

# Effect of Covid 19 on the Human Resource Development: Empirical Evidence from Tribhuvan University Nepal

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## Abstract

*This research aims to find out the effects of COVID-19 on the human resource development of Tribhuvan University, Nepal. The research follows a survey research design. It offers a brief analysis and an understanding of the human resource development at Tribhuvan University, Nepal during the COVID- 19 Pandemic. The total population of the study was 15196 employees (7966 teaching faculties and 7230 non-teaching staff), 216 samples have been taken for this study. The convenient sampling technique has been applied for the selection of the respondents. The primary data were collected through a structured questionnaire. The data are analyzed and interpreted using descriptive and inferential statistics. The findings of the study reveal the human resource development and response to the COVID- 19 pandemic during the time of crisis Tribhuvan University, Nepal. The independent variables (Are work environment, motivation, health and safety, and organizational culture). The dependent variable is human resource development. It is revealed that the Tribhuvan University, Nepal has played a crucial role to develop human resources to face the challenges of the global pandemic through the utilization of motivation, making conducive working environment, and making the cultural environment friendly. The results show, that there is a positive and significant effect of motivation and health and safety on human resource development at Tribhuvan University. It can be concluded that all constituent colleges and higher educational institutions have also followed the same strategy across the country.*

**Key words:** COVID-19, health and safety, human resource development, organizational culture, work environment

## Introduction

The main objective of this study is to show the impact of COVID-19 on the human resources development of Tribhuvan University, Nepal. Campuses and universities are sites where students live and study in direct range of one another. They're also humming cultural hotspots, bringing students from all around the world together. The fast growth of the corona virus (COVID -19) outbreak has recently undermined the foundations of this unique ecology, causing uncertainty about the ramifications for higher education. The combined use of training, organization, and career development activities to increase

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individual, group and corporate effectiveness is referred to as human resource development. Through structured learning activities, it develops the key competencies that enable individuals in organizations to execute current and future tasks. Human resource development in the twenty-first century focuses on improving knowledge, competence, efficiency, and ability in businesses.

The COVID-19 outbreak has created both opportunities and threats in the higher educational institutions in the case of Nepal many employees and teaching faculties did not have much experience with digitalization and information technology before this outbreak. At present, many colleges and universities across the country have been profoundly using ICT in the form of online classes and working from home.

Human resource development practice in Nepalese organizations is a planned effort to facilitate employees' learning of job-related behavior, skills, knowledge, and attitude to improve employee performance. It is a continuous process designed to enhance employee performance, and satisfaction, improving organizational efficiency and effectiveness. In the present context of a competitive and dynamic business environment, the role of human resources in the overall management of an organization has become increasingly important than ever before.(Baniya, 2006) Human resources professionals are assuming health, safety, and security responsibilities within organizations. Occupational health and safety are a cross-disciplinary area concerned with protecting people's safety, health, and work or employment. It is concerned with preventing work-related injuries, illnesses, and fatalities by working with employers and workers.

Motivation can be described as an individual's desire or drive to complete their work. However, de-motivation leads to a lack of performance and a loss of competitiveness, which leads to a reduction in the organization's productive resources. It is a mental element for any individual when it comes to the workplace, ambition, and the desire to pursue any form of employment. A person with significant employee engagement is motivated to produce high-quality work and to assist others in getting higher jobs.

An organization's welfare culture is understood as the proper way to behave within the organization. This culture consists of shared beliefs and values established by leaders and then communicated and reinforced through various methods, ultimately shaping employee perceptions, behaviors, and understanding.(Stajkovic et al., 2018) It is known to just have underlying principles as well as ways of interacting that contribute to the social and psychological environment of the organization.

The theory, viewpoints, work culture, dispositions, efficiency, skills, productivity, nature, and conduct of human resources all build up the work environment, which is a part of the social environment. Employee demand and supply, motivating features, compensation systems, and labor relations are all addressed. The context, social traits, and physical elements in which one conducts his or her job are referred to as the work environment. These factors can have an impact on employees' health, as well as their feelings of well-being, workplace relationships, teamwork, and efficiency.

## Review of Literature

Omar et al., (2018) found the effects of motivation on human resource management and found that motivational elements like training, monetary rewards, and team building are the key to motivating employees in an organization. He further focused on high self-efficacy and challenging goals as the most important factors for employee motivation. He concluded that to achieve maximum benefits from teams, there should be a clear budget for team building and a coordinator should involve in budgetary allocation. Brown & Dodd (1998) researched organizational culture analysis to determine human resource development needs and reveal that both leaders and managers could confidentially express their perceptions of the current organizational culture and express independent opinions about the organization's desired future state. He added that using the cultural assessment as a base for future training and growth of human resources development in a business was a great idea.

