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Motivation for Banquets' Employees in the Hotel Industry: An Exploratory Study

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ABSTRACT *This paper examines the motivation level of the employees working in F&B (Food and Beverage) Service department with special focus on the Banquets of north Indian hotels. It examines the parameters that have motivational impact on the employees of the division. To address the objectives of the study 170 respondents were questioned from various chain and non-chain hotels in India. The result was analyzed on Herzberg's and Maslow's theories. The results reveal that employers need to put special emphasis to motivate Banquet staff. It was found that many motivational attributes were missing from the F&B employees and a step needs to be taken to motivate them to not only perform but will also reduce the labour turnover existing in this particular department.*

KEYWORDS : F&B department, banquet, motivation, Herzberg, Maslow, India.

INTRODUCTION

Studies have been focusing upon the motivation levels in the Food service industry, where monies have been the major motivation besides flexi timings, health benefits and fun working environment were further motivators (Wildes, 2011). The different characteristics of jobs appeal to different workers that encompass feeling of comfort and belonging, ability to serve one's family needs, corporeal perceptions and achievement of appreciation motivates employees including Food &Beverage(F&B) Service (Wildes, 2000). Relationship among the banquet services in F&B service department has been under-researched area especially when it comes to the Indian universe. This study attempts the same. This study is timely as F&B service and especially banquet department is a highly labour intensive sector and studies in other part of the world have even reported health issues leading to low motivation levels (Buckle and Devereux 2002; Keyserling 2000). It is time when Indian F&B service industry wakes up to the issues and gauge the motivation level of its banquet workforce.

AIMS

This study aims to ascertain the level of motivation and motivation of banquet staff in the north region of India. The topic has been delved into and findings have been reported to deduce suggestions which could be handed over to stakeholders to increase motivation.

BACKGROUND

With overall emphasis on hospitality many establishments have come up in the last decade. In 2011-12 an addition of 12,782 rooms in the country happened, which led to an existing supply of 84,313, an 18% increase over the previous year (HVS, 2012). Not only tier I cities have witnessed the growth but even tier II and tier III cities have not been left out. These establishments provide specialized banquet services and are play an important role in the promotion of the establishment. Banquet attracted both experienced as well as young graduates to join these establishments with diploma/degrees and a basic training in hospitality. The recruits were majorly young college graduates including females who were unmarried and males too. It is time to analyze the motivation quotient/level of the staff in banquet and deduce ways to enhance motivation level of these employees.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Employees are not just another input in production of good and services were proved by Hawthorne studies (1924-1932) (Dickson 1973). They need motivation and lower motivation impacts on the performance of establishments, affect the productivity and make people leave their jobs. A personal desire to achieve high performance plays important role in the motivational process and hence influences overall productivity (Verma 1996). Monetary satisfaction is one of the criterions for satisfaction but is not the only one (Huczynski and Buchanan 2007). The needs and motivation of employees should be the primary focus of the management (Bedeian 1993). Understanding what motivated employees has been a focus for research (Terpstra 1979).

Each employee play a vital role in nation's building and their dissatisfaction is a matter of concern for researchers (Beer and Beer 1992). Determination of factors that enhances employee's motivation is mandatory. Factors that motivate are higher order needs like social relations, esteem and actualization (Sylvia and Hutchinson 1985). Older studies blamed high pay package allurement of workforce who had no interest in services except monetary; for a lower level of motivation (Rothman 1981) but it is insignificant in current times because of competitive salaries in other sectors also. The achievement and merit of employee has been a topic of debate among researchers (Steven and White 1987, Jordan 1986)

Motivated employees' results in producing high self esteemed managers providing job satisfaction which is one of the criteria for motivation (Peck et. al 1977, Schonfeld 1989). Motivation in managers is more crucial due to their role model status in their subordinate's life rather than just an administrator. It is not only the huge factors but employees' daily activities can also provide the required doses of motivation (Kubey and Csikszentmihalvi 1981). These daily activities motivate and help to achieve high level of concentration, immersion, strength and control along with psychological rewards enhancing motivation (Csikszentmihalvi 1990).

