

Perception of Final Year Hotel Management Students towards Working in Hotel Industry

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Abstract

Although the development of hotel industry can create new job opportunities' it is often criticized that the hotel industry provides low skilled and less paid jobs. If today's students are going to be the hotel managers of tomorrow it's important to understand their perceptions about hotel jobs. This paper focuses on final year students who have completed their industrial trainings and are ready for placement in hotels. The study finds that the students respondent neither favorable nor unfavorable towards the hotel jobs. The findings also show that there is willingness to work in hotel related jobs or study further about hospitality industry. Though the impact is debatable, a student's negative work experience during the industrial training can influence their image of hotel industry.

Keywords: Hotel Industry: The primary purpose of hotels is to provide travelers with shelter, food facility, refreshment, and similar services and goods offering on commercial basis things that are customarily furnished within household but unavailable to people on a journey away from home. Source: <http://www.encyclopedia.com>

Introduction

Hospitality is fast pace growing industry in India and a big source of employment. For developing further on Indian tourism and Indian hospitality industry it is to be encouraged to produce considerable number of hotel jobs, both directly in the hospitality sector in which tourist expenditure occurs and more widely via inter

industry linkages. The growing hotel related employment is observed seen in various countries. The ever changing and progressing hotel industry is creating various job opportunities but most of the jobs are i.e. low skilled or with low pay this eventually results in job dissatisfaction. Unfortunately in India hospitality industry has an image of high staff turnover and waste of trained personnel. To overcome the shortage of skilled staff there is increase in number of hotel management colleges which also offer industrial training wherein the students get a glimpse of hotel jobs and further decide about their future careers. The hotel industry will progress with skilled, motivated staff. It will be necessity to ensure positive outlook of students towards hotel

There are number of hotel management courses running all over India. This study was specifically done in the Pune hotel management schools with their final year students. It is required that the hotel schools provide their students with intense academic and practical experience. Well defined and extended theoretical education practical experience of students will prepare the hotel school graduates to be able to cope with industry work culture. The better experience and capable students will be more successful. Students after their industrial training program do have change in their perception towards hotel industry jobs. Job as well as personal life matters, do influence student's choice and preferences for the hotel job. Even if the impact not clearly understood a hotel school graduates negative work experience during training will have negative outlook towards hotel industry jobs. What academicians believe graduated hotel management students should have more theory knowledge and hotel industry representative believe should have good practical knowledge this is yet a

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debatable issue. Although hotel recruiters value the good academic background and during interviews do assess the knowledge of students, Hotel recruiters also demand entry level staff to have good practical understanding of hotel industry: knowledge and skill developed through real world or industry based experiences these qualifications are often obtained during hotel industrial training experiences. Despite the very well documented need for industry experience students exposed to such experiences sometimes change their perception of the hotel industry, and thereby decrease in the likelihood.

Literature Review

There is substantial literature about employment in hospitality sector, only limited number of studies conducted to highlight perception of final year hotel management students about career in hotel industry. This means more studies related to student's perception about hotel industry is required in order to evaluate the employment practices and human resource planning in hospitality sector. A negative perception about hotel related jobs may be hindrance to retain qualified skilled workforce and *Vis e versa* failure of the hotel industry. The hotel industry relies totally on human resource so it is required to understand the image of hotels amongst the students of hotel management colleges.

Colin pinto (January-May 2013) explained that what you see is what you believe, and hotel school or any educators can relate this to their teaching & learning process. Where students with theoretical knowledge also get practical experience. With this students would begin to better comprehend knowledge being delivered to them. This is because what they experience in hotel industry, is what is being taught by lecturers who already have actual hotel industry experience. The teaching & learning will be more effective if hotel school students are exposed to real working conditions by practically applying their knowledge.

Data et al. (2013) explained that there was difference in expectation between senior students who had completed internship and juniors who were yet to undergo industrial training. The hotel school students who have undergone their training had a more negative perspective towards the hotel industry.

Park & Kim (2011) also stated that after industrial training, perception of students are generally lower mean values than pre industrial training expectations for most career related factors, thereby implying that final year students after internship become pessimistic regarding their future jobs.

