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COMPETENCY ANALYSIS OF STUDENTS PURSUING SHORT TERM HOTEL MANAGEMENT COURSES

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Abstract:

Since the hospitality sector is one that is rapidly expanding, there is a rising need for qualified workers. Students looking to work in the hospitality industry have grown more and more interested in the hotel management courses. These short-term courses are created to give students the abilities and information they need to succeed in the field. The competency of students enrolling in such courses must be evaluated, nevertheless.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the level of proficiency of students enrolled in short-term hotel management courses. To ascertain how students view the abilities and expertise needed to operate in the hospitality industry, a survey will be used in the study. The survey will be given to students enrolled in short-term hotel management programmes at chosen institutions. The purpose of the survey is to gather student opinions about their abilities and expertise in the various facets of hotel management. Questions about the course curriculum's relevancy, the effectiveness of the instruction, and the overall learning experience will also be included in the survey. The study will offer insightful information about how students perceive themselves and how competent they are, which will assist the institutes in creating and providing efficient short-term hotel management courses.

Keywords: *Competency Analysis, Short Term Hotel Management Courses, Skills, Attitude, Behaviour, Human Resource Management and Knowledge.*

Introduction:

According to the modern understanding of educational excellence, the student is seen as capable of resolving the real issues and problems that occur in everyday situations. This skill may have been developed through the practise of overcoming specific problems from daily life. A lack of qualified workers in the sector has resulted from the hotel and tourism industries' rapid and enormous

growth. Despite the fact that numerous higher education institutions offer related certificate and degree programmes in hospitality, there are concerns that graduates still lack the knowledge and skills they were expected to acquire during their studies in both local and private colleges.

One of the biggest challenges that hospitality educators face today is determining clear goals and objectives for the curriculum that meets the constantly changing needs of the industry. It is crucial to close the gap between what is taught to students and what the industry expects of the students being hired (Dopson & Tas, 2004). Determining applicable capabilities and skill sets has helped human resource directors over the times to better hiring and selection practices, in developing strategies to retain directors, and in career planning enterprise (Chung- Herrera, Enz & Lankau, 2003).

However, in this study, we define competency as a set of related knowledge, skills, and behaviours (KSA) that affect a significant portion of students' future job (a role or responsibility), correlate with job performance, can be measured against industry standards, can be enhanced through training and development, and that an incumbent must bring to a position in order to competently carry out its duties and functions (Woodruffe, 1993; Parry, 1996). The purpose of this paper is to analyze the theoretical and practical aspects of competencies development. This paper reports the findings of survey based on students' view on research object. The paper aims at determining relevant competency skills, knowledge and attitude in the students pursuing short term hotel management courses, which will help Human Resource department in future recruitment.

Need for study:

Competencies are the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes that support both individual and organisational performance. Information that is learned by experimentation, research, or experience is referred to as knowledge. Skill is the result of repeatedly using information or aptitude. The innate ability to do tasks or activities at the physical and cerebral levels is referred to as aptitude. A person's behaviour is their outward display of how they feel about a circumstance. A variable competency level for each talent will be necessary depending on the function a person has and the expectations of the organisation.

Competency analysis of students is a strategic plan that is used to measure students' skills, knowledge, attitude with regards to the course they are pursuing. Competency analysis helps in evaluating student's behaviour, thought process, imagination, etc. for given situation or problem. These are often developed by researchers or human resource department. The student's knowledge, abilities, and skills are evaluated along with the elements that contribute to both average and excellent performance, as well as the conditions under which each is attained.

Companies can benefit greatly from information provided by competency analyses and job-based descriptions. It offers a way to determine the proper title and pay grade. When clear steps are

established, the hiring process is more effective. The obligations and requirements of the position are fully and completely explained to new hires. Because competences have an impact on how a task is performed, they specify the particular competencies required for success.

Theoretical Framework of competency analysis:

Competence analysis is a systematic procedure for determining and evaluating the knowledge, abilities, and skills needed to do a certain task or profession. Competency analysis seeks to identify the fundamental skills students need to succeed in the hospitality sector in the instance of those taking short-term hotel management courses.

