

# Managerial Competencies and Organisational Performance in Wildlife Tourism Hotels: Evidence from an Ecologically Sensitive Tourism Destination

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**Abstract:** *This study examines managerial competencies among hotel managers operating in the wildlife tourism context of the Jim Corbett National Park region, India, and investigates their relationships with financial and non-financial organisational performance. Data were collected from 344 hotel managers using a structured questionnaire assessing cognitive, functional, meta, social, and environmental behaviour competencies. The data were analysed using descriptive statistics and multiple regression analysis. Meta competency emerged as the highest-rated competency dimension, whereas environmental behaviour competency received the lowest rating. The regression results indicated that competency dimensions were associated differently with organisational performance. Cognitive and meta competencies were significant positive predictors of financial performance, whereas social and environmental behaviour competencies were significant positive predictors of non-financial performance. Environmental behaviour competency, however, demonstrated a negative relationship with financial performance. The findings highlight the multidimensional and context-dependent nature of managerial competencies and their differential associations with organisational outcomes. By extending an established hospitality competency framework to include environmental behaviour competency, the study provides context-specific evidence on managerial capabilities in ecologically sensitive wildlife tourism destinations.*

**Keywords:** Managerial Competencies; Organisational Performance; Hotel Managers; Wildlife Tourism; Environmental Behaviour Competency; Ecologically Sensitive Tourism

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## Introduction

Hotels operating in wildlife tourism destinations function within a distinctive environment that differs substantially from conventional urban and business-oriented hospitality settings. In addition to maintaining service quality and operational efficiency, hotels in such destinations operate within contexts characterised by ecological sensitivity, seasonality, stakeholder complexity, and increasing sustainability expectations (Bramwell et al., 2017; Carlisle et al., 2022). These conditions increase the complexity of managerial work and raise questions regarding whether conventional hospitality competency frameworks adequately capture the capabilities required for effective management in environmentally sensitive tourism destinations. Effective management in the hotel industry is intrinsically connected to financial performance and the whole visitor experience, underscoring the necessity of evaluating abilities to maintain a competitive edge. Tourism significantly contributes to economic growth, particularly in regions endowed with natural beauty, such as Jim Corbett National Park in Uttarakhand, India. With the increase in tourist numbers, the demand for proficient hotel managers also escalates. This indicates that we must evaluate their managerial competencies. Research indicates that hotel managers in Uttarakhand employ various methods to assess performance; nevertheless, they possess limited knowledge of formal frameworks such as the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) that could enhance their operations (Kala D et al., 2015). This study seeks to identify the critical competences necessary for hotel managers in environmentally sensitive regions and to examine the impact of these competencies on service delivery and business sustainability (Kala D et al., 2014). The hospitality sector, particularly hotel businesses, is unquestionably crucial for economic advancement as a significant provider of jobs. The hotel sector necessitates a substantial workforce and diverse skill sets to deliver exceptional service and ensure client satisfaction. To attain their objectives, hospitality enterprises, such as hotels, must possess specific competencies to deliver excellent service and ensure client satisfaction. Parry (1998) and Lowry and Flohr (2005) define job competency as a collection of activities, knowledge, attitudes, and abilities associated with performance, measurable against standards, and subject to enhancement through educational programs. Lucia and Lepsinger (1999) characterised a competency model as a descriptive instrument that delineates the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behaviours requisite for effective organisational performance.

Economic fluctuations have significantly altered managerial positions during the past few decades. The operating environment has become increasingly complex since the onset of the twenty-first century, compelling organisations to adapt more rapidly than ever. Globalisation is rapidly expanding, presenting both benefits and difficulties that influence managerial practices.

## Study Area

The study was conducted in the Jim Corbett National Park region of Uttarakhand, India, a prominent wildlife tourism destination with a substantial hospitality sector. The study focused on hotels located around Jhirna, Dhela, Bijrani, Dhikala, Durgadevi, and Garjia. The region provides an appropriate context for examining managerial competencies because hotels operate

within an ecologically sensitive environment characterised by tourism seasonality and diverse visitor expectations.

Objective of The Study

Given the distinctive operational and environmental context of wildlife tourism destinations, this study aims to examine the managerial competencies relevant to hotel management and their relationship with organisational performance in the Jim Corbett National Park region. Specifically, the study seeks to:

- 1. Examine the levels of cognitive, functional, meta, social, and environmental behaviour competencies among hotel managers in the Jim Corbett National Park region.
- 2. Examine the relationship between managerial competencies and organisational performance, with particular emphasis on financial and non-financial performance.

MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES IN THE HOSPITALITY AND WILDLIFE TOURISM CONTEXT

Managerial competencies refer to the knowledge, skills, abilities, and behavioural characteristics that enable managers to perform effectively within their organisational roles. Early competency perspectives emphasised technical, conceptual, interpersonal, leadership, and administrative capabilities, while subsequent research broadened the concept to include motives, traits, behavioural attributes, adaptability, and decision-making capabilities (McClelland, 1973; Boyatzis, 1982; Spencer & Spencer, 1993; Bartram, 2005). This development reflects a shift from viewing competency primarily as a set of job-related skills toward a multidimensional construct shaped by both managerial roles and organisational contexts. In the hospitality sector, managerial effectiveness depends on a combination of operational, cognitive, interpersonal, and adaptive capabilities. Managers influence service delivery, employee coordination, customer satisfaction, resource utilisation, and organisational competitiveness; consequently, hospitality research has identified competencies related to technical expertise, leadership, problem-solving, customer orientation, communication, and business acumen (Tas, 1988; Enz & Siguaw, 2000; Chung-Herrera et al., 2003; Jauhari, 2006). More recent research has expanded this perspective by emphasising emotional intelligence, intercultural capability, resilience, digital literacy, and sustainability-oriented skills (see Table 1).

Table 1: Thematic Development of Managerial Competencies in Hospitality and Tourism Research

| Theme                                   | Representative Studies                                                                           | Key Competencies                                                                                                      |
|-----------------------------------------|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Foundational managerial competencies    | McClelland (1973); Boyatzis (1982); Spencer and Spencer (1993); Woodruffe (1993); Bartram (2005) | Knowledge, skills, motives, traits, achievement orientation, leadership, decision-making, and adaptability            |
| Functional and operational competencies | Tas (1988); Enz and Siguaw (2000); Chung-Herrera et al. (2003); Jauhari (2006)                   | Technical expertise, operational management, customer orientation, financial and business acumen, and problem-solving |

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| Theme                                                  | Representative Studies                                                                                    | Key Competencies                                                                                                                 |
|--------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| Cognitive and meta competencies                        | Cheetham and Chivers (2005); Bharwani and Talib (2017); Li et al. (2023)                                  | Analytical thinking, decision-making, adaptability, resilience, learning agility, and composure under pressure                   |
| Social and relational competencies                     | Kay and Russette (2000); Giousmpasoglou et al. (2019); Jo et al. (2024); Papageorgiou et al. (2024)       | Communication, empathy, conflict resolution, relationship management, networking, and leadership                                 |
| Emotional and intercultural competencies               | Wong and Law (2002); Ang et al. (2007); Tsaur et al. (2016); Karatepe and Karadas (2015)                  | Emotional intelligence, emotional regulation, cultural intelligence, empathy, and intercultural adaptability                     |
| Digital and emerging competencies                      | Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2019); Rahman and Singh (2022); Kumar et al. (2023); Emmanuel et al. (2023) | Digital literacy, online engagement, data analytics, social media management, resilience, and digital communication              |
| Environmental and sustainability-oriented competencies | Chan and Hsu (2016); Baum (2018); Baum and Hai (2020); Rahman and Singh (2022)                            | Environmental stewardship, green skills, sustainability consciousness, stakeholder engagement, resilience, and crisis management |
| Integrated hospitality competency framework            | Bharwani and Talib (2017)                                                                                 | Cognitive, functional, social, and meta competencies                                                                             |

*Note.* The table presents a thematic synthesis of representative studies reviewed by the authors. The literature demonstrates that managerial competency has evolved into a multidimensional construct encompassing functional, cognitive, social, emotional, adaptive, digital, and sustainability-related capabilities. Functional competencies remain essential for managing hospitality operations, whereas cognitive and meta competencies enable managers to analyse complex situations, make decisions, adapt to changing conditions, and engage in continuous learning. Similarly, social, relational, emotional, and intercultural competencies are particularly important in hospitality because managerial effectiveness depends heavily on interactions with employees, guests, communities, and other stakeholders.

This broader understanding of competency is particularly relevant to hotels operating in wildlife tourism destinations. Unlike conventional urban or business-oriented hotels, these establishments operate within environments characterised by ecological sensitivity, tourism seasonality, visitor safety concerns, stakeholder interdependence, and increasing sustainability expectations. Consequently, hotel managers may require capabilities that extend beyond conventional operational and interpersonal competencies, including environmental awareness, responsible resource utilisation, stakeholder engagement, crisis responsiveness, and the ability

to balance organisational objectives with ecological considerations. Among hospitality-specific competency models, Bharwani and Talib (2017) provide a useful framework comprising cognitive, functional, social, and meta competencies. Cognitive competency reflects analytical thinking and decision-making; functional competency concerns the effective execution of managerial and operational responsibilities; social competency encompasses communication and relationship management; and meta competency represents higher-order capabilities such as adaptability and continuous learning. While this framework provides a strong basis for examining hotel managerial effectiveness, the distinctive context of wildlife tourism suggests the need to consider environmental and sustainability-related capabilities more explicitly.

