Original Research Paper

Management

A Study on Student Perception of Education and Training Programs Offered by India's Hotel Management Institutes

Deepak Sharma	Dean, Indian Institute of Learning & Advanced Development, P – 81, Sector – 34, Gurugram, Haryana – 122004
R.C.Gupta	MBA CHA FIH,Executive Director, Indian Institute of Learning & Advanced Development, P – 81, Sector – 34, Gurugram, Haryana – 122004

ABSTRACT
India being one of the favouritetourist spots due to its high cultural diversity has observed a huge growth of hospitality industry, which in turn has increased the demand of professionals those who can manage this sector. However, there are many problems inherent the hotel industry, particularly related to education and manpower management. This study attempts to bridge the gap between expectations and reality of Indian hospitality management courses by understanding students' perception.

1. Introduction

Travel and tourism sector is one of the biggest contributors to India's economic growth and provides employment to over 8% of India's workforce. According to industry estimates its contribution to India's GDP is likely to grow to 7.2% by 2025, up from 6.23% in 2016. This boom has also translated into an increased demand for skilled personnel, resulting in an upsurge in the number of hotel management institutes imparting knowledge and job skills through the right training programs (Pol & Patil 2015). However, most of them still lack a well-defined and practice-based curriculum which gives students thorough experience of what the hospitality industry requires from its graduates.

Past researches have shown that students have an unfavourable view of the industry due to long working hours, lower profile being offered to as compared to their qualifications, gender bias at the workplace, lack of skills required in the job, and education and classroom teaching being different from the actual work. Stress is a common occurrence among new employees in the industry due to overtime work (Jogaratnam & Buchanan 2004). This, coupled with lack of bright career prospects results in many of them leaving the industry within a few years and migrating to other sectors of employment (Ravikumar 2011). In such a scenario, it is pertinent to understand the perception of the students undergoing the course regarding the training and education being given to them by the institute. Therefore the present study is an attempt in this regard.

2. Aim of Study

The aim of this study is to study the student perception of education and training programs offered by India's hotel management institutes.

3. Literature Review

Training is an essential part of hotel management courses as it gives an insight as to the actual needs of industry, imparts technical know-how about customer service and operations and develops the skills required for further growth in the sector. This is done through a number of elements during the course such as academic curriculum, course content, teaching methods, internship, skill development, and industrial visits (Airey & Tribe 2005).

One of the foremost factors affecting the outcome of course is the *curriculum*. A study on importance of curriculum in hotel management courses was conducted by Lee (2008) who asserted that practical experience gained in the curriculum enables the students to have a better understanding of the industry trends, increased network of professionals, inhibits an better ability to adapt to changes, and also improves their leadership qualities.

Industrial visits provide benefits to all the stakeholders of hospitality sector (Chauhan & Gupta 2009). Students, however, are the biggest beneficiaries in this arrangement since gain knowledge about the working environment of industry and helps them focus on the required operational and managerial skill ***development*** during the course.

The impact of ***internship*** in building the managerial competence of students indicates that 'on the job training' is the most effective method. It enables the students to acquire general skills and specific skills. Felicen, Rasa & Buted (2014)(Richardson 2009) studied the importance of internship in which the found that the only students who did not undergo the internship program lacked motivation and interest in pursuing hospitality as their career path.

The challenges faced by the Indian hospitality sector have not been reviewed extensively in literature, but not in the context of education. For instance, Jauhari & Manaktola (2009) draw comparisons with developed countries regarding the performance of the sector and recommend remedial measures to improve productivity, reduce attrition and improve the quality of education consistently. However, it is important to gain an understanding of student perception of the quality of education in order to bring about a remarkable change in the scenario.
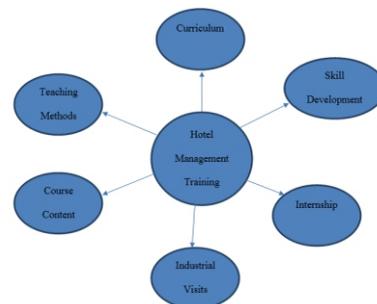
Figure 1: Conceptual Framework

4. Methodology

Primary research on 50 students with the help of a survey was undertaken in this study. The survey constitutes basic information (demographic profile of students), and their perception of various constituents of the course. Respondents were chosen using random stratified sampling. The college chosen for study met the criteria of highest number of students getting admission, passing percentage was high and drop out percentage was low. The ratio of male and female is equal in the sampled population of the institute. Students

enrolled in Bachelors of Hotel Management course pursuing their second year of education were targeted because they have experienced a year in the institute and have undergone training through internship, workshops etc. The data collected has been analysed using SPSS software and presented using tables, graphical and text representation.