Scott Richardson, 2009 explained about areas that students have concern over included respondent's relationship with their managers, promotion opportunities, career decisions, and the salary packages and conditions offered by hotel industry. Possibly the most alarming findings to come out of this study is that more than 50% of respondents are already contemplating careers outside the industry of those with work experience in the industry, 43.6% claim that they will not work in the tourism and hospitality industry after graduation, with 96.3% of these respondents citing working experience in the industry as the main reason for this decision.

Blomme, Van Rheede, and Tromp (2009) found difference of opinion between the pre-and post-entry expectations of hotel management students in the hospitality industry. Researchers have found many hospitality graduates either never entered the industry, or left the industry with no intention to return again

Walsh & Taylor, 2007 Because of high staff turnover in the hotel industry and retaining well qualified staff of education field is becoming increasingly difficult, determining the difference between importance and experiences of hospitality graduates is become more important so educators and industry professionals should make an attempt to reduce the gap.

Wen-hwa ko, 2008 emphasized that industrial training sessions made a remarkable differences in level of satisfaction of the supervisor and educational programs. The regression analysis results shows that satisfied training plays a positive role as a predictor of employee's job satisfaction and increases confidence about future careers. The administration and teaching & learning factors in connection with employee's satisfaction during the training were found to be specific predictors of their confidence about the hotel careers, but supervision by hotel employees, hotel environment and interpersonal relation were not.

Yafang and gong young (2008) emphasized that final year hospitality students who were exposed to real

work conditions in hotels during their internship period develop negative perception towards industry due to lack of coordination between schools and employers, opportunities for self-development, pay and welfare, work pressure, opportunity to work rotation, interesting and challenging work and autonomy involved in work.

Blomme (2006) found approximately 70% of The Hague hotel school graduates were no longer in the hotel industry after a span of 6 years of graduation. In addition to this, Blomme et al. (2009) found almost 66% (n= 159) of first year hospitality students intended to enter the hotel industry and 17 % (n= 78) of graduates did not intend to work in the hospitality industry.

Walsh and Taylor (2007) indicated that now retaining well qualified staff is becoming a major challenge in the hotel industry; this aligns with Blomme et al.'s results

Kim hallab and lee (2009) received 126 completed surveys from a batch of students majoring in hotel and tourism management in Korea. In their research various work factors which students wanted in a hospitality career were examined. The author found that interesting work; work with more other benefits, and good working conditions in job to be the most valued factors. And least valued factors included location, training, and supervisor. The author mentions as graduates get promoted professionally, their monthly salary becomes the top value concern.

Andrew Kevin Jenkins, 2001 mentioned about the hotel management students have a distinct preference liking for a certain hotel department, hotel chain and sector of industry. Most expect to be managers in ten years after graduating. As degree progress the student's perception of the industry deteriorates.

Leslie & Richardson, 2000 surveyed that student's pre internship perception and post internship experiences influence students to avoid a career in hospitality/tourism industry.

Getz d, 1994 mentioned that the majority in both years had actual work experiences in the tourism and hospitality sector, but attitude towards a potential career in the industry had become much more negative over the 14 years and the Explanations are found in the absence of local training, current problem in the local tourism industry and a perception that such jobs are not desirable.

From a preselected list of 20 categories that may influence student's impression of potential hotel employer, 550US hotel management students from 19 schools ranked those factors and gathered those involving personal interaction the highest ratings. The most influential factors were (1) experience with company as a consumer; (2) word of mouth from faculty members. (3) word of mouth from school alumni (4) hotel company representative personality (5) word of mouth from other students (6) guest lecturers by industry experts in class (7) hotel company representative appearance (8) hotel company participation in job fair (9) three month industrial work experience (10) hotel company sponsored tours. Less influential were hotel company sponsored scholarship, hotel company sponsored social events, and company information on internet or worldwide web.

Objectives of the Study

- To analyze attitude change amongst final year students towards hotel industry.
- To find level of satisfaction amongst final year students towards hotel industry work
- To find percentage of students willing to join hotel industry after graduation.
- To assess the impact of hotel industry jobs on final year students.

Research Methodology

1. Data collection

The primary data which was required for this research was collected using the following technique:

Questionnaire: A questionnaire with straight forward and relevant questions was drafted and sent over to the sample to obtain their response.

