A study to develop a module on entrepreneurship as an elective in Hospitality Management Curriculum

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Abstract. The number of educational program models for the hospitality curriculum across numerous nations has expanded impressively throughout the most recent ten years. A fewcountries offer such courses at the undergrad level with a term of four or three years in a few cases. The highest-level programs have different electives and courses and have developed from a highly vocational to a focused global business management study.

Our research is based on the current trend of entrepreneurship prevailing in India while focusing on the stakeholders' perspectives, such as Industry Practitioners, Alumni, Management trainees, etc., which will lead the way to groom and develop a new model with professional opinions and insights.

Given the diverse environment of the hospitality business, it is not very easy to define the subjects taught are needed in a program to ensure that the graduate is fully competent andmeet the industry's need. Hybrid models of the curriculum are encouraged;(e.g., tourism with entrepreneurship/hospitality/events/retail / real estate/wellness). There is a need to rethink the model to reposition the curriculum on the lines of international models that seek a balance betweenlearning at work and learning at the college without losing the strength of either.

The hospitality industry particularly lends itself to entrepreneurship. Every property, whether a restaurant or a hotel, has specific market characteristics determined by its location and the services it offers. Understanding the local market is the key to success and requires an entrepreneurial mindset.

People operating their businesses need to be 'jacks-of-all-trades. They must master and be able to perform a variety of tasks successfully. Besides the basic hospitality skills of food and beverage service and accommodation operation management, hoteliers need to understand customer trends, business tactics, strategy management, architecture, construction, legal and regulatory aspects, IT, marketing, social media, human resources management, accounting,finance, statistics, revenue management and many more.

The thesis aimed to develop and suggest a curriculum model for undergraduate hospitality management programs where entrepreneurship is offered as an elective in privateor state-run universities and institutions or business management colleges that may provide hospitality as an option.

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The study provides a definitive on how the increasing trend of entrepreneurship is opening up gateways in the hospitality segment and how effective it would be to design a module for HM graduates with entrepreneurship as an elective.

Since perspectives and perceptions are not directly observable phenomena, this study is an excellent base for a comprehensive theoretical construct. It involves the importance of entrepreneurial studies in a hospitality curriculum.

Keywords: Entrepreneurship, Hospitality Education, Curriculum Development

1   Introduction

1.1   The hospitality industry in India an overview

India is estimated as the second fastest-growing tourism marketplace in the world.In India, the hospitality industry contributes 8.7 % of total employment opportunities. Over 5.5 million tourists arrive annually, of which 562 million are domestic tourists. These statistics are good and have created success in the Hospitality sector by employing more trained professionals. It has been identified that hospitality is the second largest sector employing semi-skilled workers. The Indian hotel industry, apart of the hospitality and service sector, offers a diverse portfolio of tourism products - cruises, adventure, medical, wellness, sports, eco-tourism, film, and rural and religious tourism, as a developing niche.

1.2   Hospitality education an overview

Hospitality education is not just about the competencies for being a workforce in hotels or restaurants. Eventually, it deals with people, creating exceptional experiences and unique memories, and sharing special events, all driven by technology and speed. Hospitality curriculum models should specifically concentrate on skills and cultural studies to prepare students for careers across all industries around the world. AI and automation will force industry leaders to compete, leading to values and soft skills that will set the human interface apart from the machines. Students and graduates must engage in a curriculum model of hospitality that is flexible and multidisciplinary. Globalization has influenced the tourism sector but has not changed the design of hospitality and tourism curriculum models. Although views may differ on the hospitality curriculum models, and many arguments exist, there is still no consensus on the hospitality curriculum adapted by various hospitality institutions worldwide. A rapidly changing industry requires the programs to move from the traditional skill-based focus to a more general managerial, interpersonal, and holistic competencies model.

1.3   Issues and challenges -industry and academia

A key issue is that future programs or curricula need sound academic foundations and should not be relegated to the vocational and highly skilled domain. The curriculum

needs to have business-running approach along with skillsets. The good news is that hospitality programs continue to be challenged to move on to a more managerial and professional-based program from a traditional skill-based focus which is encouraging. The industry now looks for managers who not only have experience in operating a hotel but also have the business tactics and perspective of an entrepreneur. Now a manager from a hotel school is likely to possess or develop these skills quickly due to the curriculum model.