THEORIES OF MOTIVATION

Motivation can be defined as: An internal drive to satisfy an unsatisfied need (Higgins 1994). Or it may be defined as the will to achieve (Bedeian 1993) or, the psychological process that gives behavior purpose and direction (Kreitner 1995). It may also be defined as a predisposition to behave in a purposive manner to achieve specific, unmet needs (Buford et al. nd).

The current study perceives motivation as an intrinsic force that compels individual to attain and align personal and organizational goals.

The five approaches that are extensively quoted with regards to motivation theories are Maslow's need-hierarchy theory, Herzberg's two factor theory, Vroom's expectancy theory, Adams' equity theory and Skinner's reinforcement theory. Hawthorne study results tilted the focus on understanding what motivated employees and how they were motivated (Terpstra 1979).

Hierarchy of Need Theory or also named as Maslow theory named after its contributor. The needs are hierarchical similar to a staircase. The needs were five in number physiological: Most basic needs includes physical (food, water, oxygen etc.).

Safety: Safe and secure physical and emotional environment and freedom from threats. In an organization satisfied by safety of job, fringe

benefits and freedom from threats.

Social: A sense of attachment and acceptance Rapport with the peers, team involvement, superior-subordinate relationship.

Ego: Inherent need for recognition, attention and appreciation. In job it is satisfied by higher responsibilities, acknowledgement of contribution and designations.

Self Actualization: It is satisfaction of self. In job satisfied by career enhancement, creativity, innovations and taking risks and handling challenges (Maslow 1943).

It is one of the most popular but general in approach when it comes to application. It assumes that humans are motivated by multiple needs. It is not necessary that they get satisfied step by step. They may depend on situation and personalities. Once a need is satisfied it takes a lower position in the priority and the other one takes its position.

Herzberg's made two neat categories of motivators and named them as motivators and hygiene (Herzberg, Mausner and Snyderman 1959). Motivators motivate while the absence of the hygiene factors produce dissatisfaction. Motivators are known as intrinsic factors and includes achievement and recognition, producing job satisfaction. Hygiene factors are also named as extrinsic factors and includes factors such as pay and job security and absence of them produces dissatisfaction. The initial study was done on engineers and accountants (Ebert and Griffin 2005). Hygiene factors affect motivation merely by their absence in case of their enhancement they will not have marked influence on motivation and satisfaction levels. In Absence of acknowledgements and appreciations people may neither be satisfied nor dissatisfied but the mere presence of acknowledgements and appreciations will increase satisfaction and lead to motivated workforce. Thus motivation factors are assessed on satisfaction to dissatisfaction scale whereas hygiene factors are assessed on dissatisfaction to no dissatisfaction scale. Motivation factors are directly related to work whereas hygiene factors are related to work environment. The hygiene and motivation factors are not fixed and may interchange from group to group on which study is being undertaken.

Vroom's theory focused upon employee's efforts, performance and rewards.He stated that employees' effort will give birth to performance and performance will give birth to reward (Vroom 1964).The reward referred in Vroom's theory can either be positive or negative. The degree of positivity will determine the motivation of employee and the degree of negativity will determine the demotivation.Adam's theory assessed the job in terms of inputs and outputswith its referents. Equity is achieved when ratio of employee outcome over inputs is equal to other employee outcome over inputs (Adams 1965). In case an inequity is detected an attempt will be done to correct the inequity like voluntary resignation, lower productivity, reduced quality and absenteeism. Skinner theory focuses on employee behavior and stated that behavior yielding positive outcome will be repeated and those yielding negative behavior will not be repeated (Skinner 1953). Managers' reinforcement is needed to for behaviors that yield positive outcome and negative reinforcement for behavior that yield negative outcomes.

Some other theories of motivation are theory X, the assumptions are that people by nature detest work and needs a high level of control. Theory Y assumes that people by nature love work. These theories are not supported by empirical researches (Douglas 1960).

THEORIES SELECTED FOR THE STUDY

The theories zeroed in for current study are: Herzberg's theory of motivation and Maslow's hierarchy of need.

