



Linking Training Practices with Outcomes in the Hospitality Industry: A Comprehensive Literature Review

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DOI : <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17608241>

ARTICLE DETAILS

Research Paper

Accepted: 21-10-2025

Published: 10-11-2025

Keywords:

*Trainees, Hotel, Training
and Employee.*

ABSTRACT

The training practices in the Indian hotel industry play a pivotal role in shaping the hospitality workforce. This overview explores the multifaceted landscape of training methodologies employed by hotels across India. Emphasizing the significance of skill development, the study delves into diverse training modules encompassing customer service, culinary expertise, and management proficiency. The analysis reveals a dynamic blend of traditional training approaches and modern e-learning platforms, reflecting the industry's adaptability to technological advancements. Training and development can be seen as a key instrument in the implementation of human resource management practices and policies. Successful hotels always include staff training as their important development strategy. Training is shown to positively impact on employee's productivity, which results in higher levels of customer and employee satisfaction. Evidence from McDonald's suggests that low levels of training give rise to high levels of staff turnover and that the provision of good training has a positive effect on staff retention (Thomas, Lashley, & Eaglen, 2000). Furthermore, the paper highlights the industry's commitment to fostering a customer-centric culture, with an emphasis on soft skills and cultural sensitivity. Challenges such as high turnover rates and evolving guest expectations are addressed through continuous training initiatives. Overall, this overview provides insights into the evolving



training paradigms within the Indian hotel industry, underscoring the sector's commitment to enhancing employee capabilities and ensuring a seamless guest experience.

Introduction:

The Indian hotel industry stands at the intersection of tradition and modernity, blending rich cultural heritage with the dynamic demands of contemporary hospitality. At the heart of this intricate tapestry lies the crucial aspect of workforce training, an indispensable element that shapes the industry's service standards and adaptability. This overview delves into the training practices within the Indian hotel sector, offering insights into the historical trends and contemporary strategies employed by establishments across the country.

Recognizing the paramount importance of skill development, the industry has historically invested in diverse training modules, covering areas such as customer service, culinary expertise, and management proficiency. Traditional training methodologies, including hands-on experience and classroom sessions, have coexisted with the industry's progressive integration of technology. The growing prevalence of e-learning platforms has revolutionized training approaches, ensuring efficiency and widespread accessibility.

In the face of challenges such as employee turnover and evolving guest expectations, the Indian hotel industry has exhibited resilience through strategic training initiatives. The commitment to fostering a customer-centric culture, coupled with an emphasis on soft skills and cultural sensitivity, reflects a nuanced understanding of the diverse clientele that the industry serves. As we embark on this exploration of training practices, it is essential to recognize the evolving nature of the hospitality landscape and the industry's continual efforts to enhance employee capabilities. To glean a comprehensive understanding, we will not only examine historical trends but also consider the contemporary data and reports that encapsulate the state of training practices in the Indian hotel industry.

Objectives of the study:

The objectives of this study are to give an overview on training practices in Indian hotel industry, Importance of training for hotel management graduates' and training process followed in Indian Hotel Industry.



Research Methodology:

The research is based on literature review including various internet sources, journal articles and some news articles. For this purpose, the researcher reviewed the literature and finds the conclusion.

Training practices in Indian hospitality industry:

Tourism and hospitality have one of the highest levels of skill shortages (Health Coverage Tax Credit, 1995; & Higher Education Funding Council for England, 1998). However, training can influence the skill of human resource, then it is interesting to see how seriously and hospitality firm stake training .In current era of hotel business, it is sum of all core competencies in the employees’ skills. The standard of services in hotels will always depends on qualities of the employees. The qualities of employees are a set of knowledge, skills and thoughts which is the base of hotels developments. So training is very important in many aspects like, it increases productivity, skills, thought, motivation among the worker and help them to recognize how important their jobs are.

Training and development can be seen as a key instrument in the implementation of human resource management practices and policies. Successful hotels always include staff training as their important development strategy. Researcher in western context have found that the majority of hotels engaging in innovative practice include training and knowledge building as key elements to attaining best practice (Enz & Sigauw, 2000). Therefore, organizations provide training to their existing employees. Along this the industry also provides training to students of hospitality courses because they will be the potential employee to this industry and on the part of students, it is mandatory part of their curriculum.

