

FISSURE BETWEEN INDUSTRY AND ACADEMICS: GREATEST CHALLENGE TO OVERCOME

*Sumit Pant**

*Tom Thomas**

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With the advent of many new hotel chains in India and emergence of various forms of tourism like business, medical and MICE has contributed a lot in increasing the hotel industry Indian tourism and hospitality sector is scaling new heights. The World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) has predicted that India has the potential to become the number one tourist destination in the world with the demand growing at 10.1 per cent per annum.

But with this tremendous growth come great responsibilities but no problem is bigger than the shortage of skilled manpower in the industry. The industry is suffering from acute shortage of skilled manpower at various levels be it worker or executive class.

There are only 52, 000 trained people available against the hospitality industry's need for 583, 000 professionals, which will go up to 754, 000 over the next four years, according to the government.

Even if all the hotel management schools and government-run schemes manage to train around 100, 000 people as planned this year, the country will still face a shortage of at least 50% annually both in the organized and unorganized sector.

This paper is intended to find out the reasons being this shortage of skilled manpower and also brings in light the various practices followed by the hotel industry to over come this situation.

* Assistant Professor, Banarasidas Chandiwal Institute of Hotel Management, New Delhi

This paper will also highlight the current faults in hotel management curriculum and will also provide some suggestions to tackle this ever increasing problem.

METHODOLOGY OF STUDY

The research is intended to be done for an international seminar. The methodology of the proposed study was based on literature review and feed back of students through questionnaires. Opinions of experts from industry were also taken.

Following were the methods adopted for the study:

1. Literature review
2. Bibliography
3. Opinions of industry experts

Information regarding problems and gaps between is reviewed and suggestions are given. Feedback of Undergraduates studying in hotel management institutes were also taken through questionnaires and suggestions are provided.

INTRODUCTION

Indian tourism and hospitality sector is growing on a fast rate. The \$23 billion hotel industry plans to add at least 50, 000 more rooms in the top six cities of India by 2016-17. According to the latest report by WTTC (World Travel And Tourism Council) India has the potential to become the number one tourist destination in the world with the demand growing at 10.1 per cent per annum, The WTO (World Travel Organisation) predicts that India will receive 25 million tourists by year 2015. With so many tourists expected to visit India and by growing foot fall of domestic tourists there arises a huge demand for hotel rooms. According to the latest reports by FHRAI (Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Association of India), India currently has over 200, 000 hotel rooms spread across hotel categories and guest-houses and is still facing a shortfall of over 100, 000 rooms. Another report by HVS states that the country is witnessing an unprecedented growth in hotel constructions and will be adding almost 114, 000 hotel guest rooms to its inventory over the next five years.

India has the potential to become the number one tourist destination in the world with the demand growing at 10.1 per cent per annum, the World Travel and Tourism Council (WTTC) has predicted. The WTO (World Travel Organisation) predicts that India will receive 25 million tourists by year 2015.

But with this tremendous growth come great responsibilities and even greater problems. The hospitality industry has been facing big problems like there has been ever lasting taxation problems as they do not get any exemption on income tax, sales tax, electricity or water charges etc and the latest being growth in service tax, but no problem is bigger than the shortage of skilled manpower in the industry, there are concerns over whether there will be enough skilled

people to meet demand in the labour-intensive sector, which is already facing a shortage of trained staff. There are only 52,000 trained people available against the hospitality industry's need for 583,000 professionals, which will go up to 754,000 over the next four years, according to the government. According to CRISIL Research, each year around 10,500 graduates come out of the 25 Institutes of Hotel Management (IHMs) and 150 private institutions in the country. Apart from the 5-star category, the 3-star and 4-star categories also compete for this pool of graduates. The research firm projects that by 2011-12 when at least 30,000 rooms are added to the current stock, around 54,000 employees would be required in the premium segment alone.

According to HVS industrial manpower survey 2011, by 2021 Indian hotel industry alone will be requiring another 284,386 employees that come down to be 21,200 people a year. According to AICTE (all India council of technical education), India has 140 approved hotel management institutes and looking into the intake of students of these there would be 10,000 students graduating from these colleges, either in degree or diploma which still fall considerably to the annual demand of manpower demand.

