcripts will also be made anonymous by leaving out names and addresses of the participants and the hotel company. The University's Research Data Policy and procedures may be viewed by accessing the following link:

[https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/6/6913/Research\\_Data\\_Policy.pdf](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/6/6913/Research_Data_Policy.pdf)

### **Further contact details**

The **Social Science Research Ethics and Integrity Sub-committee** (Faculty of Arts and Humanities) is the responsible for ethical approval.

If you are dissatisfied with the way the research is conducted, please contact the principal investigator in the first instance: email: [rohit.rejigeorge@students.plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:rohit.rejigeorge@students.plymouth.ac.uk).

If you feel the problem has not been resolved or if you have any queries or concerns about the research or about how it is being conducted (or if you wish to make a complaint) please contact: [FoAHSocSciResearch@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:FoAHSocSciResearch@plymouth.ac.uk).

## QUESTIONNAIRE CONSENT FORM

I, confirm that (please tick box as appropriate):

I have clear understanding of what the purpose of the research is.	
I confirm that I have read the Participant Information Sheet and fully understood the information it contained.	
I volunteer to take part in this questionnaire survey. The data collected in this questionnaire will be used in a PhD thesis.	
I am free to withdraw after I have seen the questionnaire. I understand that I can withdraw from the study, whether before it starts or while I am participating.	
I understand I can withdraw from the study up until I have completed the survey (submitted the response). I understand after submitting the response researcher will anonymise the response and it will not be possible for me to withdraw afterwards.	
The procedures regarding confidentiality and privacy information have been clearly explained to me.	
The use of the data in research, publications, sharing and archiving is clear to me.	
I have read and understood the explanation of the research project provided to me. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions and they have been answered to my satisfaction.	
I understand that my anonymity and my company's anonymity is guaranteed, unless I expressly state otherwise.	

### **Participant:**

Under these circumstances, I agree to participate in the research. By submitting this form I am confirming that I have read the description of the study, am over 18, and I agree to terms as described. I, along with the Student Researcher, agree to sign and date this informed consent form.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Participant

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

### **Student Researcher:**

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the proposed research conforms to the ethical principles for research involving human participants contained in the University of Plymouth's Research Policies and Procedures.

\_\_\_\_\_

Name of Student researcher

\_\_\_\_\_

Signature

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

## **Appendix I: Participant information sheet and consent form for interviews**

UNIVERSITY OF PLYMOUTH  
FACULTY OF ARTS AND HUMANITIES  
PLYMOUTH BUSINESS SCHOOL

### **PARTICIPANT INFORMATION SHEET**

#### **Invitation**

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**Title of research:** Social capital and talent management: a comparative analysis of foreign and domestic owned hotel companies in South Asia.

#### **Personal contact details:**

Name of the researcher: Rohit Reji George

Email: [rohit.rejigeorge@students.plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:rohit.rejigeorge@students.plymouth.ac.uk)

#### **What is the research about?**

The research is overlooking the impact of working in hospitality industry and how it affects an employees' social life and well-being. This is a detailed study on understanding the social and economic benefits for individuals working in hospitality industry, their motivations, concerns, decision making influencers and aspirations for the future. More specifically, it will examine the individuals' sense of belongingness at the work space, the influencers which helps them have a well-balanced social life in and out of workspace, and to understand the extent in which training and development programmes benefit the individual as well the company. In particular it focuses on understanding the differing relationship patterns within employees as well as employees and the hotel. This research seeks to investigate the relationships (if any) between social capital and talent management in the developing country context, with special reference to foreign and domestic owned hotel companies in South Asia. In particular, it investigates the influence of talent management practices and policies on social capital formation. This research intent to draw conclusions about manifestation of social capital in the context of hospitality industry and its relationship with different talent management policies and practices. This research will contribute to the existing literature significantly by offering new lens on the issues, challenges and solutions on social capital and talent management. This research will contribute significantly to the South Asian hotel industry in particular and similar economies by providing an understanding about the best practices as well as the challenges businesses are facing when it comes to talent management. The research will offer recommendations to the hotel industry in general which could influence relevant policy-making and to make certain amendments in talent management practices.

This will also give an understanding about the personal relationships and networks, social well-being and social life of the employees' working in the hotel industry in South Asia.

### **How will I gather data?**

The research will be conducted in a total of four hotels; two in New Delhi and two in Colombo. This includes one foreign owned and one domestic owned hotel in the respective cities. The research adapts a two stage data collection method.

Stage one: The first stage is the quantitative questionnaire. The data will be collected using Jisc online survey tool with a minimum of 15% of the staff working in the hotels.

Stage two: The second stage is semi-structured interviews. Data will be collected through qualitative semi-structured interviews (via Skype) with 3 managers in each company. The researcher will also interview two of the most reputed industry experts both in India and Sri Lanka. Therefore the total in-depth interview count will be up to 14.

### **What will you have to do if you agree to take part?**

If you are happy to take part after reading this information sheet, please fill in the consent questions (you will only be able to proceed to the interview if you have given consent to participate). You will be requested to appear for an interview with the researcher at a time and date convenient to both parties (researcher and participant).

### **What are the possible disadvantages, side effects or risks, of taking part in this study?**

There are no anticipated risks to you as a research participant. You may not want to take part in this study if you are not comfortable talking about your work and your social life.