1.4 Stakeholders of hospitality

According to surveyed literature, the hospitality curriculum models proposed are with perspectives approaches from all stakeholders. Stakeholders have always remained critically crucial contributors to curriculum development based on which models are developed. Stakeholders have been defined by Freeman (1984) and Wilson (2003) in the past and more recent times. "Any group or an individual who can affect or is affected by the achievement of the organization's objectives" There are many stakeholders in an education system. Some may be primary, and others may be secondary. To help corporations strengthen relationships and develop various competitive advantages, they include stakeholders, including investors, Customers, employees, students, and suppliers, as the stakeholders seek ownership of their participation. Stakeholder students of hospitality and tourism have differing opinions on their preparedness for success in the industry Knutson et al. (1992).

1.5 Curriculum issues in hospitality in India

The Hospitality undergraduate curriculum models in India have evolved for about six decades. There have been many issues and challenges in managing these curriculums. Around the early 1980s, all catering and hotel management institutes were only in the public sector. Given the bigger picture, the curriculum was deeply enshrined with laboratory work to enable the graduate to take entry-level or semi-skill jobs in Hotels and Restaurants. Any stakeholder ever questioned the purpose of the Holistic curriculum model, as most were happy with the same. Soon the graduates from the institutes were challenged with the lack of business knowledge and could not move ahead in their careers as the management preferred to hire graduates from business schools to manage the more lucrative positions. This is where our research got its soul. Internal dilemmas and conflicts remained, with the more technically qualified graduates and those from the business schools. However, the non-hospitality graduates were weaker in understanding the operational aspects and were often at the mercy of the technical graduates of hotel management.

Gradually, stakeholders noticed that the curriculum should reflect a business management curriculum as, finally, the industry performance required to increase the profits and revenues. Very few curriculums in India models teach the business aspects of hospitality. Curriculum models reflected about 70 % laboratory work and 30% theory, with a bit of accountancy, bookkeeping, and Principles of Management. Over the year, stu-

dents aspired to travel overseas and study in hotel schoolsfocused on finance, Marketing, and Human resources. However, the business strategy is the weakand strong orientation to the core operational departments, namely Front Office, Housekeeping, Food & Beverage production, and food Service management. Private and public universities, especially at the undergraduate level, must develop a curriculum model on par with foreign universities. In the present scenario in India, the curriculum and syllabus design are an examination system in which a student must appear at the end of each year or semester. For it to happen, the syllabus should incorporate the inputs of teachers, students, alums, and industry and their learning in handlingvarious situations, or the syllabus has to be designed so that the students are exposed to the business mindset of the hotel industry. Curricular reforms have to be made withproper exposure and engagement as per the need of the university/ stakeholder, with appropriate emphasis on a different kind of exposure. For the students, a holistic curriculum with various electives should be developed along with specialized institutions in partnership at a location that would create ways for engaging with diverse knowledge areas. For a better undergraduate education of the student, an integration of a significant subject to which the student devotes maximum time should be with other relevant issues, which can be their minor subject.This will teach the students better learning, stimulate interest and engage with those for whom the subject is a major.

1.6   Principles Guiding to add Entrepreneurship as an elective

The fundamental principles that The curriculum to be designed are representative of a consensus from the primarystakeholder community.

- With the current trend of Entrepreneurship in the Indian Market segment.
- Lack of Business studies and more of a skill-based approach to the curriculum.
- The recommended curriculum should be flexible and easily adaptable to most hospitality programs.
- The elective should help in more understanding of the actual industry practice and help in creating more competent graduates.

On completing this study, the suggested elective, if adopted, would prepare graduates for working life as an essential way of facilitating the transitions to stable and satisfyingemployment. As the industry moves into the digital world, the need to be recognized for a warm and personalized service is more important than ever. Through the help of industry partnerships, graduates learn to take care of guests within a hotel's atmosphere and develop solutions to ensure guests of all ages are pampered in a way they appreciate. Education is the fertile ground of any economy. The hospitality curriculum models that the graduate undertakesdetermine who they become as individuals and their contribution to culture and society as citizens of this world. In the present-day innovation and experience economy, hospitality education has a significant role in developing the next generation of creative thinkers and innovators.

