

Issues Relating to Staff Training Hospitality Industry: A Case Study of Premier Hotel, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria

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Abstract

The general objective of the study was to investigate the issues relating to staff training in Hospitality industry using Premier Hotel Ibadan as a case study. Specifically, the study determined: practices employed by management of Premier Hotel in training their staff, and staff expressed benefits of their own training. Design of the study was survey. Area of study was Premier Hotel Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria. Population for the study comprised of all staff (both skilled and unskilled) in Premier Hotel, Ibadan. Instrument for data collection was questionnaire. Data were analysed using frequency, percentage and mean. Major findings include that most strategy training employed by the Management of Premier Hotel in training their staff is on- the job training (55%), most targeted for training were the new staff (45%), half (49.5%) of the respondents were trained on a monthly basis. There are 10 skills areas in which training are given. Other findings include nine staff expressed benefits of training. These including that training enhance staff performance in the hotel, makes staff career path to be more focused, improves the social circle of the employee, and others. Based on the findings, it is recommended that the hospitality industry, particularly hotels, should endeavour to train their staff regularly in order to upgrade competency, and staff commitment in the hotel industry.

Keywords: Issues, Hospitality, industry, Benefits, Training, Staff, Premier Hotel

Introduction

The tourism industry is often cited as the largest industry in the world, contributing 10 percent of the world's Gross Domestic Product. In 2016 there were over 1.2 billion international tourists involving a substantial economic impact and movement of

goods and services (World Tourism Organization, 2015). Tourism is one of the world's largest and rapidly growing industries in the 21st century (Anyalem, *et al.* 2016). It is said to be the largest employer of labour as it employs skilled, semi-skilled and unskilled workers. Employee is an

asset for an organization because the success and failure of any organization depends upon its employee (Abdul Hameed 2011). In hospitality industry, particularly the hotel sector it is very important for organizations to focus on how to enhance employee performance in the industry (Tedla, 2016). Employee performance is important because they have direct interaction with guests. So it is important for the manager in hospitality industry to know the factors that affect employee performance (Tharenou, Saks and Moore 2007). Training is very important.

Training has been defined as a systematic acquisition and development of the knowledge, skills and attitudes required by employee to adequately perform a task or job or improve performance in the job environment (Tharenon, Saks and Moore, 2007). Staff training is an essential and indispensable part of human resource management. The importance and value of staff training has long been recognized (Olusanya *et.al.* 2012). The level of service quality depends on the qualities of employee. These qualities deal with knowledge, skills and thoughts which lead to a hotel's survival and development.

It is a method to assist employees to become more professional at what they do. With the help of Human Resources Management, business success is partly guaranteed. (Yang, 2010). Therefore, staff training is essential in many ways, it increases productivity while employee are

armed with professional knowledge, experienced skills and valid thoughts, staff training also motivates and inspires workers by providing employee all needed information in work as well as help to recognize how important their jobs are (Dennis and Joyride, 2018).

According to Ahmmed (2013), every organization should provide training to all employees irrespective of their qualifications and skills. Specifically, the need for training may arise due to environmental changes, organizational complexity, and human relation. Change in the job assignment and to match employee specifications with the job requirements and organizational needs. Some training referred to a planned effort by a company to facilitate employees' learning on the job related competencies (James and Lucky, 2015). These competencies include knowledge, skills, or behaviours that are critical for successful job performance. For a company to gain a competitive advantage, its training has to involve more than just basic skill development (Nassazi, 2013). This means that a company can use training to gain a competitive advantage, a company should therefore view training broadly as a way to create intellectual capital. Intellectual capital includes basic skill to perform one's job and advanced skills such as how to use technology to share information with other employee. Olaniyan and Ojo (2008) posited that the considerations for training vary in organization. Some of these

organizations may not consider training as necessary.