### **What are the possible advantages of taking part in this study?**

It is anticipated that the final report will be made available to all participants. You may find the project interesting and enjoy answering questions about the research. Once the study is finished it could provide you certain information, which is useful to your knowledge about the industry you work in.

### **Ethical Protocol**

The University's Research Ethics Policy, Code of Practice of Research and procedures may be viewed by accessing the following link:

[https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/12/12337/General\\_Research\\_Ethics\\_Policy\\_final\\_draft\\_V1.0\\_.pdf](https://www.plymouth.ac.uk/uploads/production/document/path/12/12337/General_Research_Ethics_Policy_final_draft_V1.0_.pdf)

### **Informed Consent**

Your participation is entirely voluntary, and it is up to you whether you wish to participate. You must be informed about the purpose and implications of the research.

### **Right to Withdraw**

You will be receiving an outline of the research and an informed consent form before the interview to sign and agree. You are free to withdraw from the interview once the outline has been shared. The interviews will be recorded and transcribed. You also have the right not to answer specific questions or to ask for audio recording to stop during the interview. You should be told from the outset if the interviews are audio recorded and if denied, the interview will terminate.

### **Debriefing**

There will be an opportunity to learn about the outcomes of the research. You may obtain information on my progress and request copies of outputs at any time by contacting the researcher through the contact details. The researcher should provide an account of the purpose of the study. This will be provided at the outset of the survey.

### **Confidentiality and Anonymity**

If you are happy to take part, please complete the consent form, making clear if there are any parts of the research you would prefer not to take part in. The researcher may write about what the findings are in reports, conference papers, journals and books. Results of the research will be published but you will not be identified in any report or publication. The researcher will also share the findings with other people who arrange similar activities, as well as other researchers. It will not be possible to know who said what in anything made public unless you give your permission. You can ask for feedback about the findings if you would like. Any citation of statements/answers by respondents in the thesis will be anonymous. Direct quotes from open questions may be used in the report but these will not identify you in any way. Full transcripts will also be made anonymous by leaving out names of the participants and the hotel company. All participants will be given a pseudonym or sequence number for the purposes of reporting, and any potentially identifying information removed to ensure confidentiality. The researcher will not be revealing the company names at any point and it will be difficult to identify individuals by anyone including their colleagues/employers. At no point in the thesis, the researcher will identify the roles of the respondents but just refer to them as ‘senior managers’, ‘supervisory level staff’, ‘ordinary staff member’ etc. The researcher will be sticking to the broad ‘senior manager’ term and not identify the exact roles of the respondents in the thesis. Only the researcher will have access to the data. No data will be transferred outside of the University. The researcher will adhere to confidentiality.

### **Protection from Harm**

You have the right to have a third party of their choice present through the course of the data collection, and of their right to refuse to answer any question(s) and to terminate from the survey/interview at any time. If you have any complaints about the project in the first instance you can contact any member of the research team. If you wish to complain to University of Plymouth about how your personal information has been processed you can do so using a GDPR complaint form and send it directly to the University’s Data Protection Officer via post or [dpo@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:dpo@plymouth.ac.uk).

### **Data Management Plan (Storage, archival, sharing of data, security and retention)**

Research data sharing or publishing is undertaken in accordance with the University's Information Security Classification Policy and any additional ethical, legal, contractual and funder requirements (see section 3.2). This will involve ensuring that: a) the data is complete and relevant; b) consent to archive, share or publish the data has been obtained from rights holder and participants; and c) the data has been suitably documented and prepared for publication, e.g., by anonymising personal information. Any citation of statements/answers by respondents in the thesis will be anonymous. Full transcripts will also be made anonymous by leaving out names and addresses of the participants and the hotel company. The University's Research Data Policy and procedures may be viewed by accessing the following link:

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If you feel the problem has not been resolved or if you have any queries or concerns about the research or about how it is being conducted (or if you wish to make a complaint) please contact: [FoAHSocSciResearch@plymouth.ac.uk](mailto:FoAHSocSciResearch@plymouth.ac.uk).

## INTERVIEW CONSENT FORM

**By signing this consent form, I confirm that:**

I have clear understanding of what the purpose of the research is.	
I have read the Participant Information Sheet and fully understood the information it contained.	
I understand that my anonymity and my company's anonymity will be ensured in the write-up by disguising my identity.	
I am free to withdraw from the interview once the outline has been shared.	
I understand the interview will be audio recorded and a transcript will be produced.	
The procedures regarding confidentiality and privacy information have been clearly explained to me.	
The use of the data in research, publications, sharing and archiving is clear to me.	
I have read and understood the explanation of the research project provided to me. I have had the opportunity to ask any questions and they have been answered to my satisfaction.	
I agree to be quoted directly if my name is not published and a made-up name (pseudonym) is used.	
I volunteer to take part in the interviews. The data collected in this interview will be used in a PhD thesis.	

**Participant:**

Under these circumstances, I agree to participate in the research. By submitting this form I am confirming that I have read the description of the study, am over 18, and **I agree to terms as described.**

**NAME OF THE PARTICIPANT:**

**DATE:**

**Student Researcher:**

To the best of my knowledge and belief, the proposed research conforms to the ethical principles for research involving human participants contained in the University of Plymouth's Research Policies and Procedures.

**Sign:**

**Name:**

**Date:**