

Building and Educating Tomorrow's Manpower for Tourism and Hospitality Industry

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Abstract During last two decades remarkable changes have been taken place in developed as well as developing nations caused by the economic and technological advancements. These changes have posed several challenges for the transformation of the whole educational system, including educational curricula, learning materials, instructional practices and education stakeholders. Tourism and hospitality industry within the global economy has become a pivotal sector generating huge employment opportunities. The calibre human resources differentiate it from other industrial sectors. Thus, the tourism & hospitality education is focusing on building tomorrow's manpower for the industry. This paper originates in the context of growing recognition that the success of global tourism industry will ultimately depends of quality human resources. This paper will add to the extant literature on tourism & hospitality management education by addressing challenges and issues Indian hospitality industry facing.

Keywords: Tourism, Hospitality, Education, Industry, India

INTRODUCTION AND BACKGROUND

Today, the world is experiencing seismic changes. These changes have a profound impact not only society rather tourism & hospitality are being shaken by these external shocks and need to adjust to the impacts and prepare to act, think, and plan differently. Thus, students who enter this uncertain world, means the fragile and vulnerable tourism sector, need different skills, aptitudes, and knowledge and tourism & hospitality educational programmes need to fundamentally redesign and re-oriented—not incrementally by adding new courses or simply by putting courses on-line—but by changing the nature of what is taught and how it is taught, globally and India is no exception in this context.

As India has transformed from a labour-intensive economy into a knowledge-based one, economic development is depends on the quality of human resources (HR). Therefore, increasing national competitiveness depends initially on the ability to cultivate highly added-value industries and fostering the quality of HR. The Ministry of Education has prioritised the tourism and hospitality (TH) industry for national development under the framework of the service industry. In fact, HR development in a country is crucial

in achieving a comparative advantage in the highly volatile and intensely competitive global tourism industry. Elevating the TH industry in India depends on the ability to establish a related educational system that is innovative, comprehensive and professional.

Today, the hospitality industry is the largest and rapidly growing industry in India, employing over 77.3 million people, accounting for 8.8% of the total workforce, and generating over 4.5% of GNP (Ministry of Tourism, 2016). Further, estimates indicate that 80% finds a job within 6 months after graduation/post graduation; 50% in tourism related businesses; Many find jobs in service industries like financial sector and job recruitment agencies and 20% starts own business, 20% continues Higher study. Today, tourism and hospitality has acquired a pivotal milestone in developing nations as a source of GDP, earning foreign currency and generation of employment. In fact, tourism and hospitality industry indicating that there is visible evidence towards growing consolidation and franchising within the industry. However, the dominant business model remains that of the small, medium, independent family firm, except for some big international chains. Moreover, the Indian hospitality industry is confronted with considerable challenges imposed

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by the turbulent and rapidly changing external environment that it operates in. The increased competition has forced many hospitality enterprises to find ways to retain current customers and attract competitor's customers. Thus, to increase services quality, customer's satisfaction and performance though HR development is a viable way for the hospitality enterprises to remain competitive.

Considering this ironical situation during recent decade tourism and hospitality education has emerged as a global phenomenon and India is inclined to promote quality education to cater the diverse demands of human resources.

Challenges and Issues Facing Indian Tourism and Hospitality

Hospitality management education, in fact, is a multidisciplinary study of social sciences, which have a practical application in hospitality industry. It prepares the students for operational and management levels. The western structure and pattern of hospitality management education influence the Indian as well as other Asian countries in their hospitality course curriculum. During the last two and half decades the hospitality management education has become a more serious discipline. In fact, there has been an explosion in hospitality education programmes focusing on both national and international perspectives. However, Indian tourism and hospitality management education has been facing following challenges:

Strong Competition for Entry-level Employees

Many enterprises in hospitality industry are facing fierce competition for entry level employees. Most of the entrepreneurs have offered more lucrative compensation pay package to retain employees. Where as other employers are putting extra pressure on existing staff or cutting back on their hours of operation.

Global Travel & Tourism Partnership

Expand T&T related educational and career opportunities for secondary school students; develop awareness about importance of T&T.

Availability of Youth Employees

It is true that the hospitality sector has to rely heavily on youth employee which presents significant challenges for the industry. Moreover, the hospitality industry is expected to grow by 5.5 percent annually over next five years. This growth will be constrained with out an increased supply of employees from outside the traditional youth labour pool.

High Staff Turnover Rates

The employee's turnover rate is very high in hospitality industry. This may be due to the structural nature of the

industry. Thus, youth employed in the sector consider their service positions as stepping stones in their career paths.

