

A STUDY ON MAPPING OF HUMAN RESOURCE SKILL GAPS IN TOURISM INDUSTRY

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ABSTRACT

Human Resource is the most valuable asset of the organization. The success of every organization is depends upon the quality of human resources, acquiring and retaining good human resources is essential pre condition for the success of every organization. The present study is an attempt to analyze the Human Resource skill gaps in Tourism Industry to enhance and sharpen the capabilities of its employees. The study also identifies the necessary skills for the successful working of the industry. The study also focuses the role played by the Government, through the Ministry of Tourism, is engaged in several activities for skill development. The Government is engaged in making available trained human resource through its network of Institutes of Hotel Management and Indian Institutes of Tourism and Travel Management.

INTRODUCTION

The importance of Human Resource skill requirement for Tourism Industry is increasingly being realized. There is a need to mobilize the human resource with the purpose to enable them to participate in the task of organizational development and nation building. Mobilization would include the need to develop the human resource, their skills, knowledge, attitudes, so that they can achieve competently the pre-determined goals. Obviously the efficient and professional management is pre-requisite of successful tourism development. Tourism basically being a service business, a developing destination must take the necessary steps to build a pool of efficient trained people to fill various jobs, which will be created subsequently. A variety of jobs will have to be created to look after and manage various tourist services. Special attention, therefore, will have to be given to the needs of manpower and personnel to be trained and rendered qualified for the various tourism professions. Special care has to be taken to ensure that there is expansion of

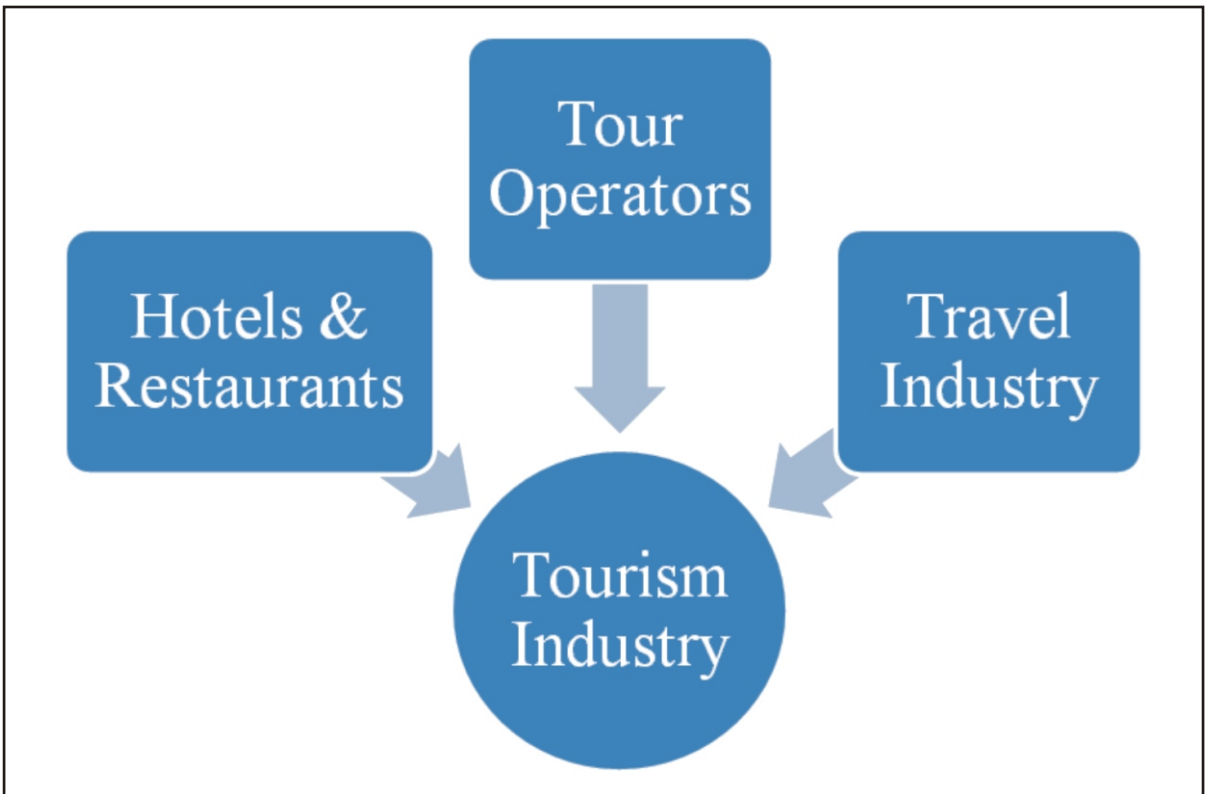
facilities and services. In case of a developing country, it will also be appropriate to study at this stage the volume of manpower required for activities complementary to accommodation industry in general and service sector particular. In spite of having a lot of tourism potentials India's share of global international tourism is relatively small in volume about 0.40% of world tourism. The greatest thrust to tourism will come through human resource development in our country. We would have skilled persons to handle this industry right from the level of waiters to executive level. While planning for human resources development, programmes should be established to screen and train prospective employees so that they could acquire both attitudinal as well as technical skills. Attitudinal characteristics contribute to an employee's success in tourism position and include pride, flexibility, adaptability and judgement. Technical skills required for equipment operation and maintenance, financial management, food and beverage, and personnel management etc. The success of every

