

# Managerial Competency Profiles of Hotel Managers in Wildlife Tourism Destinations: Evidence from Jim Corbett National Park, India

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## Abstract

The hospitality sector in wildlife tourism destinations requires managers to balance service excellence, operational efficiency, and environmental responsibility. This study examines the managerial competency profiles of hotel managers operating in Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand, one of India's leading wildlife tourism destinations. Using an exploratory mixed-method design, data were collected from 190 managers employed in 14 star-rated hotels. The study utilised a structured questionnaire comprising 35 validated items mapped across five competency domains: Cognitive, Functional, Social, Meta, and Environmental Behaviour Competencies. Descriptive analysis revealed consistently high levels of cognitive, functional, social, and meta competencies, with Meta Competencies—particularly self-awareness, self-efficacy, and achievement orientation—emerging as the strongest domain. Social and cognitive competencies were also well developed, supporting communication, teamwork, decision-making, and problem-solving. However, Environmental Behaviour Competencies ranked significantly lower, indicating limited proficiency in areas such as energy and water management, carbon reduction, and conservation practices. The Friedman Test confirmed statistically significant differences among competency domains ( $\chi^2 = 128.462$ ,  $p < .001$ ). The study highlights the urgent need to strengthen sustainability-focused competencies among hotel managers to align hospitality operations with ecological conservation imperatives. The findings offer valuable insights for policymakers, hotel owners, and training institutions in fostering sustainable hospitality management in protected areas.

**Keywords:** Managerial Competencies, Wildlife Tourism, Hotel Managers, Sustainability, Jim Corbett National Park

## Introduction

The rapid growth of the worldwide hospitality industry has heightened the demand for hospitality personnel, particularly in hotel operations. This sector generated chances for frontline staff and supervisors possessing competence in hotel operations and management. Human capital is vital for hotel operations, providing the appropriate combination of talents and personalities to meet the diverse needs and preferences of guests and tourists. This is the initial step towards upholding exemplary service standards. Incentivising hotel staff to uphold superior work performance leads to guest satisfaction and the potential for repeat patronage in the hospitality sector. The hotel sector is saturated with novel management principles, while outdated ones have become obsolete and are often supplanted by new terminology. Policies, processes, and training programs are designed to enhance the managerial competencies required by global competition, consumer expectations, and the necessity for swift adaptation to environmental changes. 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.

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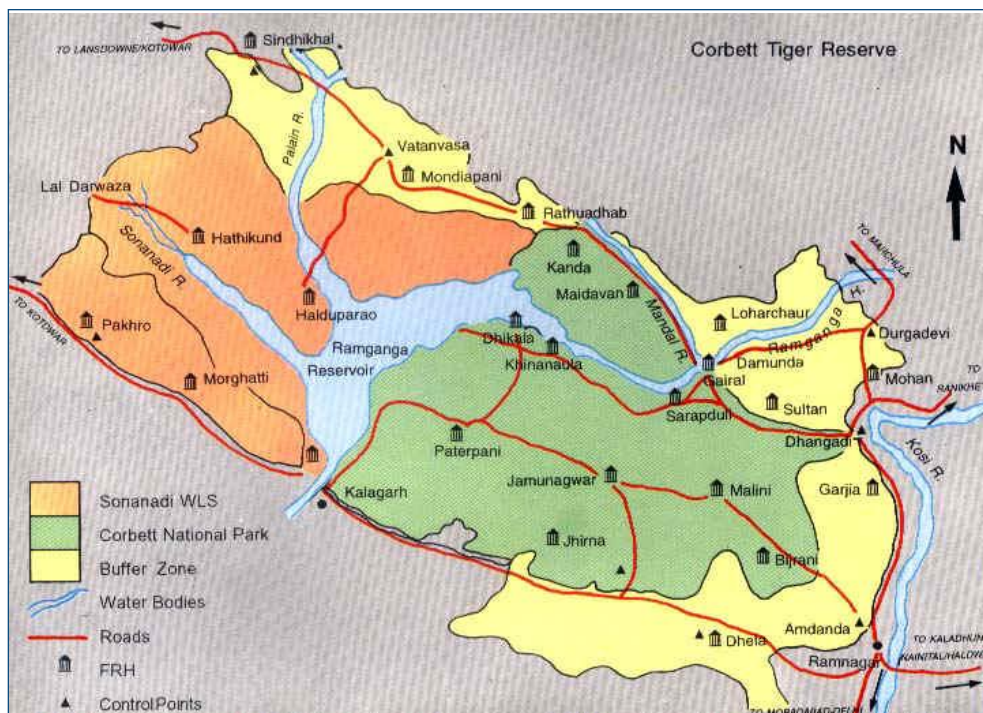
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Research indicates that hotel managers in Uttarakhand employ various methods to assess performance; nevertheless, they possess limited knowledge of formal frameworks such as the Balanced Scorecard (BSC) that could enhance their operations (Kala et 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 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

Jim Corbett National Park, formerly known as Hailey National Park (established in 1936), is a cornerstone of India’s wildlife conservation efforts. Situated in Ramnagar within the Nainital district of Uttarakhand, it is the country’s first national park and the first to be included under the Project Tiger initiative. Renamed in 1956 after Jim Corbett— a hunter-turned-naturalist instrumental in its establishment— the park stands as a model of successful wildlife protection. It hosts 617 plant species, around 50 mammal species, 580 bird species, and 25 reptile species, and is renowned for having one



Source: Nainital District Administration, Govt of Uttarakhand.