	Luxury	First class	Mid market	Budget	Extended stay	Total
Additional room required	21187	37834	70761	45810	4540	180133
Manpower to room ratio	2.70	2.11	1.52	.72	1.5	
Additional manpower required	57206	79381	107556	32983	6810	284386

Source: 2011 Indian Hotel Industry Manpower Survey, HVS

More over the students that are graduating may also not be able to fit the requirements of the hiring companies. A number of hotel management graduates also move to other avenues like retail and BPOS for the sake of more salaries making a much bigger gap between the demand and supply of the individuals. The discrepancy in the expected and actual level of skill set poses a significant problem for human resource executives.

There are many reasons behind the shortage of manpower in hotel industry these are:

1. Low salaries

The hospitality industry in India is offering very less salaries as compared to other service sectors, A hotel management graduate passing from the degree college will get nothing less than

5000 to 20000 starting in a BPO or in retail industry, but the same individual starting his career from hotel or restaurant will only manage to get anywhere between 8000 – 12000 rupees. Some of the hotels are also offering salaries as low as 4000 to a graduate in hotel management fresh from college, because of high salary expectations people are reluctant to join the industry but rather they go for further higher studies.

2. Extended working hours

In India the official working hours are 48 hours per week but this is not followed by the hotel industry (except in government organisations). There is a variability across hotel operations, a manager working in food and beverage service and chef in kitchen will work more as compared to manager working in human resource, accounts, purchase etc. Managers working in room division and food and beverage division are always challenged by long working hours, including weekend and holidays. Their schedule is not compatible with the life after the job.

Wash and Taylor (2007) found out that employers sometimes promoted people so that they can take more job responsibilities. Instead of being given the authority to delegate decisions, they were given more job tasks thus increasing their job demands and working hours.

3. Lack of training

As hospitality is a service industry the standards of the service and hospitality is of highest nature and of utmost importance, it become very important for hotels to make sure that the staff is highly skilled and in compliance with the latest technology and service standards, with many international chains making their niche in the Indian hospitality sector, they bring with them highest standards of service which is very difficult for present employees to follow unless proper training is given. Although now a days hotels have started giving importance to the training department but still being a non profit generating department it is not considered as important as other major core departments

Mr. Yash Raghav Training manager (Country Inn and Suites), “says that department heads are reluctant to send their staff for training sessions as they think its waste of time and they also give excuses that it hampers their daily operations. He also feels that training department should also keep themselves updated with new trends in service and operations and should try to implement them in their organization. Country inn and suites have also started enrolling their employees into open schools to improve their educational qualifications and also making them more confident and skillful while confronting guests”.

4. Curriculum of hotel management schools

Hotel management schools are the largest provider of manpower to the industry they plays a very important role in developing skill in the individuals. With the increase demand of hotel industry even CBSE has also decided to include basic course in their syllabus. But current

curriculum of hotel management does not support the changes or advancement that is being happening in the industry. Hotel management schools approved by AICTE or through NCHMCT have been following the same old syllabus of years with focuses more on the theoretical part rather than the practical ones.

Chef Vivek Joshi (Sous Chef Taj Sats) says “that the fresher’s from hotel management colleges don’t even have the basic idea of the spices and herbs and equipments that are being used in the kitchen as they have never seen them in their college. He feels that its high time that the syllabus of catering colleges should be modified and more practical weightage should be given, either in terms of including more practical classes or by including more workshops in their curriculum so as to bridge the gap between industry and colleges”.

5. High attrition rate

Hotel industry has witnessed high staff turnover in recent past, this is mainly due to many avenues that have open up for people from service industry, they can build their career in retail, BPOS, malls and multiplexes, event managements, business development, sales etc. Not only have these industries provide graduates with better salaries but with a much better career growth option. A graduate starting his career with a retail company will get much higher pay as compared to a hotel.

Ankush Sharma is working as sales executive with sarovar pourtico, he says “he is earning 18000 per month and feels that he has made the right decision by not joining food and beverage department of a hotel as in sales he get good salaries with time for his family and friends. Airlines, cruise liners are other most favoured options of hotel management graduates as they provide much better salaries than hotels which attract the young people to join these alternate careers rather than hotels”.