organization is depends upon the quality of human resources it has. Highly skilled and trained manpower is the key to success of every organization.

Sub-segments of tourism industry

The tourism industry in India can be categorized under three major sub segments as depicted below

Figure 1: Sub-segments of Tourism industry



EMPLOYMENT PATTERN

As per the Planning Commission an investment of Rs.10 lakh creates 78 jobs in the Tourism sector while the same generates just 18 jobs in the Manufacturing and 45 in the Agriculture sector. Currently Travel & Tourism, being employment intensive, provides employment to approximately 31 million (both direct & indirect) people throughout the country and is one of the largest employers in the country, this number is

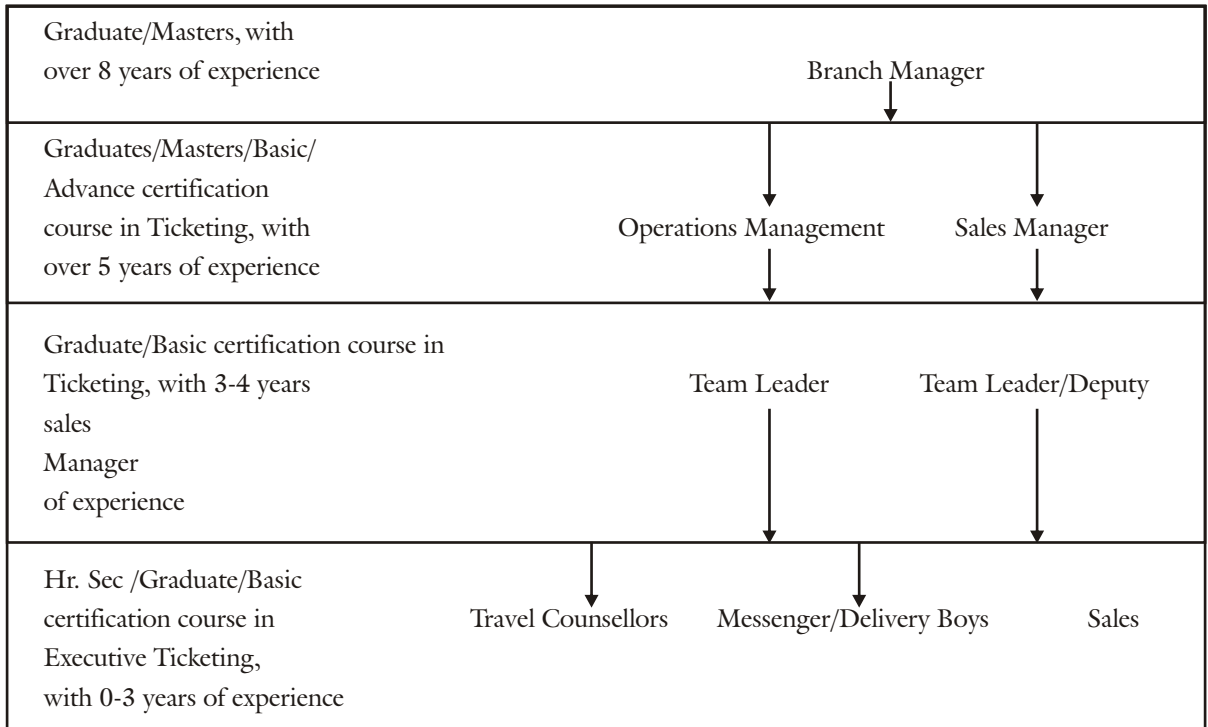
expected to rise to over 40 million by 2019 and over 43 million by 2022. The skill requirements and skill gaps are presented for the following major segments driving employment in the Tourism Industry:

1. Travel and Tour Operators
2. Hotels and Restaurants.

1. Travel and Tour Operators

Profile of persons employed in Travel and Tour Operators Segment

Figure 2.