Accordingly, the present study extends this framework by incorporating environmental behaviour competency. This additional dimension reflects the importance of environmentally responsible behaviour and decision-making among managers whose organisations operate in ecologically sensitive destinations. The integration of environmental behaviour competency provides a more context-specific approach to understanding managerial capability in wildlife tourism hospitality.

Despite the growing body of research on hospitality competencies, empirical evidence remains comparatively limited regarding hotel managers operating in wildlife tourism destinations, particularly within the Indian context. Existing studies have largely focused on conventional hospitality environments, while the competency requirements associated with ecologically sensitive tourism settings remain less clearly understood. The present study addresses this gap by examining five dimensions of managerial competency—cognitive, functional, meta, social, and environmental behaviour competency—among hotel managers in the Jim Corbett National Park region.

#### *MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES AND ORGANISATIONAL PERFORMANCE*

Managerial competencies are widely recognised as important antecedents of organisational performance because managers influence strategic decision-making, resource utilisation, employee coordination, service delivery, and organisational adaptation. However, the effects of managerial competencies may vary across different dimensions of performance and operating contexts. This distinction is particularly relevant in hospitality organisations, where managerial decisions can influence both economic outcomes and broader service- and stakeholder-related outcomes.

Organisational performance is commonly conceptualised as a multidimensional construct comprising financial and non-financial outcomes. Financial performance reflects economic outcomes such as profitability, revenue generation, cost efficiency, and related indicators. Managerial capabilities associated with strategic decision-making, analytical thinking, operational planning, and resource management may contribute to these outcomes by improving organisational efficiency and competitiveness. Murimi et al. (2021), for example, highlighted the relevance of managerial analytical and strategic capabilities to hotel performance outcomes.

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Non-financial performance encompasses outcomes such as service quality, customer satisfaction, employee engagement, organisational effectiveness, reputation, and sustainability-related performance. In hospitality organisations, leadership, communication, relationship management, and employee-oriented managerial practices can influence workforce behaviour and service delivery, thereby contributing to longer-term organisational effectiveness.

The relationship between managerial competencies and organisational performance can also be interpreted through several complementary theoretical perspectives. Competency-based approaches emphasise the role of managerial capabilities in supporting effective performance, whereas Upper Echelons Theory suggests that organisational outcomes may be influenced by the characteristics and capabilities of senior decision-makers. Similarly, the Dynamic Capabilities perspective highlights the importance of managerial capabilities in enabling organisations to adapt to changing environmental conditions. The multidimensional assessment of financial and non-financial outcomes is also consistent with the broader perspective underlying performance measurement frameworks such as the Balanced Scorecard. Despite substantial research on managerial capabilities and organisational outcomes, relatively limited attention has been directed toward examining how different competency dimensions relate simultaneously to both financial and non-financial performance within wildlife tourism hospitality. In addition, the contribution of environmental and sustainability-oriented managerial capabilities remains comparatively underexplored in ecologically sensitive hospitality contexts.

Therefore, the present study examines the relationship between the five dimensions of managerial competency—cognitive, functional, meta, social, and environmental behaviour competency—and organisational performance. Organisational performance is assessed through financial and non-financial dimensions, enabling the study to determine whether different managerial competencies demonstrate distinct relationships with different organisational outcomes in the wildlife tourism context.

### **Research Gap and Study Focus**

The reviewed literature demonstrates that managerial competencies are essential for effective hospitality management and organisational performance. However, three major gaps remain. First, most competency studies have focused on conventional hospitality settings, with limited attention to hotels operating in wildlife tourism destinations. Second, existing competency frameworks primarily emphasise general managerial capabilities and provide limited consideration of environmental and sustainability-related competencies. Third, relatively few studies have simultaneously examined the relationship between managerial competencies and both financial and non-financial performance in the hospitality sector, particularly within ecologically sensitive tourism destinations in India.

To address these gaps, the present study focuses on hotel managers operating in the Jim Corbett National Park region. Specifically, the study seeks to identify the managerial competencies demonstrated by hotel managers and examine whether these competencies are associated with financial and non-financial organisational performance. By integrating cognitive, functional,

meta, social, and environmental behaviour competencies, the study provides a context-specific examination of managerial capabilities in a wildlife tourism setting.

## **Research Methodology**

The objective of this study is to identify the managerial competencies of hotel managers at Jim Corbett National Park, Ramnagar and to examine the relationship between managerial competences and organisational performance. This study is exploratory, as numerous investigations have been undertaken in urban cities and downtown hotels worldwide; however, no research has been identified in nature-based wildlife tourist destinations. The study employed both quantitative methodology using descriptive statistics to identify the managerial competencies whereas multiple regression analysis was used to examine the relationship between managerial competencies and financial and non-financial performance of an organisation. Comprehensive insights have been obtained through the utilization of both primary and secondary data sources within the research strategy. The survey research methodology has been utilized as the principal way of data collection. A questionnaire, based on prior research studies, was modified to evaluate and analyze several phenomena pertinent to the research aims.