2. Sample technique

The population was 74 no of final year students of various hotel Management College. With due consideration to the fact that the study is based on final year students who have completed their industrial training the study was done with sample size of 74 hotel management students from various colleges. Apart from the above mentioned other t secondary data was collected from various journals books and internet.

Observations and Discussion

- **Attitude Change after Industrial Training Program:** The hotel management students learn professionalism during their industrial training in hotels which they further develop post training. This development helps them in their campus placement and builds confidence, a positive and respectable attitude towards hotel industry. The reality of hotel industry is experienced by the students during their training program which influences the decision of career in hotel industry.
- **Level of Satisfaction towards Hotel Industry Work Culture:** The students work in various departments of hotels. The basic knowledge of hotel work is acquired by them in the college, but in hotel they get opportunity to enhance their practical knowledge further by dealing actually with hotel guest and by various situations handling moments. The image of real hotel industry work is experience by students during their industrial training programs.
- **Interest Level for Working in Hotel Industry:** After experiencing real work scenario of hotel industry the decision of many students do vary from their previous decisions about career in hotel industry i.e. some may find they are in favor of working in hotel, some against in favor and some are not so sure of working with hotel industry.
- **Various Hotel Departments of Interest:** After industrial training students usually decide their department of choice where they would want to make their career.
- **Perception & Understanding about Hotel in Following Mentioned Aspects:**
- **Promotion opportunities:** After training and working in different departments various hierarchy personnel, students get an idea about promotion opportunities of hotel industry.
- **Respect level in industry:** Whether the hotel job is respectable as other jobs.
- **Whether right decision for career:** Investment done in hotel management course is a right decision as it will give higher salaried jobs.
- **Monetary benefits:** Skilled personnel are required in hotel industry and they are paid well depending on their skill levels. Managerial level jobs are paid

more monthly salary.

- **Secure future:** Students after graduation look for jobs which are ensuring future job security, and secure career future. After industrial training students analyze whether working in hotel will ensure secure career future for them.
- **Working in pleasant culture:** During the industrial training program students get an opportunity to work in various departments of the hotel, at the same time they get to interact with hotel guest and meet different people. This adds on to their confidence and communication skills. Meeting new people is pleasant experience while working in the hotels.
- **Advantages of hotel jobs:** After training program the students start to analyze whether the hotel job is more advantageous than other jobs.
- **Helpful attitude of managers:** Managers attitude towards students should be accommodating as this will create positive attitude of students towards hotel work culture, and their willingness to work in hotel industry.
- **Long hours versus pay pattern:** Hotel industry job demands long hours of work and the pay is comparatively less. This might change the decision of students to work in hotel industry.

Findings

All questions listed were asked to final year students of various hotel management schools in all total 74 no of students from Pune participated in survey.

Research objective one: To analyze attitude change amongst final year students towards hotel industry. Major sample considered change in attitude towards hotel industry after their industrial training program.

Research objective two: To find satisfaction amongst final year students towards hotel industry. Level of satisfaction towards the way hotel industry works is on higher side to dissatisfaction level with a margin of 8% only.

Research objective three: To find percentage of students willing to join hotel industry after graduation. There is a mixed opinion received about willingness to join hotel. Major sample replied that they would like to work in hotel industry after graduation and many students were also found not sure of their career in hotel industry after

