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A descriptive analysis of trainee's perception about effectiveness of industrial training programmes offered by Indian hotel industry

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Abstract

This study examines the perception of trainees regarding the effectiveness of industrial training programmes offered by the Indian hotel industry. With the hotel industry experiencing rapid growth, there is a rising demand for fresh graduates to meet the industry's workforce needs. Hotel universities play a crucial role in providing skilled manpower and internships in various hotels are an essential part of the curriculum to develop operational skills not taught in the classroom. However, there seems to be a disparity in career expectations among students after completing their internships. This research aims to identify these differences in perception and students' opinions and commitment towards pursuing a career in the hotel industry. The study collected data from a sample of hotel management students who had either completed their internships. A questionnaire was administered to assess descriptive such as working conditions, learning opportunities, and compensation that influence career choices in the hotel industry. The results indicate that students perceive the hotel industry as a growing sector with abundant employment opportunities, and a significant percentage of students expressed a favourable attitude towards working in the industry. This research aims to highlight the challenges that need to be addressed, as hotel management students are a critical workforce for the industry's sustainability. By understanding students' perceptions and expectations, steps can be taken to improve the effectiveness of industrial training programs and enhance the overall image and attractiveness of the hotel industry as a career choice.

Keywords: Hotel industry, internship, career perception, hotel management students

Introduction

The hospitality industry, being a service-oriented sector, relies heavily on a skilled and dedicated workforce to ensure its success. The quality of service provided by employees directly influences customer satisfaction and loyalty (Richardson, 2009) [27]. To meet the industry's workforce requirements, hotel schools play a vital role in producing future professionals for the hospitality sector. According to Charles's (1992) [9] research, when the expectations of students pursuing hospitality education do not align with what the industry offers, it can result in increased dissatisfaction and a higher rate of attrition or reluctance to join the industry. For the long-term sustainability of the hospitality industry, it is crucial to understand the perceptions and expectations of hotel management students regarding their future careers. These students represent the potential future workforce of the industry. By gaining insight into their perceptions, the industry can identify areas of improvement and bridge the gap between student expectations and industry offerings. This understanding can help in attracting and retaining skilled professionals who are enthusiastic about pursuing a career in the hospitality industry.

According to the research conducted by Getz (1994) [15] and Jenkins (2001) [17], it has been observed that students who initially enroll in hospitality management courses often have high expectations and positive perceptions about the hospitality industry. The purpose of this study is to investigate whether the internship experience has an influence on this change in career perception among students. The authors aim to explore the potential impact of internships on students' attitudes and perceptions towards the hospitality industry.

This study aims to examine the perceptions of trainees regarding the effectiveness of industrial training programs provided by the Indian hotel industry. The primary objective is to determine if there is a disparity in the students' career perceptions about industrial training. Additionally, the study seeks to ascertain whether the intended purpose of providing real-

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world exposure through industrial training is being fulfilled, or if it is influencing the students' perception of the hotel industry and subsequently increasing their inclination to leave the industry.

Review of literature

Lerner (1988) ^[20] highlighted that internships offer graduate students valuable hands-on experience in their chosen career field, thereby enhancing their chances of a successful professional trajectory. Educators in the hospitality industry also recognize internships as a significant opportunity for students to gain real-world experience and develop their professional skills.

Davies (1990) ^[11] suggested that internships provide students with a valuable opportunity to integrate their knowledge and skills. The learning experience gained during an internship has a significant impact on students' learning outcomes and their attitudes toward their future careers.

Barron & Maxwell (1993) ^[5] studied students in hospitality management courses without any prior industrial exposure, the findings reveal a highly positive perception of the industry. Barron's (1997) ^[14] research on 160 first-year hospitality students in Australia indicates that these students have positive views regarding fair treatment of employees, favorable working environments, career opportunities, career advancement, and remuneration in the hotel industry.

Ross (1994) ^[30] studied the hospitality profession is frequently perceived as glamorous, which attracts students to enroll in hotel schools with the anticipation of pursuing a rewarding career in the hospitality industry.

Getz (1994) ^[15] conducted a study of students in the Spey Valley in Scotland, it was found that junior students initially held positive views about hospitality jobs, considering them fulfilling and satisfying. However, as they progressed in their studies, many students developed a negative perception of the industry and expressed a desire to pursue higher education or shift to other industries.