The theoretical framework of competency analysis used in this research is -

Knowledge-based competencies: These are skills that are learned in a variety of hotel management fields, including front desk operations, housekeeping, food and beverage service, marketing, and sales. The analysis should determine whether the pupils have a thorough grasp of the ideas and ideas in these domains.

Skill-based competencies: These are the practical skills that students should learn throughout the course, such as how to run a hotel front desk, manage an inventory, deal with client complaints, generate financial statements, and utilise hotel management software. The evaluation should determine if the pupils have acquired these abilities and how effectively they can use them in practical situations.

Personal competencies: These are the character traits that are essential for success in the hospitality sector, including interpersonal and communication skills, time management, problem-solving, teamwork and leadership. The analysis should evaluate the students' personal competency development and their ability to use it in a hotel management setting.

Attitudinal competencies: In order to succeed in the hotel sector, students need to have certain attitudes and beliefs, such as a focus on providing excellent customer service, adaptability, resilience, cultural sensitivity, and ethical conduct. If the students have cultivated these attitudes and values, as well as their capacity to apply them in their work, should be evaluated through the analysis.

The theoretical framework described above will be used to create a thorough competency analysis instrument that will be delivered to students enrolled in short-term hotel management courses. The study' findings can then be utilised to pinpoint strong and weak points, provide students feedback, and tweak the course material so that it more closely mirrors market demands.

Review of Literature:

In the hospitality industry, change is an accepted and necessary part of doing business. Whether it is to stay ahead of the curve in everything from menu development to recently enacted legislation, hospitality operators must be able to position their business to be agile enough to remain

competitive in the today's world. Hospitality program has to provide their graduates with the tools necessary to be successful in the ever changing world (Lyons, 2010).

The complex nature and diversity of managerial work confirm that there are many variations of the meaning of the word “competency” in the managerial literature (Hoffmann, 1999; Karpin, 1995; Martin & Staines, 1994; Miller, 1998; Wallace & Hunt, 1996). Thus, competency generally refers to the knowledge, skills, performance abilities, and motives required to perform a job effectively and efficiently (Dalton, 1997; Perdue et al., 2001; Quinn et al., 2003).

Karpin has identified substantial gaps between the skill range and education of Australian managers and those deemed necessary to accommodate future management needs. (Karpin, 1995).

In a study conducted in Florida, showed that hospitality managers hire mainly for attitude, and secondary for specific knowledge and skills. (Tesone and Ricci, 2005).

Review of the literature suggests that competency-based programs are distinguished from traditional job-based programs in three respects (Yonghak, 2009; Schippmann et al., 2000).

1. Competencies are about what jobs share in common, rather than what makes each job unique.
2. These commonalities are directly linked to achievement of organizational success, rather than success in any individual job.
3. Because they are such fundamental commonalities, these core competencies become the primary mechanism that drives organization design, job structure, and managerial practices.

Skills and competencies required by students pursuing short term hotel management courses were assessed by surveying them with the help of a questionnaire. One questionnaire was given to the students and another Questionnaire was given to the faculties who teach the students. The survey questionnaire for the students comprised of 15 questions based on knowledge, skills and competencies, compiled from literature and curricular learning outcomes. The survey questionnaire for the teachers/faculties comprised of 07 questions based on students behaviour, attendance, knowledge, etc. during the class/lecture/practical's. The questionnaire included questions related to students' skills, basic personal information, family background, knowledge about their subjects, situation based questions.

Objectives of the research:

1. To understand the students' perspective on short term hotel management courses.
2. To understand the expectations of students from the courses.
3. To help Human Resource department in recruitment.
4. To analyse the skills, knowledge, capabilities of the students.

Research Methodology:

The research is based on qualitative as well as quantitative study. The research will give idea about students' perspective on the course they are pursuing. The statistics will show students

interests, skills, knowledge with regards to the course. The study will help human resource in future recruitment. In this research, the researcher has adopted the technique of random sampling. The researcher gave questionnaire to the students and a separate set of questionnaire to the teachers, so that it will be easy to evaluate competencies of the students pursuing short term hotel management courses.

Meaning of competency:

Competence is a collection of observable characteristics and skills that facilitate and enhance work performance. Competencies and talents are different despite their similarities. Competencies are traits that a person inherently possesses as opposed to learned skills. Competencies include knowledge, ability, and collaboration qualities.