Maslow focus was on personal needs and its satisfaction. This theory is based on the belief of need recognition and satisfaction. The prepotency concept does exist in the theory. It helps to align the study with regards to the different needs of different employees with different experiences and stages of their career.

Herzberg's theory is two dimensional. Under hygiene factors included were interpersonal relations, working conditions, company policy, supervision and pay. They bring dissatisfaction by their absence but does not enhance satisfaction by the degree of their presence. The factors included as motivators in the study were job satisfaction, achievement, recognition, the work itself, responsibility and advancement. Motivations have a long term effect and hygiene factors can bring short term changes in attitudes and performance in job.

Both the theories combined and study of organization based on them can bring a remarked change in the motivation level and job satisfaction of the employees.

The hospitality management literature review shows a deep void in the context of banquet employee motivation level and these findings may prove useful in determining what increases motivation and job satisfaction levels.

HYPOTHESIS

The hypothesis undertaken is that certain factors serve as a motivation factors for banquet employee. The banquet employee could be motivated further to provide their best.

RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The questions which current study tries to answer are:

Is the banquet staff in north Indian hospitality establishments motivated?

If motivated upto what level are they motivated?

What are the factors that keep them motivated?

What can be done to further enhance the motivation level of the banquet staff in the hotels?

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Sampling and data collection

Sample hotels were identified from the highly respected directory of the Ministry of Tourism, Govt. of India and FHRAI that serves as a resource centre for business information and maintains relevant databases of hospitality firms. The research focuses on north India as its universe and banquet employees are the sample. Study will be based on both primary and secondary data. Primary data will be generated through self administered questionnaires and interviews. Journals, books, reports, magazines, researches and internet. To provide gender representation in the sample the banquet employees were selected from different hotels and attempt was made to include representatives of both the genders. The questionnaire had closed questions which were self administered. Likert scale was used for close ended questions. To initiate the sample 300 banquet employees were contacted and out of the total sample only 170 (56.66 %) employees responded and agreed to participate in the survey. Random sampling method was used to administer the questionnaire. Even in random sampling it was ensured that representations of gender, age, experience was present.

Research instruments

Banquet employee motivation level**:** the research used existence of 13 banquet motivation variables (see Table 2) measured on a Likert-type 5-point scale ranging from 1=strongly agree 5= strongly disagree for usages. The scale includes the various attributes of banquet employee motivation levelas discussed in the literature.

FINDINGS

Table 1 presents the distribution of sample hotel organisations with respect to the demographics used in the study. The sample was managed in a fashion so as to have representations across the parameters of the category of hotel and whether they are a part of chain or are an individual establishment in themselves. Years dedicated to profession was considered along with the term of service with F&B department. Most of the representation in the sample was of males as overall in F&B services 90% of the workforce is dominated by the males. In terms of years of existence, 28 (16.47%) hotels existed for less than 5 years, 62 (36.47%) existed for 6 to 10 years, 55 (32.35%) existed for 11 to 15 years, 20 (11.76 %) existed for 16 to 20 years and another 05 (02.94%) for more than 21 years. This shows that most hotels have already established their names in the market, gained stability in the society, and indeed is part of a growing hospitality industry.In terms of capital, 16 (22.86 %) hotels spend less than 100 million, 20 (11.76 %) spend 101-300 million, 36 (21.17 %) spend 301-500 million, 43 (25.29 %) spend

501-1000 million, 55 (32.35%) spend more than 1001 million. In terms of size of employment, there are 32 (18.82 %) hotels have less than 50 numbers of employees, 49 (28.82%)have 51 to 100 employees, 39 (22.94%) have 101 to 200 employees, 30 (17.64%) have 201-300 employees and 20 (11.76 %) have more than 301 employees working with the organizations. The findings denote that the number of employees was largely dependent on the organizational set-up of the hotels and the services offered. Finally most hotel organisations are 118 (69.41%) chain properties. The advantage for this is that most of the chains have uniform policies on HR and thus having more representations from such establishments provides a broader coverage to the study.