Baum & Nickson (1998) ^[6] described striking a balance between theory and practical skills as the key challenge in hospitality education. Overemphasizing theoretical knowledge may lead students to question the applicability of their studies, while excessive focus on practical aspects may leave them lacking the necessary skills to comprehend the industry effectively. Achieving the right balance is crucial for a well-rounded hospitality education.

Rimington (1999) ^[28] argues that hospitality course provides foundation, generic and transferable skills whilst the industry will provide the practice part of the studies, which is twice as important as it gives students the chance to learn in real life and a period of time to reflect upon the reality of their studies.

Michael Armstrong (2000) ^[1] explained that training is directly related to the employee's performance. It is a formal and systematic modification of behavior through learning which occurs as a result of education, instruction, development, & planned experience.

Jenkins (2001) ^[17] described that students' enthusiasm for a career in hospitality tends to diminish as they advance through their academic years. Roney and Öztin's (2007) ^[29] study indicates that senior students hold a more negative perception of the industry, citing factors such as irregular working hours, low wages, strenuous labor, and job insecurity as significant concerns.

Kusluvan (2003) ^[19] research emphasized the importance of comprehending the career perception of current hospitality management students. This understanding is crucial in shedding light on the factors that contribute to a significant shift in students' attitudes toward their careers in the industry, leading to a notable increase in negative impressions and even reluctance to pursue a career in the hospitality sector.

O'Driscoll & O'Connell (2005) investigated the perception of hotel management students indicating a positive inclination towards working in the industry. Students perceive the industry as one that offers growth and employment opportunities. However, notable differences arise between junior and final-year students concerning factors such as pay, working hours, and overall attitudes toward the industry. Final-year students tend to hold a more negative perception of these aspects.

Adler (2008) ^[21] examined the future career expectations of hospitality and tourism management students in China. The reasons which the student rated most for their unwillingness to join the industry are unattractive jobs, low pay, and lack of career advancement prospects instead they want to switch to other industry where their earnings would be high. Richardson (2008) ^[26] study also revealed that the students are keen on switching their careers to other industries.

Chen, Hu, Wang, & Chen (2011) ^[10] described the training as the perfect opportunity for the students to complement their knowledge and skills. The learning experience during the period of internship impacts the learning outcomes and attitudes of the students toward their future careers.

Aquino (2014) ^[2] aimed to examine the expectations of various stakeholders during the internship program. Industrial training provides students with hands-on experience in their field of specialization, with the industry serving as a guide or mentor in providing knowledge and skills. However, it is important to address any discrepancies in the expectations of stakeholders, such as the industry or the intern, as the ultimate goal is to achieve successful practicum training for all involved.

McHugh (2017) ^[23] studied, interns require a more comprehensive integration process compared to regular new employees in an organization. This is because interns are seeking both specific skill development and broader career development experiences within a limited period. Additionally, interns may have a fragile sense of self in the workplace, making it important to provide appropriate support. Therefore, it is crucial to examine the impact of work-based social support on internship satisfaction. Understanding this relationship can have significant practical implications for managing hospitality internship programs in higher education institutions.

Anderson & Sanga (2019) ^[3] conclude that educational institutions offering tourism and hospitality programme and industry partners need to contribute to developing an internship program that can ensure student learning outcomes meet academic rigor and industry needs.

Giousmpasoglou & Marinakou, (2021) ^[16] identified various factors which motivate the training satisfaction of hospitality management students. Organization in which students pursue their training provides learning opportunities to the students and develops knowledge of the students which helps in the final placement of the students, while low stipend paid during internship act as a limitation and contributes to the dissatisfaction of students.

Suparman (2022) [31] emphasized that when organizing training programs, companies should carefully consider the training needs of both the employees and the company. This ensures that the training provided is beneficial and addresses the challenges faced by the company. Moreover, it is essential to ensure that the investment of resources, including time and funds, in the training program does not have any adverse effects on the company or its workforce.

Research objectives

Trainee’s perception about effectiveness of industrial training programmes offered by Indian hotel industry

Research methodology

For this work, an empirical approach was adopted and data was collected from the concerned stakeholders on the same areas prior to and after post internship. The questionnaire was based on 5 point Likert’s Scale and 798 students were

asked to mark their responses. Convenience sampling was adopted and the students had the following characteristics:

- Both male and female students were included in the study.
- The questionnaire was explained to the students for getting proper responses.

