

## **A Case Study :- The Role of Industrial Internships in Bridging the Gap between Hotel Management Education and Industry Requirements**

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### **Abstract**

Industrial training is a crucial element in hotel management education, providing students with the practical experience needed to apply the skills and knowledge they have acquired in their academic programs. This study aims to analyze the importance of industrial training in the hospitality industry, identify gaps between hotel management institutes and industry expectations, and assess the satisfaction levels of hotels with the performance of trainees during their internships. Additionally, it examines the impact of hotel management trainees on hotel operations.

**Methodology:** Data were collected from employees of star-category hotels and hotel management students in Dehradun city. The results, derived from surveys and interviews, have been presented in tabulated form and illustrated with graphs. The findings reflect the perspectives of hotel staff and students who have successfully completed their industrial training.

**Findings and Discussion:** The study reveals the significance of industrial training in shaping hospitality professionals and highlights the essential knowledge and skills required for a successful career in the industry. It also provides insights into the areas where hotel management education can be improved to better align with industry needs. The results are discussed in detail, offering valuable information for both academic institutions and industry practitioners.

**Key Words:** Industrial Training, Trainee, Hospitality Management, Education Curriculum, Practical Knowledge, Academic institutions.

## Introduction

The vibrancy of a city can often be measured by its dining options and the quality of its hospitality industry. In this respect, Dehradun, Uttarakhand, has made remarkable strides, with the establishment of numerous national and international food chains and luxury hotels. The growing influx of people moving to Dehradun for education and employment has attracted major international players in the hospitality sector, greatly enhancing the city's development and lifestyle.

The hospitality sector, particularly in the northwestern part of Uttarakhand, has seen dynamic growth, with prestigious hotels like Taj, Marriott, Hyatt, Jaypee, and Sarovar, among others, establishing their presence. The standards of hotels and restaurants have risen, with international hotel chains expanding their businesses in Dehradun. This growing competition has fueled the demand for skilled and efficient staff to meet the evolving needs of the industry.

The hospitality industry is a critical pillar of tourism and a significant contributor to any city's economy. While some cities excel at promoting themselves, others have room for improvement. As a major profit-generating sector, the hospitality industry contributes substantially to national economic growth. The various aspects of the hospitality industry attract foreign visitors, opening up numerous opportunities for the city and the country. These include cultural exchange, international collaborations, and employment opportunities for local residents.

The Hotel Management program is designed to cultivate world-class hospitality professionals, preparing them for supervisory roles in the industry. It emphasizes the development of interpersonal skills, crucial for both current and future career prospects. Hospitality management training equips students with the knowledge needed to perform various tasks and manage different facets of the industry, providing a solid foundation in management functions.

Students who develop skills in hospitality management are well-prepared to adapt to the diverse demands of the industry. Industrial training is essential in helping students understand the operations of various departments and standard operating procedures, grooming them into professionals. It teaches cost control measures to enhance economic efficiency and ensure success in business operations. This training helps establish high-quality service standards for customers.

Hospitality management education fosters a positive attitude toward the trade, boosts self-confidence in managing operations, and prepares students to become successful entrepreneurs. This education can be acquired through both practical and theoretical study.

This paper employs quantitative research methods to analyze various findings related to the study, highlighting key aspects of training in the hospitality industry that help students prepare for their future careers. Industrial training allows students to combine theoretical knowledge with practical work experience, offering a better understanding of department operations. It also helps develop professional work habits, provides insight into corporate culture, and offers opportunities to analyze international business environments. Additionally, if conducted internationally, industrial training offers the chances to observe differences in businesses practices and understand project management in different cultures.

Industrial training programs can be conducted in various ways, whether in the trainee's home city, country, or the location where they are studying hotel management.

**Hospitality Industry:** This broad category within the service industry includes lodging, restaurants, event planning, theme parks, transportation, cruise lines, and other fields within the tourism sector. A hospitality unit, such as a restaurant, hotel, or amusement park, consists of multiple groups, including facility maintenance, direct operations (servers, housekeepers, porters, kitchen workers, bartenders, etc.), management, marketing, and human resources.