Figure 1: Change in Attitude Towards Hotel Industry

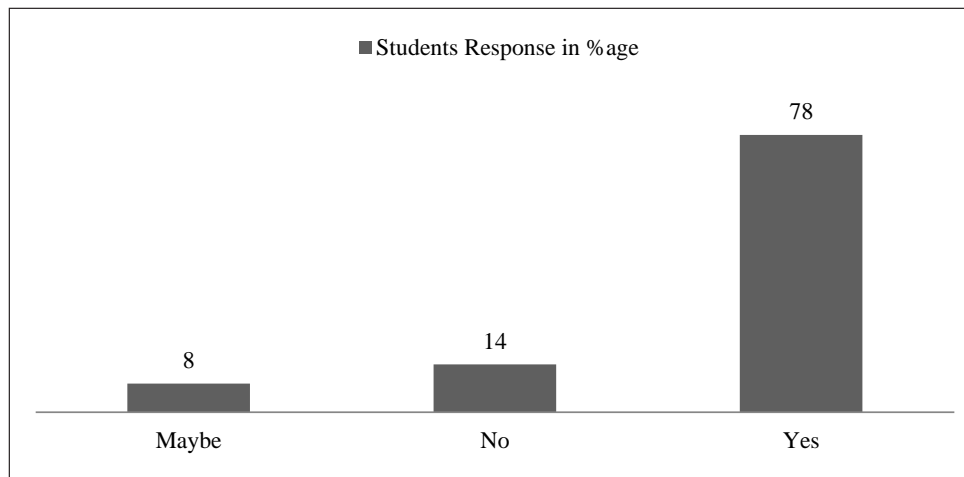


Figure 2: Satisfaction Level with Hotel Industry

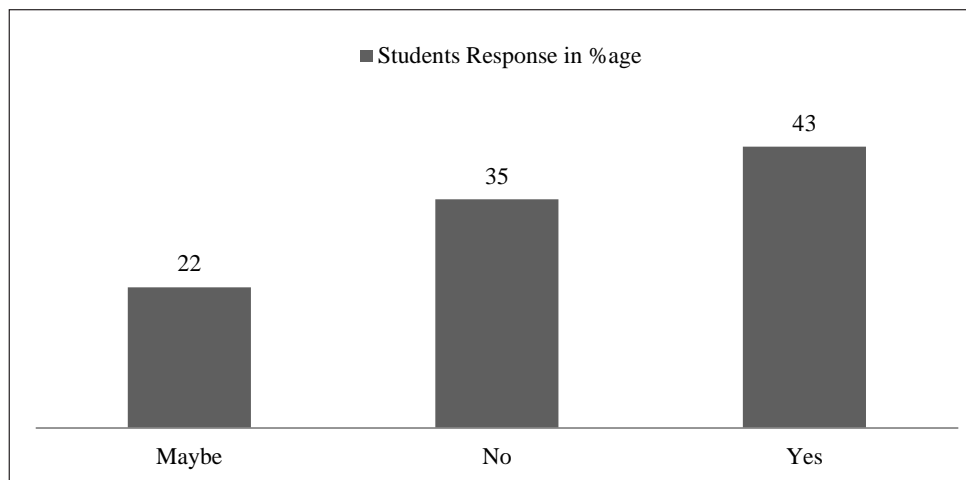


Figure 3: Percentage of Students Willing to Work in Hotel Industry After Graduation