## **Formulation of Research Questions**

The present study is exploratory, and it is being carried out to determine the managerial competencies required by hotel managers in Jim Corbett National Park, Ramnagar, a wildlife tourist destination. Following research questions are framed to support the study.

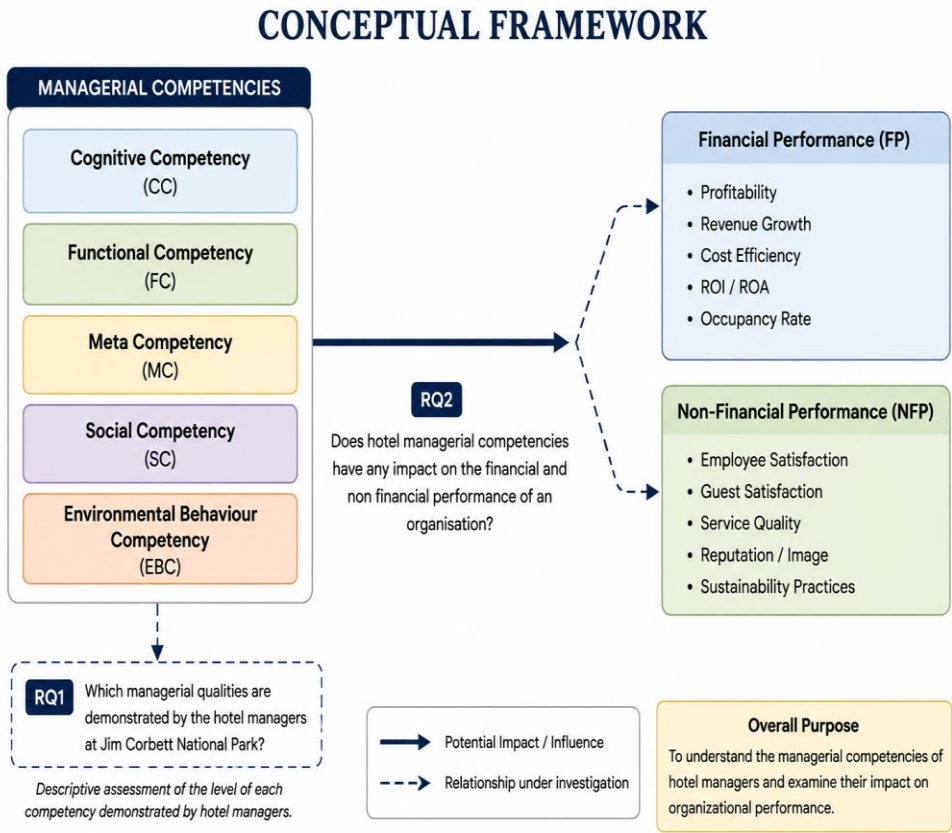
**RQ1.** Which managerial competencies are demonstrated by hotel managers in the Jim Corbett National Park region?

**RQ2.** Do hotel managerial competencies significantly influence the financial and non-financial performance of an organisation?

## **Conceptual Framework For The Study**

This study utilises the Bharwani and Talib (2017) Competency Framework Model as the primary framework for analysing management competencies among hotel managers in Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand. This model was made particularly for the hotel sector. It lists 43 competency traits that fall into four main groups: Cognitive, Functional, Social, and Meta Competencies. In service-oriented settings like hotels, where interpersonal skills, adaptability, and strategic thinking are important for performance and guest happiness, each category represents an important aspect of managerial effectiveness. Further an additional competency Environmental Behaviour competencies is also being added after going through the various literatures, as it is of prime importance for the hotel managers working in sensitive tourism destination such as as wildlife tourism destination to possess the environmental behaviour competencies. The sixth dimensions, Environmental Behaviour competency are derived from the research conducted by (Carlisle et al., 2022) ( see Figure 1).

**Figure 1 : Conceptual Framework For the Study**



*Note.* Developed by the author

### **TARGET POPULATION AND SAMPLING**

The target population comprised hotel managers employed in accommodation establishments located around the major tourism zones of the Jim Corbett National Park region, Uttarakhand, India, including Jhirna, Dhela, Bijrani, Dhikala, Durgadevi, and Garjia (see table 2). The population was selected because the study specifically examines managerial competencies within the context of wildlife tourism hospitality. According to records from the Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board, approximately 273 registered hotels and guesthouses operate within the tourism region, employing an estimated population of approximately 2,600 managers across different managerial levels. Based on the Krejcie and Morgan (1970) sample size guidelines, a minimum sample of 335 respondents was considered appropriate for the estimated population. To account for potential non-response and unusable questionnaires, 402 questionnaires were distributed.

