

A Study on Employability of Human Resource Management in Tourism Industry

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ABSTRACT

The paper goes on to explain the critical contribution of employees to the competitive advantage of tourism organisations and why human resources are an important issue for the industry. The model of performance management adopted by an organisation must be customised to meet individual business and employee needs. A series of activities were undertaken to fulfil the objectives above. A framework was developed to explore the links between tourism and human resource management. A second round of discussions was held with representatives of the tourism industry to determine how tourism industry is recruiting and retaining employees with the right skills, knowledge and attitudes to their work. The relationship between tourism and human capital is complex, of inter-conditioning, each of the two elements having at the same time the role of cause and effect. Thus, the stimulation of the growth of tourism is an important medium of re-launching of the labour, but the development, respectively the retardation of the development of tourism depends on the existence or the inexistence of the human resources in the reference territory.

KEYWORDS: professional preparation, occupation, training, education, development.

1. INTRODUCTION

Tourism's characteristics highlight a number of features that have important ramifications for people within this sector and the role that human resource development plays in supporting enhanced productivity and quality at all levels within organisations, destinations and countries:

Tourism is a 'multiproduct' industry and the different sectors of tourism offer a wide range of occupations with a diversity of human capital requirements; Tourism is characterised by duality, whereby large multinational companies co-exist with SMEs and micro-businesses (and tourism is numerically dominated by small businesses).

The realities of human resource development (for example, availability of training budgets or plans, levels of skills, career progression opportunities and business motivation) are very different for large and small, indeed micro-operators.

Multiproduct characteristics create diversity within tourism but they are also founded on substantial sectorial interdependencies, built around the notion of the tourist destination Which, for most visitors, often subsumes the individual business components within it.

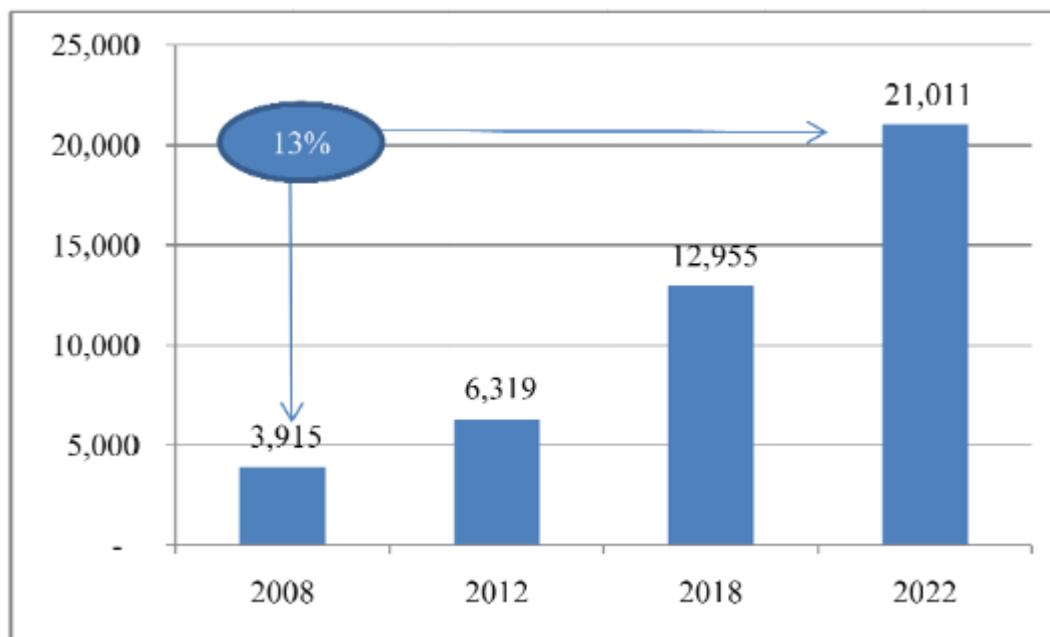
Destination, as opposed to individual business, management in tourism, creates challenges and problems with regard to ownership and leadership.