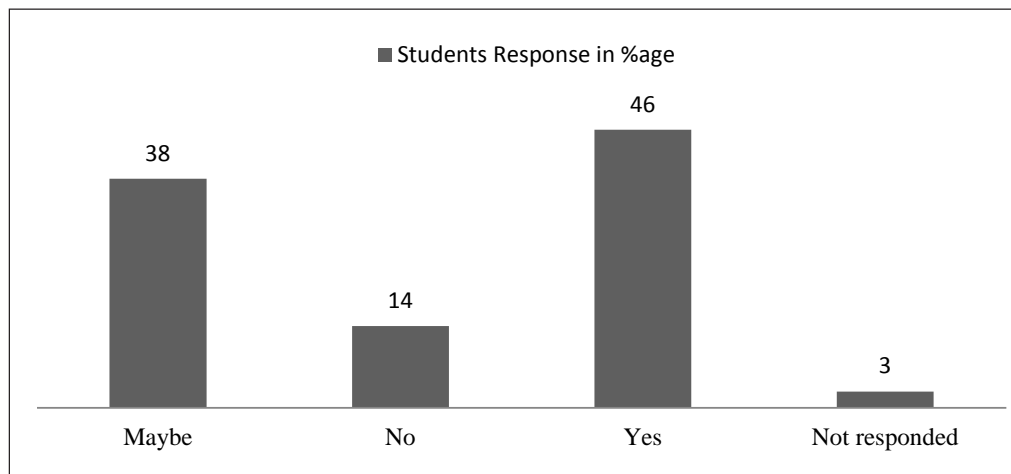


Figure 4 : Department of Interest

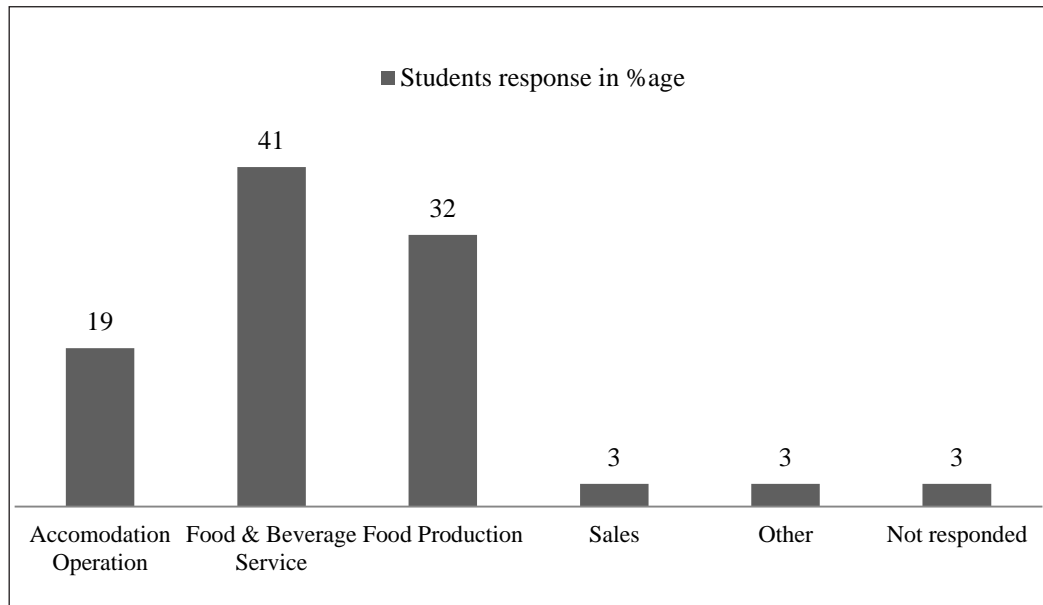