2   Review of literature

2.1   Analysis of curriculum

Hospitality education is a professional field where educators and industry practitioners work together to play the role of specialists/experts. Hospitality domain researchers havediverse views of the hospitality arena, essence, and essential nature of hospitality education. They believed that hospitality is a discipline responsible for producing knowledge to be appliedby hospitality professionals. Primary stakeholders have diverse perspectives and expectations regarding graduate education programs in hospitality while studying student learning outcomes, teaching methods, and curricula. They identified that industry, educators, and graduate students perceive student learning outcomes differently. The current educational objectives do not fully meet the expectations of the job providers in the sector emphasizedin hospitality graduate management programs. Opinion gaps continue to exist between the industry and educators, and more importantly, the industry recognizes action skills. Theexistence of an ideal curriculum is impossible as curriculum relevancy and content will change, and the curriculum review process will be ongoing. Although a good model may bein place, stakeholder participation in the curriculum is very important for a positive outcome ofthe design. The industry speaker's relevant information or experience through case studies maybenefit graduates and faculty members through enhanced networking for internships and the uses of the industry information inside the classroom to be applied at the workplace.

2.2   Hospitality education, the contemporary reviews

Education in the hospitality domain of India continues to be debatable. All stakeholders today believe that the dynamic environment has brought about many changes. The hospitality industry needs potentially high human resources to achieve its targeted success, not just market growth. These major players are committed to competence development models, future visioning, and innovative exercises in skills development initiatives. Usually, Culinary programs are preferred by hospitality students due to tremendous media exposure. The Hospitality curriculum lacks mainly focuses on skill-based nature.

In contrast, with the currentlyemerging demands in employment needs, it is noticed that business management, tactics, strategy application, team management, etc., are also taken under consideration. Now hospitality management is no more only about skill-based requirements. The courses offered in India are certificates, diplomas, undergraduate degrees, honor's degrees, and master's degrees in hospitality management. Industrial training allows the student to adapt to learning through theworking environment, culture, and interpersonal factors creating a win-win situation for academia, industry, students, and society. Imagine the effectiveness of entrepreneurial skills when implemented during Industrial Exposure Training.

2.3   Hospitality education and the immense gap

The identified gaps indicated incongruity between the educational experiencesdistributed to hospitality students and the "real world" rehearsal they experience while trainingon the job. The curriculum calls for skill enhancement and technical. In contrast, in theactual training experience, it's the intelligent play of the employee in increasing the potential of the outlet or business, which is possible with an entrepreneur's prior business knowledge and mindset.
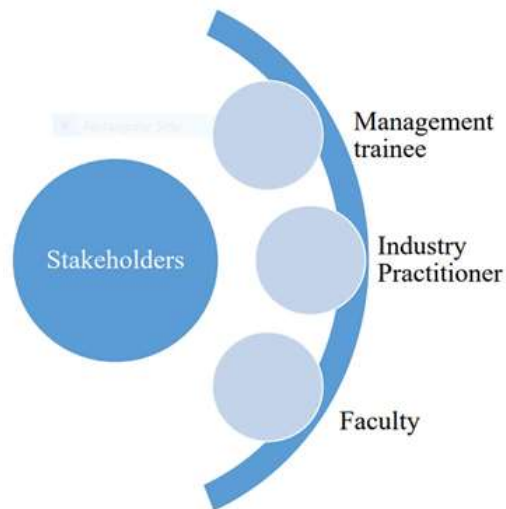
2.4   Hospitality curriculum model challenges

To meet the continuing challenges, hospitality education programs must update the curricula. In -short, the curricula of hospitality programs are outdated in identifying the importance of hospitality education on the organizational fit of managers. It must show the value of theirdegree and strive to give students management skills explicitly tailored for the hospitality industry. The gaps identified in this study suggest that industry experts focused onparticular management competencies that may receive less emphasis. Although there aremany issues in the core Curricular of Hospitality and Tourism Education, hospitality and tourismschools may need to develop positioning strategies to build a model that could strengthen the foundation for students to become better managers tomorrow. Educators should be responsible for considering the characteristics of hospitality Industry Managers in designing Hospitality Management Curricula & the companies also have a significant role to play in realistically preparing the students for the hospitality industry.