A purposive sampling approach was employed because participation was restricted to employees holding managerial positions, including general managers and managers at different organisational levels. Of the 402 questionnaires distributed, 344 usable responses were retained

for analysis, representing a usable response rate of 85.57%. Prior to data collection, permission was obtained from the respective hotel managements. Participants were informed about the purpose of the study, and confidentiality of both the respondents and participating hotels was maintained. Participation was voluntary, and the collected data were used solely for academic research purposes.

**Table 2 : Zones of Jim Corbett National park**

| S.no | Zones     | Entry Gate |
|------|-----------|------------|
| 1    | Jhirna    | Dhela      |
| 2    | Dhela     | Dhela      |
| 3    | Bijrani   | Amdanda    |
| 4    | Dhikala   | Dhangari   |
| 5    | Durgadevi | Durgadevi  |
| 6    | Garjiya   | Garjiya    |

*Note.* Source: Corbett Tiger Reserve Office , Ramnagar

### Pilot Study and Instrument Refinement

A pilot study was conducted before the main data collection to evaluate the clarity, appropriateness, and reliability of the research instrument. The pilot involved 38 hotel managers from the target population who were not included in the final study sample. The internal consistency of the questionnaire was assessed using Cronbach's alpha in IBM SPSS Statistics Version 31. The analysis produced an overall Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .858, exceeding the commonly accepted threshold of .70 for acceptable internal consistency (Hair et al., 2019; Nunnally, 1978). The results therefore indicated that the instrument demonstrated satisfactory reliability and was suitable for use in the full-scale data collection (see Table 3)

**Table 3: Cronbach's Alpha**

| Reliability Statistics |                                              |            |
|------------------------|----------------------------------------------|------------|
| Cronbach's Alpha       | Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items | N of Items |
| .856                   | .858                                         | 38         |

*Note.* Overall Cronbach's Alpha is .858

### Data Analysis

The examination of respondents' personal profiles and features is essential for an accurate representation of the construct related to the research subject. In this section descriptive analysis of the data is given of the demographic profile of the respondents. All responses were cross checked and screened as the study was restricted to the managers working in various departments of the hotel which ensures that all respondents fall under this category. With the help of tables and pie chart the analysis were presented for each major demographic profile to strengthen the analysis.

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The sample comprised 344 respondents employed in managerial positions within the hotel industry. As presented in Table 4, the majority of the respondents were male ( $n = 291$ , 84.6%), whereas female respondents accounted for 15.4% of the sample ( $n = 53$ ).

**Table 4: Descriptive Statistics of the gender profile of the respondents**

| Gender | <i>n</i> | Percentage |
|--------|----------|------------|
| Male   | 291      | 84.6       |
| Female | 53       | 15.4       |

Note.  $N = 344$

Regarding age, the respondents were predominantly young. As shown in Table 5, the largest proportion belonged to the 21–30 years age group ( $n = 226$ , 65.69%), followed by those aged 31–40 years ( $n = 76$ , 22.09%). Respondents aged 41–50 years accounted for 10.75% ( $n = 37$ ), while relatively few respondents were aged 51–60 years ( $n = 4$ , 1.16%) or 61 years and above ( $n = 1$ , 0.29%). Further descriptive analysis showed that the respondents had a mean age of 30.32 years ( $SD = 9.05$ ), indicating that the sample was primarily composed of relatively young hotel managers, although respondents from middle and senior age groups were also represented.

**Table 5: Descriptive statistics of the age group distribution of the respondents**

| Category | <i>n</i> | Percentage |
|----------|----------|------------|
| 21-30    | 226      | 65.69      |
| 31-40    | 76       | 22.09      |
| 41-50    | 37       | 10.75      |
| 51-60    | 4        | 1.16       |
| 61 +     | 1        | 0.29       |

Note.  $M$  age = 30.32 years . To create the age group variables, the age group was recorded in five categories

More than half of the respondents held a bachelor's degree ( $n = 176$ , 51.16%), making it the most common educational qualification in the sample. This was followed by diploma holders ( $n = 67$ , 19.47%) and respondents with intermediate-level education ( $n = 56$ , 16.27%). A smaller proportion held a master's degree ( $n = 28$ , 8.13%), while 4.06% had completed high school ( $n = 14$ ). Only three respondents (0.87%) reported holding a doctoral qualification. Overall, the findings indicate that undergraduate-level education was the predominant qualification among the respondents.