Training Process

Training is a process of systematic planning of organization vision and perspective, assessing training needs, setting up training objectives and developing training policy and plan, designing training programs, implementing training programs and evaluation of results & feedback for action. The various steps of training process are explained as under:

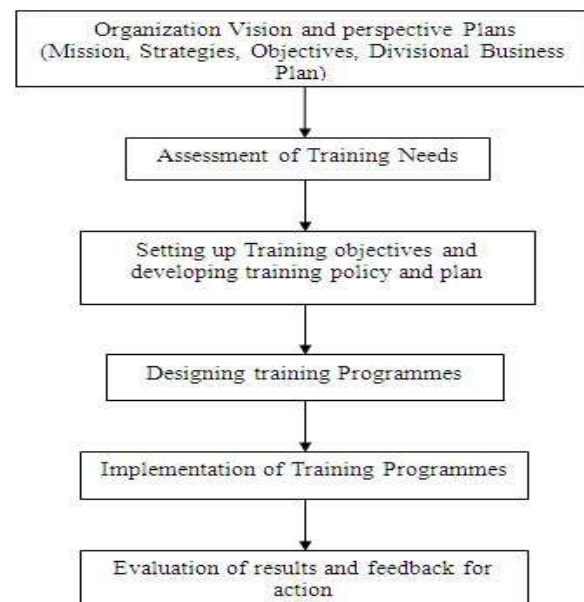


Figure No. 1 Training Process



The **Kirkpatrick Model**, originally introduced by Donald L. Kirkpatrick in 1959 and later formalized in his seminal book *Evaluating Training Programs: The Four Levels* (Kirkpatrick & Kirkpatrick, 2006), has remained the **gold standard** for assessing training effectiveness across industries.

The first step is to decide the vision of organization and to make future plan with respect to mission, strategies and objectives of the business. To attain the vision of the organization, various divisional business plans are formulated and all the activities are performed accordingly. In actual sense, training process is started with the assessment of training need but it is also necessary to link training needs with organizational objectives. So, the first step involves the decision regarding organization vision and perspective plan.

The second step is to access the training needs of the organization. The training need is the result of the difference between the HR managers' expectation with respect to employees' performances and actual performances of employees. The requirement of training may be felt for fresh employees to make them familiar with their work. Therefore, HR managers consider related aspects such as job analysis, job description, job evaluation and performance objectives etc.

After assessing training needs, training objectives are decided and then, overall plan & Policies are developed to attain the training objectives.

Fourth step of training process is related to designing the training programme in which HR managers select training methods, types of training, duration, programme structure, tools of training, location and selection of trainees etc.

After successfully designing the training programme, actions are taken to implement the training programme following the rules and policies. The implementation of training programme will be successful only when the trainer is well prepared & skilful and trainees are actively participating in the training programme.

The last step of training programme is to evaluate the results/outcomes of the training programme and take necessary action on the basis of feedback. It is very important and unavoidable step of training process because it ensures the success of training programme and ultimately contributes to the fulfillment of overall organizations' objectives.



Training Needs Identification

Training needs refers to first phase of training and consider as evaluations or needs assessment. All trainings should only be conducted to meet specific identified training needs.

Yang (2010) argued that difference between actual and expected results from employees' leads to requirement of a training program for an organisation. To fill up this gap there are needs of few core competencies which can be developed in employs by training (Bediako, 2002).

Training needs refer to the development of core competencies (Knowledge, skills, Traits and motives) with help of learning process in hospitality professionals for performing well in the organization. It is very important to find out the deficiencies in terms of competencies that are needed to be performing their task. These deficiencies can be removed by conducting appropriate training programs for the staff.

Primary phase of the entire training program is to congregate the identified training needs as it involves cost and time. This is very important for developing right types of training program. There are various procedures and methods for identifying the training need. All organizations adopt those methods which are most suitable and effective for the organizations needs. The output of training needs will emphasize the peoples who need training, what area needed to be covered, types of training during the training program.

There are various reasons for doing training needs assessment i.e. determine the: competencies gap, training is needed or not, content, scope, outcomes, basis of measure effectiveness and management support.

Once the training needs are finalized the next step is to point out the employee who needs training to meet the organizational objectives.

Laing (2009) stated that that organization should identify which employee require training, "A training policy (to provide guidelines for those responsible for planning and implementing training and to provide an equal opportunity for each employee to be trained in the organization), which spell out whom to train, in what, and on what frequency".

