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Empowerment, Motivation, and Training: Key Drivers of Employee Performance in Information Technology Sector

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Abstract: The extensive literature reflected the association between employee empowerment, financial motivation, employee training and employee performance, and empirical inconsistency existed in distinct contexts. This study examines the effect of employee empowerment, financial motivation, and employee training on employee performance in the information technology sector of Nepal. Thus, the study aims to fill up the gap in the literature, testing the research hypothesis through positivism and deductive approaches. A total of 300 structured questionnaires were disseminated among the employees working in the information technology sector in Kathmandu, Nepal, to accumulate cross-sectional primary sources of data. Only 196 (65.33 per cent) useful questionnaires were received back. Descriptive, correlation, and regression analyses are analytical statistical techniques adopted in the study to reflect the profile of respondents, assess the relationship association, and examine their effects. Additionally, internal consistency was tested with Cronbach alpha, evidencing the reliability as all values of Cronbach alpha > 0.70. The findings of the study revealed that all the variables comprising employee empowerment, financial motivation, and employee training have a positive association with employee performance and reflect a significant effect on employee performance in the information technology sector in Kathmandu, Nepal. These findings suggest that decision-makers in organizations benefit from performance enhancement through employee empowerment, financial motivation, and employee training.

Keywords: empowerment; motivation; performance; training; IT sector.

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Introduction

Employee performance in organisational operations is an essential factor for sustainability through competitive advantages, and employee motivation and performance are key to increasing organisational performance in any firm (Bashir et al., 2020; Chi et al., 2023; Khalid, 2020). In the age of extensive globalisation, shifting market economies, fierce competition, and continuously altering settings, the prosperity and expansion of an organisation are heavily dependent on the performance of its personnel (Ampong, 2024; Punch & Sugden, 2013). In particular, empowerment has evolved as the key intangible asset of a company and the basic determinant of its competitive advantage, especially in human-intensive firms that contribute a rising percentage of economic activity, such as the information technology sector (Diamantidis & Chatzoglou, 2019). In addition, to improve overall flexibility and efficiency, several businesses have replaced their old hierarchical management systems with empowered (semi-autonomous or self-managing) work teams (Gao & Jiang, 2019).

Literature indicates that training is an important human resource management approach that improves the quality of workers' knowledge and abilities, resulting in better employee performance on the job. Specifically, evidence also demonstrates that employee training leads to significant productivity and quality performance (Elnaga & Emran, 2013;

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Kiweewa & Asiimwe, 2014; Sendawula, 2018). Additionally, empowered employees who participate in teamwork are more likely to be happy, productive, and long-term members of their organisation (Singh, 2013). Moreover, motivation is the ability to satisfy a personal desire as a precondition for an individual's great effort to attain organisational goals (Nzuve, 1999). In a similar manner, the ability of managers to create an inspirational work environment for their employees is critical to the success of a workplace. It is interesting that employee motivation, a critical component in building a favourable workplace culture that results in peak performance, influences a company's overall performance. Therefore, employee motivation is essential in the workplace because it fosters dedication, harmony, and overall performance (Ahmad, 2021). In addition, motivated employees demonstrate commitment and retention, which promotes organisational growth and development.

In general, the most difficult task for managers in a competitive business environment is to keep their employees engaged and motivated to accomplish their duties properly. Specifically, it is also vital for managers to understand their employees' natural behavioural inclinations and potential sources of motivation. In short, people can be inspired by a variety of factors, including leadership, incentives, rewards, and other features of the organisation in which they work. Surprisingly, this helps to increase employee performance (Ilyana & Sholihin, 2021; Maduka & Okafor, 2014; Rodriguez, 2015). Next, evidence suggests that motivation imposes employee outcomes such as productivity and performance. Furthermore, when compared to less motivated individuals, motivated workers are more self-driven and autonomous. Furthermore, highly engaged and interested people are more likely to accept responsibility and are highly motivated (Grant, 2008; Kuvaas & Dysvik, 2009).

Additionally, employee performance has several characteristics, including task performance, adaptable performance, and contextual performance (Pradhan & Jena, 2017). Further, these aspects are represented in the form of tangible results, such as achievements based on the work accomplished by employees during a specific period of time in comparison to other possibilities (Lubis & Hasibuan, 2019). Similarly, these results are strongly associated with the company's strategic goals, customer happiness, and economic contribution (Hasibuan et al., 2021). Furthermore, quantifiable characteristics of employee performance include quantity, quality, work loyalty, work ability, and work results. Surprisingly, when every employee performs to the best of their abilities, the firm will thrive. However, empirical research indicates that there is no substantial association between empowerment and employee performance (Bose, 2018; Fernandez & Moldogazie, 2013).