Table 1 Distribution of sample according to Hotel characteristics (N=170)

	Number	Percentage
Category of hotels		
3 star	62	36.47
4 star	48	28.23
5 star	38	22.35
5 star Deluxe	22	12.94
Years of Existence		
≤ 5	28	16.47
6 – 10	62	36.47
11 – 15	55	32.35
16 – 20	20	11.76
≥ 21	5	2.94
Capital (in million Rs)		
≤ 100	16	22.85
101 – 300	20	11.76
301 – 500	36	21.17
501 – 1000	43	25.29
≥ 1001	55	32.35
Employees (numbers)		
≤ 50	32	18.82
51 – 100	49	28.82
101 – 200	39	22.94
201 – 300	30	17.64
≥ 301	20	11.76
Type of ownership		
Chain	118	69.41
Non-Chain	52	30.58

Source: Primary survey

Source: Author

A1 Working Environment

42.35 per cent of the respondents agreed on the conducive environment as a motivator. While the option 'Strongly Agree' was supported by merely 17.5 per cent 32.94 percent remained neutral. Thus working environment is one of the factor but not the major factor.

Table 2: Banquet Employee Motivation Attributes

Variables	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
· Working environment attracts, focuses and keeps talented employees	17.05%	42.35%	32.94%	5.88%	1.76%
· Rewarding employees (appreciation) with personal attention helps to motivate them	24.11%	37.05%	37.05%	1.76%	Nil
· Awards system for attendance records motivate the employees	12.94%	19.41%	52.94%	11.76%	2.94%
· Recognizing excellence for your work helps you to get motivate to work	61.17%	28.23%	10.58%	Nil	Nil
· Point system of Tipping attracts the competent workers and motivate the employees	52.94%	31.17%	15.88%	Nil	Nil
· Compensation like performance bonuses, service charge helps to motivate employees	62.94%	25.29%	11.76%	Nil	Nil
· Career advancement in banquet motivates to work	9.41%	12.94%	45.29%	19.41%	12.94%
· Company provides the special benefits on completion of set targets which motivates the employees	15.29%	20%	37.64%	16.47%	10.58%
· Training of employees should be carried out for employee retention	32.35%	33.52%	27.05%	7.05%	0%
· Guest comment card is used to attract the competent workers and motivate the employees	42.35%	33.52%	24.11%	Nil	Nil
· Teamwork helps to run the operation effectively which leads to employee motivation	51.76%	42.35%	5.88%	Nil	Nil
· 'Quality is given more importance than quantity in your department' helps to motivate the employees	54.11%	45.88%	Nil	Nil	Nil
· Banquet is major revenue generating outlet among all the F & B Outlets	60.58%	27.05%	12.35%	Nil	Nil

Working environment is a part of hygiene factor as presence of it does not make significant difference but its absence makes its need felt for the employee. Working environment provided a sense of security to the employees.

A2 Rewarding Employees
37.05 percent of the respondents fall under the option of 'Agree and Neutral'. While the option 'Strongly Agree' was supported by merely 24.11 percent and even 1.76% of the respondents are disagree that appreciation with personal attention helps to motivate them.

Rewarding also do not fall in the motivators and in terms of Maslow theory could be classified under safety and ego needs. Rewards could give a feeling of security to the employee financially and would fill in her/is ego.

A3 Attendance Records
Neutral respondents i.e. 52.94 percent rule out that awards system for attendance records motivate them. While 11.76% are Disagree and 2.94 percent of the respondents was supported the option 'Strongly Disagree'.

Thus attendance is neither a motivator nor hygiene factor. As per Maslow it will be a part of continuum overlapping ego and self actualization needs.

A4 Recognizing Excellence
With a support of 61.17 per cent and 28.23 per cent supporting the 'agree' recognition of excellence is definitely a motivator. It is part of social and ego needs both as it provides a sense of attachment improves peer and super-subordinate relationship and improves teamwork. It also provides a sense of pride to the employee.

