



IMPACT OF EMPLOYEE INVOLVEMENT ON PROVIDING QUALITY SERVICES IN TOURISM SECTOR FOR DEVELOPING NATION'S ECONOMIC POTENTIAL-A study on West Bengal

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ABSTRACT

The availability of skilled and trained manpower is a crucial element in the successful long-term development and sustainability of a tourist destination. Skilled and trained human resources will ensure the delivery of efficient, high-quality service to visitors, which is a direct and visible element of a successful tourism product. High standards of service are particularly important in sustaining long-term growth, since success as a tourist destination is determined not only by price competitiveness or the range of attractions available, but also by the quality of the services provided, there by the qualified human capital. Tourism can generate foreign exchange, employment opportunities along with economic development and hike in government revenue. But the major problem is the shortage of qualified manpower. So our objective is to examine the tourism policy of West Bengal along with locating the broad employment patterns by involving the employee in decision making process to enhance the total quality in case of service providing. Employee involvement means that every employee is regarded as a valuable resource with their unique service providing abilities, not like a tailor made service provider and each employee should emotionally involve towards the attainments of the overall goals of their respective organization. Each employee uniquely contribute as input is solicited and by proper utilizing their style of management and leadership to become a global service provider.

This article concerned with examining levels of employee involvement in service quality in tourism sector. This study analyses attitude of the employee towards maintaining the quality management in tourism. It examines the nature and extent of employee involvement in quality management through team working, describes the methods which management use to encourage team working. Actual levels of discretion and responsibility and autonomy afforded to teams are found to be lower and yet this study tries to find the mechanism to increasing control or limit extent sense of team working.

Keywords: Employee Involvement, Quality service, tourism employment, sustainable development, GDP, National Economy, Development.

Introduction

According to World Travel and Tourism Council, India will be a tourism hot spot from 2009 to 2018 having the highest ten-year growth potential. Employee involvement is a process for empowering employees to participate in managerial- decision making and improvement activities appropriate to their levels in the organization. Since McGregor's Theory Y brought to managers the idea of a participative management style, employee involvement has taken many forms, including the job design approaches and special activities such as quality of work life (QWL) programs. Employee involvement means that every employee is regarded as a unique human being with his or her identified unique qualities, not just a cog in a machine,

and each employee is involved in helping towards the attainments of the overall goals of the respective organization. Each employee's contribution as input is solicited and valued by his/her management and informal leadership. So participation of every employee in management decision making or employee involvement is necessary in running the business successfully. Where tourism is the fastest growing industry, which is entirely, depends on employees' behavior, specially their involvement and commitment in various travel and tourism services including hotel services. In today's competitive environment, excellent customer service is becoming the core competitive advantage in tourism industry. So, to make "INCREDIBLE BANGAL" from the WEST BENGAL



only can be possible by providing best services to the tourist, which is possible through employee involvement. Similarly tourism is a rapidly developing sphere of employee potential activity which can improve the socio-economic status of any country with a value added service.

Development of Human Resources through Employee Involvement, scenario of tourism sector in West Bengal
Tourism is a major source of revenue generation and therefore it is a major component of economic development. Tourism in India is the largest industry with a contribution of 6.23% to the national GDP and 8.78% of the total employment of India, including the state West Bengal. Human resource management in the widest sense involves the attractions, retention, control, motivation, reward and development of people working in the organization. The importance of human resource Management in the tourism industry in particular, has already been noted and in this field the state West Bengal is no exception to it. Human Resources Development is a vital aspect of tourism. The tourists depend on tour operators, travel agents, guides and tourism functionaries. Trained manpower is a prime need for tourism industry. Professional training will also create employment opportunities to cater the ever increasing demand for human resource in the field of tourism and hospitality in the state. The state government has now planning to recruit Special Tourist Police which are to be deployed at important tourist centers of the state to ensure safety and security of the tourists and involving all the tourism professionals to develop the service quality of this sector.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1. The authors in their study “Exploring Perspectives on Human Resource Development: an Introduction” tried to emphasize how Human Resource Development (HRD) will contribute to be a major academic discipline and a key consideration for work place development in the 21st century. The authors in their study mainly focused on multiple perspectives rather than on the learning performance dichotomy. This article presents a brief justification for adopting a multi perspective approach to the theory and practice in HRD. It is argued that such an approach has the potential to add both theoretical depth and breadth to HRD discourse as well as contributing to reflective HRD practices.