Importantly, employee success in Nepalese IT organisations is heavily influenced by motivation, reward schemes, training, and empowerment. However, their efficacy is occasionally overlooked. The lack of non-monetary appreciation can have a negative influence on staff motivation and performance. Further, in Nepal's information technology sector, maintaining high levels of employee engagement and performance depends greatly on efficient recognition and reward systems, incentives, empowerment, and staff training (Thapa, 2021). Moreover, while there have been numerous studies on employee performance, few studies have observed the relationship between training and employee performance in Nepal's information technology sector. Therefore, this study is significant in the following respects. First, the study contributes to the existing literature by investigating the relationship between training and employee performance. Second, policymakers and management in the information technology sector may need to empower their staff by assigning them more duties, which improves their performance. The study focuses on how employee empowerment, financial motivation, and employee training influence worker performance, with the aim of investigating their effect on employee performance.

The remainder of the paper is organised as follows. The following section is a literature review in which hypotheses are developed, Section 3 comprises the methodology used,

and Section 4 describes the results. Section 5 discusses the outcomes, followed by a summary and conclusions.

Literature review

Empowerment and employee performance

Employee empowerment is a comprehensive approach that includes behaviours like information sharing, resource allocation, and authority transfer to lower-level employees (Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2015). Additionally, it has become a significant managerial tool for affecting organisational success, such as increased productivity and employee satisfaction (Monica, 2019). Wadhwa and Verghese (2015) claimed that empowerment happens when superiors give their subordinates authority, power, accountability, and responsibility. As a result, empowered professionals often actively increase their task-completing competencies by using newly acquired skills and information (Jacquiline, 2014). In other words, empowerment is one of the strategies utilised to realise these efforts, as employees are currently a valuable tool in achieving company goals. Thus, this empowerment occurs if superiors and subordinates have a mutual relationship in which superiors have more faith in subordinates to participate in decision-making in order to attain better organisational goals. Consequently, the empirical findings depicted that there is a positive relationship between employee empowerment and employee performance (Alshemmari, 2023; Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013; Kok, 2011; Sitopu et al., 2021; Solehan, 2013; Wadhwa & Verghese, 2015). Based on the empirical review, the following hypothesis is developed:

H1: There is a significant relationship between employee empowerment and employee.

Financial motivation and employee performance

Employees are motivated by financial incentives such as cash and money-related things. In the corporate sector, profit sharing, wage sharing, salaries, performance-related pay, and financial fringe benefits are the principal sources of financial incentives (Landry et al., 2017). Moreover, employees expect both monetary and non-monetary compensation for their contributions and efforts. Conversely, when employees lack fair wages, opportunities for growth and development, and recognition, they become disgruntled and underperform (Yousaf et al., 2015). On the other hand, dissatisfaction, caused by a lack of monetary and non-monetary benefits, leads to excessive employee turnover and mediocre work. Interestingly, employees are motivated to achieve to the best of their ability because of the rewards they see for themselves and their families. The empirical findings showed that there is a positive relationship between financial motivation and employee performance (Nwankwo et al., 2023; Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023; Riyanto et al., 2021; Rony et al., 2024; Seng & Arumugam, 2017; Sitopu et al., 2021; Sudiardhita et al., 2018; Wahyudi, 2022). Based on the empirical review, the following hypothesis is developed:

H2: There is a significant relationship between financial motivation and employee performance.

Training and employee performance

Employee training is an important practice for building abilities and increasing work efficiency (Jaisawal et al., 2023). Similarly, it is often delivered on a regular basis by professionals and requires all employees to stay current with developing technology and concepts. Training is regarded as a vital investment for businesses, producing additional value and improving performance (Marsikova & Slaichhova, 2015). Nawarathna et al. (2021) stated that training is designed to improve organisational personnel's behaviour, aptitudes, and skills so that they can effectively fulfil their given jobs. Its primary goals are to enable personal progress within a certain career and to preserve vital skills. Employees

may be unable to do their duties as expected if adequate training facilities are not available. Therefore, the primary purpose of designing training programs is to ensure that a business has a qualified workforce available to fill essential positions (Kulkarni, 2013). Empirical findings showed that there is a positive association between employee training and employee performance (Hanaysah & Hussain, 2018; Hasan & Chaudhary, 2023; Kuswati, 2020; Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023; Sulaiman & Abdullah, 2019). Based on the empirical findings, the following hypothesis is developed:

H3: There is a significant relationship between employee training and employee performance.