**Fig. 1: Map of Corbett Tiger Reserve**

of the highest tiger densities in the world. As a prominent ecotourism destination, it attracts visitors nationwide and internationally. Corbett Tiger Reserve comprises eight tourism zones, although hotels are primarily concentrated around six major zones: Jhirna, Dhela, Bijrani, Dhikala, Durgadevi, and Garjia, with Dhikala being especially popular. Fig. 1 depicts the map of the Corbett Tiger Reserve. Tourists visit not only to observe wildlife and biodiversity but also to relax, enjoy scenic landscapes, and increasingly for destination weddings, making the region a hospitality hub. Consequently, hotels here require managerial competencies distinct from those in urban business centres. While scholars have studied managerial competencies in urban hospitality settings globally, limited research exists for nature-based wildlife tourism destinations—highlighting the need for the present study.

## Objective of the Study

To give exceptional service, keep customers happy, be good for the environment, and make money, you need to have good management abilities. Managers at wildlife tourism locations like Jim Corbett National Park need to know how to do general management tasks as well as tasks that are special to the circumstance, such as being responsible for the environment, handling crises, getting involved with the community, and running a business in a way that is good for the environment. So, the present study has two major objectives and one minor objectives, which are as follows:

*Objective 1:* To ascertain the competencies demonstrated by hotel managers in Jim Corbett National Park.

*Objective 2:* To identify the competencies predominantly demonstrated by hotel managers in Jim Corbett National Park.

## Literature Review

Research on competencies within the hospitality industry has evolved significantly over the past three decades. For the present study literature from the last 25 years was taken into consideration from the year 2001 to 2025 where it has transitioned from enumerating functional skills to more holistic models that emphasise emotional, cross-cultural, behavioural, and digital competencies. This alteration demonstrates the rapid evolution of the hospitality sector.

Frontline workers must deliver exemplary service, cultivate relationships with guests, navigate cultural disparities, and adapt to emerging technologies and the challenges of the post-pandemic landscape. Initial research concentrated on the operational and strategic aspects of hotel management. Enz and Siguaw (2000) identified revenue management, marketing expertise, and financial literacy as critical managerial competencies necessary for attaining competitive advantage in the hospitality industry. Kay and Russette (2000) expanded this perspective by incorporating practitioner insights, concluding that business acumen was insufficient without interpersonal skills, ethical judgement, and adaptability. These essential competencies subsequently influenced broader hospitality competency frameworks, including those tailored for emerging economies.

At the onset of the century, interpersonal and emotional competencies gained significance in delivering exceptional service and retaining customers. Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000) emphasised that emotional bonding, trust, and loyalty are essential for encouraging repeat patronage, thereby establishing emotional engagement as crucial to retention strategies. Wong and Law (2002) established the WLEIS emotional intelligence framework, producing a validated scale for hospitality research and identifying self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, emotional regulation, and emotional utilisation as critical employee competencies. Subsequent research validated that emotional intelligence is crucial for excelling in service roles. Tsaor and Lin (2004) linked emotional intelligence (EI) to effective service recovery, while Chong (2008, 2013) highlighted emotional regulation and interpersonal sensitivity as crucial behavioural competencies in guest-employee interactions. Kim and Agrusa (2012, 2020) identified emotional intelligence (EI) as a significant predictor of guest loyalty, demonstrating that empathy, emotional connection, and service orientation enhance satisfaction and promote repeat patronage. Karatepe and Karadas (2015), Karatepe and Olugbade (2017), and Chung and Wong (2017) all yielded analogous findings. All concurred that employees possessing high emotional intelligence excel in relational leadership, engagement, and service performance. These works collectively underscore emotional intelligence as a vital competency for frontline hospitality personnel, directly linking it to guest retention and service satisfaction—key

variables in the present study. Given that hospitality is a worldwide industry, cultural competencies are deemed indispensable. Hofstede's (2001) cultural dimensions theory provided foundational insights into the influence of cultural values on service expectations and employee behavioural competencies, emphasising the importance of respect for hierarchy, relationship cultivation, and cultural sensitivity for effective guest interactions.

Ang et al. (2007) advanced this discussion by developing the Cultural Intelligence (CQ) framework, which includes cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, and behavioural dimensions. This model rapidly gained significance in hospitality research, with studies such as Chen, Liu and Portnoy (2012), Huff et al. (2014), and Tsaor and Lin (2014) establishing connections between Cultural Intelligence (CQ), guest satisfaction, intercultural adaptability, and trust development. Tsaor, Yen, and Yeh (2016) similarly established that cultural empathy and adaptive service behaviours augment guest trust, an essential precursor to customer retention. Research conducted in India highlights the importance of intercultural competence. Jauhari (2006) identified intercultural sensitivity, leadership, customer orientation, and business acumen as essential competencies for Indian hotel managers, highlighting the significance of cultural adaptability in burgeoning tourism markets like Uttarakhand. These studies collectively confirm that cross-cultural skills are essential competencies for wildlife tourism destinations, characterised by a clientele with diverse nationalities and expectations. Another area of investigation examines service quality as a behavioural competency linked to customer retention and acquisition. Clemes, Gan, and Ren (2011) identified reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, and tangibles as the essential competencies affecting customer loyalty in the hospitality industry. Han and Hyun (2015) emphasised the significance of emotional connection and consistent service delivery as essential elements for retention, supporting the findings of Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000). Research highlights the importance of relational leadership and conflict resolution in enhancing employee-guest engagement. Giousmpasoglou, Brown, and Cooper (2019) demonstrated that hotel leaders must possess empathy, motivation, and effective conflict resolution skills. Similarly, Gannon, Roper, and Doherty (2015) observed that cross-cultural leadership

and inclusivity improve guest relations and workplace cohesion.