• Skill Requirements and Gaps in Travel and Tour Operators Segment

The skill requirements and gaps across various functions and hierarchical/reporting 'levels' in Travel and Tour operators segment are shown in the Table 1.1

Function	Level	Skills required	Skill gaps
Operations	Branch Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ability to build relationship with the clients, especially institutional. Ensure all the customer complaints are efficiently handled. Ability to promote various travel and tour products of the company. Finalising tour itineraries. Establishing tie up with various downstream service providers. Ability to liaison with airline, hotels and local community. Leadership qualities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inadequate ability to handle customers (Individual and/or Corporate) with wide range of needs. Inadequate ability to handle complaints Lack of adequate IATA qualified personnel.

Function	Level	Skills required	Skill gaps
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to provide on the job training to the staff. • Rotation of staff and deciding their roles and responsibilities. • Hiring of staff depending upon the requirement. • Excellent communication skills. • Being presentable (as the role is customer facing and involves hospitality). • Inadequate ability to handle customers (Individual and/or Corporate) with wide range of needs. • Inadequate ability to handle complaints • Lack of adequate IATA qualified personnel. 	
Operations	Branch Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to oversee specific functions such as ticketing and passport. • Ability to check the quality of the work of Travel Counsellors as a monitoring mechanism. • Ability to resolve the issues faced by Travel Counsellors. • Ability to resolve the issues faced by the clients, which have been identified through the service calls given to the clients on a regular basis. • Ability to monitor pricing, ticketing and invoicing. • Ability to suggest ways to streamline the processes to ensure excellent service. • Ability to review processes and procedures to ensure maximum efficiency. • Ability to use the knowledge of ticketing, that he/she has gained over experience and/or thorough the courses (from IATA, UFTA etc.) that he/she has done. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inability to handle the situation during the crises time such as change in tickets, sudden changes in travel schedules. • Insufficient knowledge of ticketing • Lack of adequate presentation skills. • Insufficient people management skills. • Inadequate time management skills.

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Function	Level	Skills required	Skill gaps
	Team Leader	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to ensure that the tickets, visa, etc. are issued correctly and promptly by the team. • Ability to act as a solution provider for the team members when they are unable to handle a situation. • Knowledge on various aspects of ticketing. • Supervisory skill • Time management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The following skills are inadequate: • Time management • People management • Client handling
	Travel Counselors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to understand the needs of the customer and act as their travel advisor. • Ability to effectively interact with customers and prospects and convert enquiries to sales. • Knowledge on various travel routes both domestic and international. • Ability to work in Central Registration System (CRS) for booking, cancelling, splitting, reissue of tickets etc. • Knowledge on various formalities (passport, visa etc.) that the customer needs to comply with in case of outbound travels. • Adequate knowledge of hotels available at various locations in order to execute hotel bookings. • Proper follow up with the customers once the tickets are booked and to record their feedback. • Need to be proactive and smart, especially the travel counsellors holding positions at Unique Selling Points (USP) - locations at customer premises. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of adequate geographical knowledge (especially in case of international travels) leading to higher turnaround time. • Need for better time management • Lack of adequate procedural knowledge on Passports and Visas. • Need for adequate levels of politeness while handling calls. • Lack of knowledge of client focussed/ customized products. • Inability to maintain a cordial relationship with the corporate clients, leading to misunderstanding.

Function	Level	Skills required	Skill gaps
	Messenger / Delivery boys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Housekeeping • Ability to interact with customers at the time of collecting travel related documents / delivery of tickets / returning the documents. • Ability to interact with airline personnel while meeting them for getting endorsement. • Ability to interact with officials in passport and visa office, for document submission and other procedures. • Safe and on time delivery. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of communication skill • Inadequate behavioural skills such as being polite, etc.
Sales	Sales Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flair for language. • Ability to network with clients • Studying the market to identify potential clients. • Ability to build customised products for clients depending upon their requirements, making effective presentations, and winning the business. • Need to ensure that the expectations of customers are met. • Need to motivate the team leaders and the sales team. • Recommending areas for staff training. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate presentation skills • Inadequate client networking skills. • Insufficient creativity in designing new products based on the customer requirement.
	Deputy sales Manager/ Team leaders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Assisting sales staffs in solving general problems. • Good communication skill. • Need to motivate the sales team. • Meeting clients for feedback and understanding their requirements. • Reviewing travel history to understand the customer requirements • Carrying out market studies if need be. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate communication skill • Inadequate skills to identify potential clients. • Problem solving ability

