



ISSUES AND CHALLENGES FACED BY HOSPITALITY EDUCATION IN INDIA

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ABSTRACT

Hospitality industry in India has undergone a marked shift from a stagnant industry to ever growing one with innumerable opportunities galore. It is one industry which is known for its staunch professionalism and immaculate professionals. Like the industry itself, the institutes providing hospitality education too have mushroomed, of late. But, the pertinent question here is are these institutes which are churning out graduates year after year are competent enough to cater to the needs of the industry and making its students into through professionals. Therefore, this research paper moves in this direction only where it explores the present scenario of hospitality education in our country and what the future entails. It also tries to bring forth the issues concerning the hospitality education and how they have a bearing on the hospitality sector as a whole.

KEYWORDS : Hospitality Education, Hotel Management, Industry- Academia relationship

Introduction:

Hospitality education has emerged as driving force for developing economies therefore, these economies recognized hospitality as a vehicle for their envisaged development and growth (Mill & Morrison, 1999). India too favors the same and gives much thrust to hospitality and its allied sector development (Honey & Gilpin, 2009). The increase in sanctioned amount in every budget educates the government interest towards the same. Along its way towards developing new attractions, similar significance is also given to develop the capacity of individual joining to learn this trade through initiating educational institutions to offer hospitality, tourism and its related programme, simultaneously offering the same discipline in the existing institutions. In this regard, India is always viewed as a favourite destination for higher education in general and gaining momentum for hospitality programme to considerable extent. Many private and Government institutions, universities have come up in the recent years concentrating hospitality programmes.

But very few universities came forward to initiate programs, therefore creating an uncertainty for this programme. This factor caused slow-down in the growth of hospitality education.

However many discrepancies found to be present in the present day curriculum; one such is failing to address the needs of the industry, failing to develop quality and updated professional, providing the objective of this paper. Industry related professional come forward in framing the suitable and competent syllabi which fulfil the industrial needs.

Review of literature:

However very less research attempt has been done on tourism and hospitality education in India. Hospitality and tourism education as always viewed as a factor for tourism development of any region (Bagri and Babu, 2009). Hospitality and tourism educationist of vital importance in developing right kind of manpower which in turn can make better planning and bring required professionalism to industry (Bhardwaj, 2002). The issues around hospitality education such as the lack of uniformity and standardization of courses contributes dilemma among students and employer (Amoah and Baum, 1997). The variability in terms of syllabi and resultant products restrict the healthy way for employment prospects (Bagri and Babu, 2009); failing to meet the expectation of the employer (Baum, 1995). Quality of students in India is not up to the international standards. Umbreit (1992) argues that educators must take the lead in providing their student with a relevant curriculum for the next century. He believed that changing the curriculum is imperative so that the graduate can be successful in industry. The interrelationship between education and training plays an important role in the human resource development in hospitality and tourism sector (Doswell, 1994).

Concept of Education:

The term 'education' in the broad sense is not only a pedagogical one punctuating down to the basic meaning of the term, it means to

plunge a man's body, mind and soul of ignorance. It enhances an individual's personality and provides him confidence to reach out to the world. Meaning of education according to great philosophers:

Swami Dayanand Saraswati: 'Education is a process beginning right from the mother's womb'.

John Dewey: 'The development of all the activities in the individual enabling him to

Control his environment'.

Objectives of study:

- To identify current status and potential of hospitality education in India.
- To identify future challenges and opportunities of hospitality education in India.

Methodology

The present study was undertaken through extensive study of secondary data, mainly literature review from various journals, magazines, newspapers, world wide web, ministry and hotel association reports like that of FHRAI, MOT-GOI. The main aim was to get insights of present hospitality education and to search various challenges faced by industry and educational institutes in India. Primary data from personal interview with student of hotel management institutes, faculty and managers of hotels. (10 institutes and five hotels (03 star to 05 star category).