Tourism employment, while widely welcomed by most governments, is not without problems as a consequence of the structural factors addressed above but also as a on sequence of the weak labour market conditions within which it operates and the perceived low skills set upon which it depends.

The role of seasonality in structuring how tourism operations are organised and people are managed. Stochastic demand patterns create challenges for tourism businesses in an operational, marketing, financial and, above all, human resource management sense. Tourism is a fragmented and diverse industry within the economy and is further characterised by diversity in organisational, ownership and operational terms. Indeed, many commentators question the validity of using an inclusive term such as “industry” to capture the characteristics of a sector which contains such a wide range of operations within the public, private and voluntary domain. This heterogeneity is one of the defining features of the sector and impacts upon all aspects of operations, marketing, finance and, indeed, human resource management.

Specifically, in the context of employment and wider human resource development themes, tourism faces challenges which, in part, stem from these structural and environmental characteristics but also draw on wider attributes that are also present within other areas of service work. Studies of human resource development and wider work-related research within sectors of tourism have addressed the challenges faced by businesses and the wider community in terms of the quality and benefits of such work.

A characteristic of tourism is represented by the attraction of the surplus of labour from other sectors and, implicitly, by the attenuation of unemployment, valorising this way the role in the national economic. The relation between tourism and the use of the force of work is manifested on the quantitative and qualitative plan, directly or indirectly.



It is widely argued that people are vital for the successful delivery of tourism services and, as a consequence, those who work in tourism are widely portrayed as a critical dimension in the successful operation of businesses within the sector.” The story of successful tourism enterprises is

one that is largely about people – how they are trained and educated, how they are valued and rewarded, and how they are supported through a process of continuous learning and career development. None of this happens by accident.

The quantitative increasing of those involved in the organization and the unwinding of voyages, in the serving of tourists is an effect of the significant increasing of the number of persons who make a journey, the distances of departure, the time allocated to holidays etc. the number of those who work in hotels and restaurants, transports, tourism agencies, providing/catering of pleasure, the administrative leadership of the touristic apparatus registering a substantial increase after the development of tourism. These activities are found, totally or partially, in the structure of the touristic industry, which makes it difficult to evaluate with strictness the number of those occupied in tourism; many of these jobs are at the season time or part-time, thus the contribution of tourism to the full-time employments is considerably smaller in comparison to the jobs paid by the hour. Moreover, we must mention that the area of inclusion of the touristic industry is sensibly different from country to country, pointing out/accentuating the difficulties of commensuration from this sector. The jobs are often created in areas where there are little alternatives of employment. It is worth reminding that many of these places of work attract those who want to work during the season, such as the students who search for a job as representatives of the resort/spa during the summer or the owners who rent their houses during the summer time.

It is clear that, for the countries which are major receiving destinations or which hold an internal powerful touristic demand, the number of jobs is greater. In the balance sheet, tourism, as a form of employment, is beneficial from the economic point of view, although it has to make efforts to create more full-time jobs in this industry.

2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Riley and Szivas describe tourism as a sector “where easily acquired, transferable skills co-exist and engender weak internal labour markets in organisations that economically are bound to a rate of throughput.”

Riley points to the features of employment in these conditions in terms of recruitment, training and professional status and, unsurprisingly, notes that many areas of tourism work typify weak internal labour market characteristics. Alongside this assessment sits trends within most developed countries and within economic regions such as the European Union which point to erosion of elements of labour market strength and a general weakening of workplace conditions.

Although the development of the tourism industry creates new employment opportunities, critics contend that tourism employment provides predominantly low-paid and low-skilled demeaning jobs. The negative aspects of tourism employment focus upon the physical demands of the job, poor conditions of work, job insecurity, low pay, long working hours, high turnover of labour and lack of training.

