

# Suggestive Practices for improving the Quality of Industrial Training Component in the Course Curriculum of Hotel Management

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**Abstract** - The industrial training programme serves as a vital yardstick in gauging undergraduates' marketability and employability as they gird themselves for the world of work. It is a process in which students are involved in real work situations, enabling them to establish career development goals. In today's world, merely having a degree is no guarantee of employment, nor is it a reliable indicator of the individual's competence in a job. Present paper aims to suggest certain practices to be adopted by stakeholders before, during and after the industrial training component in order to improve the quality of industry training component in the course curriculum of the hotel management. Extensive effect of industrial training towards employability in hotel industry is beneficial for all stakeholders. Industrial Training experience becoming a terminator of career development at early stage is the last thing that we expect. It means a waste of educational investment for three parties. The general view is that stakeholder's concerned need to work together in the formulation of industrial training programs to make the partnership productive and logically significant to all stakeholders. In addition, hotel management institutions should take a chief role in developing a structured industrial training component which requires the participation of both hotel industry professionals and students. Information about the needs and interests of hotel management students as well as hotel industry professionals should be included into the planning process of industrial training component in the course curriculum. These suggestive practices will be beneficial to all stakeholders concerned and will provide trainees a meaningful experience.

**Keywords:** *Employability, Practices, Stakeholders, Structured & Meaningful.*

## I. INTRODUCTION

Hotel groups during recruitment process give importance to work experience in addition to the paper qualification, thus industrial training becomes vital component in enhancing students employability skills. The industrial training programme serves as a vital yardstick in gauging undergraduates' marketability and employability as they gird themselves for the world of work. **Industrial training also known as practical training or internship** is considered to be a vital component which provides students with the opportunity to translate the knowledge gained into practice. At present, hotel management students are required to undergo industrial training in their course curriculum and in **most of the curriculum**, it is found in the **mid of their course duration** in a 3 or above 3 star hotels. At this point of time students have gained foundations aspects of all four major areas such as Front office, Food and beverage Service, Food and Beverage Production and Housekeeping. Industrial Training may be termed as profession-oriented process and aims to prepare

students with work-related skills and expertise related to their future career. It is a process in which students are involved in real work situations, enabling them to establish career development goals. In today's world, merely having a degree is no guarantee of employment, nor is it a reliable indicator of the individual's competence in a job.

## II. RESEARCH PROBLEM

Students generally complain about the quality of the industrial training which could results in increasingly **high fallout rates of graduates from the hotel industry**. The hotel industry has to anticipate the learning needs of students during their industrial training time. There is a lot of room for improvement and need for introspection. The success of any course lies on its course curriculum and contents. While there is **no perfect industrial training model** for all hotel management education programs. Quality field experiences should reflect the program's objectives within the parameters of the program, on the principle of that in order to implement a successful industrial training program for enhancing student's

employability skills, there is a need to adopt certain practices in order to improve the quality of industrial training component in the course curriculum of hotel management.

### III. LITERATURE REVIEW

**Pauze, Johnson, & Miller (1987)** [1] emphasised that internship program jointly developed by industry representatives, faculty members and students can enhance the student's potential in preparing them as high quality hospitality management graduates for the workplace. In order to make it as a successful exercise, internship coordinators should recognize the needs of each stakeholder group; however dispute lies in the level of influence each of these stakeholders apply over hospitality internship experiences.

**Barron and Maxwell (1993)** [2] in their research study compared the attitudes of undergraduate students between the students who are in their induction week at the start of their hospitality management course with students who have just completed a period of practical training in hotels. Findings of the study highlighted that there is disparity in the view held about hospitality between students embarking on their hospitality management course and the students who had completed their work experience in the industry. The differences lie between perception and experience of the industry with **new students** holding **positive views**, whereas the more **experienced students** generally held **negative views**. Student expectations of good career opportunities, good training and treatment of staff by employers and that the job does not demand a capacity effort changed to a perception of the industry as being not lucrative and responsible for poor treatment of manual staff. Researchers argued that many new entrants to hospitality institutions may well have an illusory image of the industry as glamorous and probably hold unrealistic perceptions. They suggested that a requirement for students to undertake a period of employment in the industry prior to enrolling may be one of the ways of ensuring more realistic expectations among students. Also there should be close scrutiny of the student selection procedure.

**Theil and Hartley (1997)** [3] revealed that the internship can provide an opportunity for students to expand professional experience and credit in their majors, help industry to gain excellent employees, and allow the school to gain favourable image development through the successful work of the intern.

**Crumbley & Sumners (1998)** [4] pointed that treating the intern as a part of the professional staff is essential to making the intern feel they are actually part of the profession. Researchers in their study highlighted that Mentor should determine types of work that will be assigned to the trainees. By way of assigning meaningful and challenging work assignments by the industry mentor

to student's. Mentors should give work to the trainees that closely mirror what they will expect to do when they graduate with their degree.