**Industrial Training:** This refers to a program designed to provide supervised practical training within a specified timeframe. The training can be conducted either in government organizations or the private sector.

## Review of Literature

Resource Persons and Year of Publication	Views Regarding role of local food as Destination Attraction
<b>Dr. Mohinder Chand (May – June 2013)</b>	Highlighted that key HRM practices such as recruitment and selection, manpower planning, training and development, performance appraisal, and compensation are crucial for MNEs in India's hospitality sector.
<b>Colin Pinto (January - May 2013)</b>	Emphasized the importance of hands-on activities in hotel management education, arguing that "seeing is believing" should be a central teaching approach. This method helps students better understand the material, as they apply the knowledge taught by industry-experienced lecturers in real-world settings.
<b>Dr. Manoj A S (April 2013)</b>	Explored the nature of the hospitality industry as being entirely people-driven, necessitating professional training. Given the dynamic and competitive environment, and the rapid rate of job growth and change, the work of hospitality employees continues to evolve with technological advancements.
<b>Ashok Singh and Nikita Maheshwari (January 2013)</b>	Argued that training plays a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of services provided by hotels. In an era of intense competition, training helps companies gain a competitive edge, as exceptional service distinguishes a great hotel experience from an average one.
<b>Jog Amol (January 2013)</b>	Explained that over the past two decades, training has gained significant importance in the business world. Businesses have recognized that training is vital for boosting productivity and improving organizational performance.
<b>Rajeev Menon, Area V.P. Marriott International (September 2012),</b>	In an interview with Sanjeev Bhar for <i>Express Hospitality</i> , stressed the importance of making HR training more humane by balancing technical knowledge with emotional support, helping employees better navigate their work environment.
<b>Pandey and Suruchi (August 2011)</b>	Stated that training is most effective when it motivates individuals, contributing to both their development and the organization's success. They emphasized that as the rate of development accelerates, the quality of management must keep pace, and that training, which increases employee knowledge and skills, is critical in a competitive environment.
<b>Aishwarya Mudaliar (March 2008),</b>	In her opinion piece on <i>Express Hospitality</i> , noted that the hospitality industry faces high attrition rates, and that effective training can assist HR in retaining employees.
<b>Praveen Singh (December 2007),</b>	In an article on <i>Express Hospitality</i> , proposed that the most enduring training methodologies will empower employees with the skills needed to connect with guests on a fundamental level.

**Objectives of the study:** To analyze the importance of Industrial Training as a part of Hotel Management curriculum.

- To find the level of satisfaction about the industrial training program by hotel management trainees. To find the level of satisfaction of the hotel with the performance of trainees during their training period.
- To assess the impact of the hotel management trainee on the hotel operation.
- To identify the gaps between hospitality education imparted and requirements of the industry.

## Research Methodology

Data collection the primary data required for the research was collected using the following techniques:

**Personal interviews:** The researcher conducted personal interview with employees and human resource managers of reputed hotel brands to explore the impact of hotel management students training in their organization.

**Questionnaire:** A questionnaire bearing straight forward and relevant questions was drafted and handed over to the sample to obtain their responses.

Sample technique the population being “students of hotel management college” and HR Managers, Training managers of star category hotels. With due consideration to the fact that the study is done in Dehradun & Haldwani city, the sample comprised of star category hotels from city and 100 Hotel Management students from colleges in Uttarakhand, Dehradun & Haldwani were selected for the study. Apart from the above mentioned tools the relevant secondary data for the research was collected from journals, books and internet.

## Observations and Discussions

### Importance of Industrial Training

Industrial training holds significant importance for hotel management students, providing them with a multitude of benefits that are crucial for their professional development and future careers in the hospitality industry. Here are some key reasons why industrial training is essential:

#### 1. Practical Application of Theoretical Knowledge

- Industrial training allows students to apply the theoretical knowledge they have gained in the classroom to real-world scenarios. This hands-on experience is invaluable as it bridges the gap between academic learning and practical application, helping students understand how hotel operations work in practice.

#### 2. Skill Development

- During industrial training, students develop and refine essential skills such as customer service, problem-solving, communication, and teamwork. They also learn technical skills specific to various hotel departments, including food production, housekeeping, front office, and food and beverage service.