The collected data was properly entered in SPSS 26; for analysis. In statistics Cronbach’s Alpha which is the coefficient of internal consistency is an estimate of the reliability of a psychometric test for a set of samples. This is used in social science research work to test the reliability of the set of variables. Table no. 1 shows the Value of the Cronbach’s Alpha ≥ 0.984 is considered excellent internal consistency. For this research Cronbach’s Alpha statistic was implemented on the 19 statement descriptive items using SPSS 26, the value (Table 1) confirms that the reliability of the test is excellent.

Table 1: Reliability Statistics

Reliability Statistics	
Cronbach's Alpha	No. of Items
.984	19

Data analysis

Descriptive Statistics of Various Variables of Training Programmes

Table no. 2 presents the descriptive statistics of responses provided by trainees/ students regarding training programmes in Indian hospitality industry.

The statistics provide an overview of the respondents' perceptions regarding different aspects of the training programmes. The mean values indicate the average ratings for each statement, and the standard deviation represents the degree of variability or dispersion in the ratings. It's important to note that the ratings are based on a scale of 1 to 5, where 1 represents the lowest agreement or satisfaction and 5 represents the highest agreement or satisfaction. The descriptive statistics provide a quantitative summary of the respondents' perceptions and can be used to analyse the overall trends and variations in their responses. The table

presents descriptive statistics for a set of statements related to training programmes. These statements were rated on a scale of 1 to 5, with higher values indicating stronger agreement or positive perceptions. The statistics provided include the number of respondents (N) who provided valid responses for each statement, along with measures such as the minimum and maximum ratings, the mean (average) rating, the standard deviation (a measure of variability), and the standard error of the mean. By analyzing these statistics, we can gain insights into the respondents' views and experiences regarding the training programmes. For example, the mean ratings reveal the average level of agreement or satisfaction for each statement. A higher mean indicates a more positive perception of the particular aspect of the training program, while a lower mean suggests a comparatively lower level of agreement.

Table 2: Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive Statistics						
	N	Minimum	Maximum	Mean		Std. Deviation
	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Statistic	Std. Error	Statistic
Training programmes contribute for the betterment of your working skills	798	1	5	4.06	0.04	1.172
Terminology and concepts during the training programmes were relevant for your work	798	1	5	3.92	0.04	1.094
Techniques used during training programmes were innovative and practical	798	1	5	3.95	0.04	1.115
You feel recommend such training programmes to continued	798	1	5	3.9	0.04	1.157
Principles and issues discussed during the training programmes	798	1	5	3.9	0.04	1.148
The delivery of training programmes was effective	798	1	5	4.01	0.04	1.066
You acquired the intended Job knowledge and skills out of the training programmes	798	1	5	3.94	0.04	1.163
You learnt, how to improve work performance during the training	798	1	5	4.02	0.04	1.165
You learnt innovative methods, latest techniques and trends during training programmes	798	1	5	3.91	0.04	1.2
You realized that training programmes have improved your performance and productivity	798	1	5	3.99	0.04	1.158
Training programmes has enhanced positive attitude towards hotel industry	798	1	5	3.86	0.04	1.246
The training programmes was enriched your competencies	798	1	5	3.87	0.04	1.158
You feel that there is a constructive change in your behaviour due to the	798	1	5	3.86	0.04	1.226

training programmes						
You become more positive towards organizational culture and management due to the training programmes	798	1	5	3.89	0.04	1.21
You become more enthusiastic and passionate about your work due to the training programmes	798	1	5	3.88	0.04	1.153
Training programmes help in retaining trainees as professional in hotel industry	798	1	5	3.88	0.04	1.163
Training programmes increases your participation in the organization	798	1	5	3.95	0.04	1.162
You feel that your chance of committing work errors and the frequency of rework will be decreased due to the training programmes	798	1	5	3.76	0.04	1.198
Training programmes has enhanced your satisfaction level	798	1	5	3.9	0.04	1.197
Valid N (list wise)	798					