5. Analysis
a) Descriptive analysis
The sample of 50 student's shows that more than 80% of students have internship mandatory in their course in which they have covered areas like lodging, tourism and customer relation, meeting and event planning etc.
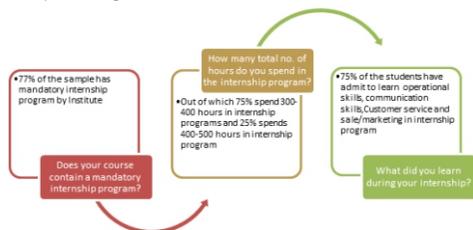
Figure 2: Internship program

As seen in Figure 4, 30% of student's reported that teaching method in their institute is more focused on mix of traditional teaching and e-learning and interactive learning which include the methods like virtual teaching, online teaching etc.
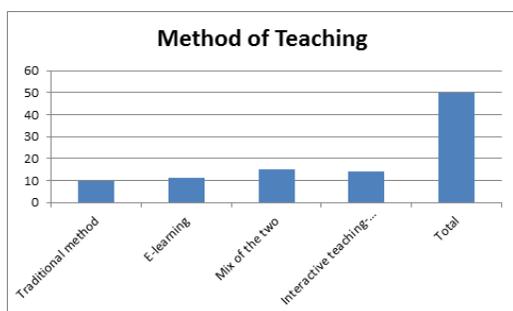

Figure 3: Method of teaching followed in the course

b) Satisfaction with the Institute
In the study, more than 70% skill development including managerial, communication and technical is the most important factor causing satisfactory perception about the institute. Also, we found that these students are satisfied because of the training they are getting which is preparing them to manage clients confidently, perform dynamic roles etc.
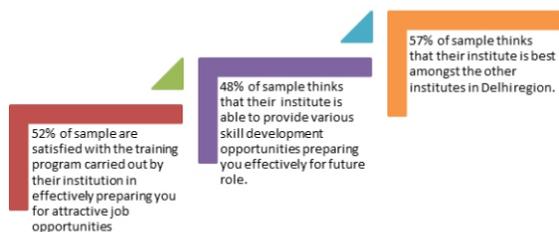

Figure 4: Students' satisfaction with overall course

c) Inferential Analysis
I. Reliability
Cronbach's test with a value of more than 0.6 shows high reliability of the data collected. In the present study, the Cronbach's Alpha value was high at 0.889, confirming that there is high internal consistency and that the data is reliable.

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	No.of Items
0.889	6

Table 1: Reliability testing of primary data

ii. Correlation
Hypothesis 1_N: Students' perception of quality of education and training in their institute is not influenced by any factor
Hypothesis 1_A: Students' perception of quality of education and training in their institute is influenced by several factors

Correlation Coefficient was undertaken to determine the extent of interdependence between students' perception and the independent variables. For this study, student's perception has been taken as a dependent variable and five main factors indicated taken as independent. As seen in Table 1, three main variables were found to be highly correlated with Students' perception, based on their high Pearson Correlation values and significance. For Course Content, Pearson correlation at 0.959 (p= .000) shows that there is high significance of practical approach of course and application during internship on the student's perception. Further, Curriculum showed high correlation (Pearson = 0.932, p= .000) signifying that the quality of curriculum of the institute had a strong influence on students' perception of quality education and training. A study by Pinto (2013) has shown similar results that course and curriculum plays an important role in student's internship experience and in overall understanding of the industry.