SUGGESTIONS

1. Better training in hotels

Hotels must provide better training to their existing employees, this will not only improve their skills but it will also develop a feeling that hotel is working for their betterment and improve loyalty factor and confidence among employees. Shop floor training (operational training) in hotels should be given more weightage rather than class room training. Training should be devised according to the needs of the department and managers and HODS should work closely with training department to improve the skills of the department. Performance appraisals should have more weightage on skills attained and their usage in the department.

2. Motivation and Retention policies

Attrition rates in hotel industry is much more as compared to other industries, it becomes very important for human resource department to implement motivational and retention policies.

These can be promotions both vertical (where the employee is given more responsibilities with change in his designation) and dry (where employee is given increment twice to keep him motivated). More over increments based on performance and fair appraisal techniques like 360 degree appraisal technique can be of great importance in retaining of employees.

3. Better salaries and working conditions

Salaries in hotel industry is far less than its counter part from service industry. Hotels should start giving its employees better salaries and proper wages for extra hours that are being put. Better salary and good working hours not only motivates the current employees but also motivates young professionals to join the industry and serve it well.

4. Hunar Pe Rozgar

The tourism ministry has collaborated with the various hotel management institutes affiliated to NCHMCT and AICTE and with social welfare organisations on skill development, the programme is called HUNAR PE ROZGAR. The ministry of tourism has already exceeded the target set, the target for the current financial year was 5500 persons to be implemented by 35 institute of hotel management, seven food craft institutes, two 5-Star hotels and the State Governments of U.P. Orissa, Kerala, M.P. and Punjab. However, by December last year 5672 persons were already trained and another 712 were undergoing training under this programme. 5610 persons were trained under the programme as against the target of 5000 during the year 2009-10.

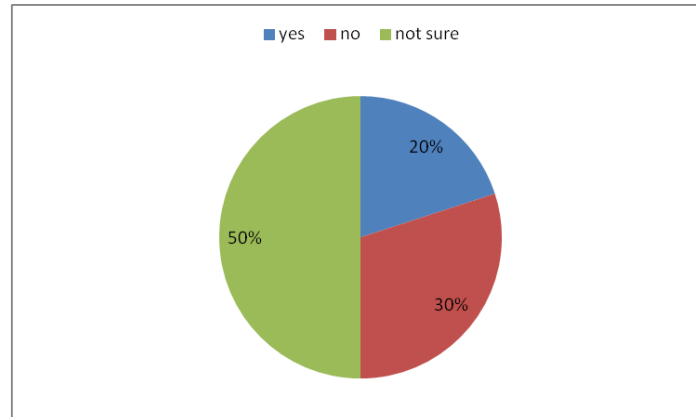
The scheme has been one of the successful ventures of the Ministry with the Institutes of Hotel Management, Food Craft Institutes and some State Governments successfully driving the scheme, meeting the targets and trainees receiving encouraging placement. It has contributed immensely in making the pool of skilled workers for industry.

5. Incentive Tour

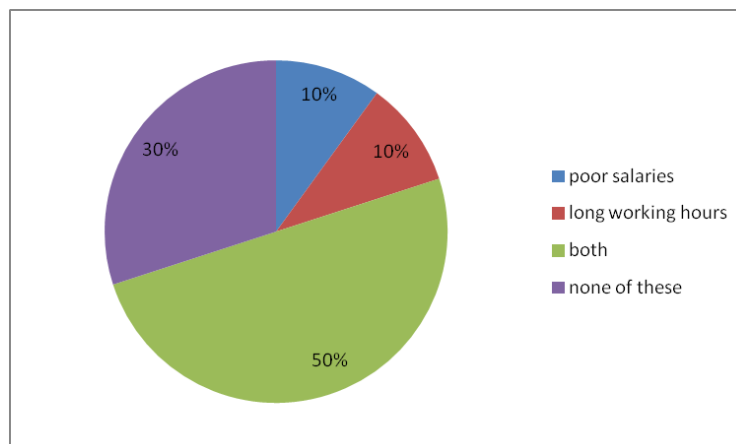
In other countries incentive tourism is taking a giant leap but in our country this kind of tourism is one of the emerging markets although other industries have been taking this seriously, hospitality industry still hasn't come in term with it. This kind of initiatives do help in refreshing the employees and they can work with more zest and zeal in the company.