A5 Point System of Tipping
This was a surprise variable as 'point system' of tipping was actually supported by a total of 84.11 per cent combined strongly agree and agree option.

Point system was a motivator under Herzberg's theory and definitely served as a safety needs which prepares the base for fulfillment of ego needs and achieving self actualization stage later.

A6 Performance Bonuses and Service Charge
Compensation tools like performance bonuses and service charges helped to achieve motivation as 62.94 percent supported the 'Strongly Agree' option and '25.29'supported the agree' option. Although 11.76 percent remained neutral but these may be F&B employees who may have higher level of needs. Thus performance bonuses and service charge acted as a motivator and was a part of safety and ego needs. It even helped the employees to meet their basic needs too.

A7 Career Advancement
45.29 per cent of the respondents consider career advancement to have neutral effect on their motivation. The respondents seemed to be divided on this as 32.35 per cent fall into 'strongly disagree' and ágree' option when it comes to career advancement. 22.35 per cent fall into agree and strongly agree option.

Such divided respondents across the options with this regards to this study will make it fall into hygiene factor. Of course career advancement is a safety need.

A8 Incentive on Sales
F&B employees generally do not get motivated by incentives on sales. Sales as such are targets which the overall perception of the employee is that it hinders with service orientation that the employees have about their profession. 37.64 percent remained neutral whereas 35.25 percent agree and strongly agree that incentives do have a motivational aspect on their work. 27.05 per cent disagree and strongly disagree with incentive on sales as a motivator.

A9 In-house Training
Continuous learning and upgradation is a motivator for employees as overall 'strongly agree and agree show a cumulative support of 65.87 per cent. 27.05 respondent remained neutral. While 7.05 percent disagree. Thus continuous learning is a motivator factor and is a part of security needs. As employees of F&B does not want to become outdated in terms of recent market knowledge.

A10 Guest Comment Card
75.87 percent of the respondents agree that comment card can attract employees and even motivate them. This is a hygiene factor and is a part of ego needs.

A11 Teamwork
Teamwork is a motivation for 94.11 per cent respondents. An able team and a team work is motivation for employees. It is a motivator and is a part of safety needs as the employees feel a sense of security working in a conducive team.

A12 Quality
Emphasis on quality by departments and establishment motivate employees. 100 per cent of employees want to work in. Working in a quality environment enhances the overall quality of the employee himself/herself. Thus quality emphasis by establishments is a motivation factor and is a safety need as quality itself brings in knowledge and learning which keeps the employee updated about recent fads in the trade.

A13 Banquet as Revenue Generating Division
Banquet being a major revenue generating outlet among the whole F&B unit motivates 87.63 per cent of the respondents. It is a motivator factor as well as fulfills the ego need that the employees of banquet contribute also to the financial needs of the establishment.

DISCUSSIONS

The study was based on the two famous theories of motivation Herzberg's theory and Maslow theory. Under Herzberg's Theory the following factors were found to be hygiene factors: working environment, rewarding of employees, use of guest comment cards. The presence of these factors may not show visible effects but absence of them does have an effect on employee's motivation. The factors that had a direct effect on motivation were recognition of excellence, point system of tipping was favored by the employees, and the feeling of banquet as a revenue generating division. Some parameters had such a divided viewpoint of the respondents that they could not be classified neatly under motivator or hygiene factor. These were attendance recognition and award system, career advancement and the incentive reward system on sales.

Under the Maslow's theory some parameters fell in one need category and could motivate employees whereas others parameters overlapped in multi needs category. 'Recognizing Excellence" and 'Team Work' was a part of social needs. Safety needs earned the maximum parameters 'Working Environment', 'Rewards', 'Point System of Tipping', 'Performance Bonuses and Service Charge', 'Performance Bonuses and Service Charge', 'Career Advancement', 'In-house training', 'Teamwork' and 'Quality Emphasis'. Ego needs were represented by Rewards, Attendance Records, Recognizing Excellence, Point System of Tipping, Performance Bonuses and Service Charge, Guest Comment Cards, Banquet as a Revenue Generating Unit. Attendance Records was grouped under Self Actualization. It was noticed people who have achieved other parameters were influenced and motivated by high attendance in their division and recognition that came alongwith it. Incentive on Sales could not be categorized into any needs.