Tourism is an activity offered by people, being the sector in which the productivity tends to be low and where the increases in terms of touristic activity lead to create new jobs.

Despite the progress reorganization of the process of production of touristic services, accelerated by the application of new technologies, especially in the countries which have a touristic sector with potential, but less developed, opportunities can be expected of supplementary

and the better and more various occupations.

Most of the European countries are very developed from the point of view of the businesses connected to tourism and should be able to cope with the future challenges. Still, there is still room for improvement to overcome the constraints which usually interfere in the businesses connected to tourism in Europe, especially for IMMs, to benefit along these perspectives favourable of the market. Among these are:

The lack of strategic knowledge regarding the touristic demand and the use of this information in operational terms.

The poor application of the quality control and of the qualitative techniques of management in production, marketing and the offering of touristic services.

The insufficiency of the appreciation of the richness and diversity of the available attractions all over Europe and which can become the basis for new and original products and touristic destinations management and skill areas.

3. MATERIALS AND METHODS

The focus turns to understanding motivational issues and how managers can inspire employees. Performance management integrates employee development with results-based assessment aligned to strategic objectives to achieve the 4Cs: commitment, competence, congruence and cost-effectiveness. It has been a qualitative analysis as there have been no comparable statistics available at EU-level on tourism labour and learning.

4. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

A multitude of aspects define the relationship tourism-labour under the qualitative aspect, such as: the level of qualification of these occupants in tourism and the structure of the labour in steps of preparation, the report between those hired with total time and partial time of work, the proportion season employees and the turnover of labour, the cost of the professional formation.

Effective managers understand the 4Cs – commitment, competence, congruence and Cost-effectiveness – and are able to integrate them holistically into business strategy to achieve organisational competitiveness.

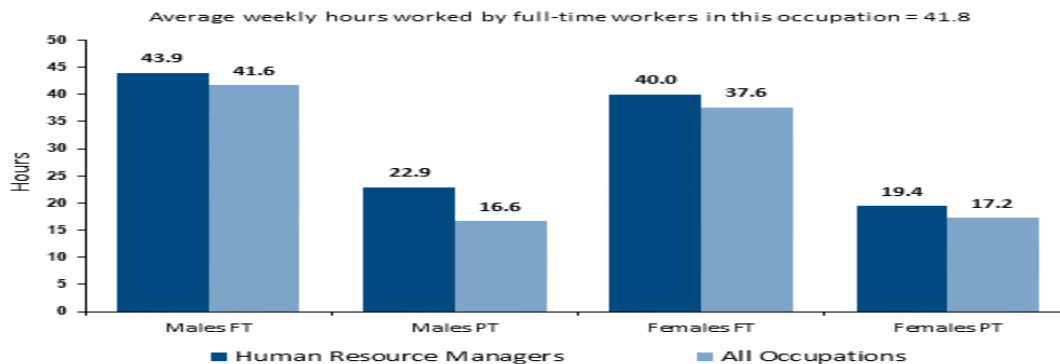
Commitment: awareness of business objectives and understanding how they can contribute to their achievement enhance staff commitment to the organisation.

Competence: managerial and employee competence are both critical to the achievement of business objectives and organisational competitiveness. Remedial action must be taken to address skills gap.

Congruence: managers and staff must pull in the same direction and share the same vision to collaborate in achieving business objectives. Transparency and good communication will enhance working relationships and identify any obstacles to achieve business objectives and the way these can be overcome.

Cost-effectiveness: managers must be both proactive and responsive to use human resources effectively and efficiently and maximise productivity.

From the point of view of the professional formation, a great part of the specialists consider that tourism needs personnel with a high level of qualification, with a large horizon of knowledge, well trained, knowing a foreign language of international circulation, capable of recommending and promoting the tourist product; also an important segment of the experts in the field appreciate that the activities which do not require a specialty also have large representation in tourism, this becoming an outlet/market for the unqualified and poorly qualified labour.