FINDINGS OF RESEARCH

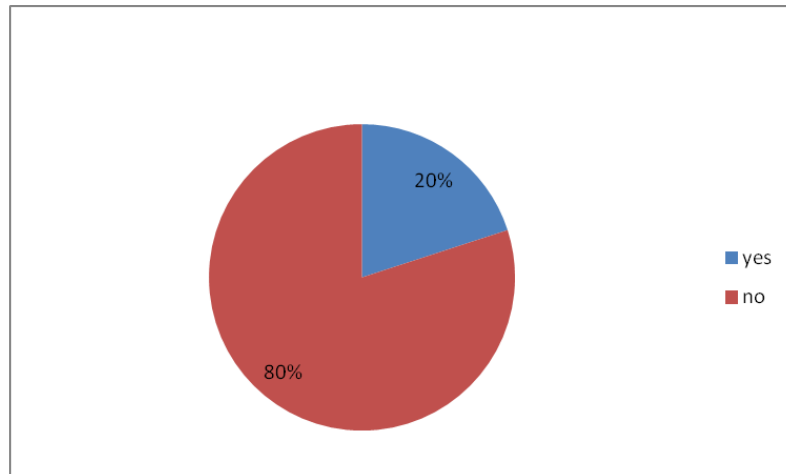
We conducted a survey among a batch of 50 students from all the three years of an hotel management institute to know their views about hotel management as a professional course and following were the results:

Students who want to join hotels after degree programme.

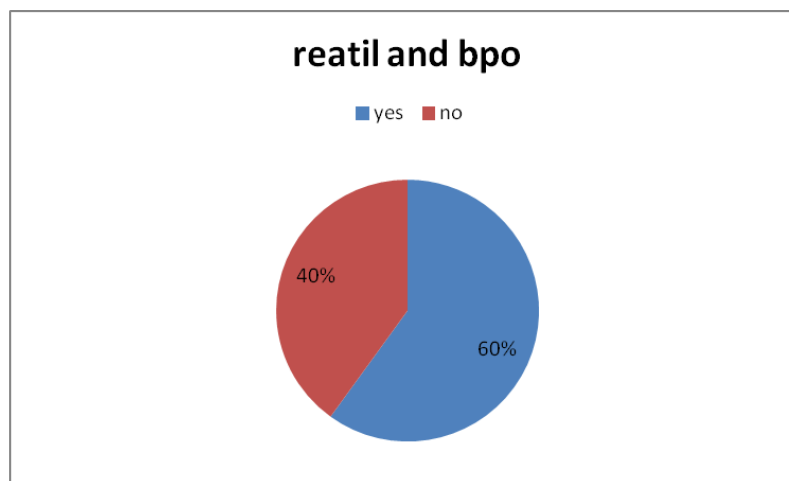
When asked about whether you want to join hotels after completion of their degree programme only 20% out of the 50 students said yes and 50% were not sure while others said no, these includes those students who have not done their industrial training and also who have made their mind to go for higher studies.

Reasons for Not Joining the Hotels

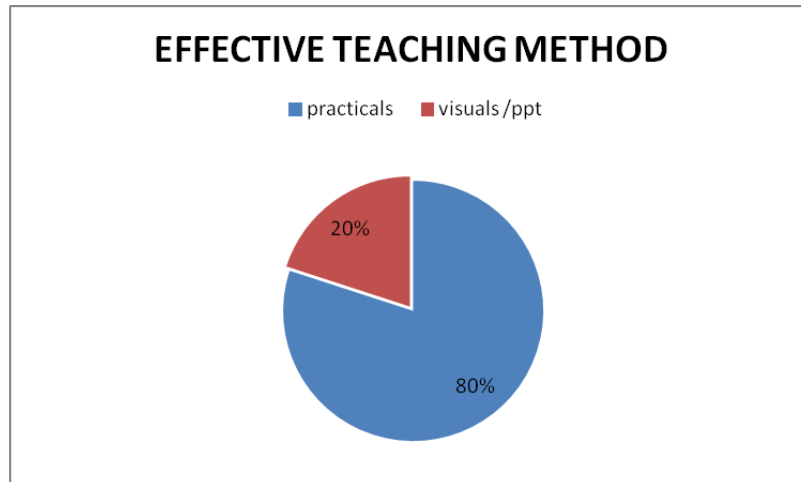
When asked the reason of not joining the hotel industry 10% students said that they find the salaries to be poor, 10% students find that the working in long hours and break shifts unacceptable while 50 % said both poor salaries and long working hours.