Beyazen (2011) said that it is very necessary for trainer to collect the information about the trainees in an organization for knowing the problems faced by the individual. Further there are various tools "questionnaires, records of critical incidents, job knowledge tools, data from assessment centre skill tests, role-playing results, and attitude surveys" are useful for the same.



Appiah (2010) concluded that training plans provides a map for trainer and the trainee to achieve the objective of training successfully. Once this step is completed, training lesson is designed in the organization.

In this study the focus will be on training needs for the hospitality students those who did their training in the hospitality industry.

Types of Trainings

Training for students is a critical pedagogical tool that bridges the gap between **theoretical knowledge** and **practical application**. Various scholars and practitioners have classified student training into diverse categories, each serving a unique developmental purpose. Different industries follow diverse training practices.

Training in the hospitality industry encompasses a wide range of structured approaches to ensure employee competence, service quality, and organizational excellence. Apprentice training has traditionally played a crucial role in skill development, particularly in culinary and housekeeping domains, where long-term exposure under expert supervision equips learners with practical expertise (Baum, 2019). Certification training, often linked to compliance and service standards, such as food safety, fire safety, or PMS (Property Management System) operations, ensures that employees meet both legal and brand-specific requirements (Kuslivan et al., 2010). Practical or industrial training, typically embedded within hospitality education programs, enables students to bridge theoretical knowledge with simulated hotel environments such as training restaurants or kitchens (Kay & Russette, 2000).

On-the-job training (OJT) remains one of the most widely adopted forms, as it allows employees to learn in real time while directly serving guests, making it cost-effective and context-specific (Nolan, Conway, Farrell, & Monks, 2010). Similarly, language and communication training has become increasingly significant due to the multicultural nature of hotel guests; training in English or foreign languages enhances guest interactions and service personalization (Agut, Grau, & Peiró, 2003). Cross-training and job rotation also feature prominently, particularly in luxury hotels, to build multi-skilled employees capable of handling diverse tasks, thereby improving operational flexibility and reducing service disruptions (Raman, 2016).

Management training programs are central to building future leadership pipelines. Leading Indian chains such as Oberoi (OCLD) and Taj emphasize leadership development programs that integrate managerial skills with service philosophy (Chand & Katou, 2007). Industrial training in the form of six-month



internships during academic programs is another cornerstone of hotel training. These internships immerse students in real hotel operations across departments, thereby enhancing employability and industry readiness (Barron & Maxwell, 1993). Vocational and technical training further supports workforce development by providing specialized skill-based competencies, particularly for operational departments such as food production and housekeeping (Walmsley, 2004).

Short-term internships and project-based learning modules also serve as entry points for career exploration and networking. Meanwhile, just-in-time (JIT) training, delivered at the point of need, has gained traction with technological integration, where mobile devices provide quick access to SOPs, digital service scripts, and upselling techniques (Poulston, 2008). Finally, training in hotel service and administration focuses on systems knowledge, service recovery, and guest complaint management, which collectively contribute to maintaining service excellence and brand consistency (Baum, 2006).

The review highlights that the hotel industry employs a **multi-dimensional training approach** that combines **traditional methods** (apprenticeships, industrial internships, OJT) with **modern strategies** (certification, JIT training, cross-training, and leadership programs). Indian hotels, in particular, have adopted a blend of **structured management development programs, cross-departmental exposure, and compliance-driven certifications**, aligning with global standards while catering to local operational challenges. The findings suggest that the hospitality sector views training not merely as a skill-building exercise but as a **strategic investment** that drives service quality, enhances guest satisfaction, and develops a future-ready workforce.

Methods of training

There are numerous methods of training are used to train students and employees. As the time passes the birth of new training methods comes into existence according to the needs of the industries. Now these days, there are two approaches of training methods that are used i.e. “on the-job” or “off-the-job” methods. First ones are applied in the organization; and later ones are performed elsewhere from the organization are used away from the organization.

Numbers of factors are to be considered for selection of training methods like investment on training, level of knowledge required, history of trainee, objectives for training and number of trainees etc.

Solem (1960) stated that case study and role playing methods of training play an important role in finding solutions of problems. Although, role playing method was perceived better to learn how to get acceptance of solutions as compared to case study.



Harris (1995) argued that one-to-one method is flexible method and used most frequently over the other methods of training. However this method is one of the complex training methods.

