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EFFECT OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING ON UNDERSTANDING THE SIGNIFICANCE OF SOFT SKILLS IN HOSPITALITY INDUSTRY

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Abstract: This paper reflects the significance of industrial exposure in creating an understanding of role and importance of the essential skills for hospitality industry. The technical skills are required to carry out day-to-day jobs in operations. Apart from that the interpersonal skills, social skills and behavioral skills which are collectively known as Soft Skills hold high significance in hospitality sector.

The study reveals that internships create an impact on understanding of students towards the soft skills which they need to acquire during the learning process. It is an essential aspect for hospitality sector as it deals with guests and customer satisfaction. The exposure given to the students during industrial training shows a considerable shift of their perspective towards acquiring soft skills.

The study considered a specific group of students and the survey was carried out before they were placed for industrial training and after they completed their training. The research reveals that communication skills, teamwork, professional etiquettes and other intrapersonal skills are important apart from hard skills.

The study concludes with the observations that the industry exposure creates a significant impact upon the students about acquiring the soft skills which are necessary to make a successful career in hospitality industry.

Keywords: Industrial Training, Hospitality Industry, Soft skills

Introduction: In the hospitality industry, technical knowledge and operational skills form the foundation of professional competence, yet it is soft skills that often determine long-term success. Communication, teamwork, adaptability, emotional intelligence, and problem-solving are critical when dealing with diverse guests, high-pressure situations, and service-oriented environments. While classroom teaching introduces students to these concepts theoretically, true appreciation of their significance emerges only through direct industry exposure.

Internships, industrial training, hotel visits, and live projects place students in real-world scenarios where a guest's satisfaction can hinge on a smile, tone of voice, or the ability to handle a complaint gracefully. Industry exposure bridges the gap between theory and practice. It reveals that soft skills are not “additional”

qualities but essential tools that impact guest experience, team dynamics, and career growth. Students who undergo such exposure quickly realize that while hard skills get them the job, soft skills help them keep it, grow in it, and lead within it.

Industry exposure provides practical contexts where theoretical knowledge is applied in real-time, often under constraints such as deadlines, team diversity, and organizational culture. In such environments, individuals quickly realize that effective communication, professional ethics, time management, and interpersonal skills are decisive factors in achieving outcomes. Unlike classroom-based learning, where soft skills may be discussed abstractly, exposure to industry highlights their tangible impact on workplace relationships, client satisfaction, and decision-making. As a result, individuals with industry exposure tend to

develop a deeper appreciation of soft skills and are more motivated to consciously cultivate them.

Understanding the effect of industry exposure on recognizing the significance of soft skills is especially important in education and employability studies. It helps institutions align curricula with industry expectations and prepares students to transition smoothly from academic settings to professional roles. By bridging the gap between theory and practice, industry exposure not only enhances employability but also fosters lifelong learning and professional competence rooted in strong soft skills.

Literature Review: Pungky Nanda Raras, Eka Travilta Oktaria, Iskandar A.A Andala Rama Putra Barusman, Habiburahman (2024) in the research paper 'Hospitality Management Competence' study the competencies required to perform various roles in hospitality industry. The study reveals that the hospitality educators must play an active role in inculcating the essential skills amongst hospitality graduates and make them fit to work in the hospitality industry.

The research has used Delphi technique for data collection and to understand the essential competencies for the industry. The scholars have taken the industry perspective to understand the same. The respondents (176) were working in four star and five-star category hotels in Peninsular Malaysia. The received responses were analysed with SPSS software and the frequencies and frequencies were determined. The results reveal that some competencies like communication skills, grooming and appearance, taking additional responsibilities, time management, stress management, team work are highly sought after by the industry professionals.

Dr. Sumegh, Dr. Pinky (2022) in the research paper 'Unveiling The Skill Demands: A Research Study On Competencies For Industrial Training In Indian Hospitality Industry' have explored the skills which are required to be service personnel. The authors have reviewed research publications to derive the essential competencies. The data was collected from industry professionals. 42 respondents were involved in data collection process. Survey was conducted with questionnaire containing closed ended questions. Descriptive statistical analysis was carried out to obtain results. The results show that aspiring candidates must possess skills

like grooming and appearance, oral communication skills, appropriate body language, proficiency in technology and strong work ethics.