2. The author in her study “Skill Development in Tourism: South Africa’s Tourism-led Development Strategy” tries to investigate the relationship on the role of

skill development in advancing South Africa’s tourism-led development strategy. According to the author skill development has a central role to play in ensuring the effective and sustainable transformation and development of tourism industry in developing countries particularly in case of South Africa. The author ensures that skill development will definitely benefit the poor South African tourism industry. She also argued that the current lack of an integrated and correlated approach to tourism skill development to impact positively on tourism transformation and development in South Africa.

3. In her article “Human Resource Development in Small Island Settings: The

Case of Maldivian Tourism & Hospitality Industry” the author tried to focus on how sustainable tourism development can be practiced in Small Island and developing states particularly in Maldives. According to the author the focus of sustainable tourism development usually only extends to tourism policy, planning and infrastructural development and in many cases the vital core of the industry- the human resource which is either ignored or is not given sufficient emphasis at the policy level. The extent to which HRD is incorporated at the tourism policy and planning stage could be crucial in achieving sustainable development outcomes, as well as improving the overall human development status of many SIDS. The author also tried to study the current employment status as well as discusses the challenges facing human resource development in Maldives by highlighting the sustainable development issues facing the government, the tourism industry and the local residence.

4. The author in his article on “Innovation in Strategic Human Resource Management: Building Capacity in the age of globalization” in 2004 tried to address how innovation would be used as a strategic instrument in human resource management for capacity building in the age of globalization. According to the author both negative and positive capacity building is needed in the area of organizational management, governance and public administrative over the world to meet the global challenges of globalization. Viewing human resource as a human capital and beyond, the article argued that without human resource nothing can be accomplished and without a well trained, well developed and well managed human resource, modern organization and government and business cannot meet the challenges of the globalization age which demands a new generations of future oriented,



anticipatory managers who can develop effective visions and manage organizations by riding high waves of changes in the turbulent world.

5. According to the author in his book “**People & Organization Employee Development**” in (2000) Rosemary H. mention that people hold the key to more productive & efficient origination. The way in which people are managed & developed at work has major effects upon quality, customer service, organizational flexibility and costs. The author tried to address the core personnel & development and four generalist electives including employee reward, employee resourcing & employee relations & employee development. The author tries to emphasis on need for those who hold HRD responsibilities to acts as business partners in the organization and also as citizens of a wider professional community.

6. In 1982, Rao, T.V. conducted a Survey of HRD practices in Indian industries. The survey revealed that only 17 out of 53 companies had formal policy focusing on HRD. All in all HRD appeared to be becoming a significant aspect of work life in many organizations. Another survey conducted by the author revealed that the general climate was not very conducive to HRD due to general indifference of employees to their own development. The study revealed that the top management in most organizations was not making sufficient efforts to improve the quality of work life.

The author in her study “**Skill Development in Tourism: South Africa’s Tourism-led Development Strategy**” tries to investigate the relationship on the role of skill development in advancing South Africa’s tourism-led development strategy. According to the author skill development has a central role to play in ensuring the effective and sustainable transformation and development of truism industry in developing countries particularly in case of South Africa. The author ensures that skill development will definitely benefit the poor South African tourism industry. She also argued that the current lack of an integrated and correlated approach to tourism skill development to impact positively on tourism transformation and development in South Africa.

7. The authors in their article on “**Quality service in international hotel sector A catalyst for strategic human resource development**” tried to analyze the nature of and relationship between, a quality service initiatives and the concept of strategic human resource development. The authors in their study found out that the

quality initiatives was acting as a catalyst for a strategic approach to human resource development to emerge in the organization namely hotel Hilton international. However although many of the factors identified with the concept of strategic human resource development are evidenced. It was proposed that standard set by academics in the field of human resource development might be too inspirational for hotel sector.

The main aim of the paper was to analyze a service quality initiative in an international hotel chains from a strategic human resource development perspective. The study concluded that the quality initiatives of equilibrium were indeed attached a greater importance to human resource development than before and it was triggered to move towards a strategic level of human resource development.

8. The authors in their books “**Tourism and Sustainable Economic Development, Indian and Global Perspectives**” in 2005 tried to mentioned in their study that to develop appropriate and suitable manpower for the tourism industry, it is essential to provide them suitable training in all aspects of HRD. According to them, men and women as workers are to be viewed in dignified, egalitarian and partnership terms. Work should be seen as a process of human collaboration rather than a commodity procured with money. The work organizations are to seen as venue for human collaboration and growth through partnership, rather than as a place to practice authority relations, or even worse, to engage in exploitative practice through submitting others to conditions of indignity and deprivations.