Competencies refer to the knowledge, skills, abilities, and attitudes that promote both individual and organisational performance. During employment interviews and exams, candidates are evaluated based on their competencies. Competence focuses on how someone behaves; it explains their personality. Competence is made up of the underlying traits that allow one to perform well at work. Competence can be transferred from one individual to another. Evaluation of competence based on attitudes and behaviours. Competence is centered around people.

Definitions of competency:

Many scholars have presented their own interpretations and definitions of 'competency' or 'competencies' based on the context in which the term is employed.

- Competencies as the key components of performance related to "clusters of life outcomes" (p. 15). They can be interpreted as broad as any kind of psychological or behavioral characteristics related to success in a person's life.(McClelland, 1973)
- Competencies are underlying characteristics that are causally related with the job performance of Individuals. They can be trained during adulthood. (Boyatzis, 1982, 2008)
- Competencies are a set of interrelated knowledge, skills and attitudes that represents a key component of a person's job role and responsibility, that associates with performance in a job, that can be measured against well-established standards, and that can be reinforced through training and development. (Parry, 1996)
- Competencies are skills, knowledge, and capabilities that individuals should have possessed when completing assigned tasks or achieving the goals. (Chung & Lo, 2007)
- Competencies are those direct and indirect skills and behaviors' that allow individuals to perform given tasks or assigned roles effectively. (Draganidis & Mentzas, 2006)

Explanation of competency analysis:

A tool for measuring knowledge, abilities, and capacities, competency analysis can be used to evaluate a company's products, services, human resources, or to evaluate core competencies in

student performance. Identification of skills, knowledge, and abilities is a focus of competence analysis tools. Competencies are skills that individuals or groups may demonstrate and assess. Competencies are more focused with the similarities across jobs than the distinctions between each role. These similarities are directly tied to creating organisational success rather than success in any one profession. Because they share such fundamental traits, these core skills serve as the driving force for managerial practises, job structures, and organisational design.

Competency analysis of students:

Competency Analysis is basically testing a persons knowledge, skills and attitude about a particular topic or subject. Evaluating competency of a student is, examining the students on their general behavior, student's thinking or thought process, students' attitude towards others, their sense of responsibility, their academic and practical knowledge, etc.

A clearly defined task or job role serves as the foundation for competency identification. In the absence of a clearly defined job role, defining one becomes the first step. In order to ease the development of competency, particular current practice's and existing standards are recognized once a job is defined. It is also necessary to establish the ethics and values that are frequently employed to assess these behaviors. Finally, the work role's future direction is made clear. This vision may be the consequence of current interpretations and trends, as well as social or commercial forces. Current practise, established standards, ethics, values, and future vision all have a big impact on the identification and validation of the knowledge, skills, and attitudes required for a particular job role.

Short term Hotel Management Courses:

Short Term Hotel Management Courses are designed for the students who are not able to attend full-time Hotel Management Courses or Degree. This courses are usually for period of 06 months, 01 year and 1.5 years. The duration of this courses differs according to the subject of specialization. The fees structure of this courses is less than Degree courses. This short term courses are beneficial for students wants to specialize in a particular department, as well as for students who cannot afford paying Degree courses fees. Short Term Courses are convenient and affordable for students.

Short Term Courses Hotel Management Courses include;