Employee performance

Employee performance and job results within an organisation are inextricably linked. While outputs may include timeliness, volume, and job quality, performance evaluation is critical to an organisation's ability to improve its employees. Irfansyah (2020) stated that performance is essential, indicating the competency of employees for work accomplishment. Management's capacity to tackle people-related issues has the potential to generate new investment and is an important component of future success. Internal self-concept and motivation have a substantial influence on employee performance (Talaohu et al., 2024). Employees with a strong internal self-concept are more productive because they take pride in their work and strive for excellence. This internal incentive improves their attention to detail, inventiveness, and invention, resulting in high-quality work (Aldabbas et al., 2023). Such personnel are also more likely to establish and fulfil difficult goals, which directly benefits the organisation's performance.

Conceptual framework

The following figure represents the conceptual model of the study where employee performance is regarded as the dependent variable, and various factors of work motivation are regarded as the independent variable of the study.

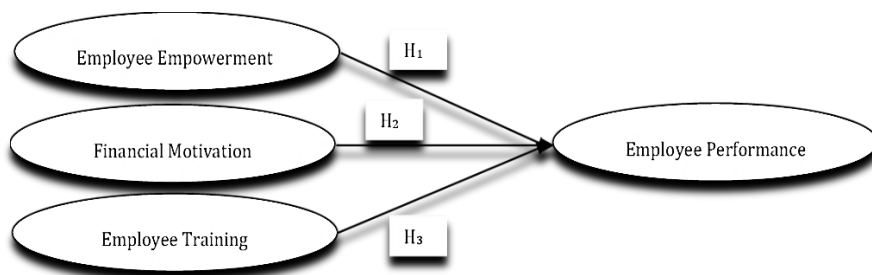


Figure 1. Conceptual framework

Source: Chien et al. (2020) and Hanaysha and Hussain (2018)

Research methods

The study aims to investigate the effect of employee empowerment, motivation, and employee training on employee performance in the information technology sector in Kathmandu, Nepal. The study employed a positivist-based survey research design of the casual correlational type (Omotunde & Alegbeleye, 2021) and a descriptive research design (Gunavathy & Ayswarya, 2011). Descriptive analysis can be used to portray the information of a population or sample, and descriptive analysis transforms the raw data into statistical data that can easily be understood before recognising, interpreting, and ordering them into structured descriptive information (Groenewald, 2010; Zikmund et al.,

2010). The area of the study represents employees of employees as respondents from the IT sector in Kathmandu Valley. The study comprised the leading IT companies, including Soft International Pvt. Ltd., Wolfmatrix Pvt. Ltd., Verisk Nepal, Deerwalk Services Pvt. Ltd., and Fonepay, for the study. The non-probability-purposive sampling technique was used for cross-sectional primary data. The dissemination of 300 structured questionnaires among the employees retrieved only 196 (65.33 per cent) useful questionnaires.

The questionnaire for the survey of financial motivation, employee empowerment, employee training and employee performance was adopted from the (Chien et al., 2020; Hanaysha & Hussain, 2018). Demographic and Likert scale assessment was used in the study. Further, the Cronbach alpha for testing internal consistency was employed, and correlation and regression analysis were tested to assess the correlation and effect of motivation, empowerment, and training on employee performance.

Model specification

A research model has been developed for the study that reflects employee performance as a dependent variable and financial motivation, employee empowerment and employee training as independent variables.

Regression model for the study:

$$EP = \alpha + \beta_1 FM + \beta_2 EE + \beta_3 ET + e_i \dots\dots\dots (1)$$

Where:

EP = Employee Performance

FM = Financial Motivation

EE = Employee Empowerment

ET = Employee training

e_i = Error term

Table 1 shows the reliability test through Cronbach alpha, which depicts that financial motivation has a 0.804 value of Cronbach alpha. In addition, the Cronbach alpha for employee empowerment remained at 0.869, the Cronbach alpha for employee training was 0.876, and the Cronbach alpha for employee performance was 0.826. It shows that as all the value of Cronbach alpha found >0.70, the internal consistency is found for the study.

