

# Empirical Examination of Attributes in Hospitality Education Policy

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## Abstract

Hospitality and tourism industry is expanding in a very rapid pace in India creating lots of opportunities for employment. With the ever-increasing need of trained and efficient manpower in these industries, there is an immediate need of a modified, reformed and upto date industry-specific academic curriculum so that it can meet the current and future demand. The industry is already plagued with problems like skill gap, high attrition, and hectic working hours. As the union government launched New Education Policy (NEP) in 2020 to address the major challenges and shortcomings in existing education policy, it is time for the hospitality and tourism industries to identify the gaps and major problem areas with reference to both academic points of view and industry perspectives and help modify the existing curriculum as per the need and derive maximum from the new education policy. This research paper is an attempt to find out the areas having major gaps in teaching and learning in respect of hospitality and tourism industries according to the New Education Policy 2020 compared to the earlier one, and to focus on the salient features of NEP 2020.

**Keywords:** Hospitality Education, New Education Policy (NEP), Skill Gap, Industry-specific requirements, teaching and learning.

## Introduction

Hospitality industry is a part of service sector, and it plays an important role in the economy of a country. The industry is growing at a great pace all over the globe. India having rich heritage, unique culture and diverse geography attracts tourism, ultimately increasing hospitality opportunities inside the country. The tourism industry not only drives growth, but it also raises people's quality of life by generating a wide range of large-scale jobs.

The direct contribution of Indian hotel industry to the country's GDP is estimated to touch \$1 Tn by 2047 driven by a significant jump in domestic tourist visits and international arrivals. The direct contribution of the hotel industry to GDP was \$40 Bn in 2022 and is expected to reach \$68 Bn by 2027.

<sup>i</sup>In tourism, India ranks 6th according to World Travel and Tourism Council in terms of Travel and Tourism total contribution to GDP in 2021. Travel and Tourism contributed 5.8% to GDP and the sector created 32.1 million jobs, which is equivalent to 6.9% of total jobs in 2021. <sup>ii</sup>

Tourism and hospitality are among the highest employment & generating sectors in India and has been generating a major chunk of foreign exchange earnings. The sector has provided 79.86 million of direct and indirect jobs in year 2019-20 as per 3<sup>rd</sup> tourism satellite account. <sup>iii</sup>

Title	2017-18	2018-19	2019-20
Share in jobs (in %)	14.78	14.87	15.34
Direct (%)	6.44	6.48	6.48
Indirect (%)	6.48	8.39	8.65
Direct + Indirect jobs due to tourism (in million numbers)	72.69	75.85	79.86

**Table 1: Percentage of jobs shared by tourism sector in India <sup>iv</sup>**

Tourism sector is projected to contribute US\$ 250 billion to the country's GDP by 2030, generating employment for 137 million individuals. <sup>v</sup> There is an urgent need to create efficient hospitality management programs including academic programs tailored to these needs because of hospitality sector's huge potential of expansion. This enhanced academic and industry-specific programs are to be focused on workforce which needs to be sufficiently trained, well-groomed and equipped with mannerism demanded by the industries to satisfy both current and future expectations. India as a country with highest population is severely facing a huge skill gap leading to unemployment. Till recently, the education policies of Indian government have been to ensure effective measures to make education available and affordable for everyone. The previous education policies had no provisions for skill development and employment generation at mass level. Till recent past hospitality management as a specialisation of educational qualification was somehow either neglected or not given due importance by the authority and the focus of the youths was mainly on traditional courses on offer. Now due to growing importance of the tourism and hospitality industry in terms of economy and employment generation, the authority realised the huge potential of these sectors and came out with specific and focused measures through NEP2020 creating educational qualifications in these areas more attractive. The NEP2020 has put the ball on the court of the industry to find out the gaps and bring in necessary reforms aligned with the NEP 2020 to harvest the fullest benefits. This study attempts to measures the effectiveness and success of the NEP2020 with its modified curriculum and structures of teaching and learning of hospitality management vis the old curriculum through a questionnaire survey among the present students of hospitality management and those graduated under the old curriculum.

### Literature Review

Hospitality education is a field which has been neglected in terms of research in comparison with the other fields, and this is due to lack of higher education in this sector. This is one of the most dynamic industries which goes through the continuous process of change in terms of service, standards, technology etc. A detailed study was done by ministry of tourism, government of India about skill gaps in hospitality sector under the title '**study on employment level and skill gap analysis in hospitality and allied sector**'.<sup>vi</sup>

The report emphasises the lack of skilled labourers (labours) in both the academic and practical domains. Even the new recruits from the premium Institute of Hospitality Management (IHM), deficiency in practical training is glaringly visible. It also revealed that there is high attrition rate amongst the new recruits due to low entry level pay scale and about 20-25% of the students prefer to drop the course to pursue another course. There are number of suggestions made in the study report and one of such suggestions provided in the report was "to start/introduce short-term courses with a focus to develop desired skills and abilities required for the industry instead of having long duration degree courses. It was felt more important and relevant to include soft skills, grooming, developing right aptitude etc in the curriculum rather than lots of not-so-useful theoretical inputs, that is, to increase skill-based learnings in the curriculum.