When there is an economy decline, organizations cut their training budget and the cost in hiring new employee which reduces organizations profitability. It is therefore become pertinent that the study determines the issues relating to staff training in Hospitality industry using Premier Hotel Ibadan, Nigeria as a case study.

Premier Hotel is located on the crest of famous Mokola Hill, Ibadan. It is one of the oldest and the best hotel in West Africa. It is jointly owned by the Odua states namely Ekiti, Oyo, Ondo, Ogun and Osun States. Premier hotel, a subsidiary of Odu'a Investment Company Limited was incorporated in 1966 as a resort, amusement, pleasure and relaxation center. The Mokola hill site gives it a unique feature of a "night watch lantern" welcoming into a haven built on top of the ancient city and with over three decades in hotel business. The hotel's location provides an easy access to major attractions, thus making it a one stop destination for business executives and tourists. Premier Hotel has put into use its vast experience and understanding of what today's hotel business is all about with a view to ensuring customer satisfaction which has made it to remain the Hospitality King (Oodua, 2020).

Objectives of the study

The general purpose of the study was to investigate the issues relating to staff training in Hospitality Industry

using Premier Hotel, Ibadan, Oyo State, Nigeria as a case study. Specifically the study determined:

1. practices employed by management of Premier Hotel in training their staff
2. staff expressed benefits of their own training.

Research Questions

The following research questions were answered by this study.

1. What are the training practices employed by management of Premier Hotel in training their staff?
2. What are the staff expressed benefits of their own training?

Methodology

Design of the study: The study adopted descriptive survey design. The survey method normally paves way for a researcher to make use of questionnaire

Area of Study: Area of the study was Oyo state. The study was conducted in Premier Hotel Ibadan, Oyo State Nigeria. It is located at Mokola Hill, 14km away from Ibadan Airport. The hotel's location also provides easy access to major attractions and business districts, making it a good place to stay for tourists and business travelers. It is a subsidiary of the Odua group of companies. Premier hotel's building has an elevator installed, well furnished and spacious rooms. The terrace garden also presents a perfect relaxation spot and a coffee/tea/pastry shop open to guests. Other facilities include an outdoor

swimming pool, a body spa and fitness centers, Banquet halls with different seating arrangements and layouts are available at fixed rates. Airport shuttle, safety deposits, laundry, car hire, room service, business center services are available

Population for Study: The population of study comprised of all staff (both skilled and unskilled) in Premier Hotel Ibadan. The hotel has five departments with a total of 241 staff as the time of data collection for the study. These include 74 in Front office department where customers first arrive at the hotel for reservation, registration, finance and cashiering and inquiry, 67 in Housekeeping department which is responsible for cleanliness, upkeep and maintenance of the rooms, 51 in Kitchen department which is responsible for production of food for restaurants, banquets and in-room service, 49 in Food and Beverages department which focuses on food and drinks. There is also a Maintenance department which ensures that various systems, facilities, equipment and components used in the hospitality industry are in good condition and are functioning smoothly. This study did not however cover the Maintenance department.

Sample for the Study: Purposive sampling technique was used to select up to 50 percent of staff in each of the four departments of concern for the study. The staff selected were those who had participated in any form of staff training at any time. A total of 120 staff members were selected as follows 38, 33, 25 and 24 in

departments of Front office, Housekeeping, Kitchen and Food/Beverage respectively. Thus, the sample was made up of 120 staff members.

Instrument for Data Collection: Questionnaire was used for data collection. The section of the instrument on “staff expressed benefits of training” was based on five-point Likert scale of Strongly agree (5), Agree (4), Undecided (3), Disagree (2), and Strongly disagree (1). The questionnaire was face-validated by five university based experts in Hospitality Industry. The split-half method of reliability test was used to establish the reliability of the instrument. The reliability index of 0.75 was obtained.

Method of Data Collection: One hundred and twenty copies of questionnaires were administered by hand with the help of two trained research assistants. Out of the 120 copies of the administered questionnaire, only 107 were properly completed and retrieved. This represents 89.16 percent return.