Ford & Tetric (2008) showed the effect of safety motivation and human resource management and found that human behaviors play a critical role in the prevention and avoidance of accidents and injuries, according to the study. Although dangers and exposures cannot be avoided in the workplace, human actions can play a critical role in the prevention and avoidance of accidents and injuries. Participative safety behaviors may also contribute to danger removal or change in safety procedures, allowing employees to be involved in engineering advancements. When businesses train people to be allowed to work correctly and create a climate where employees are encouraged to perform safely, the performance level is likely to get better.

Ruiz-Frutos et al. (2021) analyzed the work environment as a precursor of psychological distress among non-health workers during the COVID-19 pandemic in Spain. The study discovered that non-health personnel who completed important tasks during the COVID-19 pandemic are highly interested in the relationship between the feeling of community, working circumstances, work engagement, and psychological disorders. Almost all of his people agree that psychological support for COVID-19 professionals and volunteers should be provided.

Based on the literature review, the study is based on the conceptual framework as follows:

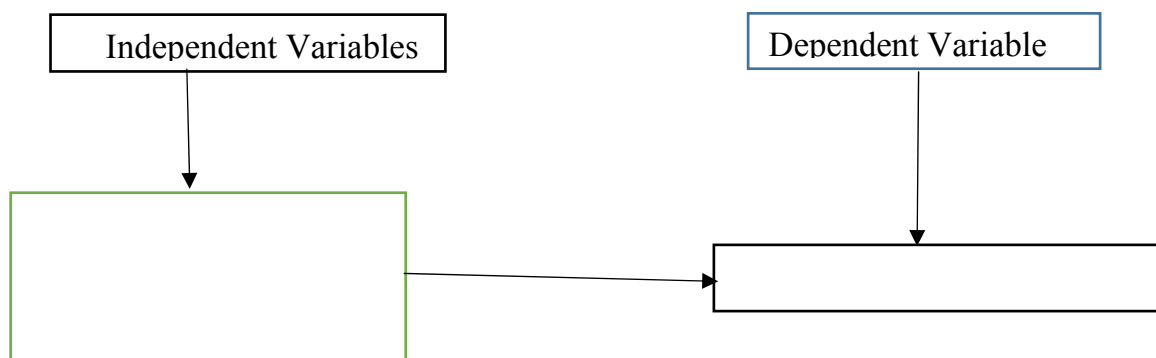


Figure 1. Conceptual Framework

**Methodology**

This study is based on primary data. The target population has been of 15196 respondents (7966 teaching faculties and 7230 non-teaching staff) from 60 constituent colleges and central administrative offices. Four constituent colleges (Patan Multiple Campus, Nepal Commerce Campus, Mahendra Ratna Campus, and Thakur Ram Multiple Campus) and central administrative offices are selected as a sampling frame. The sampling method was applied using a non-probability sampling technique, and the research was done using a convenient sampling technique. Even though questionnaires were sent to 250 respondents, only 216 responded and were used in this study. The responses are at a whopping 86 percent. A survey research design is used in this study. It also focused on the relationship between the variables in terms of cause and effect. Furthermore, when dealing with a large population, convenient sampling was ideal. The data for the research were collected through a structured questionnaire based on a 5-point Likert scale. i.e., 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neutral, 4 = agree and 5 = strongly agree.

Twenty-five opinion statements were developed to measure five separate variables, four of those are independent and one of those is dependent. The independent variables "work-environment, motivation, health, and safety," as well as "organizational culture," are described using twenty different opinion statements. The dependent variable "human resource development" has been described with five different opinion statements. The study is based on primary data because it gives relevant and up-to-date information on the study. Respondents from the Tribhuvan University of Nepal were given structured questionnaires. The information was collected from the respondents, as well as the responses to the questionnaire, during January 2022.

**The Model**

This study is focused to show the effect of COVID -19 on human resource development practice at Tribhuvan University. To show the impact, the study uses the following econometric model:

$$HRD = \beta_0 + \beta_1MT + \beta_2WE + \beta_3HS + \beta_4OC + e_t$$

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Where, HRD = Human Resource Development, MT = Motivation, WE = Work Environment. HS = Health and Safety, OC = Organizational and Culture,  $\beta_0$  = Intercept,  $\beta_1, \beta_2, \beta_3, \beta_4$  = Slope of the coefficient and  $e_t$  = Error term.

**Results and Discussion**

**Motivation**

Organizations spend lots of money on training sessions and leisure events to develop their people resources as motivation is important. It can be described as a man's desire or drive to achieve things in advance in their career, develop in their life, and meet their psychological needs.