Hospitality Management Education in India:

The term hospitality refers to the cordial and generous reception & entertainment of guest, either socially or commercially. Indians are known the world over for their hospitality "atithi devo bhava" (the guest is like a God) has been our adage from time immemorial. In ancient time traveller relied on road side homes for meals, in temple and monasteries. In India various universities provide accommodation to pilgrims. Chandergupt Maurya built inns and guest house that were referred to as a Sarai & Dharamshala. During the British raj Circuit houses and Dak Banglas came in to being in India. The first commercial hotel Taj Mahal, Mumbai was built in 1903 in India. With the growth of transportation-roadways, waterways, airways people became even more mobile. Inns, Motels, Hotels, Resorts came in to existence. To provide skilled manpower, hotel management institutes came in to existence. The Institute of Hotel Management, Catering Technology and Applied Nutrition, Mumbai, the first of its kind in South East Asia was founded in the year 1954 by the All India Women's Central Food Council under the leadership of Late Smt. Lilavati Munshi. There were six students when classes commenced in 1954 at Bhawan's College Campus, Andheri. In 1958 the Three Year Diploma Programme in Hotel Management & Catering Technology was started, recognized by the Directorate of Technical Education, Maharashtra State. Keeping pace with the continuing growth, the Institute shifted to its own separate campus in Dadar built on the land leased by the State Government. With Miss. Thangam E. Philip as its Principal

There was also a need felt to create a pool of skilled manpower for hotels at floor level jobs resulting in the creation of Food Craft Institutes at various cities in the country. In the year 1984, the Ministry of Tourism (MoT) took over hotel management education in India and created an autonomous body, 'National Council for Hotel Management (NCHM)', a nodal and affiliating organization to monitor the standards of education for all the institutes run by the Government all over India under common syllabus and norms. During this period many Food crafts Institutes were also upgraded to Hotel Management Institutes.

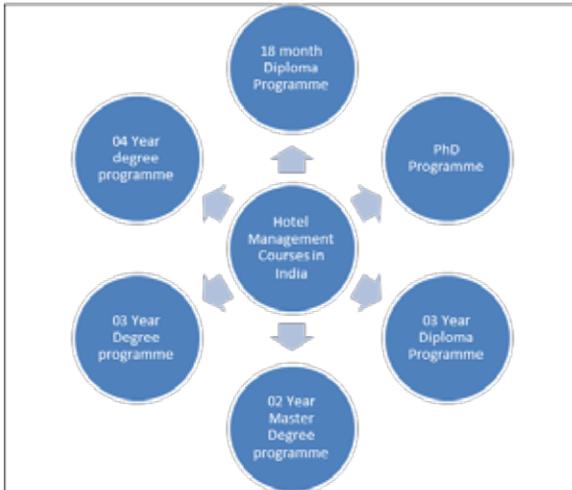


Figure 1: Hospitality Management Courses in India

Most of them offering degree courses duly approved by AICTE and NCHMCT and many private institutions, government and deemed universities.

Such as IHM Jyotisar, Department of tourism and hotel management ,Kurukshetra university(Kurukshetra) ,Institute of hotel management (Panipat), Institute of hotel management (Chandigarh), Mahrishi Markandeshwar, Mullana University and many more in the survey area.

Hunar Se RozgarTak:

According to a study conducted by Ministry of tourism on Manpower Requirement in hotel industry, the demand for manpower in hotels and restaurant sector far exceed than the supply. The study suggest that the supply of trained manpower is not even touching 40%. The Government of India, Ministry of Tourism has launched a Training Programme. Hunar Se Rozgar Tak, to create employable skills in the interested youth who are in the age group of 18-25 years and who are minimum 8th class pass, Execution of the Programme was to be conducted by the Institutes of Hotel Management and Food Craft Institutes sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism.

Courses Offered: The following two courses are offered:

a) A six week full time course in Food & Beverage Service, also covering housekeeping

b) An eight week full time course in Food Production. Each course will also have a built in emphasis on improving the trainees in behaviour and attitudes in order to enhance their market acceptability. The hotels shall ensure that the quality of training imparted under the said scheme will be of the highest quality so that the pass-outs are proficient enough to be easily employable in the sector.

