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Management of Emotional Labour in Tourism and Hospitality Industry in Kerala

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Abstract:

“Tourism and hospitality” is the world’s largest industry and creator of jobs across national and regional economies. It has great strategic importance for Kerala’s economy due to its capacity for wealth-generation and job-creation. Jobs generated by Travel & Tourism are spread across the economy - in retail, construction, manufacturing and telecommunications, as well as directly in Travel & Tourism companies. It thus, plays an important role in driving growth and bringing about economic prosperity. The organizations and managers in the tourism and hospitality industry face real challenges in recruiting, developing and maintain a committed, competent, well managed and well motivated work force which is focused on offering a high quality product to the increasingly demanding and discerning customer. This study sought to extend the understanding of the ‘emotional labour’ performed by service workers in the tourism industry, in order to identify more clearly the skills required to perform such labour and the management strategies which can support service workers in their client service work. The performance of emotional labour involves the display of organizationally desired emotion, such as friendliness, by customer service workers in their interactions with customers or clients. It is significant activity as the skill with which emotional labour is performed impacts on perceptions of service quality. Another contributing factor to perceptions of service quality is the personality of service workers, as the service exchange is essentially a social interaction. The present study also recognizes the importance of tourism and hospitality as an employment sector as it provides a large and diverse number of jobs and will be important for future job creations throughout the developed and developing world.

Key words: HRM, Emotional labour, Tourism and hospitality industry.

1. Introduction

Tourism is one of the economic sectors in India that has the potential to grow at a high rate and can ensure consequential development of the infrastructure. India’s ancient civilization, cultural diversity, unmatched heritage sites and other cultural manifestations have allured the tourists through ages and would continue to be its prime tourism resource. Service organizations like tourism is very much depending upon on the performance of frontline service people engaging customers. In tourism, front line service people such as hotel receptionist, waiter in restaurants, tourist guide, interpreters, staff at information counter and crews in tourist transport have the maximum interaction with tourists and therefore, they are having most familiarity with expectation of tourists. Tourism is a field where stock in trade is personal service and hence, the success of the whole enterprise often depends on the kind of employees and how they perform their jobs. Alternatively, they contribute in understanding customers’ needs, and designing, or creating experience. Many workers in the tourism industry can be classified as ‘front-line’ service workers, as their jobs involve direct customer contact. The nature of speaking and acting in such work involves displaying emotions, which demonstrate a willingness to be of service. The management of such emotional display has become known as ‘emotional labour’. The skill with which emotional labour is performed contributes significantly to perceptions of service quality. As a service exchange is a social interaction, the personality of service providers is also a contributor to perceptions of service quality.

In travel, tourism, and hospitality sector, tourists receive services from different types of employees. Every hotel handles its guests and reservations differently. There are differences even among different properties of the same chain group hotel. Freedom and discretion allowed to employees also differ among organizations. These differences affect the services experienced by the customer. They are visible in the behavior of the employees and thus are vital element of service product. Several tiny things during the interaction between tourists and employees at tourism delivery end determine the standard of total experience of the customer. If any of them goes wrong it will discolour the perceptions of the total tourist experience.

2. Significance of the Study

People constitute an important dimension in the management of tourism services in their role both as providers of services and as customers. The performance of emotional labour is a significant activity as the skill with which emotional labour is performed impacts on perceptions of service quality. The investigations of the degree of customer’s satisfaction on each performance factor would provide valuable information to the industry to recognize their service quality and to prioritize their people development

practices accordingly. It also helpful to the policy makers in the state to draft guidelines to uplift this sector to a higher level and to place the state as the most preferred tourist destination in the country.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the factors that affects the emotional labour performed by service people in the tourism delivery system in Kerala.
2. To study the satisfaction of tourist towards the performance of service people engaged in the tourism delivery system in Kerala.

4. Research Methodology

The present study is both descriptive and analytical in nature. Both primary and secondary data have been used. The study consists of two population groups; service people and tourists. The primary data have been collected from the sample respondents consisting of service people and tourists in public sector tourism industry in Kerala, using convenience sampling method by administering pre-tested structured interview schedules and also by way of non participatory observations, wherever required. The sample sizes are limited to 40 each from service people and tourist. The secondary data have been collected from the records and official publications of the India Tourism Development Corporation (ITDC), Kerala Tourism Development Corporation (KTDC), Department of Tourism (DoT) at Union and the State Government levels, books, periodicals, reports and the reliable internet sources.

