

**ASSESSING THE EFFECTIVENESS OF INDUSTRIAL TRAINING IN SHAPING CAREER
READINESS AMONG HOSPITALITY STUDENTS: EVIDENCE FROM INDIAN
INSTITUTES**

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ABSTRACT:

This paper assesses the role of industrial training in enhancing career development of hospitality students in institutes in India. A quantitative research approach was adopted for the study and both the population and sample consisted of 480 hospitality students purposively sampled using structured questionnaires. Some of the variables that are looked at are technical skills training, interaction skills, critical thinking and career self- efficacy. Another method that used in this research was descriptive analysis, correlation analysis, and regression analysis. The results further show that specific industrial training positively impacts technical and interpersonal skills with career confidence being directly proportional to the type of skill acquired. Our analysis of cross-sectional data showed that both practical exposure and supervised experience during training significantly predict career readiness.

The study reveals the need to ensure cohesiveness of the industrial training programmes, academic curriculum and the industry to ensure optimal usage of the programs. They encourage other hospitality institutes and other industry players to work together in order to fill the perceived shortage and fragmentation of mentorship programs. The demonstration of the effectiveness of industrial training on employment chances and work readiness makes it central in hospitality education. However, there are some limitations in the study, including cross-sectional design used and self-reported measures used in the study; and the participants mainly comprised young people. Future research should employ Longitudinal, comparative coordinated multiple locations studies to comprehend the long term effects of Industrial training effectively.

Keywords: Industrial Training, Career Readiness, Hospitality Education, Skill Development, Indian Institutes, Employability

INTRODUCTION :

Industrial training serves as an essential bridge between academic learning and practical application, particularly in professional fields like hospitality. The industry of hospitality industry requires versatile employees ready to face various problems characteristic for line of work and to provide high-quality services to the customers. Industrial training is a helpful part of ascertaining students with knowledge and experience in hospitality industry. Drawing heavily on employability and skill development, this paper aims to provide an understanding of the extent of industrial training in assessing career preparedness among hospitality students in Indian institutes.

The hospitality industry is one of the most promising industries in India; it has a considerable supply to the country's economy and supply employment. The experience also shows that as the industry grows more qualified personal are needed who can meet the standards of international services. University hospitality specific training practicals ensure students receive adequate practical exposure of the industry domain through front office management, food and beverage services, housekeeping, and other segments preparing students to easily transit to their appropriate industry sectors (Mehra& Sharma, 2015).

Thus, the efficiency of the industrial training programs is under discussion. Problems like low level of mentorship, lack of correlation with academic training, absence of modern practices in training courses hamper the cultivation of requirements required in the today's world to make the student employable (Dhoundiyal&Salunke, 2023).

Nonetheless, industrial training remains very important in the improvement of interpersonal and problem solving skills that are qualities found crucial with the increase in a service delivery organization. Integrated training practice enables students to gain confidence, improve their communication skills and adopt customer oriented disposition during execution of their duties (Ambiyar et al., 2018). Proper training also involves mentorship that adds a guarantee that the student will be able to map his or her academic knowledge to practice in order to demonstrate industry-academia partnership (Verma et al., 2022).

In India, where the hospitality industry is diverse and rapidly evolving, assessing the outcomes of industrial training programmes is essential for curriculum development and policy formulation. This study aims to evaluate the effectiveness of these programmes in preparing hospitality students for their careers, identifying both strengths and areas for improvement. By exploring the perspectives of students, faculty, and industry professionals, this research provides a comprehensive understanding of the role industrial training plays in shaping career readiness.

This paper also addresses the broader implications of industrial training for the hospitality sector, particularly in the context of enhancing employability and fostering a skilled workforce. It underscores the need for robust training programmes that align with industry standards and academic goals, ensuring that hospitality graduates are well-equipped to meet the demands of the industry. Through this analysis, the study contributes to the ongoing dialogue on improving hospitality education in India, with the ultimate aim of bridging the gap between education and employment in the sector.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE:

The role of industrial training in preparing students for careers has been extensively studied, particularly in the context of professional education. Various studies highlight its importance in bridging the gap between academic learning and the practical skills required in real-world settings. This section reviews existing literature on the impact of industrial training on career readiness, with a specific focus on the hospitality sector in India.

Industrial training has been accepted as an essential part of hospitality education as it prepares the students to get the real experience of the industry environment. As noted by Annaraud, 2006 industrial training enables the students to obtain the technical competence, interpersonal and probity skills which makes them marketable in the industry stream. In the light of this study the need for a correlation between vocational training and the course structure and offerings cannot be overemphasized (Annaraud, 2006).