Tourism Demand Trends

During recent years numerous forms of tourism have been emerged in the tourism marketplace. These have imposed new challenges to promote/ creation of activities. In fact, the mass tourism market remains fundamental to the growth of many destinations. This has created a new challenge for the decision makers to choice between supporting the conventional mass tourism activities or creating the conditions for the development of a new local tourism supply. Thus, demand Side Issues emerges as:

- The changing nature of tourism
- What skills are needed
 - Job-based
 - Destination-based
 - Citizen-based

Less Participation of Women

The hospitality industry employment structure indicates that women account for a relatively less in number. The meagre percentage of women may possibly intensify the industry's labour supply challenge.

Shortage of Service Benefits

There is a shortage of service benefits in hospitality as compare to its counterparts. This is contributing to the challenge of recruiting and retaining calibre

Policies/Legislations are Irresponsible to Industry Needs

India generally does not seem to have an umbrella labour law or regulation applicable to all sectors of hospitality industry. It does not seem to have some sort of Human Resource Development (HRD) policy or module in place for encouraging training and education of employees in the hospitality.

Conscious Consumption" is a New Consumer Trend

- Consumer are becoming more educated and sophisticated seeking more personalised product;
- Consumers seeking ecologically and culturally sensitive travel products
- Consumers demanding meaningful experiences – activities tied to nature, history or culture

High Growth Travel Sectors

During recent past car rental, serviced residences, adventure markets, and greater individualized luxury travel market have grown tremendously and have created:

- Growing demand for self-drive rentals
- Serviced residences is expected to grow competing

with the higher-end hotel segments

- Adventure niche market remains robust –integrated to travelers’ hobbies and part of lifestyle
- Luxury market -higher demand for individualization and personalization

The rise of responsible tourism and corporate social responsibility (CSR)

- Climate change and global warming issue emerged more than ever before, calling to act on
- With stronger consumer awareness and demands – more businesses want to be perceived as green

Thriving low-cost carriers

Recently introduction of low cost carriers have:

- The low-cost carriers (LCCs) and the extension of open sky policy boosting intra-regional travel
- Feeder to car rental market, affordable short-haul trips, weekend getaways, and women travel for shopping, food, and cultural experiences
- Provide more airline choices, improved seat capacity, substantially lower airfares

Adoption of Online marketing

Recent trends indicate that Travel industry and suppliers are adopting more sophisticated online marketing and distribution strategies

- Online Travel Agencies (OTAs) show two digit year-on-year increase in online bookings by consumers
- Travel agencies and suppliers’ marketing budgets are moving online

Shifting in marketing strategies

- Destinations and NTOs take on aggressive marketing strategies with strategic alliances
- The industry is shifting marketing focus from traditional long-haul markets to short-haul and regional markets in order to keep the business afloat

Safety and security

- political unrest,
- severe weather
- political environment more concern towards health
- global pandemic of “H1N1” continue to be a significant factor that may restrict and prevent travel

Emerging niche tourism

- Medical and wellness tourism is emerging as a lucrative and growth market
- Medical tourism is fast expanding since 2004 -Medical tourists spend four times more than recreational travelers.

- Singapore, Thailand, Malaysia are competing with aggressive promotion, tapping this lucrative sector.

Destinations are looking to India to fill the gaps in the global slowdown

- Indian education sector is an opportunity to growth
- Indian Inbound market is expected to grow along with its economic growth (predicted to be 7-4% over the period of 2010 and 2015).

Paradigm Shift

- New Business Models will emerge
- Implementation speed becomes critical
- Product Innovations will increase

In India the relationship between tourism education and the industry had generally been very poor and unsystematic. However, tourism research and education has seen as being able to provide a better prepared and more flexible labour force, thus granting the injection of innovation and technical know-how that could propel the industry to a new level

Strategies for Building and educating tomorrow’s Manpower for Tourism and Hospitality Industry



1. Develop a strategy to promote employment in the tourism and hospitality industry:
 - To pool the potential employees,
 - Emphasize on the compensation for different target groups.
 - Develop a platform for social interaction and experience sharing for semi-retired people;
 - Flexible working hours
 - Flexible work environments for youth.
2. Enhance participation in developing and implementing strategies :
 - Encourage participation of high school students in the tourism and hospitality industry
 - the non-monetary benefits of working in the industry (i.e. fun work environments, opportunities to socialize);
 - Develop Communication skills,
 - Develop customer service skills
 - Develop a strong Career path in tourism and hospitality.
3. Promote and share industry best practices related to:
 - attraction and retention (i.e. managing a diverse labour force, recruiting foreign workers, etc.), and