Ravish Kukreti, Dr. Rakesh Dani (2020) in the research paper 'Need And Importance Of Industrial Training For Hotel Management Curriculum' have studied the significance of industrial training in curriculum of Hotel Management. The paper also explores the gaps in the hotel management and industry requirements in-terms of skills. Data was collected from 100 respondents, the students pursuing final year of their course and who had completed the industrial training. The results indicate that the students understand the significance of industrial training and affirm that the training module helps in imparting essential skills, provides hands-on experience and provides exposure to new trends & procedures followed in the industry.

Dr. Hardaman Singh Bhinder (2017) in the research article 'Determinants Of Industrial Training Effectiveness In The Hotel Management Course Curriculum: Stakeholder's Opinions' explore the perception of stakeholders about the key aspects of the training module. The responses were collected from industry experts, academicians from hotel management institutes and hospitality management students through structured questionnaire. The results show that there is a gap in the preparedness of hospitality students and expectations of the industry professional in terms of competencies. The study also indicates that the students must use the industrial training module as an opportunity to gain hands on experience and the industry must reciprocate the same by assigning responsibilities to the trainees and provide them with more exposure to the area of their specialization. Also, the skills gap can be reduced by involvement of the industry experts in curriculum designing and changes in syllabus.

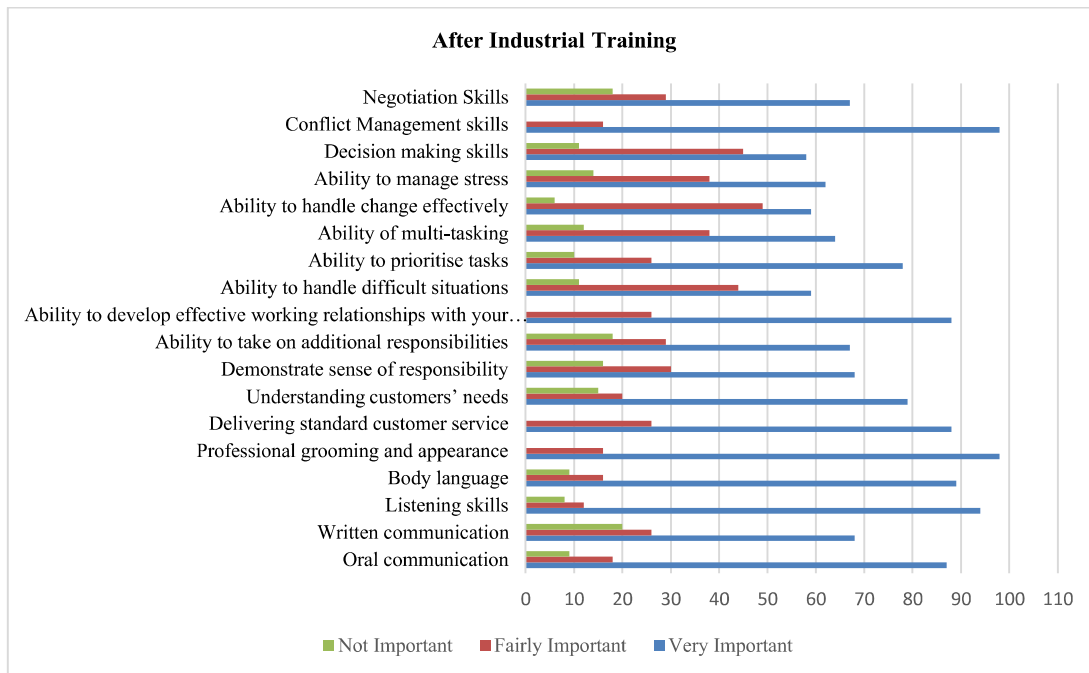
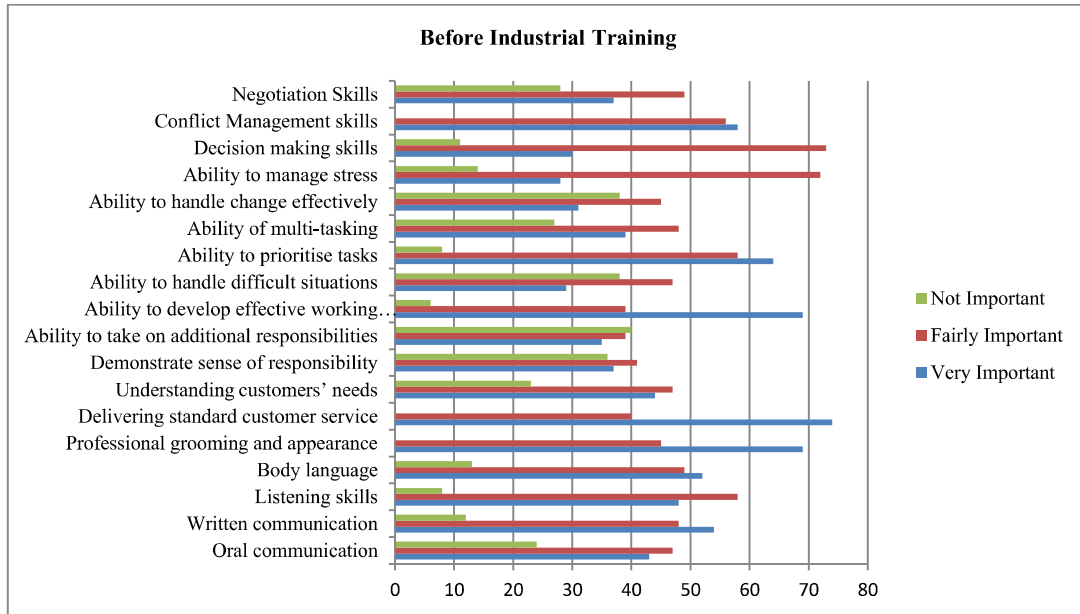
Research Methodology: A group of 114 students were selected for the purpose of research. The students had completed the first year in academics and were aware about the skills which are required for hospitality industry. The data was collected with the help of structured questionnaire. The questionnaire had a list of soft skills and the respondents were asked to rate its importance as per their perception.