Method of Data Analysis: Frequency and percentages were used to analyse data on training practices employed by the hotel management. Mean was used to analyze data on expressed benefits of training. Decision on benefits of training was based on mean score of 4.00. Any benefit indicator with a mean (\bar{X}) of 4.00 and above was regarded as a “benefit of staff training”.

Results

Personal Characteristics of Respondents: Data analysis reveals that 51 percent of the respondents were between the ages of 31 and 40 years, 34 percent were between 20 and 30 years of age, 10 percent were between 41- 50years while only 5 percent were 50 years and above. More than half of the respondents are adults in the study area. It was also found that 70 percent of the respondents were females while 30 percent were

males, 60% percent of the respondents were married, 25 percent were single, and 10 percent of the respondents were divorce while only 5 percent were widow. Majority (70%) of the respondents had OND/ NCE certificate, 29 percent had HND/BSc while only one candidate possessed PhD. It can therefore be stated that all the respondents were educated.

Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Responses on Training Strategies Employed by Management in Training Staff (n= 107)

Training Strategies	Frequency	Percentage (%)
On - the - Job training	59	55
Simulation training	32	30
Off- the- Job training	16	15

Table 1 shows that 55 percent of the respondents indicated that they received On -the job training, 30 percent of them received simulation while only 15 percent of them received

Off- the - job training. The most strategy training employed by the Management of Premier Hotel in training their staff is on- the Job training.

Table 2: Frequency and Percent of Target Group that undergo training in the Hotel (n=107)

Group	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Top Managers	12	11
Middle level Managers	19	18
Junior Staff	28	26
New Staff	48	45

Table 2 reveals that 45 percent the group of workers that are most targeted for training were the new staff. The were followed by the junior

staff (26%), then the middle level managers (18%) and the top managers (11%).

Table 3: Frequency and Percentage of Duration of training in the Hotel (n=107)

Duration	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Weekly	25	23.4
Monthly	53	49.5
Quarterly	19	17.8
Yearly	10	9.3

Table 3 shows that nearly half (49.5%) of the respondents were trained on a monthly basis. This is followed by weekly basis (23.4%), quarterly (17.8%), and then on a yearly basis (9.3%).

Frequency of Training in the Hotel: Data analysis shows that majority (72.9%) of the respondents were trained on a regular basis in the hotel while 27.1 percent of them were trained only occasionally in the hotel.

Table 4: Frequency and Percentage Responses on Skill areas on which Training is Given in the Hotel (n=107)

S/N	Skill area	Frequency	Percentage
1	Team work	9	8.4
2	Multi-tasking	3	2.8
3	Flexibility	4	3.7
4	Attention to detail	5	4.7
5	Industry awareness	2	1.8
6	Time management	32	29.9
7	Communication	10	9.4
8	Interpersonal skills	21	19.6
9	Problem solving	15	14.1
10	Hazard awareness	6	5.6

Result of skill areas on which training is given in the hotel as presented in Table 5 shows that 29.9 percent of the respondents acquired skills on time management, 19.9 percent on

interpersonal skills, 14.1 percent on problem solving, 8.4 percent on team work, while they least acquired skill area is industry awareness (1.8%).

Table 5: Mean Responses on Staff Expressed Benefits of their Training.

S/N	Benefits Indicators	SA	A	U	D	SD	Mean
Staff Training in the Hotel:							
1	has helped the staff in improving their overall required skills for work.	0	2	10	58	37	4.21
2	motivates employee to be more committed to work towards organization goals.	39	54	10	2	0	4.19

Table 5Continued

3	enhances staff performance.	32	56	15	4	0	4.18
4	makes staff career path to be more focused.	32	54	17	4	0	3.19
5	improves the social circle of the employee.	35	48	17	7	0	4.04
6	enhances staff performance in the hotel.	28	58	20	1	0	4.06
7	promotes team spirit among staff.	34	58	19	3	0	4.08
8	promotes learning of new concepts, ideas, methods and techniques.	33	56	19	3	0	4.08
9	enhances achievement of organizational goals.	36	51	15	4	1	4.09
10	encourages increased productivity through follow-up.	42	51	12	2	1	4.24
11	can be stressful for staff.	32	48	21	5	1	3.18