Recent literature acknowledges the impact of crises on service behaviours. Jiang and Wen (2020) asserted that during the COVID-19 pandemic, competencies such as providing comfort, demonstrating flexibility, and offering emotional support were essential for retaining guests. Baum and Hai (2020) further delineated resilience and crisis management as essential competencies crucial for the survival of the hospitality sector.

The findings collectively demonstrate that high-quality interactions, emotional engagement, and relational leadership significantly enhance customer loyalty and retention, directly aligning with the objectives of the present research. Cheetham and Chivers (2005) introduced the concept of meta-competencies, which are overarching skills that enable employees to navigate complex service environments. These competencies encompass adaptability, rapid learning, and systemic thinking. Bartram's (2005) Great Eight Competency Model provided an extensive behavioural taxonomy that includes leadership, collaboration, interpersonal skills, analytical abilities, conceptualisation, organisation, adaptability, and performance orientation. Initially designed as a cross-industry model, it has been extensively employed in hospitality research due to its comprehensive behavioural framework. Bharwani and Talib (2017) advanced competency research in the hospitality sector by proposing a four-dimensional framework encompassing cognitive, functional, social, and meta-competencies. Their model integrates emotional intelligence, cross-cultural awareness, functional proficiency, and problem-solving abilities. This positions it as one of the premier models for evaluating front-line personnel in Indian hotels. These models augment the theoretical rigour of the present study by offering validated frameworks to assess the emotional, cross-cultural, and behavioural competencies of hotel personnel. The swift digitalisation of hospitality services highlights the importance of technological competencies, as emphasised by current research. Litvin, Goldsmith, and Pan (2008) established a correlation between digital communication and the promptness of online service responses to customer enquiries, emphasising the importance of customer retention in the era of user-generated reviews. Marinaokou and Giousmpasoglou (2019) observed

that digital literacy, online reputation management, and emotional intelligence in digital interactions are increasingly vital competencies for hotel personnel. Recent contributions emphasise sustainability and digital transformation. Chan and Hsu (2016) identified ethical leadership and environmental stewardship as nascent areas of expertise. Rahman and Singh (2022) found that awareness of sustainability and digital competencies are now imperative for the hospitality

workforce. Kumar et al. (2023) identified data analytics, social media management, and online engagement as critical competencies for modern hotels. Post-pandemic research, notably by Emmanuel, Mensah, and Amoako (2023), emphasised the significance of resilience, digital communication, and empathy in reinstating guest trust in the altered service landscape. Table 1 showed all the different competencies that were talked about in the different competency models.

**Table 1: Competencies Listed in Various Competency Models**

<i>Sr. No.</i>	<i>Author(s) and Year</i>	<i>Research Focus</i>	<i>Competencies Identified</i>
1	Enz and Siguaw (2000)	Strategic/business competencies in hotel management.	Revenue management, marketing, financial literacy.
2	Kay and Russette (2000)	Practitioner perspectives on hotel manager competencies.	Interpersonal skills, ethical judgment, adaptability.
3	Kandampully and Suhartanto (2000)	Distinction between satisfaction and retention.	Trust, loyalty, emotional bonding.
4	Hofstede (2001)	Cultural dimensions shaping competency salience.	Respect for hierarchy, relationship-building, cultural sensitivity.
5	Wong and Law (2002)	Emotional Intelligence Scale (WLEIS) for hospitality.	Self-emotion appraisal, others' emotion appraisal, regulation, use of emotions.
6	Chung-Herrera, Enz and Lankau (2003)	Leadership competencies for future hospitality leaders.	Adaptability, service orientation, relationship-building, organisational leadership.
7	Tsaur and Lin (2004)	Service recovery and cultural intelligence in hotels.	Emotional intelligence, cross-cultural skills.
8	Cheetham and Chivers (2005)	Introduced concept of meta-competencies.	Adaptability, systems thinking, learning agility.
9	Bartram (2005)	Developed "Great Eight" universal competency taxonomy.	Leading/deciding, supporting/cooperating, interacting/presenting, analysing/interpreting, creating/conceptualising, organising/executing, adapting/coping, enterprising/performing.
10	Jauhari (2006)	Competency model for Indian hospitality managers.	Customer orientation, intercultural sensitivity, leadership, functional expertise, business acumen, interpersonal skills.
11	Ang et al. (2007)	Developed Cultural Intelligence (CQ) framework.	Cognitive, metacognitive, motivational, behavioural CQ.
12	Chong (2008)	Critiqued universal competency models.	Interpersonal sensitivity, emotional regulation.
13	Litvin, Goldsmith and Pan (2008)	Digital reviews and customer retention.	Digital communication, online service adaptability.
14	Clemes, Gan and Ren (2011)	Service quality and customer loyalty.	Reliability, responsiveness, empathy, assurance, tangibles.
15	Chen, Liu and Portnoy (2012)	Cultural intelligence in hospitality service.	CQ dimensions, intercultural adaptability.
16	Kim and Agrusa (2012)	EI and customer loyalty.	Emotional connection, empathy, service orientation.