Developing human capital through education:

As India moves towards being a world economic power, despite the economic slowdown ,the low standards of education raise a legitimate concern about the means through which India will manage to sustain this growth without developing its human capital. With its 357 million illiterates, India is home of a third of the total number of illiterates in the world. This is a statistic in which not many Indian would take pride. The investment in human capital, through quality education, holds the key to inclusive development in the burgeoning Indian economy. The education system, despite its considerable achievements in the last 60 years, is still marred by shortcomings, both the elementary and higher levels, which inhibit the country from becoming

ing a knowledge society. Converting India into a knowledge society shall require, inter alia, addressing the issue of expansion, excellence and inclusion in education while formulating policies for achieving the same.

Emerging trends in hospitality education:

Hospitality means the relationship process between a guest and a host; it also refers to the art or practice of being hospitable. The economic liberalization in the country, open sky policies in the aviation sector during the early 90's and later on the effect of globalization, gave a new boost to hospitality education, though mushrooming of hospitality institutes have posed some threat in the quality of education as a number of institutes are being run without any proper infrastructure.

Customer service and customer satisfaction are now the key words for the success of any business. Students passing out from hospitality institutes discover their importance not only in hotels, restaurants, cruise and catering industries but also in other non-catering industries like, retail outlets, hospitals, telecom industries, food packaging, hospitals, private banks and BPOs.

The entry of more foreign universities and institutions are a real challenge for hospitality institutes in the country. Universities and institutions from USA, UK, France, Switzerland, Australia, and New Zealand are targeting Indian students from affluent families who can speak fluent English. Barring a few, renowned universities like Cornell are yet to make such alliances with Indian institutes.

To counter the challenge many hospitality management institutes have established strategic partnerships with various international universities to facilitate student transfers, faculty exchange and student exchange programs, curriculum sharing and so on. Students from many institutes can complete their final year and internship in those universities and institutions. Unfortunately, there are institutions which partner with little known universities, only for the final year of study abroad, charging fees to the tune of Rs 10,00,000 in the name of internship. It is time to seriously think whether we are doing any good to the students by sending them abroad for internships or whether we are just supplying cheap workforce in the name of internship.

Challenges of Hospitality Education in India:

The success of any course lies on its course curriculum and contents. The changes in the hospitality industry are very fast and the curriculum needs to be in accordance with the needs of the industry. The industry representatives (preferably GMs or operation managers) need to be part of the syllabus committee to help in framing the syllabus.

To give a value based curriculum, AICTE, universities and NCHM have taken up necessary steps to restructure their curriculum. Unfortunately, despite this, hospitality syllabus are not uniform throughout the country.

In some states the State Council's syllabus for diploma course is much more elaborate than the degree course with some unimportant and non-core subject. Lots of importance needs to be placed on task based and management based subjects. Personality development, leadership development, grooming and such value added topics should form part of the curriculum.

New topics like hospital management, retail store management, and call center management should be incorporated in the curriculum. There should be proper co-ordination between the course approval bodies like NCHMCT, AICTE, universities and others to make uniform curriculum. It will be a good idea to bring the entire hospitality education under one umbrella for proper monitoring and uniformity.

Technology has become an integral part of our daily life. Use of technology in managing hotels has become imperative. Knowledge of these technologies particularly in property management is very important. More stress on the use of computer and Property Management System software at the institute level is the need of the hour for making presentations, teaching, research, etc. Curriculum should encourage more use and knowledge of modern equipment in kitchen, restaurants, housekeeping and front office departments.

Activity Based Teaching

Hotel management is always considered as a skilled based course, which is true. Students, after graduating (including management trainees and kitchen trainees) are joining the operational areas and gradually climbing the ladder to take up the responsibility of General Manager and Executive Chef. Therefore, teaching should place more emphasis on task based practical classes. At the same time curriculum should give due importance on management skills also. Case studies, presentations, situation handling, demonstrations, panel discussions and other innovative teaching methods should be adopted in developing the students. Teaching should have full involvement of students. It should be activity based so that students may get more skills with high confidence. The activity based learning in current era is necessity.

Faculty Development Programmes:

Faculty development should become a continuous process as they are the back bone of any institute's success and reflects on the quality of the students the institute produces. Encouragement to acquire higher education, attending seminars and workshops, undertaking research and publication, are a few areas to develop the faculty. Training of a minimum period of 15 to 21 days in the industry to study the changes in operation and management will broaden the horizon of faculty and will benefit students in turn. International exposure under the faculty exchange programs with renowned universities/institutions, attending international seminars and workshops by faculty members will add value to hospitality education. The Faculty development programmes should be designed in a professional manner. The hospitality industry is dynamic and this pace should be considered in Faculty development programmes.