Figure 5: Responses of Students on Various Hotel Job Related Aspects

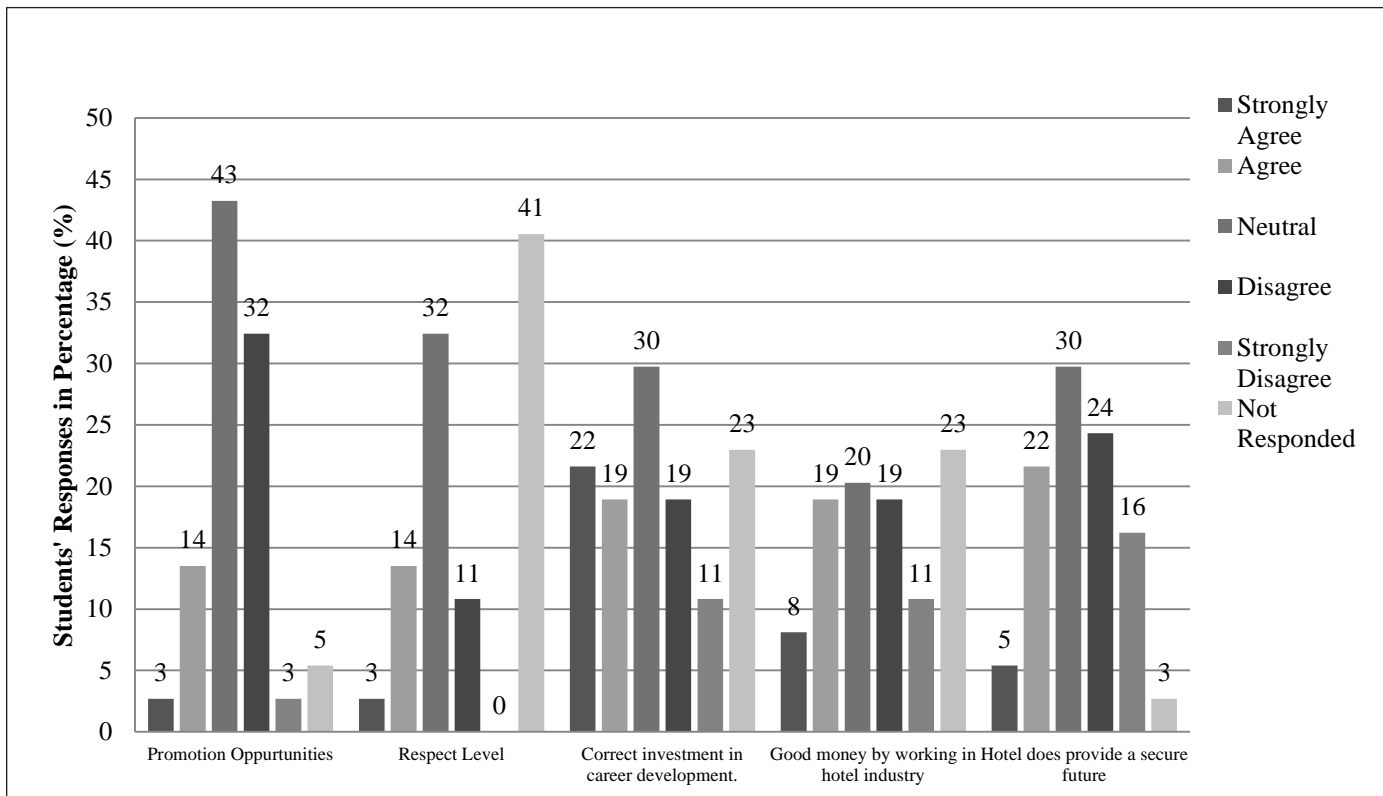
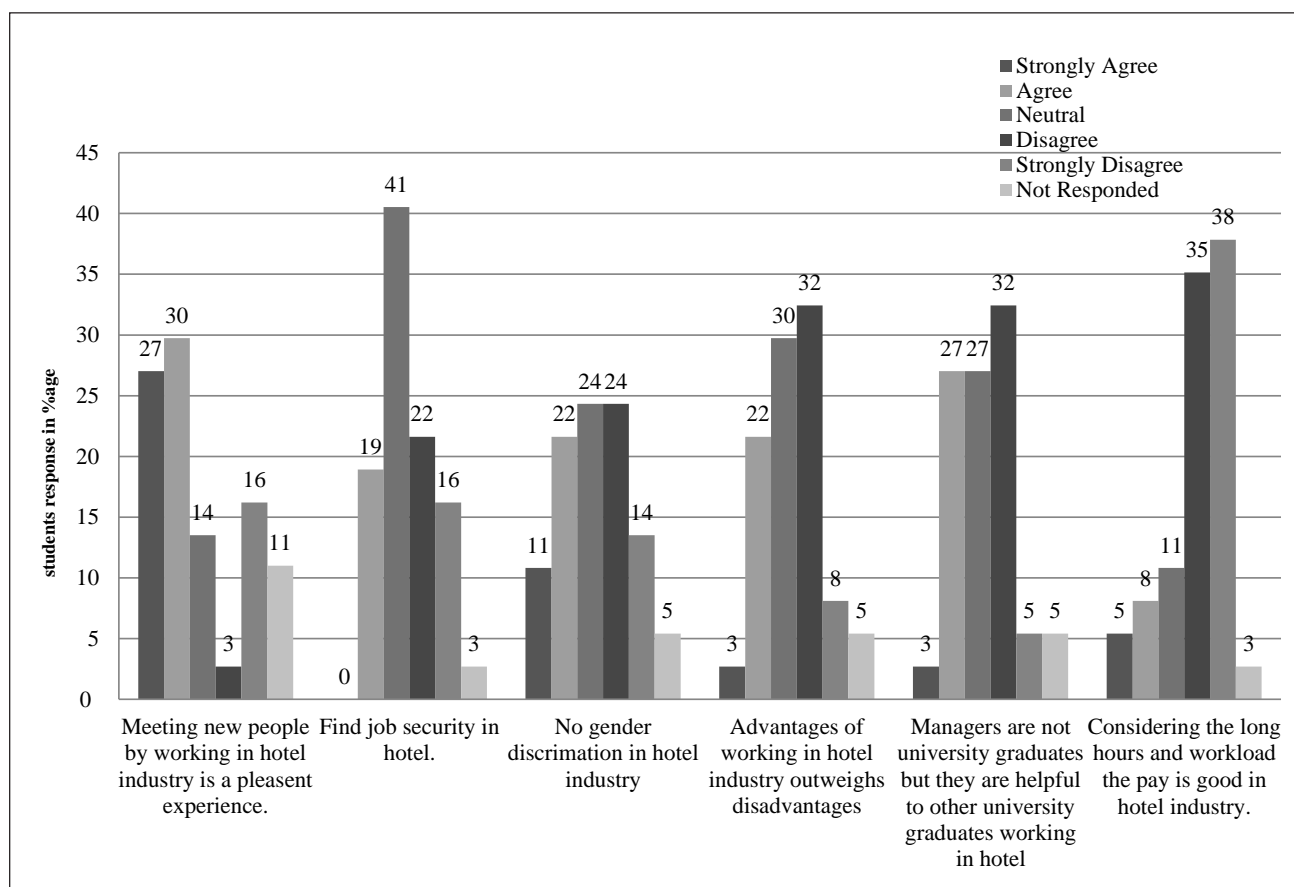