Sr. No.	Author(s) and Year	Research Focus	Competencies Identified
17	Chong (2013)	Contextual sensitivity in competencies.	Emotional regulation, interpersonal sensitivity.
18	Huff et al. (2014)	Cultural intelligence in hospitality service.	CQ development, intercultural adaptability.
19	Tsaur and Lin (2014)	Cultural intelligence and service.	Emotional intelligence, cross-cultural skills.
20	Han and Hyun (2015)	Emotional engagement in retention.	Emotional bonding, empathy, service consistency.
21	Gannon, Roper and Doherty (2015)	Cross-cultural leadership in hospitality.	Inclusiveness, intercultural sensitivity.
22	Karatepe and Karadas (2015)	EI and job performance.	Empathy, emotional regulation, adaptability.
23	Chan & Hsu (2016)	Sustainability competencies for hotels.	Environmental stewardship, ethical leadership.
24	Tsaur, Yen and Yeh (2016)	Cross-cultural adaptability and trust.	Cultural empathy, adaptive service behaviours.
25	Karatepe and Olugbade (2017)	EI and employee engagement in hotels.	Emotional intelligence, relational leadership.
26	Bharwani and Talib (2017)	Hospitality-specific competency framework.	Cognitive, functional, social, meta-competencies.
27	Chung and Wong (2017)	EI in guest–employee interactions.	Emotional regulation, empathy.
28	Giousmpasoglou, Brown and Cooper (2019)	Relational leadership in hotels.	Empathy, conflict resolution, motivation.
29	Marinakou and Giousmpasoglou (2019)	Digitalisation and EI in hospitality.	Online reputation management, digital literacy, EI in digital service.
30	Kim & Agrusa (2020)	EI and customer loyalty.	Empathy, emotional connection, service orientation.
31	Jiang & Wen (2020)	COVID-19 impact on hospitality service/retention.	Empathy, flexibility, reassurance, safety protocols.
32	Baum and Hai (2020)	Crisis competencies in hospitality.	Resilience, adaptive leadership, crisis management.
33	Rahman and Singh (2022)	Digital and sustainability competencies in hospitality.	Digital literacy, sustainability consciousness.
34	Kumar et al. (2023)	Emerging digital competencies in hotels.	Data analytics, social media management, online engagement.
35	Emmanuel, Mensah and Amoako (2023)	Post-COVID competencies in hotels.	Resilience, empathy, digital proficiency.

Source: Framed by the author.

## Research Methodology

The objective of this study is to identify the managerial competencies demonstrated by hotel managers in Jim Corbett National Park, Ramnagar. The research adopts an exploratory approach, as existing studies have predominantly focused on urban and downtown hotel settings, while limited attention has been given to nature-based, wildlife tourism destinations. To address this gap, the study employs a mixed-method research design

integrating both quantitative and qualitative approaches. Survey methodology served as the primary mode of data collection, using a structured questionnaire adapted from validated instruments in prior research to assess and analyse the key competency domains relevant to the study's objectives.

## Formulation of Research Questions

To determine the managerial competencies required by hotel managers in Jim Corbett National Park, Ramanagar,

a wild life tourist destination. Following research questions are framed to support the study.

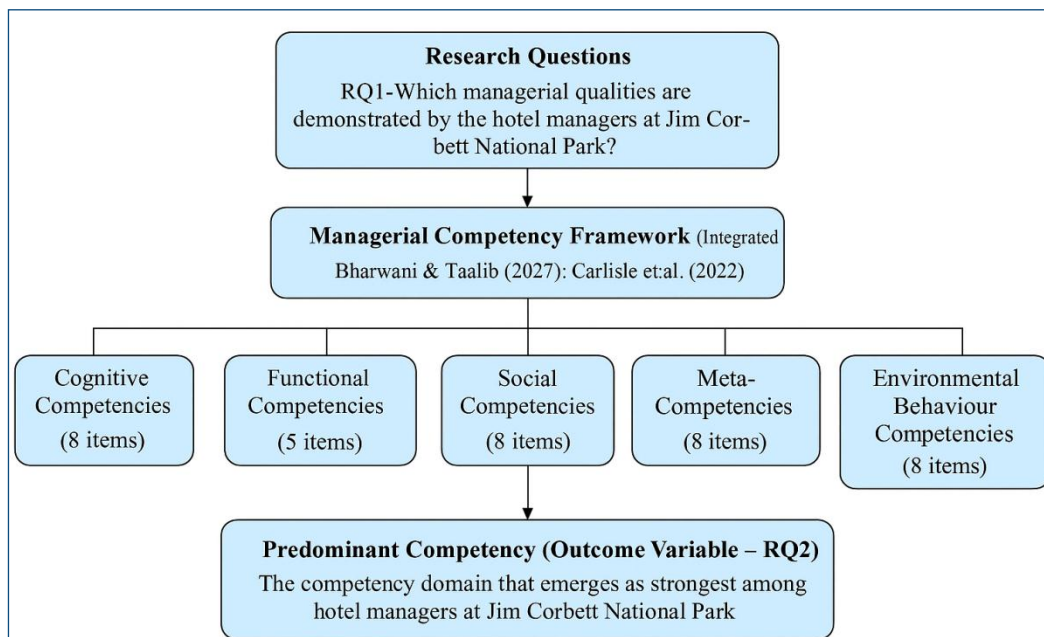
*RQ1* – Which managerial qualities are demonstrated by the hotel managers at Jim Corbett National Park?