Table 1. Reliability testing

Variable	Cronbach's Alpha	Number of items
Financial Motivation	0.804	5
Employee Empowerment	0.869	5
Employee Training	0.876	5
Employee Performance	0.826	5

Source: own processing

Results

Respondents' profile

Table 2 shows that out of 196 respondents, a majority of 107 males (54.6 per cent) participated in the survey, and 89 were female (45.4 per cent). The leading number of respondents was 89 from the age group 27 to 34 (45.4 per cent), and in the age group above 43 (7.70 per cent) were the least participants. 120 participants (61.2 per cent) were married, and 76 (38.8 per cent) were single. Finally, from the point of view of educational backgrounds, the majority of respondents, 79, had completed a master's and above degrees (40.3 per cent) and least was 67 respondents (34.2 per cent) who had completed a bachelor's degree.

Table 2. The demographic data of the respondents

Demographic variable	Demographic characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Female	89	45.4
	Male	107	54.6
Age group	19 – 26	57	29.1
	27 – 34	89	45.4
	35 – 42	35	17.9
	Above 43	15	7.7
Marital status	Married	120	61.2
	Single	76	38.8
Educational qualification	Intermediate (+2)	50	25.5
	Bachelor	67	34.2
	Master and above	79	40.3
Total		196	100.0

Source: own processing

Correlation analysis

Table 3 shows the Pearson's correlation coefficients for the variables adopted for the study. This study employed employee performance (EP) as dependent variable and employee empowerment (EP), employee motivation (EM), and employee training (ET) as independent variable for the study.

Table 3. Correlational matrix

Variables	Mean	Std. deviation		FM	EE	ET	EP
Financial Motivation	3.64	.845	Pearson's r	1.00			
Employee Empowerment	3.93	.844	Pearson's r	0.644***	1.00		
			p-value	<.001	—		
Employee Training	4.05	.930	Pearson's r	0.634***	0.911***	1.00	
			p-value	<.001	<.001	—	
Employee Performance	3.61	.799	Pearson's r	0.638***	0.698***	0.560***	1.00
			p-value	<.001	<.001	—	

Note. * p < .05, ** p < .01, *** p < .001

Source: own processing

Table 3 shows a correlation matrix in which employee performance and financial motivation have a positive and reasonably strong correlation ($r = 0.638$, $p < 0.01$), indicating that when financial motivation rises, employee performance in the Nepalese IT industry also rises. Additionally, there is a strong positive correlation ($r = 0.698$, $p < 0.01$) between employee empowerment and performance, reflecting the significance of employee empowerment for improved performance. Remarkably, there is a moderately positive correlation between employee performance and training ($r = 0.560$, $p < 0.01$), suggesting that offering training opportunities is linked to better performance in the IT sector. The finding from the correlation depicts that employee performance in the Nepalese IT industry and its affecting factors, including financial motivation, employee empowerment, and employee training, have positive and statistically significant relationships.

Regression analysis

The regression analysis for the data has been employed in the study to assess the effects of financial motivation, empowerment, and employee training on employee performance in the information technology sector in Kathmandu (Table 4). The results of regression analysis were conducted on the basis of 196 survey data using a linear regression model. The estimated model of regression for the study is $EP = \alpha + \beta_1 FM + \beta_2 EE + \beta_3 ET + e_i$, where

the independent variables are financial motivation (FM), employee empowerment (EE), and employee training (ET). Similarly, the dependent variable is employee performance (EP).

Table 4. Regression analysis

Regression	(1)	(2)	(3)	VIF
Intercept	1.137*** (0.000)	1.353*** (0.000)	1.896*** (0.000)	
Financial Motivation	0.679*** (0.000)			1.753
Employee Empowerment		0.716*** (0.000)		3.091
Employee Training			0.595*** (0.000)	2.693
Adj. R-Square	0.403	0.485	0.309	
SEE	.639	.603	.712	
F Value	132.83	184.33	88.17	