Student Support Activities:

One of the main challenges for any institutes is its student support activities. Clean campuses, well ventilated class rooms, seminar rooms, sports facilities, laboratories with modern equipment, a well-stocked library, and hostel and gym facilities etc for the overall development can make an ideal environment for learning. Regular conduct of seminars, visit interaction of industry captains with students, workshops for personal development, etc helps in improving the overall student quality and must be undertaken by the institute.

Encouragement of students to participate in various inter and intra college activities, be it in sports or cultural programs, helps in student overall development. In house theme parties, annual food festivals and such other activities organized by the students helps them in developing leadership qualities, team building and skills to play in big platform. Commercially run hotels (advance training centers) and restaurant attached to the institutes where students can work in their free time to acquire professional skills, helps them in their confidence building and good placement.

Teaching for the future

Despite witnessing healthy growth over the years, the Indian hospitality industry is facing a dearth of skilled manpower. To cater to this ever increasing demand and supply gap, there is a need to make hospitality education future ready to face challenges, apart from ensuring a sustained supply of human resource. An insight into the present education and training scenario in the Indian hospitality industry and the initiatives desired for future.

India, today, is looked at as a land of opportunities by hospitality players across the globe. As a result, a lot of international and Indian brands are setting up base in the country and have huge expansion plans charted out across the nation. However, with this increased supply comes a dire need for skilled manpower to service them

Getting future ready:

The hotel industry today is as dynamic as any other industry. Keeping this in mind, the idea of improving the existing curriculum to make it more effective has been mooted by the industry from time to time. Industry experts say that along with shop floor training to students, there is a need to integrate accounting and marketing to the course material. Also on the job training is required along with behavioral training. Most hotel companies also demand multitasking in order to cut costs and hence students today need to be multi-skilled. In order to enable the supply of a skilled and efficient human resource for the

industry, hospitality schools in India should revisit certain challenges facing the industry and attract the right kind of talent and develop the right attitude.

Ensuring an adequate supply of educated, trained and motivated staff is critical. Education and training programmes need to be a balance of theory and practical work that complements an operator's market position and culture."he says. Further, awareness of the industry and its prospects is also required by the students. Woodbridge adds, "The Government should play a stronger role in setting high standards in the Indian hospitality industry and should support this with accreditation of hotel industry training centers and awards to those individuals who complete appropriate courses."

Present Status of Hospitality Management Education In India:

The Federation of Hotel and Restaurant Associations (FHRAI) had recently conducted a study on the state of hotel management education in India. **Express Hotelier & Caterer** highlights startling facts that the research revealed...

There has been no data, and no research has been conducted in India on the status of hospitality management or hotel management education. Although a large number of Government and private sector institutions are working in this area, there is no data about the number of students passing out from different courses every year. More than that, there is no data about the demand for trained manpower in the hotel, restaurant and catering industry in India. This study has attempted to fill this gap and provide the necessary data and qualitative information on hospitality management education in India.

A structured questionnaire was sent out to 300 FHRAI hotel members in different cities to provide the necessary data on the various parameters on which research was conducted. The research revealed:

For a qualitative assessment of the status of hospitality education in India and to obtain certain estimated data from the key players, FHRAI also conducted field interviews among the three key stakeholders - the hotel managers, faculty of hotel management institution and students.

21 managers from hotels and restaurants in Delhi, Bangalore and Calcutta stated that the current status of hospitality management education in India and faculty is poor or that it is satisfactory but needs tremendous improvement. A lot of emphasis is laid on theory rather than practical training of hotel operations.

Many interviewees felt that the objective of majority of private sector institutions is to make money and they are not spending enough funds in providing the basic infrastructure, qualified faculty and quality education.