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Function	Level	Skills required	Skill gaps
	Sales Executives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need to be self driven and result oriented. • Adequate team skills • Ability to conduct market studies. • Ability to meet potential clients and interact with them, explaining the products offered. • Good communication skills. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of adequate communication skills ability to converse in English, offer travel solutions • Inadequate skill to understand the client's requirements and respond accordingly. • Inadequate attitude to work in a team.

Source: Primary Research and Industry inputs

Travel and Tour operators might or might not have their own guides. Their functions might be restricted to preparation of itinerary for tours, and booking hotels and tickets accordingly. Such operators may even outsource 'guiding' in case of international tours by having a tie up with a similar company abroad. A representative of the local tour operator (sometimes, even the Branch Manager) will act as an 'escort' while

the representative from the company in abroad will be acting as a 'guide'. In case of domestic tourism, either the tourist prefers to visit places independently or a local guide will be hired/the tour operators will arrange for a guide to accompany the tourist. The guides in India are regulated by Government of India and they have to compulsorily obtain a license for functioning as a guide in any of the sites in India.

Function	Level	Skills required	Skill gaps
Services	Meet & Greet People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to interact with airport and ticket staff and coordinate travel • High energy level • Good Communication skills 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate energy level when interacting with customers.
	Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Good communication skills • Ability to manage customers • Verbal fluency and familiarity with languages • Ability to work in a team • Knowledge/awareness of the places, people and culture • The knowledge of general decorum. • Behavioural knowledge • Passion for travelling • Crises management • Willingness to work hard/long time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I n a d e q u a t e communication skills • Insufficient knowledge of tourist places. • Inadequate skills of crises management and time management.

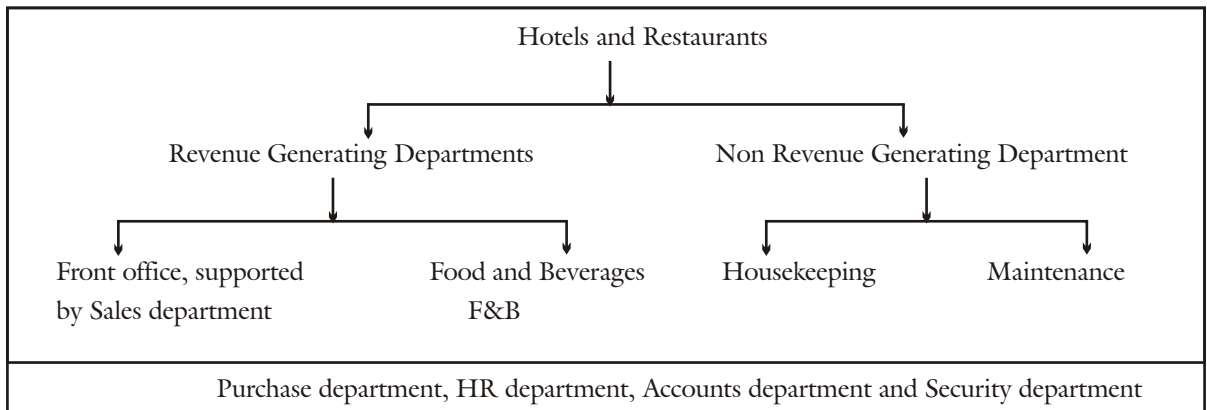
Function	Level	Skills required	Skill gaps
	Driver	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Special driving skills required while driving on mountainous/high risk regions. • Ensuring safety of passengers • Awareness on driving rules and regulations • Familiarity with routes • Ability to communicate and being sensitive to tourists • Awareness on various hotels and other locations in the travel route. • Knowledge of First Aid • Ability to attend minor problems in the vehicle e.g, changing vehicles tires, other minor mechanical problems, etc. • Understanding the traveller's requirements in terms of location preferences and acting accordingly. • Knowledge of English (in certain cases) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lack of adequate communication skills (including English when interacting with tourists such as international tourists) • Inability to understand traveller's requirement. • Unable to handle crisis situations. • Lack of awareness on driving rules and regulations. • Inadequate knowledge of safety norms • Inadequate knowledge of First Aid.

