

A STUDY OF OUTCOMES OF HOSPITALITY EDUCATION IN INSTITUTIONS AND ITS COMPARISON WITH INDUSTRY EXPECTATIONS.

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Abstract

The hospitality industry is growing at rapid pace so is the demand for trained professionals. There is no doubt that the number of professional institutions offering hospitality education is increasing day by day but still the institutions are not able to cope up with the requirement of the industry in terms of quality manpower for different operational areas. The institutions are making all sorts of efforts to provide quality education to the prospective hospitality employees but still they are matching the expectations of the industry.

With this review paper the author has tried to sum up the required objectives and outcomes of the hospitality education. This paper also concentrates on finding out the expectation of the industry people from the perspective employees in terms of knowledge, skills and managing attitude and qualities. Efforts have been made to provide suggestive measures in order to plug the gap between what the institutions are offering to the students and what industry demands from the prospective employees.

Key Words: Hospitality Education, Skills, Gap, Hotel, Industry Expectation

Introduction

Hospitality & Tourism industry is growing at a rapid speed all over the world and India is not an exception in this. This industry is one of the major contributors to the economy of the country. The industry has gained momentum and created a demand for skilled human resource. Rapid expansion in the industry during the last decade of the twentieth century and the first decade of the new millennium translated into increased opportunities for graduates of hospitality and tourism based programs. The demand for better educated, more knowledgeable and multi-skilled workers who are capable of holding managerial and supervisory level positions have increased. This created a need for not only trained professionals but professionals with educational skills.

Hospitality industry is booming in India and so is the hospitality education sector. The increased demand of hospitality professionals with educational skills led to the mushrooming of large number of hospitality management institutions offering number of programs at different levels. So with time number of perspective employees for hospitality sector is also increasing. The education sector is dealing to fill the gap between the demand and supply of trained educational skills professionals for the Hospitality Industry.

There is no doubt that Indian hospitality education sector has witnessed a rapid growth and the numbers of students being churned out every year are growing too. But a gap has been felt by the industry and academia between what industry demands and what institutions are producing. This gap needs to be taken care and we need to look at maintaining the best possible relationship between the institutions providing hotel management education and hospitality industry. There should be a healthy relationship between the two so that both are aware of each other and work towards a common goal which will benefit both in the long run.

Objectives of the study

- To understand the relationship among the perceptions of the students, faculty and industry professionals towards the required industry competencies and the content of the hospitality degree programme.
- To study the present forms of teaching and learning and how it can be combined by blending theory with practical experience through experiential learning and meet the needs and expectations of the industry.
- To study outcomes of Hospitality Management Courses as per the upcoming trends and requirement of the industry.

Methodology:

The research has been carried out by studying the data from secondary sources. The Sources of secondary data includes electronic and printed working papers, journals, books, annual reports, magazines and research work and consist of

1. The data about different related research work and opinion of researcher's about their work
2. The data about old and existing literature regarding hotel management education and the requirement of the hotel industry.
3. The data related to legal provisions, rules and regulations and norms issued by the government.
4. Data collected from books published on Hotel Industry, Front Office, Housekeeping, Food and Beverage Services, Business Management and Human Resource Practices, Journals on Commerce, Marketing and Management, Published reports and articles, Weekly Magazines and Websites related to the research study.

Review:

In the year 2001, Brownell and Chung focused on the importance of various competencies such soft skills, communication skills, managerial skills and leadership qualities. According to their study a student should possess all these competencies so that the student can transform and utilize their theoretical knowledge into real time practice. As per their research, a curriculum should integrate the credit courses with the number of nontraditional skill and competency enhancement based courses. According to the study the course curriculum should be framed in such a way that it can be customized as per the strength and weakness of

each particular student and this may be achieved by offering a large number of electives. Brownell and Chung emphasized on the competencies and skills essential for the Hospitality Leaders and effective management practices which are identified with the help of surveying on Industry Experts, Academicians, Alumni and current students while designing a competency-based model named Master of Management in Hospitality program at the School of Hotel Administration at Cornell University (Brownell & Chung, 2001).

In the year 2005 Peter Ricci in his Doctoral Dissertation had studied a comparative analysis of job competency expectations for new hires (Ricci, 2005). The emphasis was also laid on the relative value of Hospitality Management degree at Bachelor's Level. It was based on Primary and secondary data. The research was conducted on 156 lodging managers of the Central Florida Hotel & Lodging Association (CFHLA) using a questionnaire for the collection of primary data. During the study Ricci focused on job competency expectations of hospitality industry professional from the future hoteliers. The specific job competency includes Knowledge, Ability and Attitude. A comparative analysis was also made on the competency of the newly hired managers having Hospitality Graduation Degree and Non - Hospitality Graduation Degree. The study concluded that there is significant difference between the competency level of newly hired managers having Hospitality Graduation Degree and Non - Hospitality Graduation Degree. The research also stated that General Managers have more expectation from the newly hired lodging managers with the baccalaureate degree in hospitality.