Table 1. *Effect of Motivation on HRD*

Items	Mean	SD	CV
Training and allowances are the key elements to motivate employees.	3.63	.62	17.05
Self-efficacy and challenging goals are important factors for motivation.	4.00	.71	17.66
COVID-19 has encouraged the employees for innovating and learning.	3.87	.75	19.41
The absence of motivation leads to underperformance and less competitiveness.	3.73	.89	23.92
Pandemic has contributed to the employees' awareness and consciousness of learning.	3.96	.76	19.14
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.84</b>		

*Source:* Field survey 2022

Table 1 shows that the mean of items ranges from 3.63 to 4.00. The composite mean of the items is 3.84 which shows above-average development of human resources due to motivation adopted by Tribhuvan University. The table further indicated that most of the respondents agreed that motivation has played a crucial role to enhance human resource development in the University.

### Work Environment

People are supported to perform to the best in a suitable work environment. People that work in a healthy working environment have more energy, can handle stress effectively, are more creative, can manage conflict better, and can work collaboratively together. Moreover, it focuses on being agile, resilient, and improving overall achievements.

Table 2. *Effect of Work Environment on HRD*

Items	Mean	SD	CV
Coherence enables us to work in a friendly environment.	3.69	.79	21.36
Conducive environment promotes the work-engagement among employees.	4.10	.63	15.40
Psychological distress has a particular interest in non-health workers.	3.94	.74	18.73
The work environment is the set of social features and physical conditions.	3.96	.80	20.14
A suitable work environment enhances cooperation and collaboration.	4.05	.81	19.91
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.95</b>		

*Source:* Field survey 2022

Table 2 shows that the mean of items ranges from 3.69 to 4.10. The composite mean of the items is 3.95 which shows above-average development of human resources due to the work environment provided by Tribhuvan University. The table further indicated that most of the respondents agreed that the work environment has played a pivotal role to enhance human resource development in the University.

### Health and Safety

Health and safety play an important role in developing human resources in an organization. It's possible that workers are not trained in health and safety. It is impossible to deny that workplace safety and human resource development have a lot in common. Many HR operations are linked to workplace safety standards and protocols either directly or indirectly.

Table 3. *Effect of Health and Safety on HRD*

Items	Mean	SD	CV
Removal of hazards and exposures is key to developing employees.	3.44	1.10	32.04
Developing human behavior can play a critical role to prevent accidents.	4.06	0.49	12.14
Safety performance is likely to be optimized for train and development.	3.94	0.77	19.51
Occupational health and safety are cross-disciplinary areas.	3.83	0.65	16.96
Health and safety are concerned with preventing work-related fatalities.	3.75	0.82	21.86
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.80</b>		

Source: Survey Report 2022

Table 3 shows that the mean of items ranges from 3.44 to 4.06. The composite mean of the items is 3.80 which shows above-average development of human resources due to health and safety standards provided by Tribhuvan University. The table further indicated that most of the respondents agreed that health and safety arrangement has played an important role to enhance human resource development in the University.

### Organizational Culture

Organizational culture is attributed to the development of strategic human resource management. It is an important aspect that ethically motivates an organization to provide an opportunity and a broader context incorporating ethical guidelines into an institutional culture that helps manage its human resources. Culture also makes it far easier for the organization's rules and processes to accomplish its objective.

Table 4. *Effect of Organizational Culture on HRD*

Items	Mean	SD	CV
Organizational culture teaches the employees how to behave well.	3.60	.93	25.99
The culture consists of shared beliefs and values established by leaders.	3.94	.51	12.86
Culture assessment provides a thoughtful area for training and development.	3.89	.82	21.14
Culture expresses independent opinions regarding the desired future state.	3.75	.92	24.63
The culture analysis helps to determine human resource development needs.	3.59	.76	21.19
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.75</b>		

Source: Survey Report 2022

Table 4 shows that the mean of items ranges from 3.59 to 3.94. The composite mean of the items is 3.75 which shows above-average development of human resources due to the organizational culture provided by Tribhuvan University. The table indicates that most of the respondents agreed that organizational culture has played a crucial role to enhance human resource development in the University.

### Human Resource Development

Human resource development is concerned with developing the skills, knowledge, competency, and behavior of people in an organization. The different activities involve

formal training courses run internally to informal on-the-job training by a supervisor. It also includes other activities such as shadowing, coaching, mentoring, etc. (Hill & Stewart, 1999).