The data collected have been meaningfully classified and analyzed keeping in view of the objectives of the study. For the purpose of analysis, descriptive statistical tools such as percentage, measures of central tendency have been used.

4.1. Emotional Labour in Tourism and Hospitality Industries

Morrisand Feldman (1996) defines emotional labour as ‘the effort, planning and control needed to express organizationally desired emotion during interpersonal transaction’.

Characteristics of job involving emotional labour

According to Hochschild (1983), jobs involving emotional labour possess three characteristics:

- Require face-to-face or voice-to-voice or facial contact with the public;
- require the worker to produce an emotional state in the client or customer;
- allow the employer to exercise some control over the emotional activities of employees.

Those who perform such jobs in the tourism and hospitality industries include tourist information officers, tour guides and drivers, front desk staff and concierges in hotels and waiting and bar staff in restaurants. Their face-to-face interactions with customers may often be regulated by organizational guidelines in order to produce positive experiences for their customers.

5. HRD Initiatives of Public Sector

I. National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT)

II. Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (ITTMM)

III. Capacity Building for Service Providers (CBSP)

- a. Special Training Programme to Create Employable Skills (Hunar Ze Rozgar)
- b. Certified Hospitality Trainers Programme
- c. Skill Testing and Certification of the Existing Service Providers
- d. Training of Teachers of IHMs and FCIs
- e. Earn While You Learn Programme
- f. Induction Training for Regional Level Guides

IV. Atithi Devo Bhavah Programme

- a. Sesisitation (Samvedan)
- b. Training and Induction (Prashikshan)
- c. Certification (Pramani Karan)
- d. Motivation (Prerana)
- e. General Awarenes (Samanya Bodh)
- f. Feedback (Pratipushti)
- g. Ownership (Swamitwa)

V. Additional Efforts of Public Sector to Fill the Skill Development in Tourism

- a. Expanding and Strengthening the Institutional Infrastructure
- b. Craft Courses in Existing IHMs
- c. Broadening of Hospitality Education/Training

5.1. HRD in Tourism and Hospitality- Tourism Policy Vision 2012

In 2012, government of Kerala announced its new tourism policy which contains a number of creative measures to develop HR for the tourism industry As the requirement of HR in tourism and hospitality industry is approximate 10.2 million per annum, when the supply is only 12,000, the policy recognizes this situation as alarming. The policy also recognizes the employment opportunities in the formal and informal segments of tourism. As the HR requirements of the industry is presently met by the

KITTS, SIHM, IHMCT,FCI and a good number of institutes in the private sector the policy put forward some measures to strengthen the operations of these institutes. The major policy directions include:

(i) Develop KITTS as an apex institute in HR development

KITTS will be transformed as an apex institute to cater to the Human Resource requirement of department and industry. Besides conduct in academic programmes, KITTS will undertake the following activities to enhance the quality of HR in tourism.

- a. Offer training and capacity building programmes for service providers labeled as Let’s Learn Capacity Building Programme. Under the scheme, training will be offered to at least 25,000 employees in the tourism sector in the next five years.
- b. Constitute a separate research wing to conduct research and studies of various aspects of tourism.
- c. Launch a Council for Quality Education System in Tourism (C-QUEST) to ensure quality education in tourism to meet the HR requirements of the industry.
- d. Take a lead role in preparing curriculum and designing courses that are needed for the industry. Technical support for the same will be offered to various institutes and colleges offering tourism courses. Permanent arrangement will be made for Faculty Development Programmes also.
- e. Start a RT school for capacity building and training programmes of all stakeholders in tourism. The school will also work as a resource centre for researchers, academicians, policy makers and tourism practitioners.
- f. Take a lead role in promoting awareness in tourism education and career options in tourism.

5.2. Integration of Tourism Educational Activities of Technical Institutes

Tourism policy 2012 stated that Vocational Higher Secondary Schools (VHSC) and Industrial Training Institutes (ITI) will be encouraged to offer more courses demanded by the tourism industry. Similarly, the government institutes and aided private institutes offering tourism courses will be encouraged to offer skill oriented courses in tourism to unemployed youths by tapping funds from local self governments and departments like social welfare department, scheduled caste and scheduled tribe department and youth welfare department.

In order to address the scarcity of qualified faculty in tourism and hospitality, short-term teaching courses will be offered to experienced industry personnel.

6. Travel & Tourism's Contribution to Employment

Travel & Tourism generated 22,320,000 jobs directly in 2013 (4.9% of total employment) and this is forecast to grow by 2.5% in 2014 to 22,876,000 (4.9% of total employment). This includes employment by hotels, travel agents, airlines and other passenger transportation services (excluding commuter services). It also includes, for example, the activities of the restaurant and leisure industries directly supported by tourists. By 2024, Travel & Tourism will account for 28,081,000 jobs directly, an increase of 2.1% pa over the next ten years.