A research paper was written by Sampad Kumar Swain and Babu P. George (Swain & George, 2007) on HRD Practices in the Classified Hotels in Orissa: A Study of Employee Perceptions. One of the objectives of the research was to study the impact of professional training on the employees' personal growth and organizational growth. The researcher used primary and secondary data. The data was collected by using convenience sampling method on 90 employees of classified hotels of Orissa who were requested to reply to questionnaire. The study revealed that employees feel positive impact of professional training on their promotion. According to the study hotels also recognized the importance of professional training with the motive to meet the HR practices in coming future. Hotels also agreed that there is positive association between employee professional training and organizational growth and effectiveness. The study highlighted the fact that the professional training should be changing, evolutionary and sometimes constant.

P Srinivas Subbarao has submitted a working paper in IIM Ahmedabad on Issues and Constraints in Manpower Supply in Indian Hospitality Industry (Subbarao, 2008). According to the author, the hotel industry is growing at a rapid speed all over the world and India is not an exception. This rapid expansion of hotels in India is demanding large number of experienced and qualified staff. The working paper focused on shortage of experienced and skilled manpower especially at managerial positions. The Author discussed about various constraints and challenges which are being faced by the academia and industry to fill up this supply and demand gap. The study emphasized and revealed the issues like shortage of human resource, shortage of training material and modern day lab facilities, difficulty in keeping pace with fast changing innovations and dynamic changes in hospitality global market, gap between what institutes teach and what industry demand, shortage of high level Management Development Programmes and lack of knowledge of career opportunities in hotel industry amongst students and parents. The study recommended that the government should constitute a committee comprising representatives from national and international organizations, industry and academia. The study also suggested more interaction between industry and institutes, regular industrial visits and training programs for staff and students, regular arrangement of expert talks with industry people, proper research facility to update knowledge about

trends, frequently updated curriculum as per industry requirement, nomination of industry experts as members of advisory board.

Paul A Whitelaw, Paul Barron, Jeremy Buultjens, Grant Cairncross and Michael Davidson have conducted a study on Training needs of the Hospitality industry (Paul A Whitelaw, 2009). The study was undertaken on four groups of hospitality professionals of Australia and a comparative analysis of findings was done to find out the gap. The technical report of their study emphasized on skills and competencies which a hospitality graduate or a hospitality manager must possess. The study mainly focused on main areas such as Generic Skills, Skill shortages, Recruitment, Training and Industrial Relations. The study concluded that there is huge demand of service staff for front line and this demand can be fulfilled by providing proper professional training to the hospitality graduates and managers. The study also suggests that besides the knowledge of core operational areas of Hospitality Industry, the Hospitality graduates must have little knowledge of Accounting Skills, Marketing, Human Resource, Management, Computer and IT skills. The curriculum should have right balance between theory and practical. There is need to develop good relations among educators and job providers. The industry and academia should join hands to find out what is to be taught and how it is to be implemented. The study also concluded that the industry needs to frame some attractive practices and develop work culture and atmosphere so as to recruit and retain the employees.

In 2009, Dana V. Tesone and Peter Ricci conducted a study on Hotel and Restaurant Entry-Level Job Competencies: Comparisons of Management and Worker Perceptions. The study believed that as compared to previous years there is increase in the enrollment of students for the hotel management based program. More candidates are showing interest in hospitality based education. But the researchers believed that hospitality education based programs might have to face threat from regular business management based programs. Hospitality programs lose their identity because of the mushrooming of other general business courses. The study described knowledge, skills, abilities and attitude as hospitality workplace competencies. According to them the training related to knowledge, skills and abilities is possible straightforward but attitudinal training requires time and developed with work experience. The study suggested that efforts should be made to develop right attitude with help of time to time industrial exposure and training. According to them value based instructions should also be incorporated in the curriculum to develop attitudinal competencies.

Kavita KM and Priyanka Sharma in their research paper titled Gap Analysis of Skills Provided in Hotel Management Education with Respect to Skills required in the Hospitality Industry: The Indian Scenario (Kavika, KM, 2011) have studied the gap between the skills possessed by fresh hospitality graduates and skills required by the industry from entry level employees. The primary data was collected with help of questionnaire prepared in consultation with 10 Principals/HODs of Hotel Management Institutes. The study was conducted on 800 people including respondents from three, four and five star hotels as well as institutes. According to the study the students are lacking in team work spirit and do not have right attitude to work. The study also revealed that most of the students joining at entry level have poor communication skills and grooming standards. The study concluded that there is gap in curriculum which is being offered by the Hotel Management institutes and the skills which are required by the industry. The study suggested that institutes must include more hands on practicals and that too as per current trends. For this faculty and students both should be motivated for Research and Development so that they remain updated with the current and upcoming trends of the industry. It also suggested that along with the knowledge of core curriculum the skills related to communication, managerial, leadership, safety, attitude etc should be inculcated in the students.