*RQ2* – What is the predominant competency exhibited by hotel managers at Jim Corbett National Park?

## Conceptual Framework for the Study

For the present study the researcher used the competency framework as proposed by Bharwani and Talib (2017) Competency Framework Model for analysing managerial competencies among hotel managers in Jim Corbett National Park, Uttarakhand. It consist of 43 competencies

under four domains: Cognitive, Functional, Social, and Meta Competencies. Fig. 2 depicts the conceptual framework prepared of the study. Each domain represents an important aspect of managerial effectiveness required for the hotel managers. Additionally after going through various literatures an additional competency Environmental Behaviour competencies is also being added, as it is of prime importance for the hotel managers working in sensitive tourism destination such as wild life tourism destination to possess the environmental behaviour competencies. The six dimensions of the Environmental Behaviour competency are derived from the research conducted by Carlisle, Sheena; Ivanov, Stanislav; Dijkmans, Corné; and Marco-Lajara, Bartolome (2022).



**Fig. 2:** Conceptual Framework as Developed by the Author

## Target Population and Sampling

According to Martínez-Mesa et al. (2016), a population in research is a collection of people who share characteristics within a given institutional or geographic setting. Researchers can improve their sample and research goals by getting it aligned with the study's objectives. If they predetermined their target group. This distinction is crucial to research methodology because it enables researchers to tailor their methods and approaches to the characteristics and needs of the community under study,

increasing the findings' applicability and relevance. The Jim Corbett National Park is the site of the current study. The study is being carried out on the managers working in the hotels located in the six tourist zones which are Jhirna, Dhela, Bijrani, Dhikala, Durgadevi and Garjia as most of the hotels are located around these tourist zones. A total of 106 hotels and guesthouses are registered in and around these tourism zones (Source: Uttarakhand Tourism Development Board). Among them, only 14 hotels are rated four stars or above, which are employed for this study. A total of 300 managers are employed at

these 14-star rated hotels which is the target population for this study. The requisite sample size for a margin of error of 0.5 and a confidence level of 95% is established at 172, as per Yamane, Y.(1967) formula .

Formula to calculate sample size as per Yamane (1967) is:

$$n = N / (1 + Ne^2)$$

where:

n = sample size

N = total population

e = is the margin of error

$$\text{Therefore } n = 300 / (1 + 300 * 0.05^2)$$

n = 171.42 rounded off to required sample size of 172

Keeping in mind the rejection of the survey, 20% of the sample size is increased therefore 206 samples were circulated for the survey out of which only 190 samples were found suitable appropriate for the study while the others are categorised as unsuitable. The purposive sampling method is used as the study was conducted on the managers only including the general managers. The feedback response rate was 94.05%, considered adequate for the study as per Meng-Jia et al. (2022). Prior to administering the survey, authorisation was obtained from the general manager of the hotels, contingent upon the stipulation that the hotel's identity would remain confidential, the data gathered from participants would be utilised solely for this research, and the findings would be communicated to the hotel's general manager. The researcher meticulously verified the data inputted in Microsoft Excel 2016 to prevent any inaccuracies. The questionnaire consisted of two sections: General Information, which included basic employee data such as age, gender, work experience, and educational qualifications, and Hotel Managerial Skills/Competencies, which enumerated four managerial competency domain as suggested by Bharrwani and Talib (2017): a. Cognitive skills (8 items) b. Functional Skills (9 items). c. Social Skills (4 things) d. Meta Competency (5 elements). Employees were requested to respond to the questions using a Likert 5-point scale, ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree, to assess whether the

hotel managers at their firm exhibited these managerial competencies and their significance.

A preliminary study was conducted to identify and address potential faults. The objective of the pilot study was to evaluate the suitability of the utilised research questionnaire and scales. The effectiveness of the questionnaire was assessed through data gathered from a pilot study, which involved administering a pre-structured questionnaire to 38 managers. In the pilot study aimed at assessing the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, a reliability test was conducted. This involved the application of the Cronbach's Alpha coefficient test using the statistical software SPSS version 31. Following the initial research findings, some items or criteria were removed, while others underwent modifications. As a result, the scales underwent refinement, leading to the development of 35 items designed to assess the managerial competencies of hotel managers and their impact on organisational success. The questionnaire was meticulously crafted to correspond with the variables of the study. The finalised questionnaire was then distributed to the participants for the purpose of gathering their feedback.

