

Exploring Research Avenues in Hospitality Industry

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Abstract

India is the most lucrative hotel market in the world. The Indian Tourism and Hospitality Sector is one of the fastest growing fields in the services sector. The middle class in India is also developing, Indians spending capability has increased and the urge to travel has shown remarkable development in the Indian Hospitality Sector, thus supporting the growth of domestic tourism. There are number of international projects coming up, so the International tourism is bound to be boost.

With such growing Hospitality and Tourism Sector, it needs to be improved with incorporation of new ideas and new innovations. This comes from research.

Just as research and development is important for all the streams, it applies to hospitality sector as well. Research is important for the enhancement of the industry and better interaction with the industry. Research contributes to the students development by enhancing their knowledge and getting them know the challenges the industry offers. It also helps the industry professionals to know the gaps present in the industry what changes needs to be made within the industry.

Keywords: Research, Interaction, Challenges, Development, Hospitality, Tourism

INTRODUCTION

Indian Hotel industry is contributing to our economy. Almost 95% of business is from domestic traveller and maximum share being of business travel accommodation. Simultaneously we have a large number of international budget hotel chain ready for a start-up in India. India government also has approved many hotel projects in the luxury segment.

Travel and travel expectations of tourist have increased. Increased disposable income, higher global pressures

through media and frequent international travel have introduced different customer breeds into the foray who come with expectations of a completely different order. (Preethi. V).

Our hospitality industry is showing lots of trends in the form of :

1. Budget Hotels
2. Medical Tourism
3. New avenues of growth
4. Shifting focus to Tier II and Tier III cities
5. Marketing Strategies
6. International brands
7. Innovative operating models

(Preethi. V)

Tourism is one of the most happening industries in India, employment generator, foreign exchange earner. This boom in tourism industry has put a positive effect on the hospitality industry.

The tourism and hospitality sector is among the top 15 sectors in India to attract the Foreign Direct Investment.

There has been lot of projects from the government side like Project Mausam, for promoting India as a Global Tourism Hub.

Increase in tourism activities and rising percentage of domestic and foreign tourist, has shown an increase in the hospitality sector. International Brands are also showing interest in setting up hotels in India.

This is what is projected as the growth of hospitality industry.

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REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The research and application of knowledge management (KM) has grown quickly since the 1990s (Cooper, 2006; Grizeli, 2003). In the space, biotechnology and computer industries, KM has been adopted into the daily routine, and some successful corporations have even established research and development departments (Gupta & McDaniel, 2002). By comparison, the hospitality and tourism industry has been slow to adopt this approach (Stamboulis & Skayannis, 2003). The reasons for this delay include:

The poor connection between the industry and the academic research (Stamboulis & Skayannis, 2003). Unlike some primary industries, in hospitality and tourism the links between businesses and researchers are neither close nor formalized. Faulkner, Pearce and Shaw (1994) note that transferring knowledge to hospitality and tourism is one of the most challenging issues for researchers.

The hostile adoption environment (Cooper, 2006). This is especially characteristic of vocational businesses and small businesses, since the application of Knowledge and Management demands a large amount of time and money.

No clear applicability for hospitality and tourism service and inter-organizational perspectives (Grizeli, 2003). Since the concepts of knowledge and management are developed largely from a manufactured and multinational perspective (Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995), it has failed to take many aspects of hospitality and tourism services into account. Grizeli (2003) points out that knowledge and management concepts do not bring up the hospitality and tourism issues based on networks and lack an interorganizational perspective (Xu cheng, 2010)

RESEARCH IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

The change in how we project our hospitality industry needs to come from colleges and institutes offering hospitality and tourism courses.

Out of the subjects that we have RESEARCH is one of the subjects for the students. Most of the colleges have research in the third year, but I feel research should come from first year only.

Research for students has always been copy paste or exploring things which are always there.

We as faculty members have to create avenues of research for them.

Professor Parvadhavardhini Gopalakrishnan, Pncipal, Welcomgroup Graduate School of Hotel Administration, Manipal University, Manipal, Karnataka says that research is very important in all areas of hospitality education, hotel schools in India continue to practice teaching in a vocational domain which does not provide for a long term career stability to the graduates.

I agree with him we have to encourage research, publications and research related to consultancy specially for the stream of hospitality. When we bring research as the core subject we will directly create avenues of research, because as of now for most of the hospitality institutes and colleges it is just copy and paste and same topics repeated again and again only with different names, just as we say old wine in new bottle.

I feel research is one area where it helps one to think, engage minds, problem solving and accept new challenges. And we have to shed our old methods of teaching and give them research oriented topics.

Professor S. K. Singh, COO, Amrapali Institute of Hotel Management, Nainital, Uttarakhand is of the opinion that Tourism and Hospitality faculty members have to perform well for career development and in doing so the academic research plays a pivotal role.

The hospitality discipline stresses more on the operational aspects than academic oriented research activities. The teachers pursuing research have no objective and proper guidance, this results in average or poor quality of research work. The researchers when pursuing research should explore more avenues.

This contributes to providing inputs to industry and thus helps in keeping solutions open to all.

Introducing research culture not only improves the teaching learning process, but also the quality of hospitality education. For this we need to take up the research subjects which are likely to bring substantial business in the hospitality sector. New dimensions, new topics of research will bring dynamism to our growing hospitality industry.