9. In their article “**Economic determinism and human resource management practice in the hospitality and tourism industry this reality of poor employment practices**” (2000), Riley et al. argued that economics is the key determining factor for HRM policies and practices in tourism and hospitality. Of course this point is likely to be true of any industry, but as Riley et al. point out it carries a particular resonance in tourism and hospitality, due to the nature of the sector. The authors stressed that it is not to say that organizations and managers in the industry are not well aware of new managerial thinking on HRM. However, they also find themselves wrestling with traditional problems which are underpinned by fundamental labour economic imperatives. An obvious impact of this is that HRM concerns of tourism and hospitality organizations are constantly directed to short-term responses to issues such as recruitment, selection and



basic training, rather than more long-term areas which could conceivably offer more development and career progression for existing employees. Another reason for continuing pessimism is the general attitude of employers and particularly the extent to which they are willing to recognize the extent of the HRM problem in the sector.

10. Doswel explained that: HRD covering education and training at all levels addresses 1) to offer competitive conditions and career opportunities to ensure the adequate recruitment of all levels of personnel, 2) to provide educational and training opportunities for all occupations and specializations at agreed and specified levels of skill wherever necessary in the country (Doswel 1997: 265-6).

11. Harbison and Myers provided an economic perspective on HRD, which they define as: the process of increasing the knowledge, the skills, and the capacities of all the people in a society. In economic terms, it could be described as the accumulation of human capital and its investment in the development of an economy (Harbison and

Myers 1964:2).

AIMS AND OBJECTIVES

The aim of the study was to determine the relationship between tourism and Local Economic Development by providing quality services through employee involvement. Tourism encourages economic growth by generating income and employment through business opportunities in both developed and developing regions. Tourism is considered an economic sector in itself, which could assist in diversification and revitalization of local economic regions.

In the context of Globalization importance of tertiary sector or service sector has been gradually increasing. The commercialization of hospitality sector with lots of diversification and differentiation has adopted some strategies for ensuring employee performance through proper job involvement, perfect positioning and suitable acceptance. So the primary objectives of this study are to identify how employee involvement affects the service quality in hospitality sector. Some other objectives are-

1) To improve the market share of India in the inbound international tourism market and also to have a dominant share in the domestic tourism market.

2) To develop incredible and sustainable tourism through the integrated development of the infrastructure and quality services.

3) To facilitate tourism by all segments along with economic development.

4) To increase foreign exchange reserves of the country

.5) To promote quality tourism by developing the skills of the employee through various job involvement and employee development programme.

6) To promote India as a desirable tourism destination as well as investment destination.

HYPOTHESIS:

1) **Employee Involvement in hospitality sector versus Quality Services.**

2) **Relationship between Employee Satisfaction and Employee Involvement.**

METHODOLOGY

This study was based on qualitative methodology, data will be acquired through field (work place) Observation; questionnaire surveys of existing and prospective tourism workers and employers; in depth interviews with tourism workers, employers, planners and educators; as well as an assessment of tourism plans to determine the human resource planning needs in West Bengal. Pre testing of questionnaire will be done to find the suitability. The questionnaire will be revised suitably, so that the information sought can be cross checked. The researcher will meet personally to collect the relevant information from the HR professional working in various tourism and hospitality sector in West Bengal. The data for the proposed study was collected from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was supplemented by secondary data cited in the reports of Department of Tourism, Govt. of India, Govt. of West Bengal, Bengal National Chamber of Commerce and Industry, West Bengal Industry association, CII, etc.

Apart from these some relevant journals, Magazines and news papers will also be consulted. The questionnaire were carried out to 150 human resource development professionals who are working mainly at managerial level in different hotels, travel agencies, Tour operators, airline companies, State Government tourism Department etc. This study was conducted using self-administered questionnaires with the consent from the various Hotels, airlines offices, travel agencies, tour operators, foreign exchange bureaus, car rental companies and multi cuisine restaurants etc. managers beforehand. Pilot testing was



conducted using a small convenience sample of 35 to 46 respondents from various hotels and travel agencies in West Bengal. The respondents were informed that their participation was on a voluntary basis and all information provided would be kept private and confidential. The

collected data was analyzed using different statistical tool like percentage, regression, Co-relation. For analyzing data different computer software like MS Word, SPSS, Excel. ANOVA etc. will also be used.