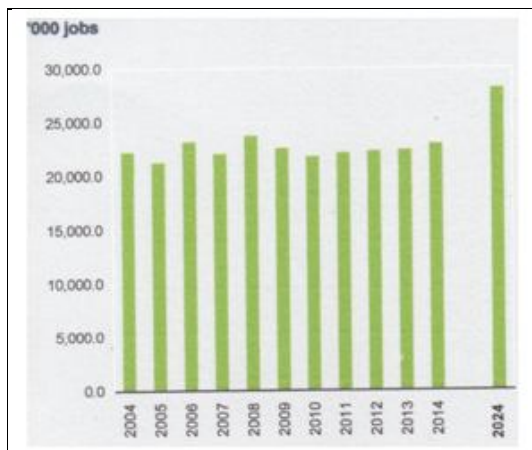


Figure 1

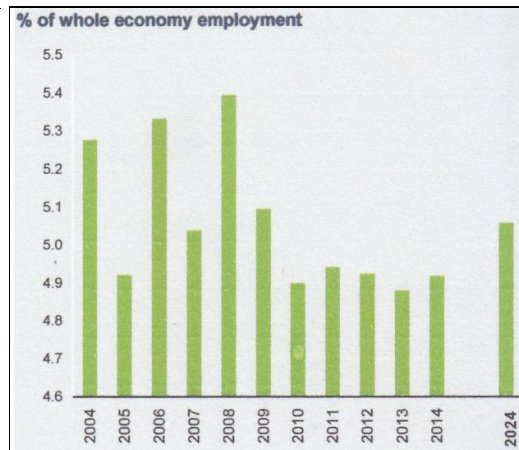


Figure 2

India: Direct Contribution of Travel & Tourism to Employment

Source : WTTC Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2014

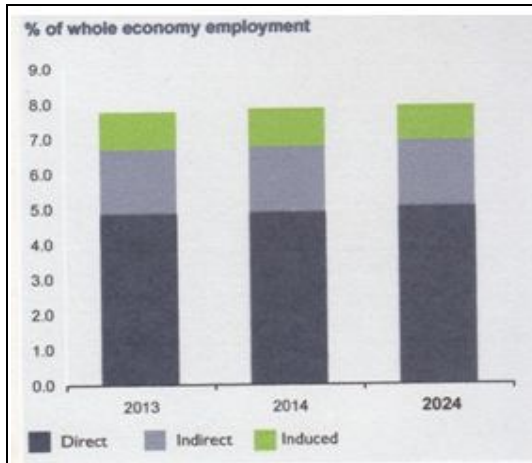


Figure 3

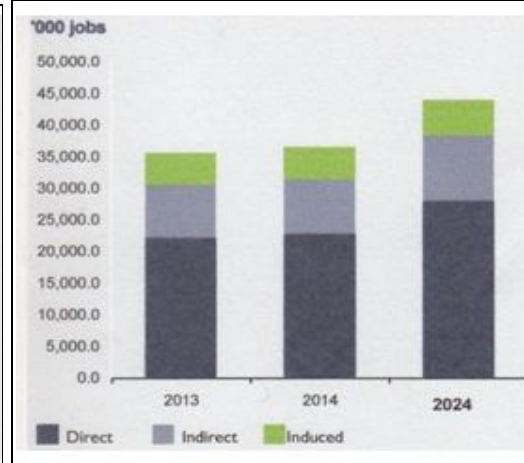


Figure 4

India: Total Contribution of Travel & Tourism to Employment
Source : WITC Travel & Tourism Economic Impact 2014

The total contribution of Travel & Tourism to employment (including wider effects from investment, the supply chain and induced income impacts, see was 35,438,500 jobs in 2013(7.7% of total employment). This forecast to rise by 2.7% in 2014 to 36409000 jobs (7.8% of total employment). By 2024, Travel & Tourism is forecast to support 43,837,000 jobs (7.9% of total employment), an increase of 1.9% pa over the period.

7. Data Analysis and Interpretations

The study “The management of emotional labour in the tourism and hospitality Industry” have been identified the profile of sample respondents belonging to service people, the factors that affects the performance of emotional labour by the service people and their satisfaction level and also the satisfaction level of both domestic and foreign tourists in respect of behavioral attributes of the service people.

