

TRENDS, ISSUES AND WOMEN IN HOSPITALITY AND TOURISM INDUSTRY

Edited By

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PREFACE

International tourism is the world's largest export earner & an important factor in the balance of payments of many industries. For many destinations across the nation, tourism is an important part of their economy. The developing nations view tourism as a source to improve upon their economy whereas the developed nations view it as a stimulus for furthering their economic growth. The effect of tourism creates a multiplicative effect and thus leads to better growth and opportunities within the society and the country as a whole. There has been a major change in the interest and motivation for travel around the globe. The interest is changing giving a paradigm shift to tourist behavior and patterns. Accordingly various stakeholders need to relook at their policies and for new developments in the field of product designing and development. This changing nature of tourism is impacting inter – organizational, relations, collaborations, completion, innovation and marketing.

This book through research contents delves into the current and emerging trends, challenges in hospitality and tourism industry along with perspectives of women in Hospitality and Tourism Industry. The book has four sections. Section A, covers chapters on “Issues and trends in food /cuisine”, Section B covers chapters on “issues and trends in hospitality human resources”, Section C covers chapters on “ issues and trends related to women in hospitality & tourism” industry Section D covers chapters on “general Issues and trends related to hospitality & tourism industry”.

A number of people have contributed significantly to the realization of this book and must be acknowledged. The contributors to this book are well-known individuals from hospitality education in India and overseas Universities. I am grateful to all those who believed in this project and contributed with chapters or advise. Without their contribution, this book would have never materialized.

(Dr. Vinay Rana)

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“MOOC IT – An Online Platform to Learn Hotel Housekeeping Operations” – A Conceptual Paper

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Abstract

MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) in the field of Hotel Housekeeping provides a wider platform to showcase the module that is not well embraced by the students. The course was designed for anyone who wants to pursue a career in the Housekeeping department in the hospitality industry and for attracting hospitality students to learn more about the module. The course developed in a private university in Malaysia is one of its kind and a pioneer. The course did achieve its aim in attracting students to learn about the module and increased the level of interest for the module.

Key Words: *MOOC, Housekeeping, Hotel, Hospitality Industry*

Introduction:

The Hospitality Industry is bigger, richer and constantly changing. It is growing tremendously. Competition for both talented employees and technical educators are on the constant rise. Rooms division in the hospitality industry comprises of both Front Office Operation and Housekeeping Operations. They form the most important operations section of the hotel.

As a housekeeper you should go to work each day feeling proud of the vital role you play to keep your property clean and aesthetic. You will have to ensure that your rooms are impeccable for guests. Helen Blinkhorn, housekeeping manager at the Golden Tulip hotel Manchester says “Housekeeping just doesn’t get a profile at colleges, we’ve been left in the background for such a long time that a lot of students don’t even consider the sector”, (Caterer & Hotelkeeper, 2006). Nick Gamble, Director of Operations at Malmaison, cited that among the large group of hotels in London the contract-out of housekeeping operations has even more weakened the profession, (Caterer & Hotelkeeper, 2006). Many International Chain groups in Malaysia have also contracted out housekeeping operations paving way for fewer candidates to apply for a job in the department.

Considering the above facts the creation of MOOC in the area of Hotel Housekeeping operations really has the prospective to attract more learners to understand that though the department is not glamorous but it is the backbone of any hotel.

The Description of the module:

The course is on a self-paced mode introducing the learners the Accommodation Product explaining on the Types of hotel rooms and the rate options and various practical tasks. The learners have the flexibility to learn from anywhere on their own devices. As a Housekeeper for more than five years I have always had the passion for the housekeeping hence this course will teach the basic skills of hotel housekeeping operations. At the end of the course the learners would be able to demonstrate the housekeeping practical tasks of guest room cleaning such as Bed Making, Turn Down service and Housekeeping Maid Trolley Packing.

Background and Importance of the module:

The housekeeping department has been unappreciated in many countries by removing the housekeeping modules from college courses and exploitation of under skilled contract workers and as a result there is a dearth in the housekeeping staff. (Caterer & Hotelkeeper, 2006). One of the top five concerns of the hotel departments is employee retention since 2008 (Wise, 2008).

Responding to the prevailing conditions of lack of employees in the department this course is a sincere initiative to create awareness about the department and the various practical tasks and activities developed would build up interest among the learners. The MOOC would also be a revision platform for the existing students enrolled with the University to enhance their performance in the Rooms Division/ Housekeeping/ Accommodation operations module.

Research Methodology:

The study proposed a Case- Study research approach where the phenomenon would be observed from multiple perspectives. This enabled the researcher to understand the study and its contribution in a real-world phenomenon in context of the case. Based on Keller's ARCS (Attention, Relevance, Confidence, Satisfaction) model (Keller & John, 1987) for online learning the study embraced activities in the module linking to the model in motivating the online learners to learn. The MOOC developed in a private University in Malaysia did attract a lot of students which was evident in the student's enrollment for the module. The active participation of the students for the various activities designed in the module did confirm with the ARCS model of Keller and John (1987).

Advantages of the module:

Out of the four major reasons for enrolling in a MOOC course the top most reason is to "*gain specific skills to do my job better*" was established in a survey of MOOC users in developing countries (G Christensen et al, 2013). Donald Clark (2013) has reported that Internal Students on course and professionals were few emerging targeted audiences for MOOC courses. The MOOC designed not only attracted the internal students of the University but also the professionals who wanted to refine their technical skills according to the established Industry's Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs).

Downes and Siemens (2009) suggest that the whole education phenomenon has to be revamped from the traditional, closed groups, highly structured course where students are totally relied on the teachers to open – networks of self-directed learners. Hence this course captures a structured lesson plan with step-by-step pictures of the tasks and video of the practical task for self – directed learner. The activity based assessment at the end of the course amused the learner to gauge their level of understanding of the practical tasks and as well to implement it in their workplace environments or at home.

Limitations & Future Research:

It has been observed that in MOOCs many incomplete learners emerge aiding to a fact that it is not necessary to complete the course assignments, (Alexander et al, 2010). Fini (2009) proved that out of 83 respondents in a particular MOOC only 15 had completed their course requirements. The same scenario prevailed in this MOOC with students not completing their course since it is a non-financial module.

The MOOC currently created is a very a basic module that was initiated to create more awareness about the module among the students. A detailed manual with more topics to enhance the Housekeeping skills should be developed to add in the commercial factor to the course.

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