Table 5 reveals the mean (X) responses of the staff on the benefits of their training. Nine of the benefits indicators obtained mean of 4.04 to 4.24. These represent the items they regarded as benefits. The Table also shows that item 4 (X = 3.19) and item 11 (X = 3.18) are not benefits of the staff training, since their mean scores are less than 4.00

Discussion

The findings of the study on respondents' personal characteristics shows that more than half of the staffs in the hotel were adults. This implies that age is an important factor that can influence attitude of an employee in discharging their duties diligently in the hotel. This finding agrees with Vetrakova (2019), who reported that respondent's turnover is focused by taking account of their age. The finding that most of the respondents were educated and are qualified employees. This finding is corroborated with the assertion of Davis *et.al.*2012 that the road to hotel management begins with an educational background in hospitality

management and that in general higher professional education is required for a hotel career. On the job training was identified as the strategy employed by management of the hotel in training their staff, this in accordance with study of Yang, 2010 that On-the-job training strategy will bring out the employees' professional quality which is the key of hotel services, the rules and principles of work are taught in this kind of training, besides, courtesy, manners and techniques of handling interpersonal relations are taught as well. This kind of training aims to train employees to learn the best way to do the work in the most quick and effective way. The group of workers that are most targeted for training were the new staff, followed by the junior staff) then the middle level managers and the top managers. It was revealed in the study that respondents acquired skills on time management, interpersonal skills, problem solving, team work while the least acquired skills on industry awareness. Caster - Lotto and Barrington (2006), identified teamwork, professionalism, problem

solving and managing resources as the main practical skills employees need. Hospitality management industries should aim to improve employees' knowledge and understanding of employability skills (Ogbeide, 2009). A large number of employees can appear dissatisfied due to being assigned responsibilities without having the right knowledge and skills in that area. It is believed that some employees have some weakness in their work place so a training program strengthen those skills that each employee needs to improve. Training is an essential process which should be cautiously designed and implemented within all firms (Ahmmad, 2013),

Most of the respondents agreed that follow up after training should encourage increase in productivity. This may also mean that they have favourable attitude towards training. This findings is in line with Ahmmad, (2013) who opined that training plays a key role in ensuring that staff is equipped with skills and knowledge required to deliver good customer services and that qualified employee trained to work in hospitality industry are able to meet the customers need. This further corroborated in the findings of Gazija (2011) that the vision of making any hospitality brand grow is to focus on satisfaction of guest because if guest remember how warm the treatment they received in a particular hotel was, they will not hesitate to patronize the hotel again. Chang and James (2017) posited that Career development (training) and psychosocial support were antecedents

of employee promotional attitude. Findings in Table 5 indicate that staff training has numerous benefits to both the staff and the hotel. This findings is consistent with the views of Olusanya et.al. (2012). This shows that staff training needs to be encouraged.

Conclusions

The study concludes that On- the Job training strategy was the most employed by the management in training their staff in the study area. The most targeted groups trained were the newly employed staff. Training was not regularly organized for staff and also follow up after training were not carried out by the hotel management. Finally, respondents had favourable attitude towards training in the study area.

Recommendations

1. Hotels should employ the use of different strategies in training their staff as a way to create intellectual capital.
2. Training of staff by the Hotel Management should not be restricted to new employee alone. All staff should be trained and retrained for better performance.
3. Since respondents had favourable attitude towards training, therefore staff training should be conducted on regular intervals as this will create opportunities for career development and upgrade competency, commitment of employee in the hotel industry.
4. Follow up after training by Hotel management should be

encouraged to attain the organization desire goals, which in turn increase profitability.

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