Gender	Number	Percentage
Male	30	76
Female	10	24
Total	40	100

Table 1: Distribution of Sample on the Basis of Gender
Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The gender wise distribution of the sample reveals the male domination (76%) in tourism Industry.

Age Group	Number	Percentage
19-29	17	42
30-39	12	30
40-49	5	13
50-55	6	15
Total	40	100

Table 2: Distribution of Sample on the Basis of Age
Source: Primary Data

Interpretation: The above table shows that, of the sample 42 percent of respondents belong to the age group of 19-29 years. While 30 percent belong to the age group of 30-39 years, only 6 percent represent the age group 50-55 years.

SI. No	Language Known	Number	Percentage
1	English	17	42
2	English and Other South Indian Languages	12	30
3	English and Hindi	5	13
4	Hindi and Other South Indian Languages	5	13
5	Other Foreign Languages	1	2
	Total	40	100

Table 3: Distribution of Sample on the Basis of Proficiency in Languages
Source: Primary data

Interpretation: The analysis of data in the table no.3 shows that 87 percent of the service people can communicate in English. When more than one fourth (26%) have proficiency in national language and only meager part of the sample (2%) in other foreign languages.

SI No.	Status	Number	Percentage
1	Permanent	18	36
2	Contract	12	24
3	Trainees	10	20
	Total	40	100

Table 4: Distribution of Sample on the basis of Employment Status
Source: Primary data

As given in the table 4, the sample consist of service people having three broad categories of employment status namely permanent (36%), contract (24%), Trainees (20%).

8. Assessment of the Factors Affecting the Emotional Labour Performed by Service People

In order to assess the management of emotional labour in tourism and hospitality Industry in Kerala, the study has identified ten factors namely, Recruitment, Functional Skill Development, Working Hours, Social Skill Development, Compensation, Recognition for good service, Grievance Handling, Infrastructure Support, Team Work, Functioning of Trade Union. The selection of these variables has been made under the frame work of a detailed Review of literature.

SI No.	Variable	Satisfaction(N=40)			
		Moderate /Below		High	
		N	Percentage	N	Percentage
1	Recruitment	22	55	18	45
2	Functional Skill Development	22	55	18	45
3	Working Hours	9	23	31	77
4	Social Skill Development	24	60	16	40
5	Compensation	24	60	16	40
6	Recognition for good service	20	50	20	50
7	Grievance Handling	25	63	15	37
8	Infrastructure Support	21	53	19	47
9	Team Work	14	35	26	65
10	Functioning of Trade Union	29	73	11	27

Table 5: Satisfaction of Service People and the Performance Development Factors
Source: Primary data

Interpretation: The analysis of the above table reveals that the working hours of service people in the sample have high degree of satisfaction than any other factors.

The data shows that 50% of service people are highly satisfied with recognition for good service in their organization.

While assessing the satisfaction of service people on the present practice of recruitment prevailing in the respective organizations, it is seen that 45 percent of the service people have high degree of satisfaction.

The analysis of data reveals that 45% of service people have high level of satisfaction with the practices of functional skill development.

So it is inferred that satisfaction level of service people with respect to other performance measures is not high.

Attributes	Satisfaction Level								
	Reception			Restaurant			Information		
	L	M	H	L	M	H	L	M	H
Willingness to help beyond service limit	7 (18%)	28 (70%)	5 (12%)	3 (8%)	30 (75%)	7 (17%)	26 (65%)	8 (20%)	6 (15%)
Politeness in Dealings	2 (5%)	11 (28%)	27 (67%)	-	14 (35%)	26 (65%)	2 (5%)	18 (45%)	20 (50%)
Sincerity in solving tourist's problems	4 (10%)	9 (23%)	27 (67%)	2 (5%)	25 (63%)	13 (32%)	1 (2%)	18 (45%)	21 (53%)
Patience in understanding tourist needs	-	8 (20%)	32 (80%)	3 (8%)	7 (17%)	30 (75%)	2 (5%)	22 (55%)	16 (40%)
Unbiased service	6 (15%)	16 (40%)	18 (45%)	4 (10%)	23 (58%)	13 (32%)	-	17 (43%)	23 (57%)
Sense of Humour in dealings	7 (18%)	15 (38%)	18 (45%)	4 (10%)	24 (60%)	12 (30%)	23 (58)	12 (30%)	5 (12%)

Table 6: Satisfaction Level of Foreign Tourists on the Behavioural Attributes of Service People

Source: Primary data

Interpretation: On analyzing the attribute 'Willingness to help beyond service limit', 70%, 75% of foreign tourist are expressed their satisfaction at moderate level in reception and restaurant, and low level (65%) at information offices.