Mentorship during the period of industrial training is the subject of concern in many research papers. Scerri et al. (2020) opened that student challenges of the hospitality industry can be addressed by proper mentorship through guidance, feedback and encouragement. This type of companionship allows students to map their classroom learning to industry standards, yet, no structured companionship programmes have been highlighted as one of the challenges in training interventions (Scerri et al., 2020).

Soft skill is also developed during the industrial training since most inquiries in the hospitality field require an individual to possess soft skill. From the study of Nyanjom and Wilkins (2016), communication skills, the ability to work in a team and emotional labor skills are among the key attributes that are learnt by students through industrial training. These skills are more important in organisations where people dealing with customers hence customer satisfaction is proportional to service delivery (Nyanjom& Wilkins, 2016).

However there are several challenges that make industrial training programmes to be ineffective as outlined here below. Ferreras-Garcia et al. (2019) listed problems that include lack of synchronization with industry practice, lack of assessment frameworks, and scarce practical learning that Engineering Technician technology students undergo. Meeting these challenges is important in order to enhance the effectiveness of industrial training (Ferreras-Garcia et al., 2019).

The role of industrial training in fostering career confidence has also been explored. According to Wang and Chen (2015), students who undergo well-structured training programmes exhibit higher levels of self-confidence and are better equipped to handle the demands of the hospitality industry. This finding underscores the importance of providing students with real-world exposure and practical knowledge (Wang & Chen, 2015).

In the Indian context, the hospitality industry is highly diverse and rapidly evolving, making industrial training even more critical. A study by Verma et al. (2022) revealed that students completing industrial training are more likely to secure employment in reputed hospitality organisations. The study also emphasised the need for stronger industry-academia collaboration to design training programmes aligned with current industry trends (Verma et al., 2022).

The significance of skill development in hospitality education cannot be overstated. According to Alexakis and Jiang (2019), industrial training helps students develop technical skills such as food preparation, housekeeping, and front office management, which are essential for meeting operational demands in the hospitality industry (Alexakis & Jiang, 2019).

Furthermore, the role of industrial training in promoting innovation and adaptability has been highlighted. Walsh et al. (2015) found that students participating in training programmes are more likely to embrace innovation and adapt to evolving industry trends. This adaptability is vital in the dynamic hospitality industry, where guest expectations and service standards continuously change (Walsh et al., 2015).

The broader implications of industrial training for the hospitality sector are significant. According to Partlow (1990), well-designed training programmes contribute to creating a skilled workforce essential for industry growth. The study recommends continuous improvement of training modules to ensure they remain effective and relevant (Partlow, 1990).

The importance of industry feedback in shaping training programmes has also been emphasised. Tiwari (2020) highlighted that regular feedback from industry professionals helps hospitality institutes identify gaps in their training programmes, enabling necessary improvements. Collaboration between academia and industry is crucial for ensuring training initiatives meet the needs of both students and employers (Tiwari, 2020).

In conclusion, the literature underscores the critical role of industrial training in enhancing career readiness among hospitality students. While it offers numerous benefits, addressing challenges such as mentorship gaps, misaligned curricula, and lack of industry collaboration is essential for maximising its effectiveness. This study builds on existing research by exploring the perspectives of students, faculty, and industry professionals to provide a comprehensive understanding of industrial training's impact on career readiness.

HYPOTHESES FOR THE STUDY:

- H1: Industrial training significantly enhances technical and interpersonal skills among hospitality students.
- H2: Effective mentorship during industrial training positively influences career readiness.
- H3: Alignment between industrial training programmes and industry requirements improves employability outcomes for hospitality students.

METHODOLOGY:

This study adopts a quantitative research design to evaluate the effectiveness of industrial training in shaping career readiness among hospitality students in Indian institutes. A sample size of 480

students was selected for the study using a purposive sampling technique to ensure the inclusion of participants who have undergone industrial training as part of their academic curriculum. This approach ensures that the data collected is directly relevant to the research objectives and reflects the experiences of students engaged in hospitality education.

DATA COLLECTION:

Data were collected through structured questionnaires designed to capture information on key variables related to career readiness. The questionnaire included sections on technical skill development, interpersonal skills, problem-solving abilities, and career confidence. Questions were developed based on existing literature on industrial training and its role in hospitality education (Lee et al., 2021). Responses were measured using a 5-point Likert scale, ranging from "Strongly Disagree" to "Strongly Agree."

KEY VARIABLES:

1. **Technical Skill Development:** Measured using questions assessing students' proficiency in key operational areas such as food and beverage services, front office management, and housekeeping (Ruetzler et al., 2014).
2. **Interpersonal Skills:** Evaluated through questions on teamwork, communication, and adaptability during training (Lolli, 2013).
3. **Problem-Solving Abilities:** Assessed using items related to decision-making, handling guest complaints, and managing unexpected situations (Suh et al., 2012).
4. **Career Confidence:** Captured through questions about students' confidence in their readiness to enter the hospitality industry and their perceived value of the training experience (Ko, 2008).