#### 3. Professionalism and Work Ethic

- Training in a professional environment helps students cultivate a strong work ethic and a sense of professionalism. They learn about punctuality, responsibility, and how to maintain high standards of service, which are all critical for success in the hospitality industry.

#### 4. Confidence Building

- The exposure to real hotel operations boosts students' confidence as they become more familiar with the industry's demands and challenges. Successfully handling tasks and responsibilities during training enhances their self-assurance and prepares them to tackle future roles with greater ease.

#### 5. Understanding of Industry Standards

- Industrial training provides students with a deep understanding of industry standards and best practices. They learn about the operational procedures, guest service protocols, and quality standards that are essential in running a successful hotel.

#### 6. Exposure to Real-World Challenges

- Students encounter real-world challenges during their training, such as dealing with difficult guests, managing high-pressure situations, and adapting to different working conditions. These experiences teach them how to think on their feet and develop problem-solving abilities.

#### 7. Networking Opportunities

- Industrial training offers students the chance to build professional networks by interacting with industry professionals, including managers, supervisors, and colleagues. These connections can be valuable for future job opportunities and career advancement.

**8. Career Clarity and Specialization**

- Through industrial training, students gain insight into the different departments and roles within a hotel. This exposure helps them identify their areas of interest and potential career paths, allowing them to specialize in specific sectors of the hospitality industry.

**9. Enhancement of Resume**

- Completing industrial training adds significant value to a student's resume. Employers in the hospitality industry highly regard candidates who have practical experience, as it indicates that they are well-prepared to enter the workforce and contribute effectively from the start.

**10. Improved Job Placement Opportunities**

- Industrial training often leads to better job placement opportunities. Students who perform well during their training may receive job offers from the hotels where they trained, or they may have a competitive edge when applying for positions at other establishments.

**11. Cultural Exposure and Global Perspective**

- For students who undertake industrial training at international hotels, there is the added benefit of cultural exposure. They gain a global perspective on hospitality practices, which is increasingly important in today's interconnected world.

**12. Understanding of Corporate Culture**

- Training in a hotel environment helps students understand the corporate culture of hospitality businesses. They learn about the organizational structure, employee relations, and the importance of teamwork, which are critical for their future careers.

**13. Development of Professional Attitudes**

- Industrial training instils a professional attitude towards work, teaching students the importance of appearance, demeanour, and how to conduct themselves in a professional setting. This is crucial for building a positive reputation in the hospitality industry.

Industrial training is a vital component of hotel management education, providing students with practical experience, skill development, and a deeper understanding of the hospitality industry. It prepares them to enter the workforce as competent, confident, and well-rounded professionals.

**Recommendations**

The following points will prove useful for hotel management students, colleges, and the hotel industry that engage with hotel management trainees:

**1. Extend the Duration of Training**

- **Recommendation:** Consider extending the duration of industrial training beyond the current standard of six months to allow students more time to fully immerse themselves in hotel operations, refine their skills, and gain comprehensive industry experience.
- **Rationale:** A longer training period would provide students with greater exposure to the various aspects of hotel management, allowing them to develop a deeper understanding and mastery of their roles.

**2. Integrate International Training Opportunities**

- **Recommendation:** Encourage and facilitate international training opportunities for students to expose them to global hospitality standards and diverse cultural practices.

- **Rationale:** International exposure can broaden students' perspectives, enhance their adaptability, and prepare them for careers in the global hospitality industry.

### 3. Structured Mentorship Programs

- **Recommendation:** Establish structured mentorship programs during industrial training, pairing students with experienced professionals in the industry who can guide them, provide feedback, and support their professional development.
- **Rationale:** Mentorship can enhance the learning experience by providing students with personalized guidance, helping them navigate challenges, and fostering their growth within the industry.

### 4. Focus on Skill-Based Learning

- **Recommendation:** Emphasize skill-based learning during industrial training, ensuring that students gain hands-on experience in all key hotel departments, including food production, front office, housekeeping, and food and beverage service.
- **Rationale:** Developing a wide range of practical skills is essential for students to become versatile professionals capable of handling various roles within the hospitality industry.