**Fu, H (1999)** [5] in his research findings revealed that faculty members and industry professionals preferred highly structured work environment and consider it as an essential element of an effective internship. Students usually found dissatisfied due to lack of supervision in their internship. A highly structured internship will provide a set up so that internship goals may be achieved. Students are likely to select their career sites based on their prior internship experiences and not based on their decision on financial or geographic issues. The industry professionals on an average believe that internship should be longer than the existing hour practices and a full-time faculty coordinator should oversee each intern.

**Barrows & Bosselman (1999)** [6] pointed out in their study that experiential learning assignments vary in terms of direction, duration, and requirements; yet there exists enough similarity to propose a standard structure for them.

In the opinion of **Garavan and Murphy (2001)** [7] pointed that work experience during training provides credible means for softening the reality shock of transitioning from the world of academics to the world of work.

**Jenkins (2001)** revealed [8] in his study that internship programmes as ill-defined and poorly planned and found that students generally complain about the quality; and it appears that many hospitality students, through exposure to the subject and industry, become considerably less interested in selecting hospitality as their career of first choice.

**Lent et al. (2002)** [9] in their study claimed that "the relative support of these experiential factors supports the exercise of exposing students to career examination activities (e.g., job shadowing, internships, realistic job previews) that enable them to make clear their interests, values, and skills in relation to particular occupational fields and work tasks".

**Collins (2002)** [10] conducted research study among 113 students at Bilkent University's School of Tourism and Hotel Management in Turkey. The main focus of the research was to assess data from three perspectives: Students, Organization and Universities participants on Industrial training effectiveness. The findings revealed that 87 percent were given orientation by the organizations. However 58 percent students complained that they were not given enough training. Recommendation made by the researcher that industry professionals should employ adequate and quality staff to assist students and conduct midterm reviews. Industrial training grading system should be improved. It will be beneficial to conduct orientation for students before undertaking their placement, having a practised control system to monitor the industrial training

experience, holding mid-term intern review to measure the progress, and reviewing the grading system to emphasize the importance of placement.

**Callanan and Benzing (2004)** <sup>[11]</sup> emphasize that internship provides students with the opportunity to develop a more accurate self-concept and test for fitness between their own individual characteristics and the demands of the work environment. Another supposed advantage of internships is creating a set of realistic expectations for work in the business world.

**Scott Richardson and Gareth Butler (2011)** <sup>[12]</sup> emphasised that Students still do not see the industry as an appealing career path because many of the factors they find important in a career are missing. These findings highlight the need for the industry to adopt tactics and strategies aimed at ensuring that potential employees, i.e. tourism and hospitality students, are not leaving the industry or even failing to enter the industry on graduation.

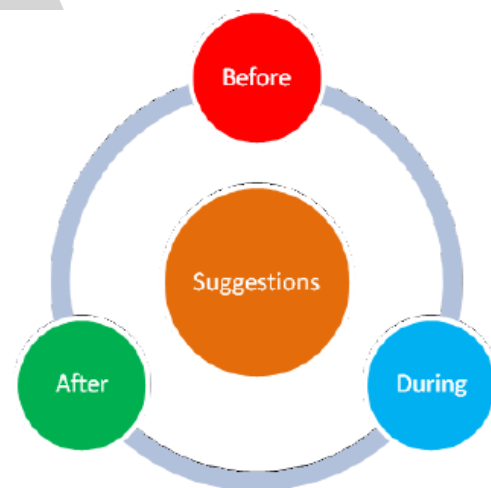
**Mhizha, Alick and Mandebvu, Golden (2012)** <sup>[13]</sup> researcher conducted research on the views of the stakeholders on Industry attachment programme of Zimbabwe students. The researchers adopted exploratory research on all the three groups of stakeholders. Questionnaire and interviews methods was adopted to collect views of student supervisors in industry, lecturers involved in industrial attachment coordination and 4th year students, who had just completed industrial attachment. Findings of the study were 87% of stakeholders agree that industrial attachment is indeed an important component of training at university level whereas 13% were neutral, possibly owing to reservations that they might have on the exercise. Overwhelming percentage concurred that how industrial attachment becomes an integral component of holistic professional training that prepares students for the realities at the workplace. Some organisations seem to take advantage of students' presence. Interviews also proved that some students felt exploited at some point, without any significant recognition and appreciation. This is an area that needs to be reviewed and which could be attributed to the fact that lecturers do not conduct frequent or strategic visits to assess the progress of practical training. Interviews revealed that 26 organisations are often careful with strategic departments such as accountancy and human resources and do not allow students to fully access the different components. Students found this unfair though managers argued that allowing students full access can be quite risky when it comes to strategic areas. Interviews revealed that organisations are often careful with strategic departments such as accountancy and human resources and do not allow students to fully access the different components. Students found this unfair though managers argued that allowing students full access can be quite risky when it comes to strategic areas.

**Objective:** To study stakeholder's perspective on practices to be adopted for improving the quality of industrial training component in the course curriculum of hotel management

#### IV. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Survey method was adopted for data collection. Stakeholders such as faculty members, Hotel industry professionals and Hospitality students were approached for the purpose of data collection. Primarily respondents were approached to explore how to improve the quality of industrial training in the course curriculum. Suggestions of stakeholders were further analysed into three phases such as **Before** (pre *industrial training*), **during and after** (*post industrial training*).

