

CHANGING SCENARIO IN HOSPITALITY EDUCATION: AN INSIGHT INTO INCORPORATING THE ENTREPRENEURSHIP MODEL IN THE HOSPITALITY EDUCATION

Narender Suhag, Maharishi Markandeshwar Deemed University

ABSTRACT

There is a substantial change in the higher education environment impacting the change in curricula, teaching methods, institutional practices and education process as a whole. The industry has an ever-growing demand for a flexible and skilled workforce to quickly adapt to the hotel industry and its day-to-day challenges. Now to up-bring the students with a mindset where they can quickly adapt and improvise needs training at the institute level itself. This paper shall be highlighting the new trends in hospitality education to create the future thinkers and entrepreneurs of the hospitality sector. Satisfaction with the job is still an issue in the hotel sector that needs to be addressed. Entrepreneurship or becoming your own boss deals with job satisfaction and turns hospitality graduates from job seekers to job providers. For primary data, a structured questionnaire was designed to understand the student's mindset. This study is based on a study of the live entrepreneurship model at the deemed university in Delhi and NCR and its impact on the mindset of students. Results revealed that an entrepreneurship model increases self-confidence and knowledge making them future-ready to start their own set-up as well as preferred by employers.

Key words: Hospitality, education, entrepreneurship.

INTRODUCTION

Hospitality education is leading by example by creating entrepreneurs in each and every field of the hospitality vertical. From job seekers the trend is shifting towards job creators. To bring this confidence to young hospitality graduates, it is important to inculcate those skills right at the institute level. Earlier, the industry was the only place to apply the theoretical aspect of knowledge to a practical concept. But now hospitality schools are fetching change in their teaching models and they are creating opportunities for the students to learn the essential skills required later at the industry level. Entrepreneurship is becoming part of the hospitality education domain as a core or elective subject and using different techniques to impart entrepreneurial skills (ZamberiAhmad et al., 2018). This advancement in the education system is surely going to impact the hospitality sector. It is evident from the past that hospitality education with exposure to the outer world is more successful and preferred by the students and industry. Oberoi group of Hotels Systematic Training and Education Programme and Oberoi Center of Learning and Development, Welcome Group School of Hotel Administration, IHM Aurangabad, Indian School of Hospitality, Gurugram and CIHM Chandigarh are just, a few to name who are working with this model. This study is based on a running model of the Hospitality Skill Development Center where at Manav Rachna Institute of Research and Studies, the department of Hotel Management opened an HM Cafe. How a small scale HM Cafe at an institute level can give a

platform for the students to nurture their entrepreneurial skills is the idea behind this concept of opening it which is operated by the students of hotel management. Where the need of this teaching model arises and how it is going to benefit the students and industry is what I will discuss in this paper.

Hospitality Education as Center of Excellence

What we know is that education is the ground for shaping the economy of a nation. To nurture these grounds, it is important to facilitate the institutes with required laboratories and funds and more importantly change the mindset of the budding hospitality graduates, faculties, and management (Barber et al., 2011). How the students learn at the institute level determines whom they become as individuals and their contribution to society and culture as citizens of the nation. In today's world of innovation, it is of utmost importance to education providers to create a platform for students so that they become creative thinkers and innovators. To equip them with a skill set where they can solve problems, working with others as a team will transform their attitude towards the world they live in. By observing the start-ups in hospitality in the new era, it is interesting to note that majority are from non-hospitality background like OYO, Zomato, Fab Hotels, etc. The reason could be they have an edge of technology and a better mindset to grow big by breaking new ground in the field of hospitality. This attempt to find out the uneven participation in start-ups could assist the hotel management institutes in better equipping the graduates to excel in the field of entrepreneurship (Lulla & Kumar, 2020).

Active Learning in the Hospitality Teaching Model

This trend of education where learning will be based on students' demands will continue in the coming future as well. Flexibility in education is already there where students have a choice based credit system. In running an entrepreneurial cell, student have to gain knowledge of the ancillary areas like purchasing, accounting, sales, and marketing and handling human resources. Teaching models are student specific and make it easier for them to get absorbed in the industry or opening of a new venture at an early stage. Students with different areas of interest have an opportunity to refine and showcase their technical skills with the help of the adjoining HM Cafe. Here the students propose a business plan and faculties guide them in fine tuning the same. From purchasing, receiving, storing, issuing, and conversion of raw material into the final product and its sale, each step will be performed by the student. Introducing this model with the increasing demand from the industry is making the students more flexible and transferable in approach. It is operated by the students, for the students.