DATA ANALYSIS

		FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
VALID	HIGH SCHOOL & BELOW	17	11.3	11.3	11.3
	GRADUATE	75	50.0	50.0	61.3
	POST GRADUATE & ABOVE	57	38.0	38.0	99.3
	OTHERS	1	7	7	100
	TOTAL	150	100.0	100.0	

Regarding educational qualifications of the respondents the table reveals that 50% of the respondents educational qualification were graduate followed by 38% were post graduate and above. 11.3% respondent’s qualification was 11.3%. So the state has to be more careful about tourism education.

Designation of the Respondents

		Frequency	Percent	Valid percent	Cumulative percent
Valid	Managerial	28	18.7	18.7	18.7
	Supervisory	32	21.3	21.3	40.0
	Workmen	25	16.7	16.7	56.7
	Executive	49	32.7	32.7	89.3
	Trainee	16	10.7	10.7	100.0

Regarding designation the table reveals that around 32.7% of the HR professionals were at executive level followed by 21.3% were at supervisory level. The above table also depicts that 18.7% were working at managerial level and 16.7 % were at entry level professionals. It was also revealed that 10% were at trainee level. So employee involvement can be more effective for holding higher position in tourism job.

Job involvement and skill development are some of the most important HRD aspects of any employee for the success of nay organisation. Job involvement and skill development will not only makes the job more stimulating but also increase the involvement of the employee during planning and decision making process. This will lead to increase in performance as well as provides opportunities for better career development of the employee.

1. Job Involvement and Skill Development



S21 = the content of my job is very interesting and stimulating,
 S22 = my skill and knowledge match properly with my job
 S23 = Employees are completely involved in the activities and decision making process of tourism sector,

S24 = my job allows me to learn and develop my performance,
 S25 = my organisation provides me Opportunities for career development,
 S26 = Creative ideas in my organization are encouraged and rewarded.

Table: 1. Job involvement & skill development

Statement Factor	Factor Loading	Eigen Value	Variance	Cumulative Variance	Naming
S21	.829	1.678	4.159	51.113	Job involvement And Skill development
S22	.574				
S23	.453				
S24	.466				
S25	.732				

2. Hypothesis Testing (2)

O2: Employee involvement is independent of intensity and stimulating job content and scope for offering creative ideas.

HA2: Employee involvement is dependent of intensity and stimulating job content and scope for offering creative ideas.

Table: 2.Hypothesis Testing 2

	Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
Regression	41.592	2	20.796	29.921	.000
Residual	102.168	147	.695		
Total	143.760	149			



3. Hypothesis Testing (1)

H01: Providing quality service to the client in tourism sector is independent of employee involvement.

HA1: Providing quality service to the client in tourism sector is dependent of employee involvement.

Table: 3. Testing of Hypothesis 1

VAR038 VAR039

VAR038 Pearson Correlation 1 .194

Sig. (2-tailed) .017

N= 150

VAR039 Pearson Correlation .194 1 Sig. (2-tailed) .017

N =150

The degree of relationship between quality service provided and employee involvement is .194 which is statistically significant (P –Value = 0.017) at 5% level of significance. So, null hypothesis is rejected and the alternative hypothesis is accepted.

4. Hypothesis Testing (2)

Table: 3. Testing of Hypothesis (2)

		VAR038	VAR039
VAR038	Pearson Correlation	1	.194
	Sig. (2-tailed) .	.	.017
	N	150	150
VAR039	Pearson Correlation	.194	1
	Sig. (2-tailed	.017	.
	N	150	150

MAJOR FINDINGS:

The provision of tourism human capital need is a complex issue in a state like west Bengal. There is always a shortage of qualified tourism workers, particularly for the higher level positions that require skilled workers. The department of Tourism, Government of West Bengal is not only aware of the contribution that tourism makes to economic development, but is also aware of the key role

that human resource development plays in optimizing that contribution. There is no problem, therefore, concerning the awareness on the contribution of HRD. Moreover, it became clear from the research that the strategies and policies are in place. The problem is the lack of appropriate action plans and implementation procedures. Thus HRD officials and experts should be at the forefront, to be trained and educated so that they can implement the



strategies and policies at hand. It is only through highly capable and committed employees that organizations as well as countries gain a competitive advantage.

a) In West Bengal tourism industries limited capacity to absorb college/ University graduates from tourism because there are a lack of systematic institutional systems for the cultivation of tourism manpower at all levels.

b) There is always an absence of mismatch between the supply and demand in the middle and higher level managerial positions of the tourism workforce in the state.

c) Employers indicated that, given the fact that students do not have substantial practical skills and job placement is for a limited time, it is risky for them to empower the students to perform more sophisticated jobs. Also, tourism employers feel that the ultimate value of industrial job placement for students is the opportunity of being in a real working environment where they can observe what goes on and get acquainted with actual work situations. Contrary to many tourism educators and students, employees do not regard industrial placement as a way of acquiring new skills. In any case, industrial placement is also a way of employers gaining cheap help. What has been neglected by the tourism employers is to consider the industrial placement as an integral part of tourism education, because of its short duration, as well as the long-term benefits to the industry.

LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Although the researcher has made her best efforts to minimize the limitations, but still there are few limitations the researchers faced during this study. The researcher collected primary information mostly through field survey in different districts of West Bengal. For lack of sufficient time as well as cost constraints it was not possible to visit all the districts of West Bengal thereby to produce an exhaustive research work. Here the researcher has mainly visited different prominent tourism developed districts of West Bengal.

1) The statistical tools used by the researcher have their own limitations.

2) Absence of universally accepted entry credentials and performance standards and hence the need for standards and certification.

3) Lack of awareness in developing potential employees through proper job involvement.

4) Employer's unwillingness for involving employees in managerial decision making process.

5) Lack of awareness among the employees regarding the significance of tourism industry.

6) To maintain greater control over the employees employers always take decisions, which selected from a pre-determined, set of alternatives.

7) Individual Employee participation into a group through physical and psychological involvement is always restricted by the rules, policies, sense of authority within the tourism industry.

8) Mostly in every sector of the tourism industry invites absence of psychological involvement of the potential employees which creating 'ego' and inhibits their creativity.

Suggestions / recommendations:

1) For high attribution of junior managers and in building up mutual bond and trust among employees.

2) Performance appraisal should be conducted regularly and perks and incentive may be taken up for twice a year to make up for the employees lost ground on account of low salaries.

3) Adequate motivation should be given to the employees for participating in organizational decision-making process

4) Industry/ organizations must allocate staff the job where they are best fit for providing best services to the customer.

5) The HR department must identify top performers and give them a fast track route to grow and develop themselves for senior positions, in all its fairness.

6) Organisations should invite their potential employees for active participation in formulating plans and policies to judge their operational success and efficiency of those employees.

7) There must be some clearly defined career employee empowerment policies to motivate the employees and also to reduce the turnover rate in tourism sector.

8) Improving the quality of communication among employees and management can provide better definitions of job satisfaction will definitely improve the working environment in the state and thereby improve the service quality.



CONCLUSION

The tourism industry should ask for employee's suggestions in policy making and invites creativities from the employees in formulating flexible environment through strategic ideas. The hospitality sector should give much importance on its employees to develop a sense of their belongingness from that particular organization and they will feel motivated towards providing best services. A fully involved employee will always leads towards organizational efficiency and job satisfaction will be there. Employee satisfaction through employee involvement positively leads towards quality services. Employee involvement through decision-making process generates high quality information. The employee involvement process towards the service must be transferred to the set of the organizational policies, to programs for continuous improvement and innovation.

Although the growth of the tourism industry in the state of West Bengal has slowed down as a result of the several factors including industrial slow down, land acquisition issues, border conflict, once these issues will solved, it is expected that the state will bounce back and regain its status as a fast growing tourism destination in Indian. As a result, development of the tourism industry will facilitate the creation of new employment opportunities and will provide an important source of foreign exchange. Hence, tourism is an activity that must play an important role in the economic development of West Bengal. If tourism policies are carefully developed, the tourism industry will

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not only result in an increased source of income and the creation of new jobs, it will also stimulate infrastructure development In addition, an effective tourism policy could reduce poverty, foster entrepreneurship and promote growth of domestic industries, stimulate production of food and local handicrafts, facilitate cultural exchange and contribute to social goodwill in the state in particular country in general. The qualitative and quantitative findings of the survey conducted for this study will assist policy makers in defining particular priorities for employee involvement in different service provider of the tourism industry. The results and their implications are revisited thereafter; more specific recommendations are to be made for addressing the problems regarding involvement of the employees and by economic development can be achieved by maintaining quality services.

A policy thrust should be established for both public and private sectors of hospitality industry to be actively involved in manpower training and development to enable the industry operate with adequate supply of skilled and knowledgeable personnel to meet the present and future challenges of tourism and hospitality sector in West Bengal.

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