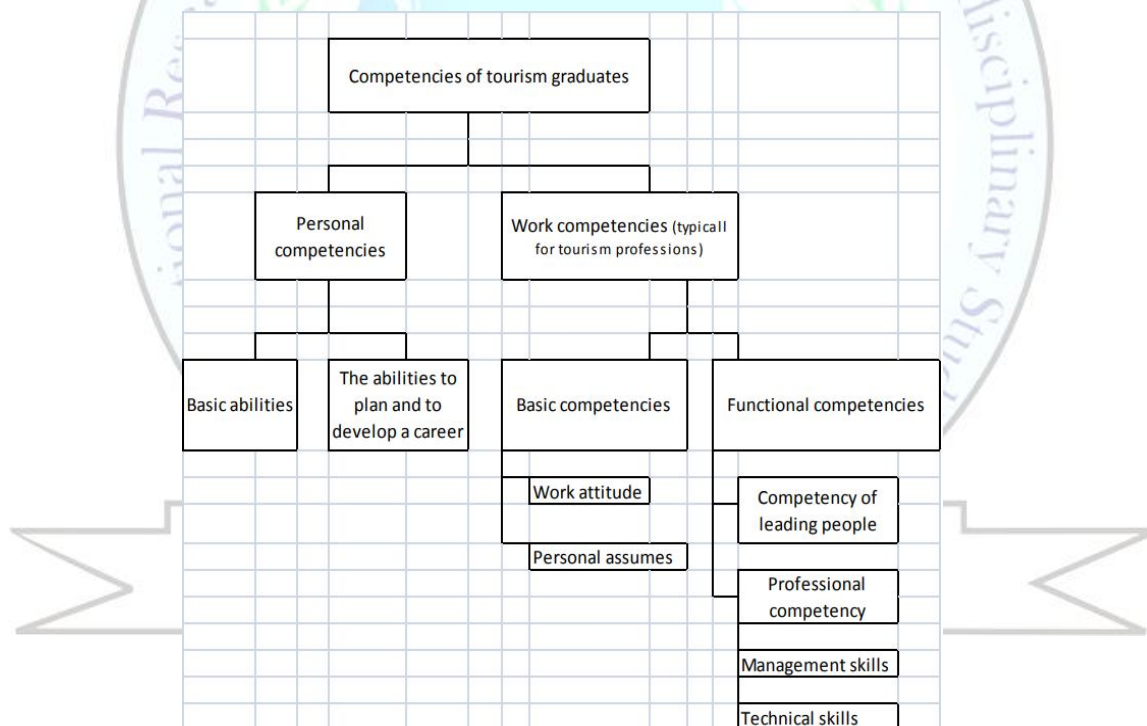
- Diploma in Food Production
- Diploma in Bakery
- Craft Course in Food Production
- Diploma in Food and Beverage Service
- Diploma in Housekeeping
- Diploma in Front Office

Purpose and Characteristics of competencies in students pursuing short term hotel management course:

- The main purpose of identifying competencies is to define standards of behavior in the workplace (Yonghak, 2009).
- Competencies may reflect the graduation requirement of academic institutes or training cycles for future professionals (Williams, 2003).
- To improve the skills of the workforce, many countries started to adopt standard competencies (Brady & Associates, 2001).
- Well-defined competencies can help an organization align its strategic development with HR (Human Resource) planning using various HR processes such as effective recruiting, training, coaching, and rewarding (Garavan & McGuire, 2001; Gonzales & Nelson, 2005; Yelden & Albers, 2004)

Competency development:

According to Richey, Fields, and Foxon, a competency describes the critical ways in which competence is demonstrated; competence is the state of being well qualified. (Richey, Fields, and Foxon, 2001)



Source of image: Wang and Tsai, 2014

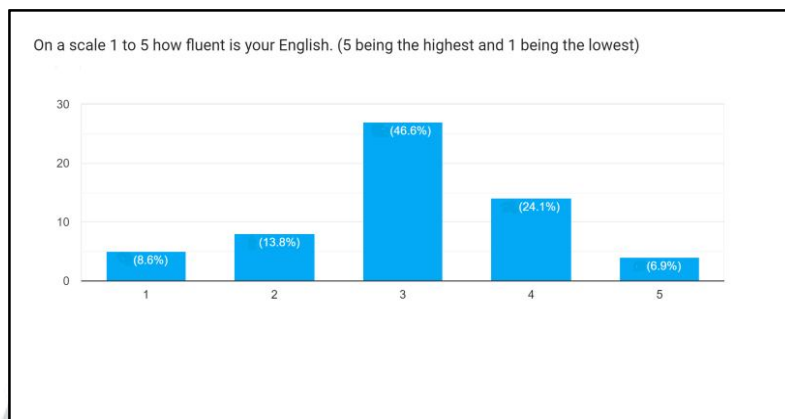
Parry identifies a competency as knowledge, attitudes, or skills that define the core abilities required for successful performance in a given job. (Parry, 1998)

The competency model for graduates in higher education levels has been adopted. This model aims to serve as a tool for creating curriculum and a graduate profile that can close the gaps between

the demands of tertiary education and the practise of tourism. The competency model includes a predetermined set of general and particular professional competencies that are crucial for graduates of a given study programme and academic level. In their model, Wang and Tsai (2014) employ a binary competency model. These skills are classified as both personal and professional skills with reference to potential job.