According to Garavan (1997), training and development in hospitality industry is play a very important for enhancing the level of guest satisfaction by using social skills, certain behavior and attitudes. This can be done only by role-plays, sensitivity training, computer case study aided training etc. These all methods relate to personal interaction with the trainees and develop the problems solving skills in to the trainees.

Moscardo's (1997) did her research on thinking skills of HR professional in hotel industry and found that these HR professionals had limited thinking approaches towards employee training. As they use only those training methods which are more accessible and already tested and also have no interest in understanding of employee training. This causes lack of employee retention rate in the hotel industry. Furunes and Mykletun (2005). This view is also supported by Jakobsen et al. (2002) and Engstrøm (2005) and said that there is negative attitude towards training which results shortage of training program in the hotel industry.

Curran and Blackburn (2001) highlighted the advantages of SMEs using on-the-job training methods.

Furunes (2005) has conducted a study in Norwegian hospitality industry on training methods which include case study, videotape, lecture, one-to-one training, role-play, games, computer simulations, paper and pencil programmed instruction, audiotapes, self-assessments, movies/films, multi-media presentations, computer-assisted instruction, video conferences, and sensitivity training. The study found one-to-one training method most effective method of training but role play method of training play effective role in interpersonal skill development as compared to one-to-one method. Further, the study found that large organizations use instructional videotapes, case study, role play, self assessment, multi-media presentation, computer-assisted instruction and programmed instructions method in employees training process whereas one-to-one training method and lecture is used in small organizations. In addition, case study and role-play has direct relation on the one hand whereas computer assisted instruction, films/movies and a videotape has on the other.

Feedback and attention are important elements of training program because these elements motivate (Mayer, 2002) and inspire employees to give better performance. Past studies also supported this view by arguing that training methods facilitate instant feedback and attention to the trainees (Fedor, Eder & Buckley, 1989; Leung, Su & Morris, 2001; Macky & Johnson, 2000). At the outset, some studies



demonstrate that training methods used in the organization prejudiced by time and costs (Barrows, 2000; Harris, 1995; Jameson, 2000).

The study also highlighted that one-to-one method of training can be cost effective if, the training is provided by experienced worker who is working with the organization from beginning. Lecture method is also found second most popular method of training but this method fails to make interaction between trainees.

The review of literature reveals that training methods in the hospitality industry have evolved significantly, yet they largely revolve around two major approaches: **on-the-job** and **off-the-job** training. Selection of methods depends on factors such as organizational resources, training objectives, employee background, and the number of trainees. Among the various techniques, **one-to-one training** and **role-playing** emerge consistently as effective methods. While one-to-one training offers flexibility and personalization, role-playing enhances interpersonal skills and problem-solving abilities—both of which are essential for delivering guest satisfaction. Case studies, lectures, and computer-assisted methods also remain prevalent, though their effectiveness varies depending on the organizational context.

Research also highlights a disparity in training practices between large and small organizations, with larger establishments relying more on advanced instructional tools, multimedia presentations, and simulations, whereas smaller firms prefer lectures and direct mentorship. Despite their advantages, several studies point to limitations such as cost constraints, negative managerial attitudes, and overreliance on traditional methods, which restrict innovation in training practices.

Overall, the findings suggest that the **hotel industry must adopt a balanced training strategy**, integrating modern interactive methods (such as role-play, simulations, and multimedia tools) with traditional approaches (like lectures and mentoring). Doing so will not only enhance employee skills but also improve motivation, engagement, and retention, ultimately contributing to improved service quality and guest satisfaction.

Training Tools

There are various training tools are used for the students and employees training in the hospitality organizations such as photographs/chart/diagram, text and manual, transparencies and simulation tools.

Therefore, in order to meet the higher expectations and more diverse needs of both students and employees, a training system should be designed in a more individualized and educational format. For



example, diversity in workforce has encouraged hospitality operators to implement effective and efficient training tools for their employees. Training programs offering specific training tools for students and employees.

In order to maintain, enhance and utilize industrial skills, Know-how and experiences, training multimedia resources such as training software, internet, computer assisted learning platforms and online & offline help resources play critical role through independent, flexible, interactive, time and cost effective ways (Pollard, 1992; Hosie, 1993; Murphy, 1993; Howard, 1995; Fankhauser and Lopaczuk, 1996; Reynolds and Iwinski, 1996). Moreover, these ways enable training multimedia resources to identify key strategic problems related to skill maintenance, just in time training, knowledge obsolescence and multi-skilling in the organizations (Oktem, 1996; Wagner and Flannery, 2004).