Mushrooming of private sector institutions in hotel management and additional numbers are opening up every year. They usually do not have any infrastructure or labs and have poor faculty and standards. A number of them also said that there should be a curb on such institutions from the Government, who should only allow quality institutions to come up

On the question on the quality of students joining the hotel management institutions, many managers said that it is still the last resort or a low priority program, and bright students go for medical, engineering, IT, business management and other program. However, the situation is improving. This is because of opening up of job opportunities for hotel management graduates in many other sectors like call centre, airlines, banks, shopping malls, cruise ships, multiplexes and others. A large number of them are also able to find jobs abroad.

Faculty members of some Government and private institutions of hotel management contradicted the views of the hotel managers and felt that the standard of hotel management education in India is satisfactory and is going up over the years. This is because of better job prospects for hotel management graduates, not only in hotels and restaurants but also in many other sectors and abroad.

Many faculties also opine that the quality of industrial training in the

hotels is poor. They all squarely blamed the hotels for it, which treat these students as cheap labor and do not give them satisfactory training or a comprehensive exposure to the operations. There are just a few hotels that take good care of the students and have structured and meaningful training program for them. Many faculty members said that these practices are lowering the image of the industry in the eyes of the students and this spreads far and wide through word of mouth. Many of these disenchanted students leave their education before finishing it.

Many faculty members felt that hotels should co-operate more with the institutions in areas like curriculum development, guest lecturers and training of faculty members in the hotels. They appreciated some of the hotels who are inviting the faculty members for a brief exposure of about two weeks where they get to see the working in key departments of the hotel and also get exposed to latest trends in operations, equipment and procedures.

It is now a known fact that hotel management graduates and certificate holders have much wider job prospects and less than half of them join hotels and restaurants after passing out. Some faculty members said that only about 15 per cent of those passing out from diploma/ degree programmes are joining any hotels and restaurants in India. This appears to be too small a number and could perhaps apply to a few upper end institutions from where majority of students are able to afford higher studies or go abroad or have the personality profile to join the higher paying jobs in other service sectors. The other view expressed by some faculty members, who could perhaps apply to majority of the institutions was that about 60 per cent of students passing out from hotel management institutions are joining the hospitality industry in India and the remaining numbers are accounted for by jobs in other sectors like call centres, higher studies and going abroad. It was the general view that a much higher number of students who do one year certificate courses in India, are able to go abroad for jobs as there is a greater demand for such persons in cruise ships and places like the Middle East. Some interviewees said that about 70 per cent of certificate holders are able to go abroad after passing out and a brief job in India.

Majority of students said that they were happy with their studies and the institute. On the question as to whether they would still join hotel management education after seeing the working conditions in hotels, particularly in terms of long hours and low pay, majority of them said that they had known about this in advance and were enthusiastic about doing their careers in the hospitality industry. Some of them were happy that such a course had helped them in personality development, communication skills and grooming, which they would not have received from an ordinary BA course. These remarks and those appearing in the following paragraphs may again be taken in the context that we did the interviews only in a small number of upper end institutions in India.

While hotel managers and faculty members were critical of the state of industrial training for students for different reasons, surprisingly the students all appeared to be happy with their industrial training. They said that this gave them a rare insight into operations in the hotels, which they could not have received while studying in the institute. Majority of them considered the exposure and training in the hotels to be highly valuable to their education and for their job prospects

While hotel managers said that institutes have a theoretical curriculum and many of the things they taught are not in keeping with modern trends in hotels operations, the students did not mind it. They said that they were getting good and useful education, even if it was theoretical. They were getting some practical training in the hotels during their education and they would get more of it when they joined the industry. Some of them did feel that the institutes should revise their curriculum, add more practical hours and also buy some new and latest equipment being used in the hotels.

While hotel managers and some faculty members said that many institutions have poor faculty with low skills and practical exposure, the interviewed students did not agree with this view. Majority of them praised their faculty and said that they were getting good education. Many of them said that their faculty had past experience of working in the industry and this was not an issue. As clarified earlier, this could perhaps apply to a few upper end institutions in India.

On the question of fees being charged in the institutions and whether they were satisfactory or high, the students gave the reply on the basis of where they were studying. Those who were in Government IHMs said that the fees were adequate and should not be increased further.

Future Plan of Ministry of Tourism and Government of India:

According to a study conducted by Ministry of Tourism on manpower requirement in hotel & restaurant sector the demand for manpower far exceeds the supply.