This is what we are here to

EXPLORING AVENUES OF HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

Research begin with we need to give students the topics from their area of interest rather than allowing them to choose topics and maintenance on data integrity in every distribution medium is essential. Staff needs to be well aware of the booking trends, customers choices, opinions, and market data. Toof marketing or IT related. Avenues of research are available for tourism marketing researchers and marketing practitioners in the areas of consumer behaviour, branding, e-marketing, and strategic marketing.

AVENUES OF RESEARCH IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

The avenues that are open for Research in hospitality industry can be:

- Brand of the hotel;
- Hotel property experience;
- Consumer related research;
- Menu related research;
- Food and Beverage related research;
- Tourism research;
- knowledge management and knowledge transfer;
- Training and education (hospitality students learning);
- Organization and management (practical issues and current trends in the hotel, catering and tourism industry);
- Product and food innovation;
- Gastronomy;
- Current trends;
- Tourism

BRAND HEALTH AND EQUITY RESEARCH

To know how a brand is functioning is of utmost importance not only in terms of repeat guests but also to have a strong position in the market.

Presently there are plenty of brands of hotel, restaurants in the market each wanting to strengthen their position.

Satisfaction in respect of the customers and the employees is also a factor in knowing how the brand is functioning. The marketing ideas adopted are they fruitful in strenghtening the position of the brand.

At the moment the research is stricted to marketing ideas and case studies of the brand.

One needs to explore

how Brands can be positioned especially the Indian Brands.

The comparative study of the brands and their SWOT analysis.

The performance of the brand in the market in terms of customer satisfaction and employee satisfaction.

How is the brand's performance as a whole and the individual performance of the brand.

The solutions and actions that can be taken for the health of the brand.

CONSUMER RELATED RESEARCH

Research in this area is restricted to the attitudes of consumer and their behaviour mapping.

The research in this should be used to strategize design and launch of restaurant.

Consumer tastes and trends keep on changing, with changing trends, research avenues needs to be explored to keep the property customer friendly.

Consumer diagnostic in the form of consumer delight and consumer satisfaction can be carried out.

This research can be qualitative through in depth interviews, used to enhance the delight factors or take corrective measures to avert dissatisfaction.

TREND ANALYSIS FOR FOOD AND BEVERAGE

Prevalent trends in the hospitality market especially for restaurants to maintain a sustainable edge in fine dining market.

The research can be qualitative as well as quantitative.

Qualitative research in the form of interactive sessions with chefs, opinions or views of consumers, food connoisseurs and experts.

Quantitative research interviews with customers who frequent the fine dining or 5 star restaurants.

This type of research is for long term development.

TOURISM RELATED RESEARCH

Though many topics are covered by researchers in tourism in related fields, what is missing is the experience related research. There are many journals small and big which can contribute to the understanding of tourism experience and management related issues.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT AND KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER

More attention can be given to exploring management perspectives into tourism research. Till now research is concentrated on hotel sector. The nature of innovations within tourism can also be one of the avenues. The present trends have shown rapid growth in knowledge management, however tourism has been slow in adopting to this approach. The researchers in tourism related field are very slow in adapting to this trend and do not readily accept the knowledge management as a field to study. Research in knowledge management will provide insights and potential applications for tourism.

SUPPLY CHAIN MANAGEMENT

Supply chain management in the manufacturing industry has been part of most of the researchers topics but in tourism industry there are hardly any researches related to Supply Chain Management. The literature that is available may be limited but most of the research is focussed on marketing and distribution related activities. Infact one can identify and explore core issues and concepts in Tourism Supply Chain Management, as there are a different suppliers involved in the provision and consumption of tourism products. Tourism Supply Chain Management is one of the new and exciting area and definitely one of the avenues that needs to be explored.

Although little research has been undertaken regarding specific types and definition of entrepreneurship and

entrepreneurs in transition economies, Dallago and Scase have made a significant theoretical contribution.

CONCLUSION

I would suggest future research should be based on domain specific knowledge offering insights into actual learning dynamics, it should be more related to hospitality management and employees. Research should be a way to investigate how to gather contextual knowledge, how to forecast business change through employer's knowledge and manager's knowledge and to provide a vision how to align knowledge activities.

The research challenge, therefore, is to be cognisant of the danger of partial and uncritical knowledge creation through disciplinary and/or methodological, ideological bias or power. Furthermore, the fact that the subject areas continue to evade unifying definitions and/or conceptual frameworks is perhaps testimony to the complex and irreverent nature of the phenomena. Therein lies a further research challenge that explicitly requires the incorporation of the dynamics of social setting, and geographic and cultural context. Hospitality research has advanced 'from being a topic simply for thematic investigation directly or indirectly for the study to management to one that also locates the study of hospitality as a significant means of exploring and understanding society'. Research can bring a change in the way every hotel brand sees things.

Reputation management, intelligence reports, trending or yielding tools are few of the avenues that needs to be researched, based on this every hotel brand can use it daily.

To make sure our industry grows, we need to know our customers. Knowledge is power and this applies to research. The more research is carried out the more we know about our industry. Our corporate culture needs to be developed, wherein we encourage constant research and new innovation. This in turn puts a positive influence on the staff and the customers. There are areas that needs to be explored such as theoretical revelations and innovations, environmental and cultural exploration aspects, tourist destinations and other recreation and eco tourism aspects of the hospitality and tourism industry.

Research in hospitality is mostly based on tourism areas, what needs to be improved upon is the fields of hospitality. With changing trends and to foresee a future

growth in hospitality, more and more research avenues in hospitality industry need to be explored.

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