According to (Axtell, Maitlis, and Yearta, 1997; and Bates, 2003), the training tool/product should be 'content valid'. Here, 'content valid' refers to the transfer of information, knowledge, idea, expertise and experience are sound and broadly articulated, recognized, tested and designed (Stein and Frolick, 2001; Dobbs, 2006). The training tool/product will be 'content valid' only if the knowledge designer extracts the relevant information/knowledge from content experts and after that, plan and incorporate it into technology based training tools in order to provide training to the trainees. It is also essential for the persons who design and develop training program to create materials focused on two approaches of learning i.e. cognitive based learning approach and behavior based learning approach Dobbs (2006, p. 500). Therefore, a sound learning theory and research must be incorporated in designing and developing training program. Hospitality organizations use both traditional tools (charts, manuals, simulations) and modern multimedia resources (software, internet, e-learning) to train students and employees. To meet diverse workforce needs, training must be **flexible, interactive, and cost-effective** while ensuring **content validity** through expert knowledge. Effective programs should combine **cognitive and behavioral approaches**, enabling employees to gain knowledge and apply it in practice. Overall, adopting **technology-driven, well-designed training tools** is essential for building skilled and adaptable hospitality professionals.

Training Outcomes

It is defined as systematic collection of descriptive and judgmental information necessary to make effective training decisions related to selection, adoption, value and modification various instructional activities. For hospitality industry main outcome of the students training are students able to perform



more effectively after training program. Training outcomes means what is the total output of training program.

Woods (1997) stressed upon the employees training and considered it as an employee- retention strategy. This view is also supported by many researcher Jakobsen et al. (2002) observed that this strategy is applied on those industries where recruitment of skilled employees is very difficult task. If they provide proper training to their employees, they can minimize employees' turnover rates significantly. Consequently, they will not require the recruitment of fresh employees in the organization.

Zopiatis (2007) analyzed that internship provides more job opportunities after their education. Many studies also favours that with experience of training the students have more job offers then the others. The findings have confirmed the results of Cannon and Arnold (1998); Knouse, Tanner and Harris (1999); Kwok, Adams and Price (2011)

Mani (2010) in their research paper, "Evaluating Effectiveness of Executive Training" examined empirically four levels of measuring training effectiveness by using a sample of trainees who attended a management development program in 2010, targeting future managers. This study reveals that the training program can be further equipped with technology which is practiced during job functions. The interest among the employees can be sustained and increased by adopting new methods in teaching the course content .The positive attitude of the employees towards the training program could be increased by concentrating on the few steps suggested by HRM department.

The review indicates that training outcomes in the hospitality industry are primarily reflected in **enhanced employee performance, improved retention and increased student employability**. Effective training reduces turnover rates by fostering loyalty, equips employees with relevant skills, and strengthens organizational efficiency. For students, structured training and internships significantly improve career prospects by offering practical exposure and higher job opportunities. Furthermore, incorporating technology-driven and innovative training methods sustains engagement and maximizes the overall effectiveness of training programs.

CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the training practices in the hospitality industry are a **systematic and multidimensional process** that directly links organizational vision with employee performance and student employability. Both **on-the-job and off-the-job methods** are widely practiced, with approaches such as role-playing, case studies, one-to-one training, simulations, and technology-assisted instruction proving particularly



effective. The choice of method depends on factors such as cost, trainee needs, organizational size, and training objectives.

Training tools, ranging from traditional resources like charts and manuals to advanced multimedia platforms and e-learning systems, have expanded the scope of hospitality training by making it more flexible, interactive, and content-valid. These tools not only support cognitive and behavioral learning but also address challenges of workforce diversity, knowledge obsolescence, and multi-skilling.

Ultimately, training outcomes are seen in **improved employee productivity, higher retention, enhanced guest satisfaction, and stronger student career opportunities**. Well-designed and effectively delivered training ensures that employees and students acquire essential technical and social skills, while organizations benefit from reduced turnover and sustained competitiveness. Therefore, training in the hospitality sector is not merely a developmental activity but a **strategic investment** that drives long-term organizational success and industry growth.

The role of training remains pivotal in ensuring a seamless and exceptional guest experience. By fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptability, the industry is poised not only to meet but to exceed the expectations of a diverse and discerning clientele. Ultimately, the success of the Indian hotel industry hinges on its ability to invest in, evolve, and optimize its training practices to meet the demands of the future.

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