Source: Primary Research and Industry inputs

2. Hotels and Restaurants

Skill Requirements and Gaps in Hotels & Restaurants Segment

Figure 2.1: Overall structure of Hotels and Restaurants



Source: Primary Research

The skill requirements and skill gaps in the Front office are shown in the Table 2.2

Function	Level	Skills required	Skill gaps
Front Office	Front Office Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure smooth functioning of the department • Adequate problem solving skills • Good communication skills • Ability to maintain guest history and network with guests • Review room availability status and promote sales. • Co-ordination with F & B, Housekeeping etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate skills in interact with guests • Inadequate ability to proactively review occupancy and promote sales. • Inadequate ability to management team
	Front Office Assistant	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate communication skills • Ability to handle incoming and outgoing calls telephone etiquette. • Facilitating smooth client check-ins and check-outs • Receiving checkouts settlement and maintain a proper account for the same. • Knowledge on various hotel offerings, procedures, etc. • Familiarity with billing software 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate communication skills • Inadequate customer orientation • Lack of knowledge about various service offerings in the hotel. • Inadequate knowledge of billing software.
	Bell Captain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate supervisory skills • Scheduling the duties for bell boys • Maintaining arrival and departure registers. • Ability to ensure smooth check-ins and check-outs. • Ability to interact with guests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skill • Supervisory skill • Guest handling
	Bell Boys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognising the guests • Ability to read and write English • Ensuring the safety of luggage in the lobby. • Maintain personal hygiene 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate curtsy level • Lack of discipline • Insufficient communication skills
	Travel Desk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Booking air/hotel/train or cab based on the requirement of the guest. • Awareness about the local areas/site seeing/shopping areas and suggesting the same to guest based on their interest. • Communication skill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication skill • Inadequate awareness on the local areas

The Skill Requirements and Skill Gaps in Food and Beverage Services are shown in the Table 2.3

Function	Level	Skills required	Skill gaps
F&B - Services	Senior Captain/ Captain	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supervisory skills • Ability to manage F&B Inventory • Basic knowledge of cuisines • Good communication skills • Ability to interact with guests • Ability to manage team of stewards • Ability to manage customer complaints 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate people management skills • Inadequate skills in handling customer complaints
	Restaurant Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to minimise daily complaints • Interacting with the guest and explaining the speciality of cuisines • Ability to manage the shift • Monitoring standards of facilities • Co-ordination with other departments • Ability to organise parties & functions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate skill in people management. • Insufficient marketing and communication skills.
	Beverages Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to manage the operation of bars, cafeteria services, etc. • Co-ordination with all the other departments • Ability to organise parties and functions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Guest handling in bars • Inadequate ability to address problems/complaints. • Inadequate communication skills
	Waiter/ Waitress /Service staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to take orders and serve food in a professional and courteous manner • Ensuring cleanliness • Maintain customer relationship 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient servicing skills • Inadequate communication skills
	Bartenders	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to converse with guest to understand their requirements • Management of production of cocktails, mocktails, etc. • Inventory management of all the sprits, soft drinks, etc. • Billing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Poor customer orientation • Inadequate knowledge of production of cocktails, mocktails etc. • Inadequate communication skills
	Line Cook	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Knowledge on cuisiness • Ability to prepare menu items • Ensuring hygiene and cleanliness • Familiarity with all kitchen equipments • Communication skills • Time management 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Insufficient knowledge on cuisines • Time management

Function	Level	Skills required	Skill gaps
	Commis	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic Culinary skills • Hygiene knowledge • Ability to assist line cook 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inadequate culinary skills • Inadequate knowledge of hygiene

Source: Primary Research and Industry inputs

The Skill Requirements in Housekeeping and Maintenance are shown in the Table 2.4

Function	Level	Skills required
Housekeeping	Executive - Housekeeping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure smooth functioning of the department (such as housekeeping) • People management skills • Ability to groom staff • Knowledge of using housekeeping equipments, vacuum cleaning machines, laundry, etc. • Ability to interact with guests
	Supervisors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequate supervisory skills • Ability to plan and allocate work • Reporting, daily briefing the staff • Complaint handling • Ability to maintain a polite and cheerful appearance/personage.
Laundry	Laundry Manager	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure smooth functioning of washing units • Knowledge on chemical mixing and Cleaning • Ability to work in cleaning equipments
Maintenance	Chief Engineer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure proper functioning of all equipments • Ability to assist the management in planning investments • Engineering administration • Inventory management of spare parts • Ability to handle crises in machinery related areas/power supply/generator sets
	Assistants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Technical skills in relevant areas, such as Plumbing, Carpentry, Painting, electricians etc.