Entrepreneurship in Hospitality

An enterprise affects all the sections of society as innovation and creativity generate products and services further generating wealth and creating job opportunities (Jones et al., 2011). Further, entrepreneurship is freely used in the business world and academic domain and their own interpretation create further confusion. There could be two aims of business – wealth creation and value addition (Anita et al., 2012). Hospitality education is not just about working in Hotels. It is about working with the people, for the people by creating special moments on various occasions. By opening an HM Cafe, an institute offering the students a platform to learn the theoretical aspect in the classroom teaching and application of the knowledge in operations.

This will assist them in better understanding of the concepts and problem-solving ability desired by the industry. With the increasing problem of employability, it is a nationwide message to develop skill centers that make them self-employed in the future. A small step in this direction is having a Hospitality Skill Development Center where students can design their own recipes; it's pricing, and see how the final product performs in the market. Apart from regular practical classes, this window is to create thinkers who they can bring their ideas and their feasibility to the real world. A study on students' perception in the hospitality industry revealed that formal education and creation of entrepreneurial set-ups are necessary in developing a business mindset (Patil et al., 2014).

The core competence of hospitality graduates is the skills and creativity they learn in their education which give them an edge over others. Creativity is not only the use of resources in an innovative manner but creating awareness in the cultural context and meeting the expectations of the guests with the use of local abilities (Gous & Naik, 2019). An example could be a hotel in a forest like Jim Corbett National Park where the use of natural resources and local manpower by offering local delicacies is an illustration of creativity and innovation in a sustainable manner.

Teaching Methods with more Emphasis on Experiential Learning

In the past, students were taught in a typical classroom lecture based system and later it changed into a more active form of learning where they were given case studies. These students have to find out the problems and generate the solutions. Now the latest trend shows experiential learning where students get a chance to interact with the real world (Hyun Jeong Kim, 2018).

Students who were given educational as well as infrastructural support at the institute level shall be having more self-confidence to enter into the businesses. The chances of making a career as an entrepreneur increase if knowledge and inspiration are provided at the university level (Turker & Selcuk, 2009). It helps in bridging the gap between the institute's teaching and industry expectations. While working in the HM Cafe students had a fair opportunity to meet the real life challenges of the hospitality sector and were able to find out solutions. Industrial training or internship is also there to get exposure to the industry but running an outlet makes them more capable and confident in becoming an entrepreneur. Methods adopted for experiential learning are job shadowing, industry visits, vocational training, industrial training, and hands-on experience in managing a Food and Beverage outlet.

Research on Entrepreneurship in Hospitality

A major focus of hotel management schools is to impart basic technical and soft skills required to work in a hotel or allied industries but rarely provide them with a platform to experiment with new products or services at the institute level. Now, it seems that there is a shift in the paradigm of hospitality education and students are given an opportunity to develop unique recipes and innovative products or services. Not only that, they have a chance to try and test their ideas in the real world scenario where they have a mechanism to interact with the consumers to take the feedback and improvise. Ultimately this will enable them to begin with a startup and become a job provider instead of a job seeker.

It is interesting to note that the hospitality industry is rich in entrepreneurship and startups but little theoretical study has been conducted on it. Little literature is available focusing on entrepreneurship in hospitality and tourism (Fu et al., 2019). For this reason, it is difficult to find the gaps in terms of the background of entrepreneurs who pursue hospitality education and why

only a few of them attempt to make their career in hospitality entrepreneurship despite the desired skill set required for a business.

Benefits and Challenges of Managing an F&B outlet by the Students

No doubt, industry prefers academic achievers but they also look for initial qualities of a manager they develop while interacting with the real world (Thesone, 2002). It is a challenge for the institute to bring equilibrium between work experience and classroom teaching. Ignorance of one will not equip the student to grow in the hospitality industry. A questionnaire was developed addressing various questions to understand the student's point of view and their expectations and whether they are met with the running of a Food and Beverage outlet or not.

1. Are hospitality students gaining knowledge while working in an F&B outlet?
2. Do students feel the requirement of having an adjoining F&B outlet as part of their curriculum?
3. Do students with work experience have greater career advancement opportunities than those who do not have work experience?
4. Does their work experience as students influence their job expectations?
5. Are work experience challenges the same for students working in comparison to those who are not working?
6. Is academic performance in the college affected by working in the Food and Beverage outlet?

Research Methodology

Both exploratory as well as descriptive research techniques were used to gain the background information and changing scenarios of hospitality education. For primary data collection, a structured questionnaire was designed to collect information on students' expectations and perspective on running a Food and Beverage outlet. On-line survey research was used to collect the data for cross sectional analysis at a faster rate. A stratified convenient sampling technique was used to collect the data. Students of Manav Rachna International University studying in undergraduate program were part of the sample unit. The study was limited to hotel management students and all the other qualifications and programs were excluded from this study. 50 students who willingly worked in the food and beverage outlet for a semester were part of the study. Further filtering the data, it was reduced to 40 responses which is used in the study.