Students who want to opt for higher studies after graduation.

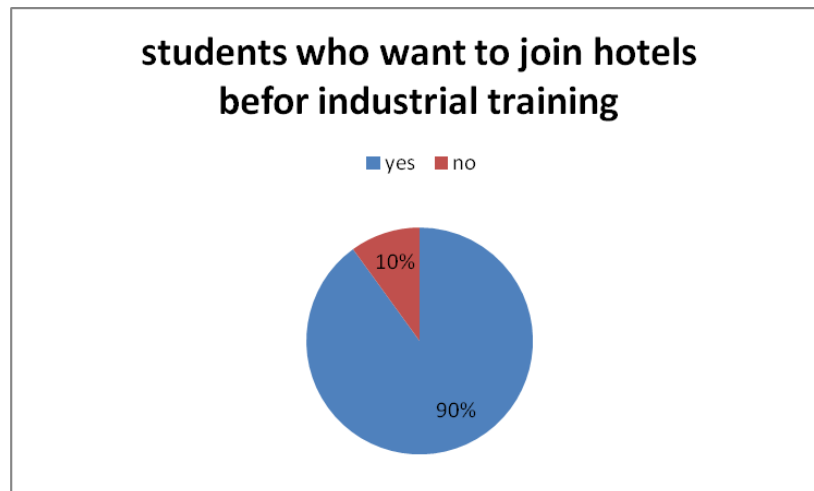
When asked about whether they want to join higher studies after graduating 20 % of the total strength said yes while rest 80% were not keen to pursue higher studies.

Students who are interested in other industries like Retail & BPO

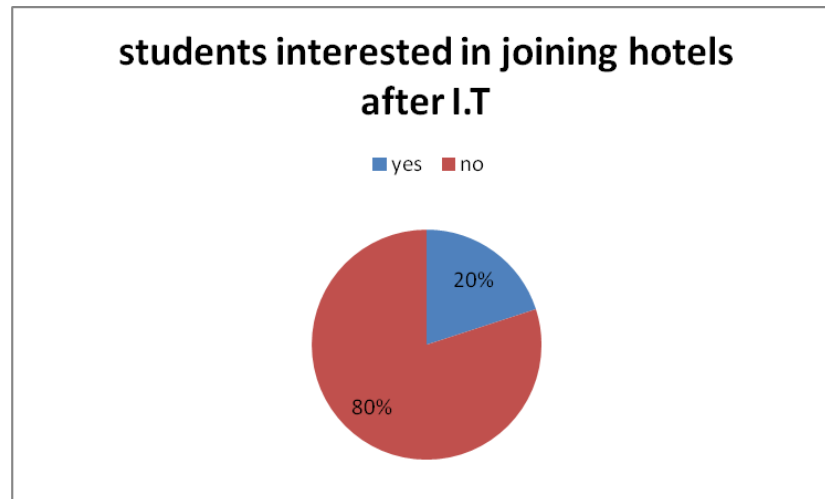
When asked that whether they will opt for other industries like retail, BPO, event management etc 60 % said yes, while 40% said no to the possibilities of joining any other variant of service industry.

Teaching method which they found more effective

When question was asked about the form of teaching they like, 80 % of students said practical's and workshops as a better method of teaching while 20% said visuals and ppts.

Students who were interested to join hotels before training

When asked about students whether they wanted to join hotels before having gone through their training 90 % of them said yes while 10 % were not interested in joining hotels.

Students who were interested to join hotels after training

After completion of training more students have refused to join hotels, the percentage of not joining the hotels risen to 80 while those who would join the hotel is only 20%.

FEED BACK AND SUGGESTION FOR EDUCATION SECTOR

Being a part of education sector, it is very important for us to contribute and revise our processes to tackle this emerging problem of shortage of skilled manpower.