The second stage of data collection was carried out after the students completed the Industrial Training module as per the curriculum. The same set of respondents were given the questionnaire again and were asked to rate the importance of soft skills listed therein.

The data analysis was done with comparative analysis of responses collected prior Industrial Training and post Industrial Training.

Data Analysis: The data includes responses from 114 students who shared their opinion about the importance of soft skills required to work in hospitality industry.

The responses are depicted in the form of bar charts.



These views were grouped into three categories: Important, Fairly, Not Important.

- Most students think soft skills are either Very Important or Fairly Important. For example Conflict Management Skills and Professional Grooming were rated as Important by around 86% of the students. This shows that most students understand how important these skills are in the workplace.

- Listening Skills were rated highly by 82% of students.

- Body Language by 78% of students.

- Oral Communication by 76% of students.

- These skills are all about communication.

- Skills related to teamwork and customer service such as Developing Working Relationships and Customer Service Delivery were also rated highly by than 75% of the students.

- Even skills that did not receive ratings, like prioritization and decision-making were still considered important or fairly important by most students.

The responses clearly show that students value skills. The data suggests that students training has helped them understand and appreciate skills related to communication

Getting along with people and professional conduct.

Summary: The data shows that students think soft skills are important.

Soft skills like communication, how to get along with people, and professional conduct are really important to students.

Students consider skills as important skills.

Soft skills are really important to students.

Interpretation: The survey shows that students think about skills in a different way after they get industrial training. Students now think that skills like managing conflicts and communicating are really important. This means that students now know what they need to do in the workplace not just what they learn in school.

- Before they got training many students probably did not think that soft skills were very important.

- After they got training they started to think that practical skills like customer service, teamwork and being adaptable are valuable.

- This shows that being in a workplace helped students see how what they learn in school connects to what they need to do at work,

which also make them understand the importance of academics and performance.

- Some skills like listening, body language and looking professional got high ratings.

- This shows that students now see how important it is to communicate without talking and to look professional.

- Another thing that is interesting is that few students thought that any of the skills were not important.

- This shows that students now think that almost all of these skills are important for their careers.

- Overall the training experience seems to have helped students see the difference between what they learn and how to use it in the world.

- It made students more aware of skills it made them more confident and it made them ready for the industry for the workplace and for their careers for industrial training and, for soft skills.

Conclusion: 1) The study findings show that industrial training helps students understand work skills and standard operating procedures which they can remember forever. 2) Students now focus on skills rather than just academics, which helps them to be clearer about the concept rather than just imagining which discussing. 3) Hands-on learning really works since it actually enables the students to understand the Sop's and challenges while working on the particular task. 4) Students know that soft skills are very important as they observe how people and professionals at workplace handles the situation and students also wish to be that accurate and fluent. They think communication, managing conflicts, teamwork and presenting themselves professionally are key. 5) These skills affect how easy it is to get a job and how well you do at work. 6) Most students think these skills are essential.

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