The respondents also represented a range of managerial experience levels. The largest proportion had 0–1 year of managerial experience ( $n = 97$ , 28.19%), followed by those with 3–5 years of experience ( $n = 82$ , 23.83%). Respondents with 5–7 years of managerial experience accounted for 16.27% ( $n = 56$ ), followed by those with 7–10 years ( $n = 44$ , 12.79%) and 1–3

years ( $n = 36$ , 10.46%). In addition, 8.43% of the respondents ( $n = 29$ ) reported having more than 10 years of managerial experience. These findings demonstrate that the sample included both relatively new and experienced managers.

With respect to departmental representation, respondents were drawn from a broad range of core and ancillary hotel departments, as presented in Table 6. The largest proportion of respondents worked in Food and Beverage Service ( $n = 130$ , 37.79%), followed by the Culinary department ( $n = 80$ , 23.25%). Housekeeping ( $n = 47$ , 13.66%) and Front Office ( $n = 46$ , 13.37%) were also substantially represented. Smaller proportions of respondents were from Learning and Development ( $n = 10$ , 2.90%), Sales and Marketing ( $n = 7$ , 2.03%), Human Resources ( $n = 7$ , 2.03%), and Event Management ( $n = 4$ , 1.16%). Additionally, respondents from other departments, including Engineering and Maintenance and Purchasing, accounted for 3.77% of the sample ( $n = 13$ ).

**Table 6 : Descriptive Statistics: Managerial Department of the Respondents**

| Department                 | <i>n</i> | Percentage |
|----------------------------|----------|------------|
| Food and Beverage Services | 130      | 37.79      |
| Culinary                   | 80       | 23.25      |
| Housekeeping               | 47       | 13.66      |
| Front Office               | 46       | 13.37      |
| Learning and Development   | 10       | 2.90       |
| Sales and Marketing        | 7        | 2.03       |
| Human Resource             | 7        | 2.03       |
| Event Management           | 4        | 1.16       |
| Other                      | 13       | 3.77       |

*Note.* To create the variables of the managerial department, the managerial categories were recorded in nine categories

Overall, the respondent profile demonstrates that the study included hotel managers from diverse demographic, educational, experiential, and departmental backgrounds. The representation of managers across multiple hotel functions provides a broad perspective for examining managerial competencies within the study context.

### **Descriptive Statistics of Variables**

Descriptive statistics were used to examine managerial competency levels across five domains: cognitive, functional, meta, social, and environmental behavior competencies. Overall, meta competency received the highest mean score ( $M = 3.87$ ,  $SD = 0.57$ ), followed by functional competency ( $M = 3.79$ ,  $SD = 0.56$ ), social competency ( $M = 3.77$ ,  $SD = 0.65$ ), and cognitive competency ( $M = 3.73$ ,  $SD = 0.57$ ). Environmental behavior competency received the lowest mean score ( $M = 3.57$ ,  $SD = 0.85$ ), indicating comparatively greater variability and a potential need for further development in sustainability-related managerial practices (see Table

7).Overall, the findings suggest that hotel managers demonstrated relatively stronger meta, functional, social, and cognitive competencies, whereas environmental behavior competency emerged as a comparatively weaker area requiring greater attention in the wildlife tourism context

**Table 7: Raking of the Competencies**

| S. No | Domain                             | M    | SD   |
|-------|------------------------------------|------|------|
| 1     | Meta Competency                    | 3.87 | 0.57 |
| 2     | Functional Competency              | 3.79 | 0.56 |
| 3     | Social Competency                  | 3.77 | 0.65 |
| 4     | Cognitive Competency               | 3.73 | 0.57 |
| 5     | Environmental Behaviour Competency | 3.57 | 0.85 |

Note. M = Mean; SD = Standard Deviation.

#### RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN MANAGERIAL COMPETENCIES AND HOTEL PERFORMANCE

Multiple regression analyses were conducted to examine the effects of cognitive competency (CC), functional competency (FC), meta competency (MC), social competency (SC), and environmental behaviour competency (EBC) on financial and non-financial performance. Preliminary diagnostic tests indicated that the assumptions of multiple regression were adequately met.

#### Financial Performance

The regression model predicting financial performance was statistically significant,  $F(5, 338) = 51.82$ ,  $p < .001$ , explaining 43.4% of the variance in financial performance ( $R^2 = .434$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .426$ ). Cognitive competency and meta competency were significant positive predictors of financial performance. In contrast, environmental behaviour competency was a significant negative predictor. Functional and social competencies did not make statistically significant contributions to the model. See Table 8 for details.