3 Research Methodology

3.1 Introduction

This research deals with entrepreneurial skills & modules, the current curriculum, and stakeholders' perspectives. The primary objective of this study is an analysis of the hospitality curriculum of India and the importance of entrepreneurship as a module. It is assumed that this research willsupport hospitality educators while developing the curriculum, which may be modified for three-year graduation programs yielding a bachelor's degree in hospitality.

Primary survey -Interaction with Stake Holders, i.e., Industrialists, Professors, Hospitality Graduates, and Management Trainees.

Secondary survey – Data Gathering, Existing Research

The most significant challenge hospitality programs face today is to deliver a curriculum that fulfills the constantly shifting needs of the industry and the contemporary period. During ongoing timesand conditions, entrepreneurial skills are proving to be the handful required in the present.

3.2 Data collection tool – questionnaire development

The research data collection was conducted in the year 2022. As a part of the research, a questionnaire was developed using google forms, which was used to collect data from hospitality practitioners' teachers. The research guide and field experts approved the questionnaire.Data was collected by mailing the questionnaire and a covering inviting the respondentsto participate in the study. Respondents are requested to fill out the questionnaire and submit it online. The respondents were asked to evaluate the importance of these elective subjects on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1(Least Important) to 5 (Essential and core). The questions were segregated as subjective-based questions, Likert Scale Questions & MCQQuestions.

3.3 Data collection process

The data collection process was twofold. One was an online survey google form which helped us to cover vast ground, and the other was Stakeholders' perspective through one-to-one communication. The latter enabled us to cover much more profound aspects of the reality of the industry as they were actual practitioners. Hence these two-fold methods were crucial in theresearch to suffice our thoughts.
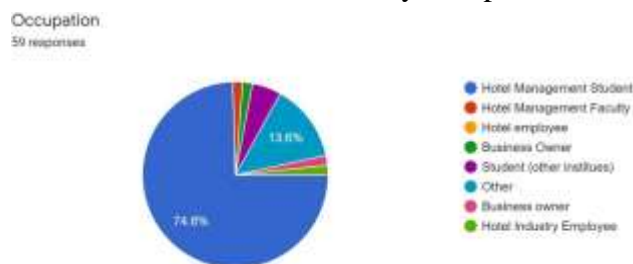
3.4 Research questions

1. What are the perspectives of hospitality industry practitioners/ experts/ industry leaders onthe importance of a hospitality management curriculum model with Entrepreneurship as an elective?

2. What are the perspectives of hospitality academia/faculty of hospitality on the importance of a hospitality management curriculum model with Entrepreneurship as an elective?

3. What are the perspectives of hospitality Management Trainees on the subject item importance of a hospitality management curriculum model with Entrepreneurship as an elective?

4. What are the perspectives of the three identified stakeholders of important subjects for anundergraduate hospitality curriculum model apart from Entrepreneurship?
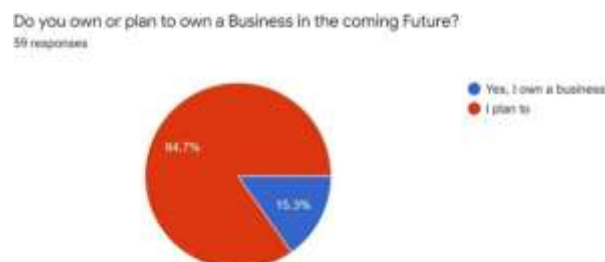
The above research questions were determinedly phrased with both positive and negative views in mind. At the same time, the optimistic view believes that the curriculum is robust and needs modification or inclusion of more recent course subjects. The opposing view is about the robustness of curriculum changes that can be adopted despite meeting the requirements of regulatory bodies governing hospitality management institutes. The aim is to ascertain the most recent perspectives of the three essential stakeholders, rating entrepreneurship's significance and importance as an elective in the hospitality curriculum model.