On analyzing the attribute 'Politeness in Dealings' foreign tourists are satisfied at high level in Reception, restaurant and information offices.

On analyzing the attribute 'Sincerity in solving tourist's problems' 67%, 53% of foreign tourist having high level of satisfaction with reception and information offices and moderate level with restaurant.

Regarding the attribute 'Patience in understanding tourist need', 80% and 75% of foreign tourists having high satisfaction in service experience with reception and restaurant. 55% of foreign tourists is having moderate level of satisfaction in service experience with information service offices.

Regarding the attribute 'Unbiased service' 45%, 57% of foreign tourist expressed a high level of satisfaction towards reception and information offices and moderate level (58%) towards restaurant.

On analyzing the attribute 'Sense of Humour in dealings' 45% of foreign tourist expressed high level of satisfaction towards reception, 60% are at moderate level at restaurant and 58% shows low level of satisfaction towards the information office.

Thus, the satisfaction in respect of behavioural attributes of service people across various categories of services is almost similar in respect of reception, restaurant and information services.

Attributes	Satisfaction Level								
	Reception			Restaurant			Information		
	L	M	H	L	M	H	L	M	H
Willingness to help beyond service limit	6 (15%)	26 (65%)	8 (20%)	3 (8%)	32 (80%)	5 (13%)	24 (60%)	8 (20%)	8 (20%)
Politeness in Dealings	1 (3%)	12 (30%)	27 (68%)	-	16 (40%)	24 (60%)	3 (8%)	17 (43%)	20 (50%)
Sincerity in solving tourist's problems	6 (15%)	10 (25%)	24 (60%)	1 (3%)	22 (55%)	17 (43%)	1 (3%)	19 (48%)	20 (50%)
Patience in understanding tourist needs	1 (3%)	7 (18%)	32 (80%)	4 (10%)	6 (15%)	30 (75%)	3 (8%)	20 (50%)	17 (43%)
Unbiased service	5 (13%)	18 (45%)	17 (43%)	6 (15%)	23 (58%)	11 (28%)	-	14 (35%)	26 (65%)
Sense of Humour in dealings	5 (13%)	13 (33%)	22 (55%)	3 (8%)	25 (63%)	12 (30%)	23 (58)	13 (33%)	4 (10%)

Table 7: Satisfaction Level of Domestic Tourists on the Behavioural Attributes of Service People

Source : Primary data

On analyzing the attribute 'Willingness to help beyond service limit', 65%, 80% of domestic tourist are expressed their satisfaction at moderate level in reception and restaurant, and low level(60%) at information offices.

On analyzing the attribute 'Politeness in Dealings' domestic tourists are satisfied at high level in Reception, restaurant and information offices.

On analyzing the attribute 'Sincerity in solving tourist's problems' 60%, 53% of tourist having high level of satisfaction with reception and information offices and moderate level(63%) with restaurant.

Regarding the attribute 'Patience in understanding tourist need' 80%, 75% and 55% of tourists respectively having high satisfaction in service experience with reception, restaurant and information offices.

Regarding the attribute 'Unbiased service' 45%, 57% of foreign tourist expressed a high level of satisfaction towards reception and information offices and moderate level (57%) towards restaurant.

On analyzing the attribute 'Sense of Humour in dealings' 45% of foreign tourist expressed high level of satisfaction towards reception, 60% are at moderate level at restaurant and 58 % shows low level of satisfaction towards the information office.

9. Findings and Suggestion

1. The male domination in the tourism industry is high.
2. The representation of youth in the sample is comparatively high.
3. The employees in the tourism sector essentially need the skill in oral communication in languages other than their local languages.
4. The satisfaction level of service people with respect to most of the performance development measures is not high, hence to be improved. So the tourism undertakings in Kerala should think about redesigning their existing people development practices.
5. Satisfaction in respect of behavioural attributes of service people across various categories of services are found almost similar in respect of reception, restaurant and tourist information services.
6. Recognition for the good service of people delivering direct service.

10. Conclusion

The people element constitutes an important dimension in the management of tourism services in its role both as performer and as customer. In travel, tourism, and hospitality sector, tourists receive services from different types of employees. Every hotel handles its guests and reservations differently. No technology, equipment, system can ever become substitute for the individual recognition that personal contact can provide. Therefore, an organization that normally invests in buildings and equipments should also recognize people as its important resource and invest adequately on it.

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