Source: Primary Research and Industry inputs

3. CURRENT SKILL DEVELOPMENT INITIATIVES IN THE TOURISM INDUSTRY

The Government, through the Ministry of Tourism, is engaged in several activities for skill development. The

Government is engaged in making available trained human resource through its network of Institutes of Hotel Management and Indian Institutes of Tourism and Travel Management.

3.1. NCHMCT, IHM, FCI programmes

The Government established the National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT) in the year 1982. The NCHMCT and its affiliate institutes impart MSc programmes in Hospitality, Diploma, and Certificate Courses. There are about 41 Institutes of Hotel Management (IHMs) and 5 Food Craft Institutes (FCIs) in the country offering such courses. The PG, Diploma, and Certificate Courses are offered in Hospitality Administration, Accommodation operation and management, Dietetics and Hospital Food Service, Craftmanship Course in Food Production, Hotel and Catering Management etc. The NCHMCT through IHMs and FCIs also offers 3/6 month certificate courses in the following

areas:

- Food Production
- F&B
- 3 month Crafts Courses.

3.2. CAPACITY BUILDING FOR SERVICE PROVIDERS

There are a large number of persons who are engaged in the unorganised sector such as small hotels, roadside eating places, ticketing/ travel agencies, dhabas, etc. There is also a segment of tourism service providers who are engaged in other professions but come in contact with the tourist. These persons are staff at bus/ railway stations, police personnel, immigration staff at airports, coolies, taxi/ coach drivers, staff at monuments, guides etc. The tourists come into contact with various service providers and it is this experience they have, while interacting, that governs their experience of India as a tourist destination.

It was therefore felt necessary that this large number of service providers be given certain inputs which can improve their behavior and service levels.

Therefore a Scheme was formulated wherein these service providers in the unorganized sector are given some inputs so as to upgrade their behavior and service skills. This Scheme is the '*Capacity Building for Service Providers (CBSP)*'.

Some of the important areas being covered under the training include health & personal hygiene, cleanliness, basic service techniques, cooking techniques, garbage disposal, etiquette and basic manners, basic nutrition values, etc. Energy saving and basic tourism awareness, communication skills, behavior skills, first aid, client handling and behavioural skills, etc. are also covered in the training programmes. The duration of the course ranges from 4 days to 6 days.

3.3. INDIAN INSTITUTES OF TOURISM AND TRAVEL MANAGEMENT (IITTM)

The Indian Institute of Tourism and Travel Management (IITTM), an autonomous organisation of the Ministry of Tourism, Government of India, is one of the premier institutes in the country offering education, training, research and consultancy in sustainable management of tourism, travel and allied sectors. The IITTM came into being on 1983 with its registration at New Delhi. The IITTM has its headquarters at Gwalior (set up in 1992) with centres at Bhubaneswar (set up in 1996) and Noida. In the year 2004, the National Institute of Water Sports (NIWS), Goa was also incorporated in the IITTM. It has been decided to set up another centre of the IITTM at Nellore in Andhra Pradesh. The management of the IITTM vests in its Board of Governors having the Union Minister for Tourism as Chairperson. This multi-campus Institute offers various programmes in tourism and related fields, services and international business along with various extension programmes for capacity building. It offer various programmes in Ticketing, Cargo management and Tour operations,

International Tourism, Tourism-Hospitality, Adventure/MICE etc.

4. Conclusion

The study analyses the Human Resource skills gaps in the Tourism industry and also identifies the required skills. It also analyses the role of Government in setting up the various institutions which providing the various training and education programmes in the Tourism field. The Ministry of Tourism has also formulated a scheme for Financial Assistance to IHMs, FCIs, IITTM, ITIs, Polytechnics, Institutes, Vocational Schools, etc. for the setting up and upgradation of Institutes of Hotel Management & Catering Technology & Applied Nutrition (IHMs), Food Craft Institutes (FCIs) in the country. *The Government/Ministry of Tourism has taken several initiatives to build skills in the Tourism sector.*

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