The opinions of the experts are sustained by the structure of qualification levels of those occupied in tourism, on the studies made in the main touristic European countries the following have been observed, appreciatively 40% of the personnel's total form tourism is unqualified, appreciatively 42% has medium general preparation, 8%- specialty studies and only 10%- superior studies.

The relatively high cost (comparable, in some authors' opinion, to the one in the industries with high technical level) of the demand of a new job in tourism and its maintenance is determined by the temporary character of the employment of workers in tourism.

A particular aspect of the relationship tourism-labour is represented by the quality of consumer of goods and services; this influences favourably the use of the labour in its supplying branches, such as: agriculture, the alimentary industry, the light industry, the construction, the industry of the construction materials, etc. If the tourists are accommodated in a certain area, there are directly created jobs. These workers and their families need preparation and medical assistance. In turn, these create new jobs in shops, schools, hospital in order to satisfy the needs. The volume and the quantity of the touristic activity depend in an essential way on the employment of personnel, respectively the number of workers and their level of qualification, on the concordance between the characteristics of the preparation of the labour and the functions accomplished, on the professionalism and the quality of the practice of attributions. The role of the human factor increased during the contemporary time, thanks to the increase of the consumers' exigencies in report to the quality of the services and the participation to the touristic activity of larger and larger segments of the population.

Baum and Szivas argue that the effective deployment and management of people as critical esources within tourism does not happen without considered planning, development and support at the level of the enterprise, the destination and the country. Various actors and agencies, both public

and private, can and do take the lead and play significant roles in enabling the tourism sector to recruit, manage and develop human resources in a optimal manner. Key players in this process are frequently local, national and trans-national governments and their agencies.

5. CONCLUSION

The small enterprises have supported a tradition of maintenance of amateur personnel in management, which only the big unities started to change. The qualified personnel and trained professionals, and most of all those with experience in other industries, are an unusual thing outside the big firms. These lead to a lack of complexity of the politics and practices of human resources, which are dominated by unusual styles of management and approaches of the operational circumstances. This makes tourism vulnerable to the ideas, the assumptions and its domination by the practices of management identified in other economic sectors.

The success of the tourism industry and ultimately of the destination depend on the quality of employees. The real human resource challenge for the tourism industry is recruiting and retaining employees with the right skills, knowledge and attitudes to their work. There are a number of approaches to recruiting, retaining and motivating employees.

Positively targeting recruits from groups under-represented in the workplace.

Providing career development opportunities.

Providing training and development opportunities and ensuring that the organisation views training as an investment rather than a cost

Ensuring competent line management.

Considering job design and job roles, including: job enlargement, job enrichment, job rotation, job satisfaction and job sharing.

Providing a better deal than employees perceive they can get from alternative employers.

Considering levels of pay and non-financial rewards on a regular basis.

Managing employee expectation.

Ensuring all new recruits complete a well-planned induction programme.

Addressing equality issues, e.g. through the implementation of family-friendly human resources practices.

Increased requirements and opportunities for education and training for individuals within the tourism industry are direct and critical responses to these growth trends. New trends include collaborative organizations, which link traditional competitors (educators at various colleges and

universities) while attempting to address the changing needs of the industry. The resulting curricular modules are designed for inclusion in existing traditional tourism and hospitality education courses and programmes around the world. This focus allows for the promotion and sharing of the latest best thinking and practices in tourism education.

The outlining of the profiles of the new jobs can be seen as a result of a general change in the manner in which the work is organized- as we mentioned earlier- but it can be seen as a result of a more complex market, more complex products and changes in the concept of service. As a consequence, the simple and repetitive traditional tasks are transformed in multidimensional tasks to furnish complex products. Another trend would consist in the dividing of the complexity of the service in simple, repetitive functions which need some or very little abilities. This tendency to eliminate the abilities can be seen to a certain extent as a strategy which should cope with the qualified labour.

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