Figure 6: Response of Students on Various Hotel Job Related Aspects



undergoing industrial training. This shows decline in interest towards hotel jobs.

Research objective four: To assess the impact of hotel industry jobs on final year students. The scale considered to assess the impact is:

1=strongly disagree, 2=disagree, 3=Neutral, 4=agree, 5=strongly agree

The findings suggest the students interest level is more towards core operational departments. The students also have negative opinion about promotion opportunities in the hotel jobs. There is average rating for respect level in hotel job, good money earned in hotel jobs and whether hotel job provides secure future. The rating received for job security in hotel, gender discrimination, hotel industry jobs are more advantages, and considering long hours of work hotel salaries are good is with average score. The positive impact is seen on opportunity to meet new people while working in hotel industry. This shows students are

not sure of joining hotel jobs and the impact of hotel jobs on them is mediocre.

Recommendations

The following recommendations will be helpful for hotel industry and final year hotel management students

- There must be good liaison between hotel recruiters and hotel management schools. This will be helpful in getting qualified personnel for hotel jobs and students will get more interaction with hotel industry recruiters and will be able to understand the requirements and specifications of hotel job.
- Hotel should provide industrial trainees with good amount of learning opportunity which will encourage them to join hotel job after they graduate.
- The students during their training should get opportunity to work in all the various departments of the hotel and also should get responsibility this will

boost their confidence level of working in hotel and also add on the respect towards hotel job.

- Students should be trained well in order to get accustomed to hotel job work culture.
- The hotel staff should be paid well and also there must be consideration of the extra working hours.
- While interacting with the hospitality graduates the industry must take care of certain points so that there should not be any change in perception. The training programmes should be designed in such a way that the students enjoy the training sessions and not treat it as burden.

Conclusions

The research study investigated with final year students of hotel management colleges 'perception towards work in hotel industry. This study is based on the perceptions of final year hotel management students who have undergone industrial training in a hotel. This research project focused on the impact of hotel job culture on the hotel management students. After the analysis of the responses received from students about hotel industry this study concludes following:

Most hotel management students have a change in attitude after actual work experience in hotel industry which is during their industrial training. Many students are satisfied with the way the hotel industry works and many after hotel training are unsure about their decision of working in hotel. Students also decide about their department of choice where they would like to work in future. As per students observation it is analyzed that there is average promotion opportunities in hotel jobs, and it is suggested that industry provides careers which are relatively unattractive to vast majority of final year students. The students feel that there is average respect level for hotel jobs as compared to other jobs. The hotel management students responded that there is relatively good money earned in hotel jobs so the investment on hotel management school is generally right decision. But the respondent feel compare to the long hour shifts of hotel jobs the money offered in hotel jobs is less, this suggests that there should be no overtime for staff and if it is they should be paid for their extra hours. Many times the low salary packages offered by hotel are the reason of negative attitude of students. This practice will have

positive impact even on the industrial trainees as they will observe that staff is not working long hours. There is positive and pleasant effect on students about hotel jobs as here they get to meet and interact with people from different cultures and countries. Students strongly disagree that working in hotel provides job security. There is major sample which disagree that hotel jobs are advantages.

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