## Data Analysis

The demographic profile of the respondents to the current study is summarised in Table 2. It shows that 28.42 percent of respondents are aged 21-30 years, 44.21 percent are aged 31-40 years, 23.15 percent are aged 41-50 years, and 4.21 percent are over 51 years of age. The findings indicate that the personnel in star category hotels are largely youthful, with 72.63 percent being under the age of 40. Furthermore, the hotel sector in the region exhibits a significant gender imbalance, with 75.26% of the workforce comprised of males, while females account for only 24.73% of employment. Regarding educational achievement 16.31% of respondents hold a one-year certification or certificate in hotel management, 37.89% possess a professional bachelor's degree in hotel management, 35.78% have a graduate degree, and 10% hold a post-graduation degree. The findings reveal that 16.81% of respondents possess less than five years of experience, while 34.21% have between five and ten years. Additionally, 22.10% fall within the eleven to

fifteen years range, 17.89% have between sixteen and twenty years, and only 9.47% of respondents boast more than twenty years of experience. This data suggests that

the workforce is largely experienced, with only 16.31% having less than five years of experience.

**Table 2: Demographic Characteristics of Respondents**

Demographic Profile		Respondents	Percentage
Age in years	20-30	54	28.42
	31-40	84	44.21
	41-50	44	23.15
	51 and above	08	4.21
Gender	Male	143	75.26
	Female	47	24.73
	Others	00	00
Education	Graduate	68	35.78
	Hospitality Graduate	72	37.89
	Postgraduate	19	10
	1-Year Diploma/Certificate (HM)	31	16.31
Experience	< 5 years	31	16.31
	5-10 years	65	34.21
	11-15 years	42	22.10
	16-20 years	34	17.89
	>20 years	18	9.47
Total Number of Respondents		N=190	100
Number of Hotels Surveyed		14	

## Findings and Discussion

In the present study 5.1 Likert scale has been used from strongly agree to strongly disagree to answer the questionnaire and to check the validity and reliability of Cronbach’s Alpha coefficient have been performed as per Table number 3, and the findings of the Cronbach’s Alpha is more than 0.7 signifying that reliability has been achieved and the scale is reliable according to the sample as per Pallant (2013). The results indicate that the majority of managers at Jim Corbett are aged between 31 and 40 years, suggesting a youthful management demographic, followed by those aged 41 to 50 years. managing jobs are predominantly held by males, with 75.26% of managers being male compared to 24.73% female managers, indicating opportunity for increased female representation in managing roles. The majority of managers are hospitality graduates, indicating that organisations prioritise individuals with hospitality degrees for managerial positions, based on the assumption that these graduates possess the requisite skills to manage

a hotel. The majority of managers possess 5-10 years of managing experience, with a subsequent group having 11-15 years, indicating that the managers at this establishment are equipped to oversee hotel operations.

**Table 3: Cronbach Alpha Reliability Results**

Reliability Statistics		
Cronbach’s Alpha	Cronbach’s Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
.856	.858	35

*RQ1* – Which managerial qualities are demonstrated by the hotel managers at Jim Corbett National Park?

The descriptive statistical analysis conducted to address RQ1 offers a thorough examination of the managerial attributes demonstrated by hotel managers in the Jim Corbett National Park area. Five primary competency domains—Cognitive, Functional, Meta, Social, and Environmental Behaviour Competencies—were

evaluated. The average scores in these areas range from 3.67 to 4.03, which shows that managers are moderately to very good in a wide range of managerial skills. Table

4 illustrates that the range of mean scores and standard deviation of all the competencies as demonstrated by the hotel managers working in the Jim Corbett National Park.

N=190

**Table 4: Range of Mean Scores and Standard Deviation of All the Competencies**

Factors	Item Coding	Statements	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Cognitive Competencies	CC1	You are able to find opportunities and problems in the work environment.	1	5	3.82	0.927
	CC2	You are able to make prompt, efficient, and knowledgeable decisions.	1	5	4.03	0.902
	CC3	You are able to think outside the box and come up with new ways to examine things.	1	5	3.96	0.895
	CC4	You are able to plan and carry out new projects.	1	5	3.91	0.890
	CC5	You are able to find the business data and other useful information that are required to make decisions.	1	5	3.88	0.894
	CC6	You are able to set targets, goals, and deadlines to make sure that certain goals are met.	1	5	3.91	0.891
	CC7	You are able to reach logical conclusions and answers.	1	5	3.98	0.900
	CC8	You are able to take calculated risks to help the organisation reach its goals.	1	5	3.92	0.970
Functional Competencies	FC1	You are able to handle guest requests, complaints, and issues promptly.	1	5	3.76	0.939
	FC2	You are able to implement the quality standards within the workplace.	1	5	3.79	0.946
	FC3	You are able to ensure optimal resource utilization.	1	5	3.92	0.889
	FC4	You are able to work on hotel property management systems.	1	5	3.86	0.857
	FC5	You are able to examine financial data.	1	5	3.98	0.893
Meta Competencies	MC1	You are able to stay calm and optimistic even when things go wrong.	1	5	3.91	0.905
	MC2	You are able to demonstrate passion for work, motivated by factors apart from money or prestige, such as sincere hospitality towards guests.	1	5	3.90	0.940
	MC3	You are able to demonstrate a desire to achieve excellence in the workplace.	1	5	3.97	0.853
	MC4	You are able to recognize own strengths, limitations, experiences, successes, and failures to identify areas for improvement.	1	5	4.00	0.878
	MC5	You are able to trust your own abilities to handle both easy and difficult situations in workplace.	1	5	4.00	0.853
	MC6	You are able to balance the intellectual and emotional activities of the mind and think before reacting.	1	5	2.95	1.148
	MC7	You are able to take the lead for any new task in the workplace.	1	5	3.94	0.872
	MC8	You are able to tackle the difficult situation with people skilfully inside and outside the organisation.	1	5	3.83	0.871