P-values in parentheses

* p<0.05, ** p<0.01, *** p<0.001, Source: Authors' data analysis

Source: own processing

Table 4 shows the regression coefficient estimates to investigate the effect of financial motivation, employee empowerment, and employee training on employee performance in the information technology sector. The beta coefficient for financial motivation depicts the positive and statistically significant effect of financial motivation on employee performance. This means that one unit increases financial motivation and enhances employee performance by 0.679 units. Moreover, the beta coefficient for employee empowerment was found to be positive and statistically significant for employee performance in the information technology sector. It shows that a one-unit increase in employee empowerment enhances employee performance by 0.716 units. Finally, the beta coefficient of employee training was found to be positive and statistically significant for employee performance. It reveals that a one-unit increase in employee training increases employee performance by 0.595 units. The regression results validate the significant impact of financial motivation, employee empowerment, and employee training on employee performance in the information technology sector of Nepal (Table 5).

The regression model is shown below:

$$EP = 1.137 + 0.679FM + 0.716EE + 0.595ET + e_i \quad (2)$$

Table 5. Summary of Hypothesis Testing

Hypothesis	Results
H ₁ : There is a significant relationship between employee empowerment and employee performance	Confirmed
H ₂ : There is a significant relationship between financial motivation and employee performance	Confirmed
H ₃ : There is a significant relationship between employee training and employee performance	Confirmed

Source: own processing

Table 5 shows a summary of the hypothesis testing, which reflects that the first hypothesis, stating there is a significant relationship between financial motivation and employee performance, was found to be positive and statistically significant, which is confirmed by the theory. Similarly, the second hypothesis of the study, stating that there is a significant relationship between employee empowerment and employee performance, was found to be positive and statistically significant, confirming the theory. Finally, the third hypothesis, stating there is a significant relationship between employee training and employee performance, was found to be positive and statistically significant, which also confirmed the theory.

Discussion

The research purpose was to examine the effect of employee empowerment, financial motivation, and employee training on employee performance among the employees of the information technology sector in Kathmandu, Nepal. Three hypotheses were tested in the study, and the data was analysed through descriptive statistics, correlation, and regression analysis. The findings showed that there is a positive and significant association between employee empowerment and employee performance. It also depicted the significant positive effect of employee empowerment on employees of the information technology sector in Kathmandu. It means better employee empowerment leads to an increase in the enhanced performance of the employees. The positive and significant association of this finding is in line with previous findings (Alshemmari, 2023; Fernandez & Moldogaziev, 2013; Kok, 2011; Sitopu et al., 2021; Solehan, 2013; Wadhwa & Verghese, 2015).

Similarly, findings revealed a positive and significant effect of financial motivation on employee performance. This finding is consistent with previous findings (Nwankwo et al., 2023; Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023; Riyanto et al., 2021; Sitopu et al., 2021; Rony et al., 2024; Seng & Arumugam, 2017; Sudiardhita et al., 2018; Wahyudi, 2022).

It depicted that the higher the level of financial motivation, the better the employee performance. Finally, the result showed a positive and significant relationship between employee training and employee performance. This finding is in line with previous findings of performance (Hanaysah & Hussain, 2018; Hasan & Chaudhary, 2023; Kuswati, 2020; Rivaldo & Nabella, 2023; Sulaiman & Abdullah, 2019). This indicates that as the organisation provides adequate developmental programs through training, it fosters the prospect and actual performance of employees working in the information technology sector in Kathmandu, Nepal.

Conclusions

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of employee empowerment, financial motivation, and employee training on employee performance among the employees of the information technology sector in Kathmandu, Nepal. The results from the analysis revealed that employee empowerment has a positive and significant correlation with employee performance. When organisations offer autonomy, delegation of authority, and employee development strategies, then the overall performance of employees becomes positive and improved. Thus, it is concluded that the organisation needs to offer enough employee empowerment programs to enhance employee performance. Similarly, the findings from the above analysis showed that there was a positive and significant association between financial motivation and employee performance. It concludes that the organisation working in the information technology sector needs to pay attention to financial motivational packages as they help foster employee performance in the organisation. Finally, the findings showed that there was a positive and significant relationship between employee training and employee performance among the employees of the information technology sector. It concludes that training employees plays a crucial role in enhancing the performance level of employees; organisational adoption of better knowledge, skills, and ability to enhance programs through training is indispensable. However, this research lacks broad-based comprehensive research as it relies mainly on cross-sectional primary data. Future research can be done with a longitudinal study comprising a large sample size and different organisational and geographical contexts.

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