



Paucity of the Talented Professionals: a Major Challenge for Tourism Industry

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ABSTRACT

To keep up the growth in the travel and tourism industry, trained manpower/ workforce is required at every level — managerial, supervisory, skilled or semi-skilled. Major challenges faced at each level are different. At mid and senior management levels, the industry faces talent crunch and at the front-line staff level, although human resources are adequate, a boom in other service industries such as banking, retail, airline and BPO have resulted in shortage of manpower at this level for the travel and tourism industry.

The present paper focuses on the paucity of the talented manpower faced by the industry and also tries to suggest and recommend some of the initiatives which can be taken for filling up the gap between the demand and the supply in the tourism industry.

Keywords : Manpower, talent, skilled, Industry, Challenge etc.

INTRODUCTION: The immense growth in the Indian tourism industry can be attributed to several factors. The boom in Indian economy has resulted in more disposable income in the hands of middle class. Also, increasing large number of people to spend money on vacations abroad or at home. India is also a booming IT hub and more people are coming to India on business trips. There are number of challenges faced by the industry in terms of Human resource development which finally to cater the demands of the customers like Shortage of skilled manpower, Improper HR practices, Lack of knowledge of service providers, Lack of Education improvement in tourism and hospitality, Lack of implementation of Government policies etc. The paper focuses on the remedies to resolve the issue of the paucity of the trained manpower. The paper is based on the study conducted in order to understand the view point of the stakeholders regarding the quality, skills, competence and availability of manpower.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

Objectives of the Study:

1. To understand the main reason of the paucity of the trained manpower in the Industry.
2. To understand the reasons why the attrition rate is so high in the tourism sector.
3. To understand the lacunas in the HR practices in the tourism industry.
4. To suggest some suitable steps to make the tourism an attractive profession.

Scope of the Study:

The study confines itself to the reasons related to the paucity of the trained and skilled manpower in the tourism industry in India.

Sample design and methodology:

The relevant data for the study has been collected from both the primary and the secondary data, the primary data is collected from the telephonic and field survey conducted on the various stakeholders of the industry viz; tourists, travel agents, employees of the various travel houses and hoteliers etc. Two sets of the questionnaire were designed one to know about the view point of the tourists and another one to understand the opinion of the service providers about the reasons

of the paucity of the skilled manpower in the business. With the help of literature review, total of 05 questions were developed for each questionnaire to understand the reasons of the paucity of the manpower in the tourism industry. In Figure 1, the two main entities i.e. Tourist's and the travel agents/ hoteliers etc. were identified and the findings are based on the opinion of the both the stakeholders.

There were total of 50 respondents for the questionnaire number one (Tourists) and 50 respondents for the questionnaire number two (travel agents/ hoteliers etc.). The observations were done using the Likert's scale and the hypothesis was tested through Chi-square Test: The chi-square test is used with discrete data in the form of frequencies. It is a test of independence and is used to estimate the likelihood that some factors other than chance account for the observed relationship. Since the null hypothesis states that there is no relationship between the variables under study, the chi-square test merely evaluates the probability that the observed relationship results from chance. The chi-square test represents a useful method of comparing experimentally obtained results with those to be expected theoretically on some hypothesis. The equation for chi-square is stated as follows:

$$\chi^2 = \sum \left[\frac{f_o - f_e}{f_e} \right]^2$$

f_o = Frequency of the occurrence of observed or experimentally determined facts.

f_e = Expected frequency of occurrence on some hypothesis.

The difference between the observed and expected frequencies are squared and divided by the expected number in each case, and the sum of these quotients is χ^2 . The more closely the observed results approximate to the expected, the smaller the chi-square and the closer the agreement between observed data and the hypothesis being tested. On the contrary, the larger the chi-square the greater the probability of a real divergence of experimentally observed from expected results. The opinions were sought on the following statements.

1. Tourism Industry is facing the paucity of the trained manpower

2. Tourists experience is affected by the poor expertise of the professionals.
3. How difficult is it for the Hoteliers/Travel houses to get the good manpower etc.

TABLE 1: QUESTIONNAIRE 1

Total sample: 50 (Degrees Of Freedom=4, Critical Chisqr Value=9.488, Los=.05)

Q1	Tourism Industry Lacks in skilled Manpower	No. of Respondents	%	Chi Value	Mean
1	SA	22	44	22.2	3.6
2	A	11	22		
3	NC	02	04		
4	D	08	16		
5	SD	07	14		
Q2	Lack of Knowledge of the service providers	No. of Respondents	%	Chi Value	Mean
1	SA	18	36	21.6	3.4
2	A	18	36		
3	NC	04	08		
4	D	11	22		
5	SD	06	12		
Q3	Unskilled manpower hampers your experience	No. of Respondent	%	Chi Value	Mean
1	SA	14	28	17.4	3.56
2	A	17	34		
3	NC	04	08		
4	D	13	26		
5	SD	02	04		
Q4	Poor treatment by service providers	No. of Respondent	%	Chi Value	Mean
1	SA	11	22	17	3.34
2	A	20	40		
3	NC	02	04		
4	D	09	18		
5	SD	08	16		
Q5	Pay little more if better professional services	No. of Respondents	%	Chi Value	Mean
1	SA	15	30	12.4	3.30
2	A	14	28		
3	NC	01	02		
4	D	11	22		
5	SD	09	18		

Source: Data is collected at Nainital in Uttarakhand and through e-questionnaire from Delhi/Noida.

SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), NC (No comments), D (Disagree), SD (Strongly Disagree)

TABLE 2 : QUESTIONNAIRE 2

Total sample: 50 (Degrees Of Freedom=4, Critical Chisqr Value=9.488, Los=.05)

Q1	Your organisation has proper service rules/HR policies for your employees	No. of Respondents	%	Chi Value	Mean
1	SA	06	12	24.2	2.34
2	A	07	14		
3	NC	01	02		
4	D	20	40		
5	SD	16	32		

Q2	Employees has proper Formal Training	No. of Respondents	%	Chi Value	Mean
1	SA	10	20	12.6	2.64
2	A	07	14		
3	NC	03	06		
4	D	12	24		
5	SD	18	36		
Q3	Organisation easily gets the skilled employees	No. of Respondents	%	Chi Value	Mean
1	SA	08	16	24.6	2.8
2	A	07	14		
3	NC	02	04		
4	D	23	46		
5	SD	10	20		
Q4	Employees are send frequently for training programmes like "Skills Development etc."	No. of Respondents	%	Chi Value	Mean
1	SA	07	14	20	2.46
2	A	08	16		
3	NC	01	02		
4	D	19	38		
5	SD	15	30		
Q5	Attrition rate is high in your organisation is not very high	No. of Respondents	%	Chi Value	Mean
1	SA	8	16	24.6	2.74
2	A	7	14		
3	NC	2	4		
4	D	23	46		
5	SD	10	20		

Source: Data is collected at Nainital in Uttarakhand and through e-questionnaire from Delhi/Noida.

SA (Strongly Agree), A (Agree), NC (No comments), D (Disagree), SD (Strongly Disagree)

Interpretations: It is very clear from Table 1 that the responses of the tourist in questionnaire one that tourist's strongly agree or agree on all the five questions related to the type of human resources with they have interacted that Tourism Industry Lacks in skilled Manpower, Lack of Knowledge to the service providers, Unskilled manpower hampers their experience, They don't want to visit destination again because of poor treatment by service providers but very interestingly they are ready to pay little more if better professional services are provided to them. And for all the five questions the Chi-square values are 22.2, 21.6, 17.4, 17, 12.4 respectively which is very much higher than the tabled value i.e., 9.488 which clearly means that there is significant difference in the opinion of the tourist regarding the questions asked to them.

Interpretations: It is clear from Table 2 that the responses of the stakeholders in questionnaire two, that tourist's strongly disagree or disagree /NC zone on all the five questions related to the HR policies, formal training, Organisation easily getting the skilled employees without compromising on their quality, Employees are send frequently for training programmes like "Skills Development etc.", Attrition rate is high in your organisation is not very high. And for all the five questions the Chi-square values are 24.2, 12.6, 24.6, 20, and 24.6 respectively which is very much higher than the tabled value i.e., 9.488 which clearly means that there is significant difference in the opinion of the tourist regarding the questions asked to them.

SUGGESTIONS: A good human resource planning, job description/ specification and career planning is required at all levels of organization in tourism. People working at different levels should be given regular and timely training which will improve their skills, abilities. Image building of the Industry needs to be done with the help of better services and professional standards. The industry people and government should take the initiative to promote travel, tourism industry amongst young talented generation and attract them to join

the industry making it long term career oriented. Academia-Corporate Interfaces, Collaborations with the corporate which has not yet entered into the tourism field fully, should be encouraged to enter into this field to manage & develop it professionally. Government must expand facilities for Training and Certification of existing and aspiring service providers to bridge the huge skill gap for non managerial skilled manpower; completely free courses must be encouraged and popularized; Tailor-made programmes permissible must be developed and promoted; Wage loss compensation for the working employees must be provided by the government in case they take up training programme because in all the cases they have no choice but to stick to their job for earning his/her daily meal. The universities colleges running all tourism related programmes must design their courses according to the needs of the industry. The tourism and hospitality courses taught at university are lacks employability factor and are very much theoretical, in nature the curriculum has not been re-

vised for long. The tourism education courses having lack of practical orientation, Industry experts/ Guest faculty from the industry are available in the urban areas but, when it comes down to Tier-II and Tier-III cities a rare industry interface is available also the course curriculum does not give emphasis on soft skills and personality development. The government must initiate the schemes like incentives /tax exemptions etc. to the service providers. Poor salary structure, long working hours, uncertain career path, lack of professional growth, lack of training and development, quality of work culture are the key issues in tourism industry which need to be addressed by the industry in order to attract the good professional. The tourism needs to be introduced at the school level. As we have seen from the observations at its interpretations that tourists are ready to pay an extra penny if provided better and professionalized services which revitalize their whole experience and motivate them to travel again to the destination.

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