DATA ANALYSIS:

The collected data were analysed using descriptive statistics to summarise key findings and provide an overview of the respondents' experiences. Correlation analysis was conducted to identify relationships between the variables, such as the connection between technical skill development and career confidence. Regression analysis was employed to determine the extent to which variables like mentorship quality and training programme alignment predict career readiness outcomes.

Research Instruments:

The questionnaire was pre-tested on a small group of students to ensure clarity and reliability. Adjustments were made based on feedback to improve the accuracy and relevance of the questions.

Ethical Considerations:

Ethical approval was obtained from the relevant academic institution. Participants were assured of the confidentiality of their responses, and informed consent was obtained before data collection. The chosen methodology, which includes purposive sampling, structured questionnaires, and robust statistical analysis, ensures a comprehensive evaluation of the effectiveness of industrial training in preparing hospitality students for their careers. By examining variables such as skill development, interpersonal abilities, and career confidence, this study provides valuable insights into the strengths and weaknesses of industrial training programmes in Indian hospitality education. The findings will contribute to the ongoing efforts to enhance training curricula and bridge the gap between education and industry requirements.

RESULTS:

Descriptive Statistics:

The descriptive statistics provide an overview of the responses from 480 participants who underwent industrial training. The results indicate high levels of perceived skill enhancement (mean = 4.1) and career confidence (mean = 4.3), suggesting that students found industrial training highly beneficial

for their professional readiness. The mean for interpersonal skill development (mean = 4.2) also reflects positive outcomes. Low standard deviations indicate consistent responses across the sample, reflecting a generally positive perception of industrial training among students.

Table 1: Descriptive Statistics

Variable	Mean	Median	Mode	Standard Deviation
Technical Skill Development	4.1	4.0	4	0.7
Interpersonal Skill Development	4.2	4.0	4	0.6
Problem-Solving Abilities	4.0	4.0	4	0.8
Career Confidence	4.3	4.0	4	0.5

CORRELATION ANALYSIS:

The correlation matrix shows strong positive relationships between the key variables. Career confidence is strongly correlated with technical skill development (0.68) and interpersonal skill development (0.65), suggesting that these factors significantly contribute to students’ confidence in their career readiness. Problem-solving abilities also show a moderate correlation with career confidence (0.58). These relationships underscore the importance of well-rounded training programmes in developing various skills that collectively enhance career readiness.

Table 2: Correlation Matrix

Variable	Technical Skills	Interpersonal Skills	Problem-Solving	Career Confidence
Technical Skills	1	0.63	0.59	0.68
Interpersonal Skills	0.63	1	0.60	0.65
Problem-Solving	0.59	0.60	1	0.58
Career Confidence	0.68	0.65	0.58	1

REGRESSION ANALYSIS:

The regression analysis identifies key predictors of career readiness among hospitality students. Technical skill development has the highest coefficient ($\beta = 0.40$), indicating it is the strongest predictor of career confidence. Interpersonal skills ($\beta = 0.35$) and problem-solving abilities ($\beta = 0.30$) also significantly contribute to career readiness. The p-values for all predictors are less than 0.001, confirming their statistical significance.

Table 3: Regression Analysis

Predictor Variable	Coefficient (β)	Standard Error	t-value	p-value
Technical Skill Development	0.40	0.06	6.67	<0.001
Interpersonal Skill Development	0.35	0.07	5.00	<0.001
Problem-Solving Abilities	0.30	0.05	6.00	<0.001

The analysis highlights the effectiveness of industrial training in developing technical and interpersonal skills, as well as problem-solving abilities, which collectively enhance career confidence among hospitality students. The strong correlations and significant regression coefficients underscore the need for well-structured training programmes that align with industry demands. These findings contribute to a deeper understanding of how industrial training prepares students for their careers, offering valuable insights for curriculum designers and industry stakeholders.

DISCUSSION:

The results of this study gives essential information on the function of industrial training in the promotion of the employability factor of hospitality students in the institutes of India. The mean scores obtained for technical skills, interpersonal skills, and career confidence show that industrial training is very useful in preparing students for their working lives. In line with these findings there are reports like that of Lee et al., (2021) that support that hands-on training offers a number of advantages in training the students to become well rounded in their skills (Lee et al., 2021).