Factors	Item Coding	Statements	Min	Max	Mean	SD
Social Competencies	SC1	You are able to establish an effective communication system and process within the workplace.	1	5	3.77	1.007
	SC2	You are able to bring together the team's goals and beliefs with the organisation's values.	1	5	3.80	0.963.9
	SC3	You are able to establish and maintain relationships, within and outside the organisation, using a customised strategy.	1	5	3.99	0.975
	SC4	You are able to resolve conflicts by providing creative solutions.	1	5	3.86	0.968
	SC5	You are able to coordinate the work of team members and get things done so that the organisational goals can be met.	1	5	3.85	0.936
	SC6	You are able to minimise discrimination by providing equal opportunities for individuals irrespective of race, gender, lifestyle, or disability.	1	5	3.90	0.986
	SC7	You are able to make the workplace a good place to work by motivating and pushing others to do productive things.	1	5	3.90	0.900
Environmental Behaviour Competencies	EBC1	You are able to maximize efficiency of water and energy use and minimize their consumption.	1	5	3.67	1.005
	EBC2	You are able to handle waste management, sewage treatment, recycling, and composting.	1	5	3.76	0.965
	EBC3	You are able to monitor and evaluate energy use through equipment and technology.	1	5	3.81	0.962
	EBC4	You are able to implement methods to minimise carbon emissions.	1	5	3.72	0.908
	EBC5	You are able to promote environmentally friendly products and services among guest.	1	5	3.88	0.961
	EBC6	You are able to conserve the resources of the national park.	1	5	3.90	0.956
	EBC7	You are able to communicate the information required on proper environmental conservation behavior in the park.	1	5	3.90	0.900

Cognitive Competencies means how managers are at making decisions, solving problems, and thinking analytically. In this domain, the average scores are between 3.82 and 4.03, which shows that the person has high cognitive skills. The highest-rated skill is make prompt, efficient, and knowledgeable decisions (CC2, Mean = 4.03, SD = 0.902), followed closely by the ability to draw logical conclusions (CC7, Mean = 3.98). Coming up with examine things (CC3, Mean = 3.96), risk-taking (CC8, Mean = 3.92), and project planning (CC4, Mean = 3.91) also do well. These findings indicate that the managers at Jim Corbett National Park have a strong base of analytical intelligence, which allows them to find problems, weigh their options, and make well-informed judgements quickly. The standard deviations are not very high (0.89–0.97), which means that the cognitive competence of the respondents is fairly consistent.

Functional Competencies, it includes the skills needed to run a hotel. The average scores for this area are between

3.76 and 3.98. The ability to examining financial data (FC5, Mean = 3.98, SD = 0.893) is the most important functional competence, which shows that financial data is an important skill for managers. Managers are also very good at using resources (FC3, Mean = 3.92) and running property management systems (FC4, Mean = 3.86). These findings indicate that managers demonstrate excellent operational competence, notably in financial control and resource management—skills that are crucial for hotels operating within a protected wildlife setting where efficiency and accountability are critical. Meta Competencies, which include self-regulation, resilience, motivation, and personal effectiveness, are one of the strongest areas. Most of the items get scores between 3.90 and 4.00, while two competencies get the highest mean score in the dataset: Self-awareness (MC4, Mean = 4.00), Self-efficacy (MC5, Mean = 4.00). These data show good self-management capacities among managers. The ambition for excellence (MC3, Mean = 3.97) and the willingness to take the lead

(MC7, Mean = 3.94) are two other strengths. The only significant gap is emotional-intellectual balancing (MC6, Mean = 2.95, SD = 1.148), which has the lowest mean and the most variation of all the categories. This indicates that managers could find it challenging to regulate their emotions and maintain balance in high-pressure situations, which is a regular occurrence in the hospitality industry. Social Skills show how well managers can interact with others, communicate, and solve problems. The mean results, which range from 3.77 to 3.99, show that people are generally very socially competent. The highest-rated item in this area is the ability to build and keep relationships both inside and outside the company (SC3, Mean = 3.99). Some more strong places are promoting equality (SC6, Mean = 3.90), motivating employees (SC7, Mean = 3.90), conflict resolution (SC4, Mean = 3.86).

These results show that there are excellent relational and team-management skills, which are important for hospitality operations that involve guests and staff coordination. Environmental Behaviour Competencies, which are very important for hotels in areas that are sensitive to the environment, have typical scores between 3.67 and 3.90, which means that they are moderately to strongly engaged with the environment. Competencies with high scores are conservation of park resources park (EBC6, Mean = 3.90), communication of environmental conservation behaviour (EBC7, Mean = 3.90), promotion of eco-friendly products/services (EBC5, Mean = 3.88). These represent managers’ awareness and implementation of sustainability strategies associated with conservation aspirations within national park ecosystems. The lowest mean in this category is for how well people use water and energy (EBC1, Mean = 3.67). This means that performance is only moderate, and more training and resources may be helpful.

*RQ2* – What is the predominant competency exhibited by hotel managers at Jim Corbett National Park?