**Table 8: Multiple Regression Results Predicting Financial Performance**

| Predictor                          | B     | SE   | $\beta$ | t      | p      |
|------------------------------------|-------|------|---------|--------|--------|
| Cognitive competency               | .175  | .040 | .261    | 4.363  | < .001 |
| Functional competency              | .076  | .044 | .173    | 1.722  | .086   |
| Meta competency                    | .153  | .042 | .331    | 3.643  | < .001 |
| Social competency                  | .094  | .053 | .179    | 1.779  | .076   |
| Environmental behaviour competency | -.110 | .027 | -.299   | -4.042 | < .001 |

Note. Dependent variable = financial performance.  $R^2 = .434$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .426$ ,  $F(5, 338) = 51.82$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $N = 344$ .

*NON-FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE*

The regression model predicting non-financial performance was also statistically significant,  $F(5, 338) = 137.10$ ,  $p < .001$ , explaining 67.0% of the variance in non-financial performance ( $R^2 = .670$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .665$ ). Social competency emerged as the strongest positive predictor, followed by environmental behaviour competency. Cognitive competency also had a significant positive effect. Functional and meta competencies were not statistically significant predictors. See Table 9 for details.

**Table 9: Multiple Regression Results Predicting Non-Financial Performance**

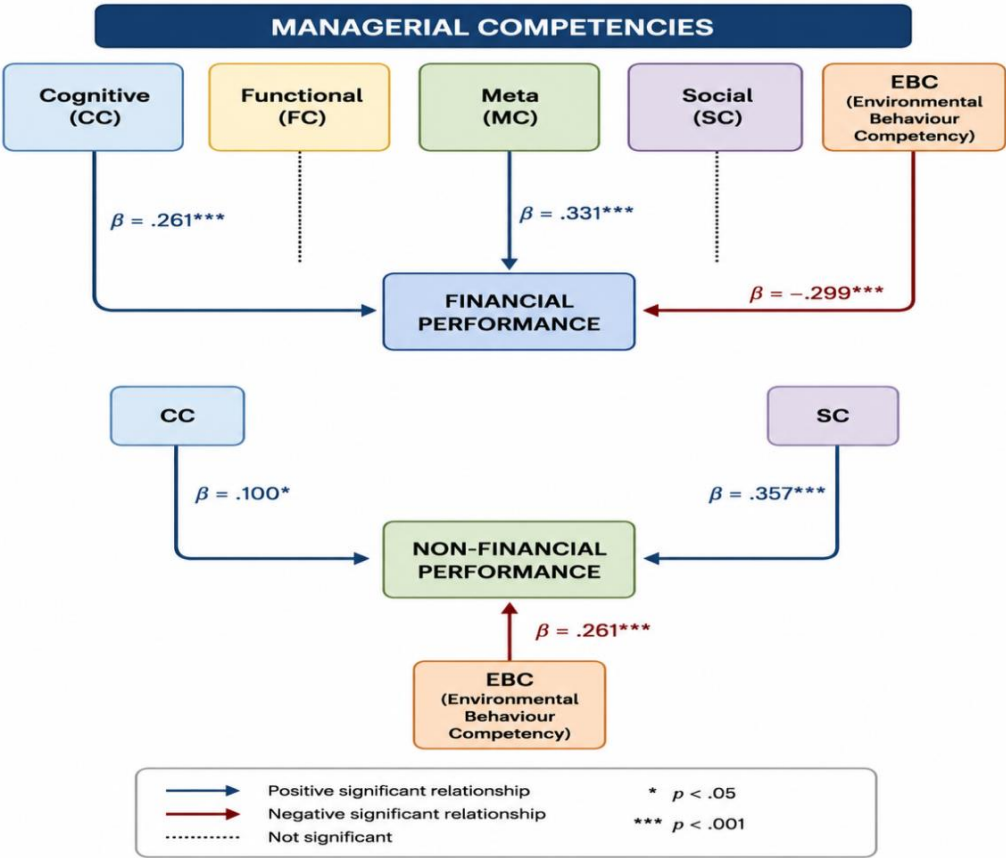
| Predictor                          | B    | SE   | $\beta$ | t     | p      |
|------------------------------------|------|------|---------|-------|--------|
| Cognitive competency               | .065 | .030 | .100    | 2.194 | .029   |
| Functional competency              | .047 | .033 | .111    | 1.441 | .151   |
| Meta competency                    | .030 | .031 | .067    | .961  | .337   |
| Social competency                  | .182 | .039 | .357    | 4.655 | < .001 |
| Environmental behaviour competency | .093 | .020 | .261    | 4.621 | < .001 |

Note. Dependent variable = non-financial performance.  $R^2 = .670$ , adjusted  $R^2 = .665$ ,  $F(5, 338) = 137.10$ ,  $p < .001$ ,  $N = 344$ .