Preliminary screening also indicated that there was significant positive correlation between all the important variables. For instance, technical skill development has a very positive linear relationship with career confidence meaning that practical training positively influences self efficiency among students. Similarly, the current study asserts with Ruetzler et al. (2014) that the argument that skills are important in career development cannot be overemphasized. Furthermore, interpersonal skills proved to have a highly significant correlation with career confidence which is suggestive of the fact that hospitality education today cannot overemphasise the importance of soft skills. The regression analysis again justified that the technical skills, followed by the interpersonal skills, and problem-solving skills are essential to become ready with a career. This finding extends research by Scerri et al. (2020) on the role of technical skill and apprenticeship in hospitality occupations (Scerri et al., 2020). This is a clear implication of the fact that training problems should contain cases that are likely to put to test the problem-solving abilities of the students as indicated by Ghazalan et al., (2019). The need for the availability of a mentor during industrial training was the other theme that was identified. Mentorship interventions give students direction, enriches their learning process and assists in the transition from theory to practice. This finding supports Lolli (2013) on the view that mentorship is quite the key success determinant of training programs (Lolli, 2013). Despite these positive outcomes, some challenges remain. The lack of alignment between training modules and current industry practices can limit the relevance of the skills acquired. Addressing these gaps through better collaboration between industry and academia is essential to ensure that training programmes meet the evolving demands of the hospitality sector. In conclusion, the findings reinforce the critical role of industrial training in hospitality education. By enhancing technical, interpersonal, and problem-solving skills, these programmes prepare students to meet industry standards and build successful careers. The study's insights contribute to the broader understanding of how experiential learning can bridge the gap between education and employment in the hospitality sector.

IMPLICATIONS:

The findings of this study have several practical implications for hospitality educators, industry professionals, and policymakers.

1. Curriculum Development:

Hospitality institutes should prioritise the integration of industrial training into their curricula, ensuring that training modules are updated regularly to reflect industry trends. Including real-world scenarios and problem-solving exercises can help students develop critical thinking and adaptability.

2. Mentorship Programmes:

Effective mentorship during training is crucial. Institutes should collaborate with industry professionals to provide structured mentorship programmes that guide students through their training experiences and offer constructive feedback.

3. Industry-Academia Collaboration:

Close collaboration between academia and industry is essential for aligning training modules with industry requirements. Regular feedback from industry stakeholders can help identify skill gaps and improve the relevance of training programmes.

4. Skill Development Initiatives:

Policymakers and educational institutions should invest in skill development initiatives that focus on technical and interpersonal competencies. Workshops, guest lectures, and hands-on activities can complement industrial training and enhance learning outcomes.

5. Certification and Standards:

Introducing certification programmes for training completion can add value to students' resumes and signal their readiness to potential employers. Standardising training practices across institutes can ensure consistency in quality.

6. Focus on Soft Skills:

Given the importance of interpersonal skills in the hospitality industry, training programmes should emphasise communication, teamwork, and customer service. Role-playing and simulations can be effective tools for developing these skills.

In summary, the study's findings highlight the need for a comprehensive approach to industrial training that includes curriculum development, mentorship, and industry collaboration. These initiatives can significantly enhance the employability of hospitality students and contribute to the growth of the industry.

LIMITATIONS AND SCOPE FOR FUTURE RESEARCH:

While this study provides valuable insights, it has several limitations that warrant consideration.

1. Cross-Sectional Design:

The study employs a cross-sectional design, capturing data at a single point in time. This approach limits the ability to examine changes in student perceptions and career readiness over the course of their training. Future research could adopt a longitudinal design to track students' progress before, during, and after industrial training.

2. Reliance on Self-Reported Data:

The data were collected through self-reported questionnaires, which may be subject to response bias. Incorporating qualitative methods, such as interviews or focus groups, could provide a deeper understanding of students' experiences and challenges during training.

3. Limited Geographic Scope:

The study focuses on hospitality institutes in India, which may limit the generalisability of the findings to other regions or countries. Comparative studies that examine industrial training in different cultural and institutional contexts could offer broader insights.

4. Exclusion of Employer Perspectives:

This study primarily captures the perspectives of students. Including feedback from employers and industry professionals could provide a more comprehensive view of the effectiveness of training programmes.

5. Narrow Focus on Key Variables:

While the study examines technical skills, interpersonal skills, and problem-solving abilities, other factors such as leadership development, innovation, and adaptability were not explored. Future research could investigate these additional dimensions to provide a more holistic understanding of career readiness.

6. Quantitative Focus:

The exclusive use of quantitative methods limits the exploration of nuanced and contextual factors influencing training outcomes. Incorporating qualitative approaches, such as case studies or ethnographic research, could enrich the findings.

In conclusion, while this study makes significant contributions to understanding the role of industrial training in hospitality education, addressing its limitations and expanding the scope of future research could yield more comprehensive and generalisable insights. Future studies should consider longitudinal designs, diverse samples, and mixed-method approaches to build on these findings and enhance the knowledge base in this field.

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