Additionally, the standard deviation provides information about the dispersion or variability of the ratings. A larger standard deviation implies that the respondents' opinions were more diverse or scattered, indicating a wider range of perspectives on the given statement. The provided descriptive statistics offer insights into participants' perceptions of training programs in various aspects related to their work. The data is based on responses from a sample of 798 individuals. Each statement was rated on a scale from 1 to 5, where 1 represents the lowest rating and 5 represents the highest rating. On average, participants reported that training programs contribute to the betterment of their working skills (mean = 4.06). They also indicated that the terminology and concepts covered in the training programs were relevant to their work (mean = 3.92). The techniques used in the training programs were perceived as innovative and practical (mean = 3.95). Participants generally expressed positive attitudes towards the training programs. They felt recommended such programs to continue (mean = 3.9) and believed that the principles and issues discussed during the training were valuable (mean = 3.9). The delivery of the training programs was considered effective (mean = 4.01), and participants reported acquiring the intended job knowledge and skills from the training (mean = 3.94). They also felt they learned how to improve their work performance (mean = 4.02) and gained exposure to innovative methods, latest techniques, and trends (mean = 3.91). Moreover, participants perceived that the training programs had a positive impact on their performance and productivity (mean = 3.99). They felt the programs enhanced their satisfaction level (mean = 3.9) and contributed to a more positive attitude towards the hotel industry (mean = 3.86). The training programs were also seen as enriching participants' competencies (mean = 3.87). Additionally, participants believed that the training programs resulted in constructive changes in their behavior (mean = 3.86), increased their enthusiasm and passion for their work (mean = 3.88), and fostered a more positive outlook towards organizational culture and management (mean = 3.89). The programs were perceived to promote trainee retention and increase participation in the organization (mean = 3.88). However, participants felt that the chance of committing work errors and the frequency of rework would decrease to a lesser extent due to the training programs (mean = 3.76).

In summary, the descriptive statistics highlight generally positive ratings for the various aspects of the training programs, indicating that participants found value in the programs and perceived them as beneficial for their working skills, job knowledge, and overall professional development. It is worth noting that the table does not provide specific information about the context or nature of the training

programmes. However, based on the ratings, we can observe trends. For statements where the mean rating is close to or above 4, it suggests that the respondents generally had favourable views or positive experiences. Conversely, statements with lower mean ratings may indicate areas where improvements or enhancements could be considered. These descriptive statistics offer a summarized overview of the respondents' perceptions and feedback regarding the training programmes.

Conclusion

This research paper focused on the career perceptions of the hotel management students. Through the use of a questionnaire, the responses that have completed their internship were compared and analyzed. This study shows that the overall students who are studying hotel management highly disagree what the industry offers them in choosing a future career. All students expressed a positive perception that the job in hospitality industry is interesting and that they are willing to join the hospitality industry upon completion of their course. This is in contrary to the studies of the authors who had done their work on foreign country which might be that the opportunities and job market in India is not that advance as that of the developed nations. Almost all pre internship students have perceived that hospitality staffs are friendly and helpful which is not so in case of post internship which might be that the students had some bitter experience with the hotel staff during their internship period. Both the sets of students have agreed on the job mobility part. After gaining some years of experience, opportunity of switching hotels is easy. Hotel industry is a growing industry; there are lots of scopes of getting hospitality jobs within India and even abroad in comparison to other industry. All the pre internship students perceive that there is job security in the hotel industry but only half of the post internship student believe that hospitality jobs are secure. Hospitality industry is direct customer oriented industry, where service qualities of the staff are of outmost important and hotel industry does not retain such staffs who do not match their standard level. These students have experienced such situations happening during their industrial training which lead them to this perception. The descriptive statistics provide a comprehensive overview of participants' perceptions regarding training programs and their impact on various aspects of their work. The data reveals that, on average, participants hold positive views about the training programs, considering them effective for improving their working skills, acquiring job knowledge, and enhancing their overall performance and productivity. The participants also reported that the training programs were relevant, practical, and innovative, offering valuable insights and techniques.

Moreover, the programs were found to positively influence participants' attitudes towards their work, organizational culture, and management. The statistics indicate that the training programs were successful in enriching competencies and promoting a constructive change in behavior. Although participants expressed slight reservations regarding the reduction of work errors and rework frequency, overall satisfaction levels were favorable. These findings underscore the importance of training programs in facilitating professional development and fostering positive outcomes in the hotel industry.

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