**Suggestions:** For improving the quality of hotel management industrial training component for all the stakeholders.



##### **Before - Preparing students for industrial training**

a) **Workshop:** A pre-industrial attachment workshop focusing on grooming and deportment, discipline, codes of professional conduct, personal security and what students are expected to produce at the end of the industrial training should be organised in hotel management institutions. To be coordinated by the faculty members in collaborations with representatives from hotel industry as resource persons. The workshops must highlight the importance of industrial training in minds of students and motivate them to take maximum benefit from the industrial training.

b) **Session in time table:** Institutes must keep the provision of at least one session in the time table on **what to observe (WTO)** during the industrial training phase for the overall success of the said purpose. Faculty members should frame WTO Sheets for students so that during industrial training, they should know what to observe in the real working environment.

c) **Be prepared before Industrial Training:** Academically students should be prepared to face the real working

environment by incorporating the right time (semester) for sending students for their industrial training. Essential knowledge of the hotel core functioning areas and their job descriptions will help students to apply theories from books or lectures, in which career skills can be developed and strengthened.

d) **Be positive about Industrial Training experiences:**

Realistic expectations should be established to anticipate difficulties or even boredom. Faculty members must brief the students that they should not make negative perception about the hotel industry, in case if they had bad or unfavourable experience and guide them that certain experiences are just situational and might not be same in all the hotels. Industrial training should be treated as a potential learning opportunity and like a real job.

e) **Stipend:** There is need for review of stipend paid to the students during industrial, so that the allowance needs should be realistic since it helps students cope with the financial demands of the work environment.

f) **Accommodation:** Providing housing may make an industrial training more attractive to students, and attract more and possibly better qualified students.

g) **Industrial training site consent:** Faculty member, who is responsible for arranging students training, should ask students first about their preferred location for industrial training. Normally students face difficulties in other cities, due to accommodation and other personal obligations which are linked with their parents. Institute should not assign training site hotels without taking consents from parents as well as students. In some cases, it has been found that students feel homesickness, due to staying away from their native place for duration of more than 20 weeks.

## V. DURING INDUSTRIAL TRAINING

a) **Industrial Training Orientation/Schedule:** The induction program should be made more structured and comprehensive to give a fair idea about the work culture of the property/hotel group concerned to the students when they began their industrial training. Hotel industry professionals should frame proper training plan in order to avoid getting any surprises for the students once they begin their training program. Plan should have all details regarding learning outcomes, job rotation, mentors, feedback process, grievance handling etc. This will surely help in preparing students to understand the nature of the industry/work and also to face the stressful situations and works like realistic job preview.

b) **Meeting of faculty members & hotel industry professionals:** The differences between student expectation and their actual experience may also be reduced down by having better co-ordination and supervision by faculty member in charge for training and hotel industry

professional. Both meet periodically and exchange ideas for improving the quality of these industrial training programs.

c) **Mentor:** Hotel Industry professionals offer a mentor to the student during industrial training, who should be someone working at the supervisory level. Students should more openly discuss problems and concerns with their respective mentors other than a direct supervisor.

d) **Industrial connection visits:** Faculty members to visit students at least three times during the training period to assess their work and to solve any problems as needed. Training in charge must meet the industry professional to discuss the trainee progress or any problems of concern to any of the parties. The industrial training faculty in charge must ensure that the employers do not treat the trainees as cheap or free labour, however ensure that trainees get meaningful experiences and supportive work exposure.

e) **Category of assignments:** The quality of an industrial training as a learning tool appears to be more dependent upon the category of assignments given to the students and type of supervision a trainee receives. Supervisors should assign motivating and challenging assignments to the trainees which makes trainees satisfied with the learning benefits of the industrial training experience. There is a need to instruct the supervisors on how they can work more effectively with students

f) **Be proactive during the internship:** Students must take the initiative to ask for tasks and questions related to their queries and feedbacks.

g) **Job Rotation:** Industry professional must rotate the trainees in all operational departments and provide the schedule on the orientation day.

### **After-Industrial training**

a) **Evaluation:** Evaluation and assessment during and after training needs to be more structured and strict so that students see more importance being attached to the assessment, in return they will take the learning process more seriously and should include performance appraisals of the trainee filled by the supervisors, Project report and presentation.

b) **Feedback:** Trainees should be encouraged to offer feedback regarding the organizations and overall industrial training program

## VI. CONCLUSION

The Industrial Training component of the undergraduate hotel management program constitutes a vital component in the drive to strengthen the key competencies required to improve the graduates' ability to work. Industrial training is an interdependence mechanism among hotel businesses, educational systems as well students. A number of institutions need to review their current industrial training programs to make them as effective. The general view is

that stakeholder's concerned need to work together in the formulation of industrial training programs to make the partnership productive and logically significant to all stakeholders. In addition, hotel management institutions should take a chief role in developing a structured industrial training component which requires the participation of both hotel industry professionals and students. Information about the needs and interests of hotel management students as well as hotel industry professionals should be included into the planning process of industrial training component in the course curriculum. These suggestive practices will be beneficial to all stakeholders concerned and will provide trainees a meaningful experience

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