

SKILLS DEVELOPMENT IN TOURISM SECTOR IN INDIA

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Abstract :Human Resource is the most valuable asset for the success of any organization or sector as a whole. Human resources acquiring and retaining good human resources is essential precondition for the growth and development of any nation. Tourism in one of the fastest growing sectors of the Indian economy. Therefore, there is a need to formulate an appropriate policy for skill acquisition and development in the sector for accelerating the sectoral growth in Tourism sector. The present research article highlights the potential of tourism sector and stresses the need for skill development in the sector.

Key words:Tourism, hospitability, skill development, skill acquisition.

INTRODUCTION:-

Tourism/hospitability is one of the fastest developing sectors in India. Tourism accounts for 6.8% of India's GDP. It contributes about USD 18.13 billion towards foreign exchange earnings of India. There were 1 billion domestic travelers and 6.97 million foreign tourists in India in the year 2012-13. India houses 30 world heritage sites, 21 hotel management institutes and about 25 bio-geographical zones. The job creation potential of the sector is estimated to be 78 jobs with every USD 1 million invested. Thus, there is a greater need as well as potential for skill development in tourism sector in India.

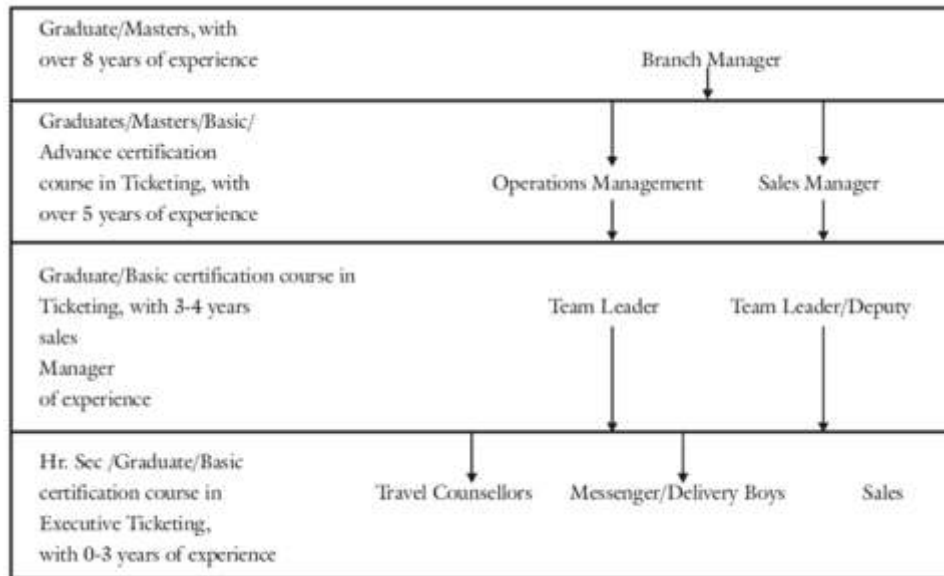
Skill development is the priority of the Government of India. This was explicitly brought out in the Prime Minister's Independence Day address to the nation. The National Skill Development Council has identified tourism/hospitability industry also for mass basing the skill training.

Potential of Tourism Sector:

- (1)Tourism in India accounts for 6.8% of the GDP and is the third largest foreign exchange earner for the country.
- (2)India ranks 42nd in the United Nations World Tourism Organization rankings for foreign tourist arrivals.
- (3)India registered 6.97 million foreign tourist arrivals in 2013, registering an annual growth of 5.9% over the previous year.
- (4)The foreign exchange earnings from tourism during 2013 was USD 18.13 billion, registering an annual growth of 2.2% over the previous year.
- (5)India is the 16th most visited country in the world, with a share of 1.56% in the world's tourism receipts. Domestic tourism contributes to three-fourths of the tourism economy.
- (6)India offers geographical diversity, attractive beaches, 30 world Heritage Sites and 25 bio-geographic zones.
- (7)India has a diverse portfolio of niche tourism products – cruises, adventure, medical, wellness, sports, MICE, eco-tourism, film, rural and religious tourism.
- (8)The UNWTO has forecast that foreign exchange earnings from tourism are likely to show annualized growth of 14% during the same period.

Skill Requirements in Tourism Sector:

The following diagram represents the skill requirements in the tourism sector.



Government Initiatives for Skill Development in Tourism Sector:

- (1) A growing recognition of tourism’s contribution to employment and economic growth, the availability of better infrastructure, focused marketing and promotion efforts, liberalization of air transport, the growth of online travel portals, growing intra- regional cooperation and more effective public private partnerships are seen as key drivers for tourism in the next decade.
- (2) More than half of the Ministry of Tourism’s Plan budget is channelized for funding the development of destinations, circuits, mega projects as well as rural tourism infrastructure projects.
- (3) The ministry also ensured that 10% and 2.5% of its total annual plan outlay for 2013–14 went to tourism projects in the Northeastern region and tribal areas, respectively.
- (4) There is a renewed focus on skill development in the travel and tourism sector – 21 government-run hotel management and catering technology institutes and 14 food craft institutes have been established to impart specialized training in hoteliering and catering.
- (5) The availability of the Visa on Arrival facility significantly influences tourists’ travel plans to any country. During 2013, a total number of 20,294 Visas on Arrival were issued as compared to 16,084 Visas on Arrival during the corresponding period in 2012, which amounts to a growth of 26%.
- (6) The launch of several branding and marketing initiatives by the Government of India such as “Incredible India!” and “Athiti Devo Bhava” provides a focused impetus to growth.
- (7) Recently, the Indian government has also released a fresh category of visa – the medical visa or M visa, to encourage medical tourism in India.

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