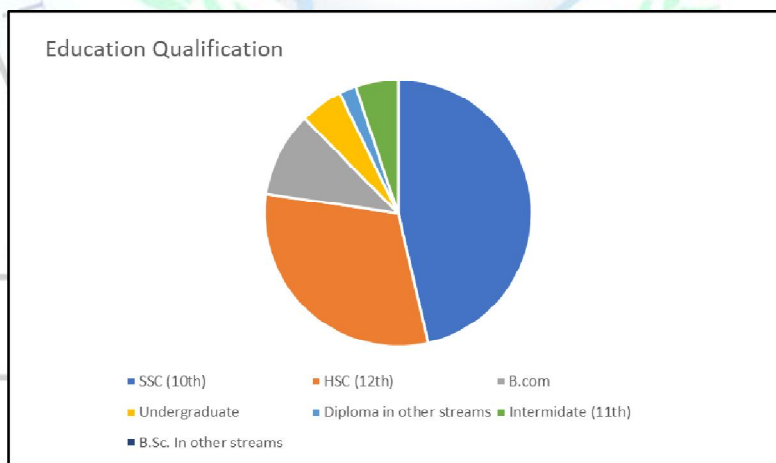
Data Analysis and Data Interpretation of questionnaire:

1. On a scale 1 to 5 how fluent is your English. (5 being the highest and 1 being the lowest)



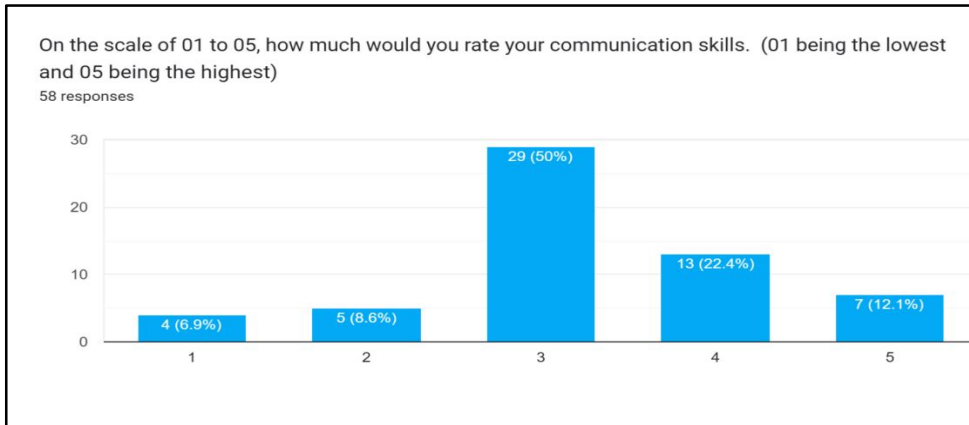
This chart shows that the students pursuing short term hotel management courses are moderate in speaking English. They are either bad nor to good.

2. What is your education qualification ?



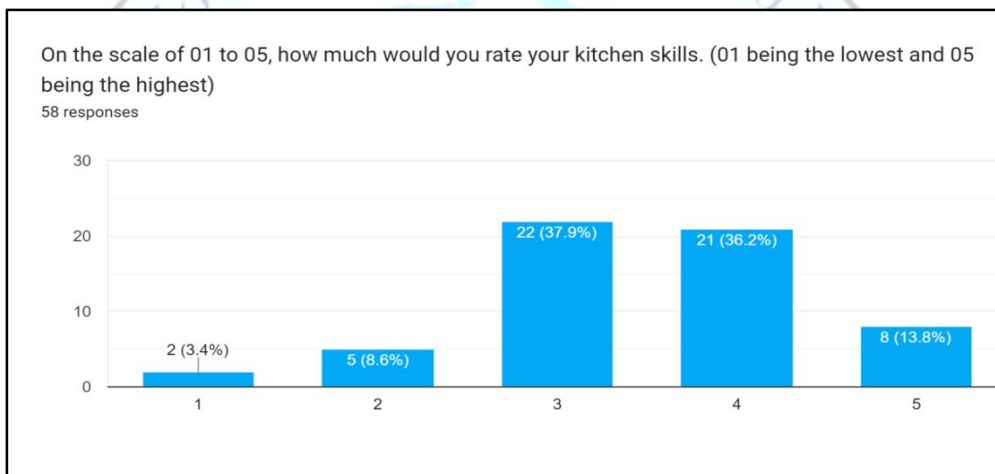
The study shows education qualification of the respondents lies majorly between SSC (10th) and HSC (12th). There are few students who have diploma courses in different streams and B.Sc. in different streams.