### Summary of Findings

Overall, the findings indicate that the contribution of managerial competencies differed across the two dimensions of hotel performance. Cognitive and meta competencies were significant positive predictors of financial performance, whereas social and environmental behaviour competencies demonstrated stronger relationships with non-financial performance. Environmental behaviour competency showed a significant negative relationship with financial performance but a positive relationship with non-financial performance. See Figure 2. These results suggest that different managerial competency dimensions contribute differently to organizational performance outcomes in the hotel industry.

**Figure 2: Significant Relationships Between Managerial Competencies and Hotel Performance**



*Note.* Only statistically significant relationships are shown.  $p < .05$ . Functional and meta competencies were not significant predictors of non-financial performance, whereas functional and social competencies were not significant predictors of financial performance.

### Practical Implications

The findings have practical implications for hotel operators, human resource managers, hospitality educators, and destination stakeholders in wildlife tourism settings. The identified competency dimensions—cognitive, functional, meta, social, and environmental behaviour competency—may provide a useful basis for managerial recruitment, training, and professional development. In particular, hotels operating in ecologically sensitive destinations may benefit from competency-based training that combines conventional managerial capabilities with environmental responsibility, sustainability practices, stakeholder engagement, and crisis responsiveness.

The findings also have implications for hospitality education. Higher education institutions and training providers may incorporate competency-based and experiential learning approaches that

strengthen managerial decision-making, operational capability, interpersonal skills, adaptability, and environmental responsibility. Such initiatives may help prepare future hospitality managers for the distinctive operational and sustainability challenges associated with wildlife and other nature-based tourism destinations.

### **Theoretical Contributions**

This study contributes to the literature on managerial competency by extending its application to the relatively underexplored context of wildlife tourism hospitality. Previous competency perspectives have emphasised technical, functional, cognitive, interpersonal, leadership, and adaptive capabilities (Katz, 1955; Boyatzis, 1982; Delamare Le Deist & Winterton, 2005). Within hospitality research, Bharwani and Talib (2017) further conceptualised managerial competency through cognitive, functional, social, and meta dimensions.

Building on this framework, the present study incorporates environmental behaviour competency as an additional dimension relevant to hotel managers operating in ecologically sensitive destinations. The findings therefore support a context-specific understanding of managerial competency by suggesting that the capabilities required for effective hotel management may vary according to the characteristics of the operating environment. By integrating environmental considerations with conventional managerial competencies, the study contributes to a broader conceptualisation of managerial capability in wildlife tourism hospitality. The study also contributes by examining managerial competencies in relation to both financial and non-financial organisational performance. This multidimensional approach provides a more comprehensive understanding of how different managerial capabilities may be associated with distinct organisational outcomes.

### **Limitations and Future Research**

The findings should be interpreted in light of several limitations. First, the study was conducted among hotel managers in the Jim Corbett National Park region; therefore, the findings may not be generalisable to other hospitality contexts, including urban or metropolitan destinations. Second, the study focused exclusively on managers, and future research could examine competency requirements among frontline employees, and other hospitality personnel. Third, the cross-sectional and self-reported nature of the data may limit causal interpretation and introduce the possibility of common method and response bias. Future research could replicate the study across other wildlife and nature-based tourism destinations and compare competency requirements across ecological, urban, and resort contexts. Longitudinal and multi-source research designs could provide a more robust understanding of how managerial competencies develop and influence organisational outcomes over time. Further studies may also examine the role of demographic and professional characteristics, such as experience, education, and managerial level, in shaping competency development. In particular, environmental behaviour competency warrants further conceptual and empirical investigation to determine its relevance across different hospitality and tourism contexts.

## Conclusion

This study examined the managerial competencies demonstrated by hotel managers in the Jim Corbett National Park region and investigated their relationship with financial and non-financial organisational performance. The findings indicate that hotel managers demonstrate moderate to high levels across the five competency domains, with meta competency emerging as the strongest dimension and environmental behaviour competency receiving the lowest rating. The results further demonstrate that managerial competencies contribute differently to organisational performance. Cognitive and meta competencies were associated with financial performance, whereas social and environmental behaviour competencies showed stronger relationships with non-financial performance. The differing effects of environmental behaviour competency on financial and non-financial outcomes highlight the complexity of balancing organisational performance with environmental responsibilities in wildlife tourism destinations. The study contributes to hospitality and tourism research by extending the examination of managerial competencies to a wildlife tourism context and incorporating environmental behaviour competency alongside cognitive, functional, meta, and social competencies. From a practical perspective, the findings suggest that competency-development initiatives should adopt a balanced approach that strengthens managerial, interpersonal, and environmental capabilities. Such an approach may support both organisational effectiveness and responsible tourism practices in ecologically sensitive destinations.

Overall, the study demonstrates that managerial competency is multidimensional and that its contribution to organisational performance varies across performance outcomes. The findings provide context-specific evidence for hotel management in wildlife tourism destinations and offer a basis for future research across other ecologically sensitive tourism settings.

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