As the questionnaire were self administered informal discussion brought many a skeletons out of the closet. The major issues that were faced by the employees were extra long working hours, less salaries compared to other sectors, absence of any social life, demanding guests and keeping up with their moods, and issues with intoxicated guests make the conditions challenging. The service issues arise due to shortage of staff. Most of the respondents complained about the staff shortage in banquets. The managers did not allowed innovations also because of the same reason and following SOPs (Standard Operating Procedures) made it monotonous. One of the basic condition under which SOPs could be practiced is meeting the minimum criterion of optimum manpower in the banquets division of the establishment. Zero interaction with the in-house guest is also a major constraint of the job profile which acts as a de-motivator.

Due to recruitment of young graduates in banquets there is a high labour turnover; average time being six months. This hampers the

establishment of team spirit along with wastage of time training new entrants after every six months.

RECOMMENDATIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

The difference between the two theories of Herzberg and Maslow is that Herzberg describes the difference between job satisfaction and employee dissatisfaction, whereas Maslow relates need met with satisfaction or dissatisfaction. To achieve motivation all barriers to motivations or reasons for de-motivation has to be removed. The practice of exit interviews is merely a formality in most of the establishments which needs to be taken up as an insight into the banquet services of F&B departments.

The high pressure and overloaded working will affect the health conditions of the employees of this division due to stress built up. Recognition at all levels not only place of work but in society is missing. Hospitality should launch a programme where self esteem and overall image in the eye of internal environment and society in general should be improvised upon. Once these basic issues and barriers to motivation has been dealt for satisfaction of higher needs the studies have to be based on effects of media reporting, outside perception, and family and leisure involvement on employee's morale.

A properly chalked out plan and policy should be marked in the shortest span possible about how can the labour turnover be reduced and a quicker vertical and horizontal promotions be arranged. Long term retention in the same division will help in acquaintance with all kind of situations and challenges and so lesser overall stresses in situations and facing challenges. A workshop for banquet supervisors, managers and general managers should be organized on motivation and, performance review and appraisal should be conducted. Similar workshops on career development, employee handling and team building should be conducted for the employers. Banquet staff should have enough freedom to deliver with their individual styles and alter the level of challenges. New SOPs designed by individual properties of chain establishments, adequate participation in decision making, experimentation with working methods, and learning experiences can enhance the involvement (Knoop, 1986).

CONCLUSIONS

The analysis of questionnaire and observation both brought out many observations. The motivators in Herzberg's theory are associated with a long lasting positive effect in job performance, satisfaction and motivation. The study also proved that hygiene factors are lesser in impact in comparisons to the absence of them. The hygiene factors were found to be missing in banquets. Lack of sense of security and safety is present. The job lacks in dimensions like love and loneliness needs. Even the society has become to materialistic and equate all professions on the basis of monetary achievements. This is also fulfilled even in the internal environment by their peers and bosses. As working conditions are also an issue and thus, development is not felt by the employees so self esteem needs are also not fulfilled.

The social needs have greater implications on work. Minimizing the value of social interaction weakens the social support system and leads to a higher level of burnout (Nagy and Davis 1985). One of the reasons for lesser social need satisfaction is ephemeral interaction with the clients. Labor retention is mandatory as increased length of service correlated with greater satisfaction with salary, higher level of self esteem, higher level of respect for the profession, and decreased level of stress and burden. Eventually these are measures of job satisfaction and motivation.

Unstable working conditions, centralized management, nil participation in decision making process, no recognition, centralized management and neglection of self development are the parameters dominant in the employees. As the hospitality industry is growing manifolds its time when banquet services need to focus on proper working conditions change in environment and review of HR handling can bring in a difference in the motivation and satisfaction levels in the employees of this department. The attributes and factors in Hertzberg's theory and Maslow theory can be a guide book to the banquet department stakeholders.

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