Table 5. *Details of Human Resource Development*

Items	Mean	SD	CV
COVID-19 has provided an opportunity to the employees of TU in ICT	4.06	.68	16.82
COVID-19 has contributed to becoming aware and conscious of learning	3.98	.72	17.96
COVID-19 has encouraged the employees for innovating and learning.	3.93	.76	19.32
Pandemic has been a milestone for developing human resources at TU.	4.00	.56	13.97
Employees are satisfied with the human resource development during COVID	3.19	1.29	40.30
<b>Average mean</b>	<b>3.83</b>		

Source: Survey Report 2022

Table 5 shows that the mean of items ranges from 3.19 to 4.06. The composite mean of the items is 3.83 which shows above-average development of human resources due to COVID-19 at Tribhuvan University. The table further indicated that most of the respondents agreed, that COVID-19 has provided an opportunity to develop entire human resources in the Nepalese pioneer University.

### Correlation Analysis

The correlation between the dependent and independent variables is shown in Table 6. Human resource development and health and safety have a moderate (0.494) relationship. Likewise, there is a 0.414 correlation between motivation and human resource development. The correlation between the work environment and human resource development is 0.134, which is the lowest of any variable. According to the analysis, the majority of the human resource development factors have a moderate relationship with one another.

Table 6. *Correlation between Dependent and Independent Variables*

Variables	HRD	MT	WE	HS	OC
HRD	1				
MT	0.414	1			
WE	0.134	0.203	1		
HS	0.494	0.572	0.261	1	
OC	0.309	0.237	0.445	0.450	1

### Regression Analysis

Table 7 shows the impact of independent variables (motivation, working-environment, health and safety, and organizational culture) on the human resource development of Tribhuvan University.

Table 7. Regression Coefficient of Variables

Variables	Unstandardized		Standardized		Sig.	Tolerance	VIF
	Beta	Se.	Beta	t			
Constant	1.101	.333	-	3.304	.001	-	-
MT	.256	.089	.205	2.865	.005	.668	1.498
WE	-.028	.034	-.054	-.824	.411	.792	1.263
HS	.342	.080	.330	4.263	.000	.568	1.761
OC	.139	.072	.136	1.920	.054	.680	1.471
<b>R<sup>2</sup> = 0.53, Adj. R<sup>2</sup> = 0.48 F. Stat. = 20.75, F. Sig. = 0.000, DW = 1.048</b>							

Dependent variable: Human Resource Development.

Darwin Watson's test of the residuals of regression in this study shows positive autocorrelation (1.048) which means the effect of COVID - 19 on human resource development of Tribhuvan University has positive effect on pandemic in the coming days. Value of F- statistics 20.75 and F. sig. 0.000 explains that the regression model used in this study is fit. Adj. R<sup>2</sup> 0.48 means the independent variables used in this study explains the human resource development of COVID – 19 by 48 percent. VIF values of all the independent variables are less than 2, so there is no multi collinearity between the independent variables. Dodge, Y. (2008) explained VIF values less than 2, there is no multicollinearity. Thus, the regression equation of the study is:

$$HRD = 1.101 + 0.256 MT - 0.28 WE + 0.342 HS + 0.139 OC + e_t$$

Table 7, the regression equation explains that there is a statistically significant positive effect of motivation on human resource development ( $p = 0.005$  and beta 0.256), this result is similar to the finding of (K. Omar et al., 2018) and contradicts the result of (Suresh Kumar & Kapoor, 2021). In the same way, health and safety have a positive and significant impact on HRD with  $p$ - a value of 0.000 and a beta value of 0.342. Organizational culture also has a positive and significant effect on human resource development of Tribhuvan University, Nepal the result is similar to (Okoye & Ezejiofor, 2013). But work environment has an insignificant negative effect on human resource development ( $p=0.411$  and beta = - 0.028) this result is contradicted (Sobaih et al., 2020).

## Conclusion

The objective of the study is to show the effect of the COVID -19 pandemic on human resource development at Tribhuvan University, Nepal. As per the descriptive analysis of the variables, the average views of the respondents for all independent variables are greater than the average of averages. It means that the independent variables (Motivation, Work - Environment, Health and Safety, and Organizational culture) have a meaningful effect on human resource development at Tribhuvan University, Nepal.

The scope and importance of human resource development in any organization are to develop the competency, skill, ability, and capabilities of employees. The variables motivation, health and safety, and organizational culture have a positive and significant



effect on human resource development at Tribhuvan University. Therefore, these play a vital role to enhance effective human resource development. Organizational culture has a significant but minimal effect on HRD and the work environment hurts the human resource development of the university.

### Future Implication

This study has used only four independent variables to show the impact on human resource development at Tribhuvan University. A future researcher can further use the variables like performance appraisal, career management, organizational analysis, and personal development as independent variables to generalize the findings of human resource development in all universities. The researcher can also research human resource development in corporate firms, schools, and cooperatives.

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