Revision of Curriculum

There is a lot of modernization that has happened in cooking and service, but the syllabus of the hotel schools have remain the same, There is a must need of incorporating these changes in to the

The current curriculum of hotel management must be revised and new trends in hospitality sector must be introduced into it so that students can be made aware of latest in the industry.

Workshops and Seminars

Industry and education relationship should be strengthened by inviting more professionals from the industry for guest speakers, workshops and seminars.

Better Liaison between Industry and Education sector (FDP)

Faculties from hotel management institutes must be constantly given faculty development programmes and must be given provisions to go and train themselves in hotels so that they can keep pace with the changes made in the industry.

Banarsidas Chandiwalla has already taken an initiative in this regard as they have tied up with IHG as academic partner, this will help us to know what are the requirements of the industry and they will be able to mould the students according to the requirements of the company.

Importance to Industrial training

Industrial training should be revised again and should be included in second year, as it is very difficult for college to place students for management trainee positions when the industrial training is done in last semester (as done in UPTU syllabus). Moreover hotels also have the moral obligation to allow the students to go for industrial training in all major departments rather than using them as cheap labour in one department only.

Separate colleges for degree and diploma courses

Many hotel management colleges are mushrooming in our country, they are still not able to cater to the demands of the hotel industry. As most of the hotel management institutes provides degree courses (3 year and 4 year), students passing from these colleges are always reluctant to join the hotel at a lower level or starting level, moreover when an institute provides a diploma course along with the degree course, the former is not given much importance. So we propose that there should be different colleges for degree and diploma courses as both of them cater to different demands of the industry. So that equal importance can be given to both form of education.

Kinesthetic learning in hotel management institutes

College mode of learning is very different from schools. In colleges we are dealing with adult learners who are more open towards different form of learning than the traditional classroom teaching. There are 3 types of adult learners:

Visual learner: Those who learn more by visuals and seeing things.

Audio learner: those who learn by listening.

Kinesthetic learner: are those learners who learn more by working on the job, i.e. by practically doing things. Researches have already shown that kinesthetic learners have better understanding and grasp more than other learners. So hotel management and catering institutes should lay more emphasis on practical teaching than theoretical one, this will not only develop keen interests among individuals but also improve their technical skills as hotel management graduates. More workshops, seminars and conferences must be held and most of the teaching should be done through assignments, so that students can do research themselves and would learn more than their syllabus.

CONCLUSION

Hospitality industry in India is growing at a very high rate, employment opportunities which this industry offers is second to none. With so many avenues to generate manpower for the industry the hospitality sector is still facing problems to keep in terms with the demand. Many factors have been responsible for this situation like attrition, low salaries and effect on social life. So it is the responsibility of hotels to motivate and derive new retention policies. Hotels should also ensure that training offered to students and employees should be of higher standards, and should motivate and attract employees and students towards hotel industry. Education sector has also an important role to play in developing a pool of skilled professionals, Hotel management institutes should also give equal weightage to both degree and diploma courses as both the courses cater to different sections of the industry. Modern methods of teaching should be started and kinesthetic learning in institutes should be given importance. The current curriculum of the hotel management institutes should also be revised and modern trends should be included in the curriculum. More importance should be give to programmes like Hunar Pe Rozgar etc.

By adopting these reforms and with equal contributions from all the sections of hospitality like education, Training etc, the demands for skilled manpower can be achieved in future.

QUESTIONNAIRE

1. Do you want to join hotels after completion of your undergraduate programme?
☐ Yes ☐ No
☐ May be
2. IF NO, Why don't you want to join hotel industry?
☐ Poor salary ☐ Long working hours
☐ Both ☐ None of these
3. Will you opt for higher studies after completion of degree programmes?
☐ Yes ☐ No
4. If you get other options in service industry like (retail, BPO) will you join hotel.
☐ Yes ☐ No
5. What form of teaching did you find more effective?
☐ Visual aids/Ppts ☐ Lecture
☐ Practical's and workshops ☐ None of these

6. Should there be any special semester or year for specialization in hotel management curriculum?

☐ Yes

☐ No

7. Did you want to join hotels before doing your I.T?

☐ Yes

☐ No

8. Do you want to join hotels after I.T.?

☐ Yes

☐ No

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