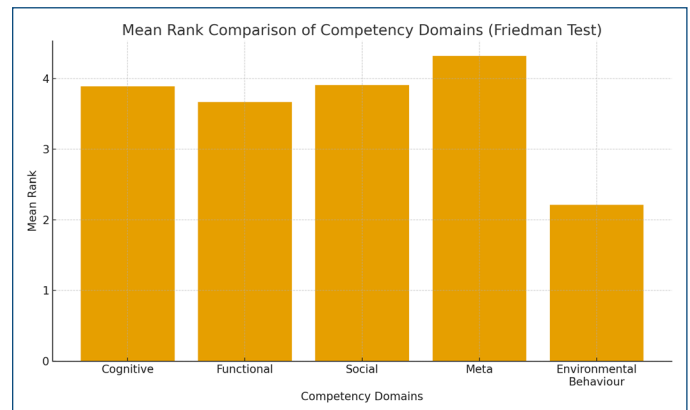
To statistically examine whether hotel managers demonstrated the five competency domains at comparable levels, the Friedman Test was applied. Given that all domains were assessed using a common 5-point Likert scale and measured from the same 190 respondents, the Friedman Test is the most appropriate non-parametric

procedure for analysing related ordinal data. This approach allowed for a robust comparison of mean ranks across the five domains: Cognitive, Functional, Social, Meta, and Environmental Behaviour Competencies. The distribution of mean ranks across competency domains is presented in Table 5.

**Table 5: Mean Ranks of Competency Domains (Friedman Test)**

Competency Domain	Mean Rank
Cognitive Competency Domain	3.89
Functional Competency Domain	3.67
Social Competency Domain	3.91
Meta Competency Domain	4.32
Environmental Behaviour Competency Domain	2.21

The findings clearly indicate that Meta Competencies received the top ranking, signifying that managers consistently exhibit robust self-regulation, self-efficacy, achievement orientation, and resilience. Cognitive and Social Competencies are ranked closely, whereas Environmental Behaviour Competencies received the lowest ranking.



**Fig. 3: Mean Rank Comparison of Competency Domains**

The Friedman Test indicated a statistically significant variance in the application of the five competency domains by hotel managers in star-rated hotels in Jim Corbett National Park ( $\chi^2 = 128.462$ ,  $df = 4$ ,  $p < .001$ ) as illustrated in Table 6. The findings unequivocally indicate that managerial competencies are not consistently cultivated across all five domains.

**Table 6: Friedman Test Statistics**

Statistic	Value
N	190
Chi-Square	<b>128.462</b>
df	4
p-value	<b>.000</b>

Findings from the Friedman Test indicates that the managers working in the Jim Corbett National Park have strong meta competencies. It reflects a workforce with robust internal capacities, including emotional stability, self-awareness, and a drive for excellence. These competencies are vital for hospitality managers functioning in challenging, unexpected, and guest-focused settings such as wildlife tourism destination. High ranking of meta competencies indicates that internal human abilities are the fundamental strength of the managerial personnel in this region. On the other hand the social, functional, analytical interpersonal capabilities of the managers are well developed. Whereas on the contrary, Environmental Behaviour Competencies were rated considerably lower as compare to other competency domains. The low ranking of sustainability, conservation behaviour, and ecological responsibility in managerial roles highlights that these competencies are undersdeveloped and should be developed among the managers as they are working in the ecological sensitive region.

## Conclusion

The findings of this study indicate that hotel managers at Jim Corbett National Park possess a comprehensive and largely robust skill set, encompassing decision-making abilities, analytical reasoning, and creativity in generating new ideas. The study indicates that managers exhibit robust functional skills in financial management and the efficient operation of a business. Essential competencies such as self-awareness, self-efficacy, motivation, and leadership within a group are notably prevalent among managers. Additionally, strong social skills facilitate effective communication, teamwork, and the resolution of conflicts. The prominence of Meta Competencies is evident, showcasing the most robust and consistently cultivated abilities, which constitute the primary strength of managers in the region. The prevalence of Meta Competencies corresponds with the characteristics of

the hospitality sector, where emotional intelligence, self-assurance, and flexibility are essential for achieving service excellence. Individuals with robust internal regulation and self-efficacy are more adept at managing guest interactions, addressing operational challenges, and leading effectively in the high-pressure environments typical of wildlife tourism.

The moderate ranking of Cognitive and Social Competencies reinforces the idea that managers in this region demonstrate excellent decision-making capabilities and effective interpersonal communication skills. These are crucial for collaborating with team members, resolving guest issues, and overseeing hotel operations in remote and nature-focused tourism settings. Nonetheless, the significantly low ranking of Environmental Behaviour Competencies indicates a disconnect between managerial practices and the ecological requirements of functioning within a protected wildlife sanctuary. This indicates that existing managerial training might not sufficiently emphasise sustainable practices, including energy conservation, waste reduction, biodiversity protection, and educating guests about environmental behaviour. Enhancing this area is crucial for ensuring the long-term viability of tourism in Jim Corbett National Park. The Friedman Test offers strong statistical evidence that Meta Competencies stand out as the primary competency domain among hotel managers in the study area. Although managers exhibit notable personal effectiveness and interpersonal skills, it is crucial to enhance their competencies in environmental behaviour to ensure that hotel operations are more closely aligned with conservation priorities in ecologically sensitive areas. This finding offers valuable insights for hotel owners, training institutions, policymakers, and destination managers aiming to improve sustainable hospitality practices in wildlife tourism regions.

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