Data Analysis

According to Hejase & Hejase (2013), "*descriptive statistics deals with describing a collection of data by condensing the amounts of data into simple representative numerical quantities or plots that can provide a better understanding of the collected data*" (Hejase et al., 2014; Hejase, 2021). Therefore, this study analyzed data collected with descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages supported with charts for clarity.

Academic Qualifications

Results show that the samples of students' academic qualifications were as follows: 27.5% (11/40) were third-year students, 42.5% (17/40) were second-year students, and the remaining 30% (12/40) were first-year students. Figure 1 illustrates these results.



FIGURE 1
ACADEMIC QUALIFICATIONS OF SAMPLED STUDENTS

Area of Study

Results show that 27.5% (11/40) were interested in the front office, 25% (10/40) were interested in F&B production, while 17.5% (7/40) chose F&B service, and 7.5% (3/40) chose housekeeping. The remaining 22.5% (9/40) students did not mention their choice.

Having an F&B Outlet as Part of the Curriculum

	Frequency	Percent, %
To a great extent	12	30
Somewhat	9	22.5
Little	8	20.0
Not at all	2	5.0
No answer	9	22.5
Total	40	100.0

Table 1 show that the majority of the students (52.5%) do like this new concept and only a few are not in favor of it. On the basis of their responses, necessary amendments shall be taken in the upcoming semester to bring all of them to a single platform.

Gaining Confidence and Knowledge by Working in the Suggested HM Cafe

Results show that at least 52.5% of the students are convinced and feeling confident while working in HM Café and gaining the required knowledge. It is a positive sign for the management and staff to strengthen this model.

Attitude Toward the Work Experience

Two questions were addressed using a 5-level Likert scale style with responses coded as follows: Strongly agree: SA [5], agree: A [4], neutral: N [3], disagree: D [2], and strongly disagree: SD [1].

The analysis will be based on percentage agreement grouping ‘strongly agree and agree’ *versus* percentage disagreement grouping ‘disagree and strongly disagree’ while keeping neutral as reference. For these questions, seven (7) missing values were reported and therefore responses are measured based on 33 students’ responses.

No.	Statement	SA	A	N	D	SD
1	Students with work experience have greater career advancement opportunities than those who do not have	12.12	51.52	30.30	3.03	3.03
2	Work experience as a student influences work expectations	9.09	60.61	27.27	3.03	0

Table 2 shows that the majority of the students 63.64% feel confident in their future prospects in the hospitality sector, 30.3% were neutral, and 6.06% were not. Moreover, 69.70% of the students have clarity in their minds of what the hospitality industry expects from them and how to adapt themselves at an early stage to quickly adapt to the hotels and their survival in the long-run.

F&B Outlet Impact on Academic Performance

Is academic performance influenced by working at the F&B outlet	Yes	No	Maybe
	19.4%	16.1%	64.5%

Table 3 shows that students are concerned that working in the HM Cafe will affect their academic scorecards. 64.5% are not sure and 19.4% confirmed such doubts. Only a minority are sure that such work will not influence their academic scorecard.

LIMITATIONS

This study was limited to an institution of Delhi and NCR. With more institutes from different regions shall give a better representation. The study was confined to an F&B outlet to impart entrepreneurship education. Study based on event management, facility management and other catering operations can widen the horizon of entrepreneurship education. Present study has wide scope but results are limited to pre-defined objectives.

RECOMMENDATIONS

It is evident from the present study that incorporating entrepreneurship education in the curriculum can enhance the students’ ability to early start their career in the field of hospitality as an entrepreneur. Being a skill based course, it is highly recommended to include the live entrepreneurship model in the curriculum. On completion of their degree, students shall be given the opportunity to opt for the startup models funded by the academic institutions or industries with minimal expenditure or interest free loans. This shall give students an edge and their chances of success will be much higher.

There is also a need to have step-by-step manuals on policies and regulations on entrepreneurship model of a country and integrate them with curriculum to reap the maximum

benefits. Knowledge of funding institutions like state and central ministries, NGOs, private sectors etc. can assist the students managing the start-up capital because academic institutions alone cannot source the initial investments.

CONCLUSION

It can be concluded that students benefit from working in a live model where they are involved in all processes required to run an outlet. Gaining knowledge and application gives them an edge to better equip for real time situations and increases their success rate. Having said that, it is important to acknowledge the role of entrepreneurship models in education where students gain the knowledge on the basics of finance, accounting, marketing, operations and how to manage the day to day challenges of supply and maintenance which are missing from the curriculum. Dealing with customer expectations and providing solutions enhances students' confidence to operate a food and beverage outlet. If we talk about gains from this model, yes they would feel more confident as students get real work experience and have better clarity in mind while going for a job or running their own venture in the future. It is always a debatable issue that what students have learned academically fit what practical skills industry representatives believes students have mastered during their program of study.

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