In the year 2013 in a research paper titled: The Gap between the Hospitality Education and Hospitality Industry written by Gloria Honny Asirifi, Vida Doku, Sarah Morrison and Augustina Sackeley Sackey, the researchers found that there is a difference between what the educational institutes are teaching to the hospitality students and what industry demands from the hospitality graduates. The study was conducted on Polytechnics of Ghana with the research population of 535 and sample size of 100. The source of data was both primary and secondary. The Primary data was collected with the help of questionnaire and face to face personal interview where as secondary data was taken from text books, newspaper, magazines and other important documents. The study that most of the institutions are using old theoretical pattern curriculums and that needs to be modified on the basis of current industry trends and requirements. Lot of emphasis should be laid on the knowledge of Information Technology, Leadership qualities, Managerial Communication skills and employee relations. The study also emphasized on the reason behind this gap. According to the study the curriculum is more sort of theoretical in nature rather than practical. The study reported that the most of the students found hospitality jobs arduous and stressful. They also suggested that both industry and the academia should sit tighter while deciding on the curriculum.

Noble Amoako Sarkodie and Kwame Adom conducted a study on Bridging the Gap between Hospitality/Tourism Education and Hospitality/Tourism Industry in Ghana. (N. Amoako, 2013). The objective of the study was to explore the skills required by the hospitality students to get fitted in the industry and to find out any gap between the skills and knowledge taught in the classroom and the skills actually required in the industry. Another objective was to find out the reason behind this gap and also to suggest the measures to bridge that gap. Researchers used Qualitative approach methodology on 106 hospitality graduates working in three to five hotels of Ghana with the help of semi structured form interview. According to the study computing skills, managerial communication skills, multi lingual skills and operational skills are most prominent skills which are required to get fitted in the hospitality industry. Other important skills related first aid, tour guiding, leadership, customer relationship, problem solving, situation handling etc are also of much importance. The study revealed that this gap is due to inadequacy of modern day technology and equipments, more theory classes, outmoded lessons, lesser number of latest and updated study material, short internship period, inadequate guest lectures and industry exposure etc. The study also recommended that there should be collaboration between industry and academia. The study also gave various suggestions to bridge this gap which include: regularly updated and reviewed curriculum, timely organization of industry expert talks and industrial visits, longer training period, more practical sessions, modern infrastructure as per industry trends, language training and strengthening managerial communication.

In 2013, Raphael Avornyo in his study titled Bridging the gap between the tourism industry and tertiary institutions offering tourism in Ghana: a case study of cape coast emphasized on ascertaining the status of collaboration of hospitality education institutions and hospitality industry. It identified what benefits industry and academia derive from each other and the challenges which are involved in collaboration. The study was conducted on 5 lecturers and 20 management and staff of hotels of Cape Coast Municipality, Ghana by using descriptive interview process and qualitative approach. The author stated that the students are not able to apply the knowledge which they have gained from their institutions during their work in their industry. This is due to lack of practical skills and inadequate of industry exposure during study. The author pointed that the students are weak in foreign language skills, leadership qualities, computing skills and modern equipments usage. The study also revealed that the industry also sometimes do not want employee professionals because of high remuneration which they need to pay to the professionals as compared to unskilled labor. The study recommended that the industry should contribute to the development of curriculum as per their need and demand. It also suggested that workshops and lectures

from industry people should be arranged frequently for the updated industry knowledge and public relations. According to the author the students should be flourished with both theoretical as well as practical knowledge.

Ashaq Hussain Najar & Syed Aasif M. Bukhari shared their views in the conceptual paper titled Gap Analysis in Hospitality Education and Industrial Requirements (Najar, 2017) about the gap between what is offered by the educators and what is required in the industry. The authors highlighted that a hospitality student is supposed to learn operational skills of four core areas of the hotel, conceptual skills in general management, strategic management, accounting management and human resource management in the span of three years which puts him under pressure and due to which he become Jack of all trades but master of none. The study identified some of the drawbacks as per hospitality graduate perception that are inadequate computer knowledge, multi lingual barrier and short duration training. It recommended that Faculty development programmes must be organized in collaboration with the industry. The study also suggested that the student assignment should be scientific and learning exercise rather than a copy and paste show. The authors also emphasized on the promotion of research amongst faculty members.

Conclusion:

This literature review concludes that there is huge demand of skilled and experienced manpower in Hospitality Industry Knowledge, skills, abilities and attitude as **hospitality workplace competencies**. Along with the knowledge of core operational areas of Hospitality Industry, the Hospitality graduates must have little knowledge of Accounting Skills, Marketing, Human Resource, Management, Computer skills, Foreign Language, First Aid, , problem solving, situation handling etc. There is need to develop good relations among educators and job providers. The industry and academia should join hands to find out what is to be taught and how it is to be implemented. Efforts should be made to develop right attitude with help of time to time industrial exposure and training. According to them value based instructions should also be incorporated in the curriculum to develop attitudinal competencies. The industry should contribute to the development of curriculum as per their need and demand. The students should be flourished with both theoretical as well as practical knowledge.

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