4   Findings

Tabulation & analysis representation

Occupation
59 responses

- Hotel Management Student
- Hotel Management Faculty
- Hotel employee
- Business Owner
- Student (other institues)
- Other
- Business owner
- Hotel Industry Employee

- The Survey Consisted of 59 responses, with a Maximum of 74.6% from Hotel Management Students and 13.6 % from other Institutes.

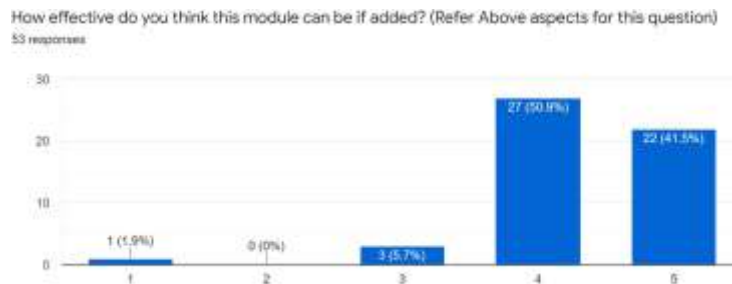Do you own or plan to own a Business in the coming Future?
59 responses

- Yes, I own a business
- I plan to

- The maximum percentage of respondents were those who plan to own a business – 84.7% and 15.3% - who own a business.

If you plan to run a Business, what type of business would it be ?
53 responses
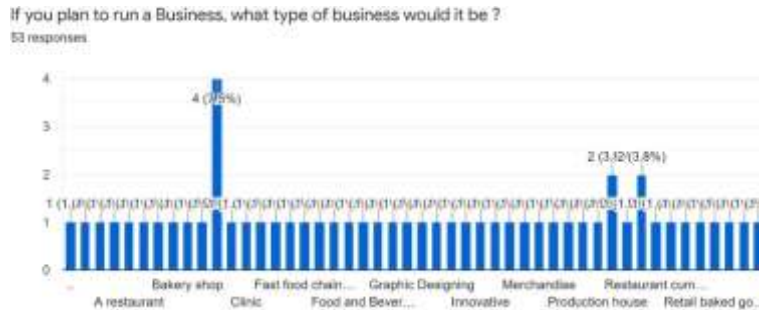
- The majority of business plans were - Café – 7.5 %, QSR – 3.8 %, Restaurant – 3.8 %, Bakery Shop, Clinic, Graphic Designing, Merchandising, etc
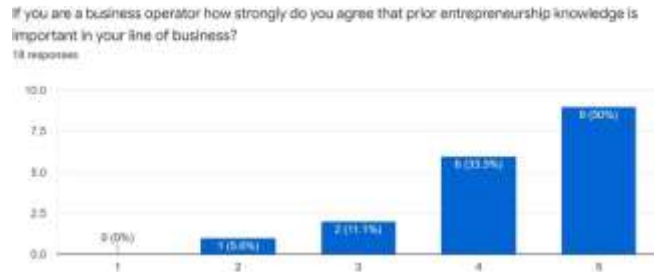
Entrepreneurship module aspects (Reference for below question) 1. Modern Business & Employability skills, Management Principles, Social Enterprise & Sustainability, Entrepreneurship & Innovation in the Digital Era, Financing Business Growth, Managing People & Teams, Service & Supply chain Management
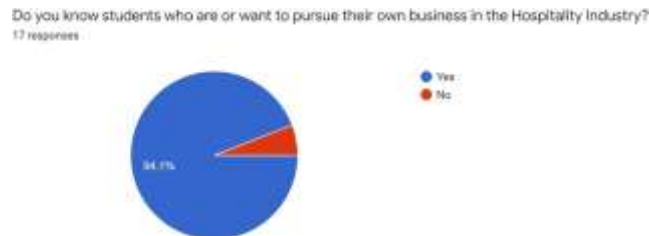
How effective do you think this module can be if added? (Refer Above aspects for this question)
53 responses

- Concerning the above aspects of the module, the Linear rating had a majorityresponse of 4 – being near to most effective.