### 5. Incorporate Regular Performance Evaluations

- **Recommendation:** Implement regular performance evaluations during the training period, with feedback sessions to help students identify areas for improvement and track their progress.
- **Rationale:** Continuous assessment and feedback allow students to address weaknesses, build on strengths, and stay motivated throughout their training.

### 6. Promote Industry-Academia Collaboration

- **Recommendation:** Strengthen partnerships between hotel management institutes and industry leaders to ensure that the training curriculum aligns with current industry standards and practices.
- **Rationale:** Collaboration with industry professionals ensures that students receive relevant and up-to-date training, better preparing them for the workforce.

### 7. Encourage Soft Skills Development

- **Recommendation:** Incorporate soft skills training into the industrial training program, focusing on communication, teamwork, problem-solving, and customer service.
- **Rationale:** Soft skills are critical in the hospitality industry, where guest interactions and teamwork are central to success. Developing these skills alongside technical knowledge will create well-rounded professionals.

### 8. Offer Specialized Training Modules

- **Recommendation:** Provide students with the option to undertake specialized training modules in areas of interest, such as luxury hotel management, event planning, or sustainable hospitality practices.
- **Rationale:** Specialization allows students to tailor their training to their career goals, making them more attractive to employers in niche areas of the industry.



## 9. Facilitate Real-Time Problem-Solving Scenarios

- **Recommendation:** Incorporate real-time problem-solving scenarios and crisis management exercises into the training program to simulate the challenges students might face in their future careers.
- **Rationale:** Simulated scenarios prepare students to handle unexpected situations with confidence and competence, which is crucial in the dynamic environment of the hospitality industry.

## 10. Encourage Reflection and Self-Assessment

- **Recommendation:** Encourage students to regularly reflect on their experiences during training and conduct self-assessments to evaluate their growth and identify areas for further development.
- **Rationale:** Reflection and self-assessment promote self-awareness, helping students to understand their strengths and weaknesses, and fostering a proactive approach to personal and professional development.

## 11. Promote Ethical and Sustainable Practices

- **Recommendation:** Integrate training on ethical and sustainable practices within the hospitality industry, emphasizing the importance of responsible tourism and sustainable operations.
- **Rationale:** As sustainability becomes increasingly important, students should be equipped with the knowledge and skills to implement eco-friendly practices in their future careers.

## 12. Enhance Post-Training Support

- **Recommendation:** Provide post-training support through workshops, alumni networks, and career counseling to help students transition from training to full-time employment.
- **Rationale:** Continued support after training ensures that students can effectively leverage their training experiences to secure employment and succeed in their chosen careers.

## Conclusion

This study on the impact of industrial training for hotel management students on hotel operations is based on the industrial training programs that hotel management students undergo as part of their college curriculum. The research aims to identify the basic impacts of these training programs on both the students and the hotels. It examines the challenges trainees face during their hotel training and evaluates whether the work performed by hotel management trainees is efficient and beneficial to the hotels. Additionally, the study assesses whether the training has contributed to the development of the students, helping them become polished graduates.

After analyzing the trends of hotel management students' industrial training programs and the perceptions of various hotel employees, this study concludes the following:

1. **Most hotels in Dehradun hotel management trainees.** Industry professionals state that these students exhibit the right attitude and work ethics.
2. **The human resources departments of hotels report spending less time training hotel management students** compared to trainees from other institutions, noting that the knowledge and technical skills of hotel management students are superior.
3. **The training programs not only save recruitment and hiring time but also provide financial benefits** by fulfilling temporary staffing needs.

4. **Both trainees and the hotel industry are satisfied with the industrial training of hotel management students.** However, the level of satisfaction can be further increased with better coordination and cooperation between the hotel industry and institutions, particularly in Dehradun.
5. **Feedback from industry professionals will aid in effective practical curriculum planning,** which can be adopted by institutions to further develop their students' skills.
6. **Hotels noted that minimal effort was required to train students from this school,** as they already possessed the necessary knowledge to perform their tasks and duties.
7. **Feedback from both students and industry professionals was positive,** indicating satisfaction with the students' knowledge and their performance in the industry.

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