3. On the scale of 01 to 05, how much would you rate your communication skills. (01 being the lowest and 05 being the highest)



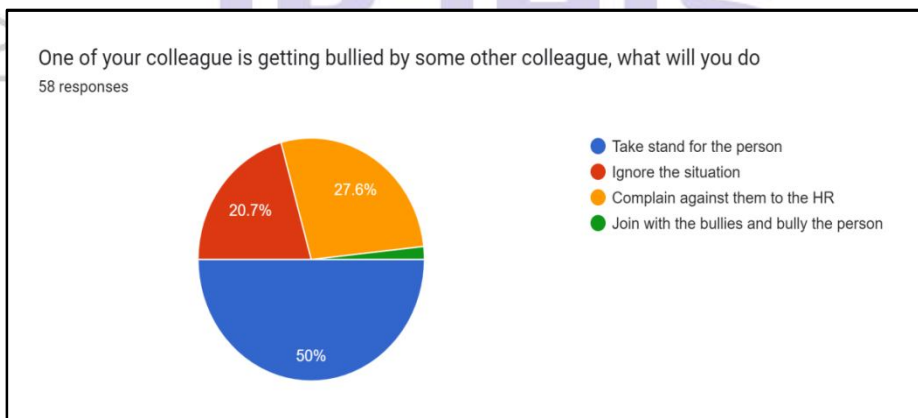
The chart shows that students think their communication skills are moderate. This shows that students are not confident in their communication skills.

4. On the scale of 01 to 05, how much would you rate your kitchen skills. (01 being the lowest and 05 being the highest)



The chart shows that students are moderate in their kitchen skills, which means they need to improve their kitchen skills.

5. One of your colleague is getting bullied by some other colleague, what will you do?



Similarly a total of 25 questions were given to the students, to review their knowledge, skills,

attitude, behavior, personality.

Findings:

After evaluation of collected data, it is clear that students' perception towards the short term hotel management courses they are pursuing is positive. The data tells us that students do have relevant competency skills of knowledge, attitude, personality and subjective skills which are required but there are improvements needed in various aspects for the betterment of the students.

- From the data collected it is stated that, more of male students are pursuing short term hotel management courses than female students.
- Age criteria for pursuing short term hotel management courses is to 15 years to 30 years. In the study it is observed that students pursuing short term hotel management courses are of age group between 17 years to 24 years. Majority of the students pursuing this courses are age group of 18 years to 21 years.
- In the study, it is observed that majority of the respondents are pursuing Diploma in food production and Craft course in food production.
- While analysing the data it was observed that most of the students pursuing this short term hotel management courses are from Southern region of India. It shows that students staying with opt for short term hotel management courses, if the place of study is not so far from their place of residence.
- The study determines that maximum number of students speak the local language.
- The study shows that more number of students come from the family background who are farmers, other occupation like engineer, I.T. comes second on the chart, then comes the retired parents' families.
- With the help of data analysis, it can be stated that more than 40% of students are working and they have working experience. The age group of students who are working lies between 18-24 years.
- Oral and written communications are mentioned when discussing communication abilities, either generally or specifically. One ability that is necessary and used frequently is the ability to speak with customers, staff members, managers, suppliers, and collaborating agencies right away. Writing abilities are additionally typically required when conveying concepts to lead, educate, urge, train, and coordinate. Effective communication is still necessary for jobs in the management of hotels, restaurants, and clubs.
- Some of the research discussed here stress the relevance of customer-focused abilities. Customers were only left out of the list of Chef competences and the club management area. Given that the purpose of the business is providing services to club facility members (as loyal consumers), this is unexpected in the club industry. These studies mentioned a variety of skill

sets, including the capacity to address customer problems and manage visitor issues with compassion and empathy.