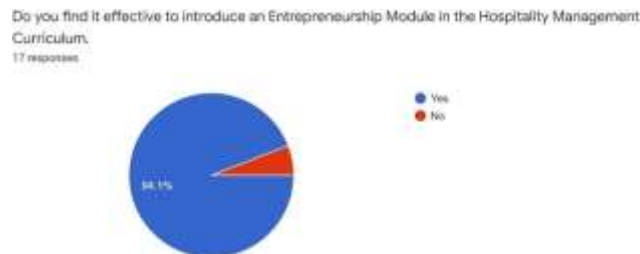Is entrepreneurship an attribute to start a business?
25 responses
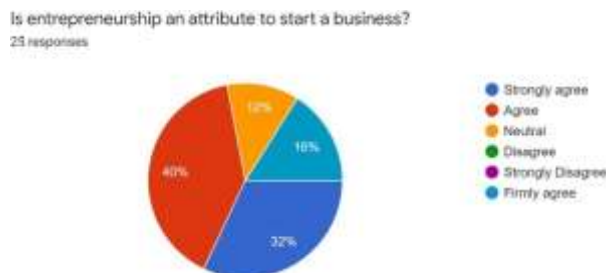
- Questions answered by Business Owners if entrepreneurship is an attribute to start abusiness or not gave an affirmation towards strongly agreeing.

If you are a business operator how strongly do you agree that prior entrepreneurship knowledge is important in your line of business?
18 responses

- Most Business Owners agree that prior entrepreneurship knowledge isessential in their line of business. The percentage is – 50 % for (5)

Do you know students who are or want to pursue their own business in the Hospitality Industry?
17 responses

- Major Faculty Respondents – 94.1% agreed on knowing students who are or want to pursuetheir business ideas.

Do you find it effective to introduce an Entrepreneurship Module in the Hospitality Management Curriculum.
17 responses

- 94.1% of respondents agreed that introducing Entrepreneurship is an elective in HospitalityManagement Curriculum

— Below are a few of the samples of the subjective answers to the given question

Would you like to propose entrepreneurship as a course in IHM (Institute of Hotel Management)?You may give a short description of your answer

- Yes, it may be beneficial to many students
- Yes, I would like to suggest to propose entrepreneurship as a course in IHM
- Yes, it would be great for the future of entrepreneurship

- Yes, I think it would be helpful
- Yes, it may be beneficial to many students
- Yes, I would like to suggest to propose entrepreneurship as a course in IHM
- Yes, it would be great for the future of entrepreneurship
- I strongly propose including this module as It would bring a lot of entry-level mindset changefor a student.
- Yes, it will encourage and enrich their knowledge
- In my opinion, with the changing trends, a lot of students nowadays are interested in openingtheir food outlets or many other businesses, so entrepreneurship will be beneficial to mold the students for future
- Sure. Entrepreneurship should be a subset of most of the curriculum to understand the workingand working efficiently.

5   CONCLUSION

5.1   Stakeholder 1 perspective – Industry, experienced practitioners know their employees' current requirements. They firmly agreed that they would prefer to hire an employee with business running knowledge over technical skills because technology can be learned on the job. It is business administration that requires skills and tactics.

5.2   Stakeholder 2 perspective – Faculty, The Alumni/Faculty, are keen to introduce this as an elective into the curriculum as they agree with the fact on the contemporary style of the curriculum of IHM's. Adding entrepreneurship as an elective will increase the quality of education and prepare the students for different managerial roles.

5.3   Stakeholder 3 perspective – Management Trainee As freshly passed outs, they are right nowentering the industry. They can relate much better to the teachings of the college and the actualpractice in the hotel. Adding entrepreneurship will give them access to a business mindset that will help further during their industrial training.

6   LIMITATIONS

- Geographical differences- geography plays an essential part as the change in terrain calls for change in work situations; this can affect the curriculum by being ineffective at a particular place.
- Perspective clashes among the stakeholders – people hold different thoughtsabout the same proposal and can be the basis of changes and differences in the curriculum. Some may agree to a point, and some may not.
- Only elective- adding entrepreneurial studies in the curriculum just as an elective for the studentsto choose from or adding it as a core subject keeping the current and contemporary situation in mind.

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