- Innovative and improved technology, operational approaches, processes and practices among industry employers to make the tourism and hospitality industry an industry of choice (i.e. HR Audit).
4. Conduct or review existing research:
 - To better understand the reasons why people choose not to enter or decide to leave the tourism and hospitality industry.
 - To identify labour supply issues
 - to build public understanding/support of industry initiatives.
 5. Develop a strategy to strengthen human resource management practices throughout Indian hospitality industry, including:
 - create a forum for sharing human resource ideas and best practices;
 - support initiatives that can assist companies assess the effectiveness of their human resource practices and take the necessary steps to address deficiencies;
 - Encourage and promote the importance of developing management supervisory skills.
 - Develop and deliver training effective practices for employees.
 6. Increase collaboration between industry and education providers to develop educational and workplace-based training programs that meet industry's needs.
 7. Promote increased employer investment in employee training and development. Increase awareness and use of existing programs and scholarships that provide financial support for education and training.
 8. Encourage increased employer participation and investment in the apprenticeship and industry training system to increase the supply of workers in the tourism and hospitality industry with relevant trades certification (i.e. cooks).
 9. Promote industry standards for tourism and hospitality service delivery to increase consistency of service excellence across the industry.
 10. Identify practices that may benefit from adopting new technologies or improved processes. Promote these technologies and improved processes within the tourism and hospitality industry.
 11. Raise awareness in the tourism and hospitality industry of workplace health and safety standards and best practices.
 12. Encourage the continued contribution of mature workers in the industry (i.e. offering part-time or flexible work arrangements, involving mature workers in mentoring and training, etc.).

13. Promote the adoption and implementation of comprehensive Human Resources (HR) practices (i.e. apply systematic business approach to HR skills, develop Top 10 HR Practices for the Workplace, emphasize HR as a major cost item for most sector employers and as a competitive advantage, showcase success stories).

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

A number of issues have been identified in regard to Human Resource Development (HRD) and training for the tourism sector, which include a lack of consistency of training and performance standards for employees and the requirement for greater coordination among existing providers and institutions. In terms of delivery, the lack of access to the internet and computers is a significant impediment, particularly for rural areas. In addition a lack of flexibility in delivery acts as a constraint for the industry in using exiting training providers. With the range of providers available, there is a need for greater linkages to be formed between the industry and tourism educational institutions. This would encourage the development of targeted tourism industry courses which meets industry needs. Whilst the employment in industry of graduates from tourism & hospitality students is relatively high, there are some concerns that students need to have a higher level of training for managerial positions and supervisory roles in the future.

At the end, we should support efforts for autonomous and sustainable development of human resources by each region by formulation of the guidelines that clarify the image of human resources required in each region and knowledge and skills to be acquired, review thereof, information provision on human resources development for tourism destination development, and information sharing among regions. In order to provide the hospitality industry with high-quality human resources who have received specialized education, the industry, the academia and the government cooperatively construct model curriculum to enhance and strengthen the hospitality management education at universities that offer hospitality education.

Further, hospitality industry can't control the powerful forces driving demand globally, but hospitality stakeholders which can strategically act as 'future makers' rather than 'future takers. This requires hospitality stakeholders to ask, not 'what will the future be', but rather 'what *should the future be*'? The hospitality industry is expected to develop, on both the supply side and the demand side, consistently with wider economic, social, cultural, political, technological and environmental trends affecting all countries. Thus, the changes taking place in the global industry present both challenges and opportunities to hospitality educational institutions around the world to 'build the future' to achieve

a sustainable growth in the hospitality industry. Moreover, the consequences of non-understanding of these changes will result in strategic drift for all hospitality organisations and failure to achieve competitive advantages over rivals.

The main suggestions are:

- assigning priorities to actions;
- engaging all industry members and other stakeholders and securing their commitment to collaborate in moving forward with specific actions;
- avoiding fragmentation and duplication of implementation activities within their industry and other industries;
- collaborating with stakeholders in other industry sectors on cross-sector initiatives;
- monitoring labour market conditions – within their industry, the province, and in some cases, nationally and globally – and adjusting strategy actions and priorities to respond to changing circumstances, and
- Keeping the momentum going on the implementation of strategy actions over the next decade.
- Matching of Individuals and Jobs
- Close interface between industry and academia
- Professional and Personal Development
- Better career Planning
- Ownership in paypackage
- Industry may not expect Universities to deliver these professionals, but should invest in collaboration to develop them.

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