- It is seen in the study that students are quite smart and do think twice in situation handling and responses were given carefully. But there were students who think different and choose various options.
- They study stated that students are not very good at accounting skills. Students are not confident to answer accounting skills questions.
- It is also observed that students tend to manipulate their answers in order to get their task done. Students did use their proper knowledge and answered the situational questions.
- A similar area should be strengthened by enhancing the professional competencies of the students enrolled in short-term hotel management courses. This area has been identified by the small differences between what they believe to be most essential and how they perceive themselves.

Results:

The research on competency analysis of students pursuing short term hotel management courses has resulted in a positive analysis of competency analysis of students' knowledge, skills, attitude, personality, etc. This research has highlighted that that students pursuing short term hotel management courses should be given more opportunities and changes, so that they can also excel in the hospitality industry. The students pursuing short term hotel management courses have proper knowledge about their kitchen skills, but they do lack behind in communication and accounting skills. So it is required to look after this and make sure the students excel in this skills also.

According to the teachers, the students are attentive and are keen to learn new things in theory class and practical classes. So the students should be given opportunities to attend various lectures. The survey states that students are interested in attending extra guest lectures so, institutions should try and arrange guest lectures for the students. Looking at the study's findings, we can observe variations based on how various student groups were evaluated. For each set of respondents, it demonstrates the kinds of abilities that ought to be cultivated. These findings may help instructors who are instructing students as well as everyone else who needs to identify their weaknesses and the need for competency development. This information is useful for determining the knowledge, skills, and attitudes of students (KSA). This (KSA) data of students pursuing short term hotel management courses will help Human Resource Department in recruiting right candidate at right time for right position. Also, this data can be referred for further research in same field of research study.

Suggestions:

The study recommends the following suggestions;

- Providing new opportunities to the students

- Helping the students in improving their English language
- Arranging guest lectures for the students
- Providing bus and train concession for students
- Conducting assessment test in the class for students to see if they are actually attentive in the class
- Conducting brain-storming session in the class for increase the interaction between the students and the teachers
- Giving the students group projects or group tasks, so that they get the habit of working in a team
- Allowing students to practice their kitchen and other skills in their free time
- Giving chance to students to participate in various inter and intra college competitions
- Granting free access to library books to the students whenever they want
- Creating a student and teacher friendly environment in the class, so that the students can keep their point without hesitation
- Making sure students skills, knowledge are increased after every class they attend

Conclusion:

Based on the analysis of the competencies of students pursuing short-term hotel management courses, it can be concluded that these courses provide a valuable opportunity for individuals to gain specific skills and knowledge that are relevant to the hospitality industry. The competencies acquired through these courses can be grouped into several categories including, interpersonal skills, communication skills, technical skills and problem-solving skills.

Technical skills refer to the specific abilities related to the operation of various departments in a hotel, such as housekeeping, food and beverage service, front office operations, and sales and marketing. One can perform the basic functions of their job with just knowledge of ... These skills are not just desired but also necessary in the hospitality industry.

Communication skills are essential for hotel management professionals to communicate effectively with guests, colleagues, and superiors. These skills include verbal and written communication, active listening, and presentation skills. Interpersonal skills are crucial for individuals to develop positive relationships with guests and colleagues. These skills include teamwork, leadership, conflict resolution, and emotional intelligence.

For people to recognise and address problems that develop in the hospitality sector, problem-solving abilities are required. Critical thinking, intellectual prowess, and decision-making talents are some of these capabilities. Overall, the competency analysis indicates that providing students with the information and abilities they need to succeed in the hospitality business through short-term hotel management courses is an effective strategy. However, the effectiveness of these courses can be

improved by incorporating practical training and industry-specific case studies to help students apply their knowledge in real-life situations. Additionally, continuous learning and development programs should be offered to students to help them stay updated with the latest trends and technologies in the hospitality industry.

Looking at the research findings, we can observe disparities based on how various student groups were evaluated. It demonstrates the kinds of talents that ought to be cultivated for each category of respondents. These findings may be helpful for professors instructing students as well as for everyone in identifying their weaknesses and the need to improve competencies.

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