Correlations	Students Perception	Significance (2-tailed)
Course Content	.959**	.000
Curriculum	.932**	.000
Internship Experience	.778**	.000
Teaching Method	.288*	.042
Industrial Visit	.377**	.007

Table 2: Correlation analysis of Students perceptions and its contributing factors

iii. Regression

Model Summary				
Hypothesis	R Square	Adjusted R Square	F	Significance
H1$_N$	.948	.942	161.53	.000

Table 3: Model Summary of the impact of several factors on Students' perceptions in HM institutes

In order to determine the extent of influence each of the independent variables had on the students' perception of the education and training in HM institutes, regression analysis was carried out. As seen in Model Summary (Table 3), the overall fitness of good is indicated by Adjusted R-square value which is 94.2%, suggesting that course content, internship, industrial visit, curriculum and teaching method explained almost 95% of variation in the students' perception. The high F-value, along with high significance (p= .000) signifies that the null hypothesis can be

rejected, that no factors influence students' perceptions in HM institutes. In a previous study conducted by Lee, (2008), similar results that student's perception is strongly affected by industrial visits, classroom activities etc. have been shown.

Model		Standardized Coefficients Beta	t	Sig.
1	(Constant)		-2.919	.006
	Course Content	.605	5.429	.000
	Curriculum	.219	1.982	.054
	Internship Experience	.155	2.433	.019
	Teaching Method	-.256	-2.840	.007
	Industrial Visit	.312	3.723	.001

Table 4: Regression Coefficients of five independent variables on Students' perceptions in HM institutes

Further, regression Coefficient analysis (Table 4) was done to evaluate the extent of each of these factors influence student's perception and found that almost all the variables were found to influence students' perceptions, except Curriculum (Coefficient= .219, p= .054), which had low significance. Course content with coefficient value of .605 suggested that 1 unit increase in course content led to .60 units increase in students' perceptions. Further, Industrial Visit also showed to significantly contribute to student perception. However, Teaching Methods was found to contribute negatively to student's perception which means in unit increase in teaching method will lead to decrease in student's perception by .25 units.

Overall, the Null Hypothesis $H1_N$ was rejected, and its alternate accepted that, students' perceptions in Hotel Management Institutes are influenced by several factors.

6. Conclusion

It is now evident from the study that student's perception is more likely to get affected by course content, internship experience and curriculum in comparison to teaching methods and industrial visits. Researches in past show almost a similar trend which provides validity of this study too. So, this gives institutes a reason to focus on both course and curriculum structure which will give a direction to students to achieve excellence in their field. There is a boom of hospitality sector in our country along with the increase in the supply of workforce, but the advantage of two can be taken only when this workforce is provided with good guidance and skill empowerment. The study provides recommendation in general for the all the institutes to focus more on their institute's education structure which will not only benefit students but will also benefit the institute in long run and hospitality. Programs should be designed in a manner where there is greater application of theoretical knowledge by students; preparedness of students should be improved in regards to communication skills and handling of customers with confidence.

References

1. Airey, D. & Tribe, J., 2005. An International Handbook of Tourism Education, Oxon: Routledge.
2. Chauhan, V. & Gupta, B., 2009. Role and Effectiveness of Industrial Training in Tourism Education. International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Systems, 2(1).
3. Jauhari, V. & Manaktola, K., 2009. Managing workforce issues in the hospitality industry in India. Worldwide Hospitality and Tourism themes, 1(1), pp.19–24.
4. Jogaratnam, G. & Buchanan, P., 2004. Balancing the demands of school and work: stress and employed hospitality students. International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management, 16(4), pp.237–245.
5. Lee, S. a., 2008. Increasing Student Learning: A Comparison of Students' Perceptions of Learning in the Classroom Environment and their Industry-Based Experiential Learning Assignments. Journal of Teaching in Travel & Tourism, 7(4), pp.37–54.
6. Pinto, C., 2013. Transition of tradition curriculum to a more practical approach in hotel schools. Stamford Journal.
7. Rajeshree S. Pol & Hemraj Patil, 2015. Perception of Final Year Hotel Management Students towards Working in Hotel Industry. Atithya: A Journal of Hospitality, 2.
8. Ravikumar, R., 2011. Hotel industry grapples with high attrition, rising staff cost. The Hindu - Businessline. Available at: http://www.thehindubusinessline.com/economy/hotel-industry-grapples-with-high-attrition-rising-staff-cost/article1718580.ece.
9. Richardson, S., 2009. Undergraduates' perceptions of tourism and hospitality as a career choice. International Journal of Hospitality Management, 28(3), pp.382–388.
10. Sevillia S. Felicen, Lhea C. Rasa, J.E.S. & Buted, D.R., 2014. Internship Performance of Tourism and Hospitality Students: Inputs to Improve Internship Program. International Journal of Academic Research in Business and Social Sciences, Vol. 4, No.