The Tourism Ministry has developed a master plan to increase intake in existing institutes. More craft and skill-level program have been introduced, while hospitality education has been broad based to include hospitality vocational courses at ITIs, polytechnics, at 10+2 stage of CBSE and introduction of specific tailor-made skill testing and certification program.

By the end of the 11th five-year plan, the target is to have 49 Institutes of Hotel Management and 31 Food Craft Institutes, plus a tourism management centre in the south. But there's a need to standardize the quality of hospitality education.

Indian Colleges offering program in Hospitality		
Institute	Location	Programme
Institute of Hotel Management	Ahmedabad, Mumbai, Chandigarh, Chennai	BSc, Hospitality and Hotel Administration Program (3 years)
Institute of Hotel management (Taj Group)	Aurangabad	BA (Hons) Hotel Management (4 years)
Barkatullah University	Bhopal	PG Diploma in Tourism & Hotel Management (1 year)
Institute of Hotel Management	Bangalore	MSc in Hospitality Administration (2 years)
Christ College	Bangalore	Bachelor of Hotel Management (4 years)
Dr. Ambedkar Institute of Hotel Management	Chandigarh	Diploma in Hotel Operation, Catering & Applied Nutrition (3 years)
Institute of Hotel Management	Chennai	BSc in Hospitality and Hotel Administration (3 years)
FHRAI Institute of Hotel Management	Greater Noida	BSc (Hons) International Hospitality Administration (4 years)
Institute of Hotel Management	Hyderabad	BSc/Msc in Hospitality & Hotel Administration (3 years)
Institute of Hotel Management	Kolkata	BSc in Hospitality and Hotel Administration
Vardhaman Mahaveer Open University	Kota	PG Diploma in Tourism & Hotel Management (1 year) (Distance Education)
Welcome Group (WGSMA)	Manipal	Diploma/Msc/Bachelor of Hotel Management (3/2/4 years)
Rizvi College of Management	Mumbai	BA in International Hospitality Administration (4 years)

Institute of Hotel Management	Mumbai	BSc in Hospitality and Hotel Administration (3 years)
Institute of Hotel Management, George Brown College	Mumbai	International Chef Diploma (close to 3 years)
Institute of Hotel Management	New Delhi	BSc in Hospitality & Hotel Administration (3 years)
Merit Swiss Asian School of Hotel Management	Ooty	BSc in Hotel Management (3 years)
Punjab Technical University, Jalandhar	Jalandhar	Bachelor of Hotel Management & Catering Technology (4 years)
Department of Tourism & Hotel Management, Kurukshetra University, Kurukshetra	Kurukshetra	Bachelor of Hotel Management & Master in Hotel Management
Institute of Hotel Management	Jyotisar	BSc in Hospitality & Hotel Administration (3 years)

Exhibit: 2, Hospitality education around the country, Source: National Council of Hotel Management and Catering Technology, www.nchmct.ac.in

Source:

Conclusion:

As per views to respondents the success of any course lies on its course curriculum and contents. The changes in the hospitality industry are very fast and the curriculum needs to be in accordance with the needs of the industry. The industry representatives (preferably GMs or operation managers) need to be part of the syllabus committee to help in framing the syllabus. To give a value based curriculum, AICTE, universities and NCHMCT have taken up necessary steps to restructure their curriculum. Unfortunately, despite this, hospitality syllabus is not uniform throughout the country. Requirement of faculty development program for their continuous development Students need to trained as per industry requirement .Industry-institution partnership is required at all levels, i.e., training, course development,

motivational & guest lectures by industry experts till final placement .Major finding of the study is that hospitality education is being offered by more of private institution and universities, if government comes forward to offer these courses at affordable cost .Further industries may be encouraged to be partner with educational institutions .Introducing earn while you learn program shall be an effective to attain the objective of ensuring employability of students. There is high need to bridge up the industry-academia interface. The results are also suggesting that there should be proper government monitoring over the private hotel management institutes to maintain the education quality and its utility for hospitality industry.

In the words of Martin Luther King Junior-We may have all come from different ships, but we are in the same boat now. It would be a win-win situation for all if the stakeholder can work together in cooperation and mutual understanding.

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