Suprabha K.R (2017)<sup>vii</sup>, in his study found that the Indian tourism is seasonal, and this industry is seen as a second option in terms of career. In the sample studied in this research, there were up to 22.84% of unfilled positions overall. Apart from this up to 60.30% of employers feel there are skills gaps in the new recruits, and many of them also claimed that their employees lack the requisite management, communication, and customer service abilities.

Of all the opportunities for skill development, communication was deemed to be the most important. Employees also lacked in job-specific tasks, management skills, and accounting skills.

Jung-in (2022)<sup>viii</sup> in his research studied the factors affecting hospitality and tourism students' satisfaction and their intention to stay in the program. During the research it was found that the curriculum of hospitality and tourism management draws the commitment from the undergraduate students on the areas of work life, self-efficacy, and career goals whereas the same curriculum fails to attract students for master's degree due to not-so-attractive pay packages and that affect them negatively to continue or stay in the program.

Chabbra M (2022)<sup>ix</sup> enumerates the need for reform of the hospitality education programs as the industry is changing rapidly and the curriculum must incorporate these developments to remain updated and relevant. He has suggested some measures for this, and he strongly felt that the curriculum must be developed with valuable industry inputs.

- i.) Industry experts should be deputed to educational institutes to bring in real life issues to the classrooms.
- ii.) There should be collaboration with foreign institutes of repute.
- iii.) Faculty development programmes on regular basis should be encouraged to keep the faculty members updated and motivated.

Singh D. (2017)<sup>x</sup> researcher attempts to find out the reasons why hotel industry in India is facing this issue of talent shortages and what are the possible effects of it on the industry which might slow or hold the growth of industry as forecasted. He studied 10 variables and came out with 2 most important factors, as mentioned below:

Factor 1: Low level of coordination amongst the hospitality staffs, low rate of guest arrival or occupancy rate in the hotel, low satisfaction of guest and all these leading to decrease in the market image.

Factor 2: Due to lower business volumes the organizational performance takes a dip and this leads to lower motivational level amongst the staffs, poor service level, low productivity, wastage of time and finally making financial losses by the business.

### **The Research Problem/ Gap**

In the literature review it is found that there exists a gap between the industry requirement and hospitality education program.<sup>xi</sup> Also some problems exist like shortage of skilled labour, high attrition rate from course as well as the industry. The problem which needs to be addressed by this research is to find out the areas where the hospitality education is lacking in views of students, and how it can be improved with the implementation of NEP.

### **Research Objectives:**

- To measure the influencing factor for the hospitality students towards the industry.
- To examine the provisions and the level of effectiveness the new education policy

### **Research Methodology**

The study is exploratory in nature. Data is collected mainly from primary sources. Secondary sources are also referred to understand the research gap well. A questionnaire of 40 questions was prepared. Out of 40 questions 6 questions were demographic questions and the rest 34 questions revolved around the perception, satisfaction level and awareness of the respondents about the NEP and its implications in the study of hospitality as a professional course.

**Structured Schedule** - The 40 questions under three different categories (excluding demographic questions) have been designed. Sample Instrument is Structured Schedule, Sample Size is 500 Approximately, sampling from a population following Stratified Random Sampling. The research would be based on categorical analysis followed by description / interpretation of each analysis. Generally, the Cronbach alpha and reliability test are widely accepted in descriptive research. Cronbach's alpha is systematically used in the social sciences to estimate internal consistency. Cronbach's alpha is the most common measure of internal consistency ("reliability"). It is mostly used when there are multiple Likert questions in a survey/questionnaire that form a scale. Cronbach's alpha has

been described as ‘one of the most important and pervasive statistics in research involving test construction and use’ (Cortina, 1993, p. 98) to the extent that its use in research with multiple-item measurements is considered routine (Schmitt, 1996, p. 350). Alpha is commonly reported for the development of scales intended to measure attitudes and other effective constructs, understanding that Cronbach’s alpha as an indicator of instrument quality.<sup>xii</sup>

### **Test Results of Reliability Statistics**

<b>Reliability Statistics</b>		
Cronbach's Alpha	Cronbach's Alpha Based on Standardized Items	N of Items
0.877	0.891	34

**Table 2: Reliability statistics Value**

Out of Cronbach’s reliability test for 34 questions, further analysis is performed on 34 questions. The questionnaire was floated amongst the respondents and 519 responses were received. Type of sample was stratified random sample. Hospitality students from government colleges as well as private colleges have responded.

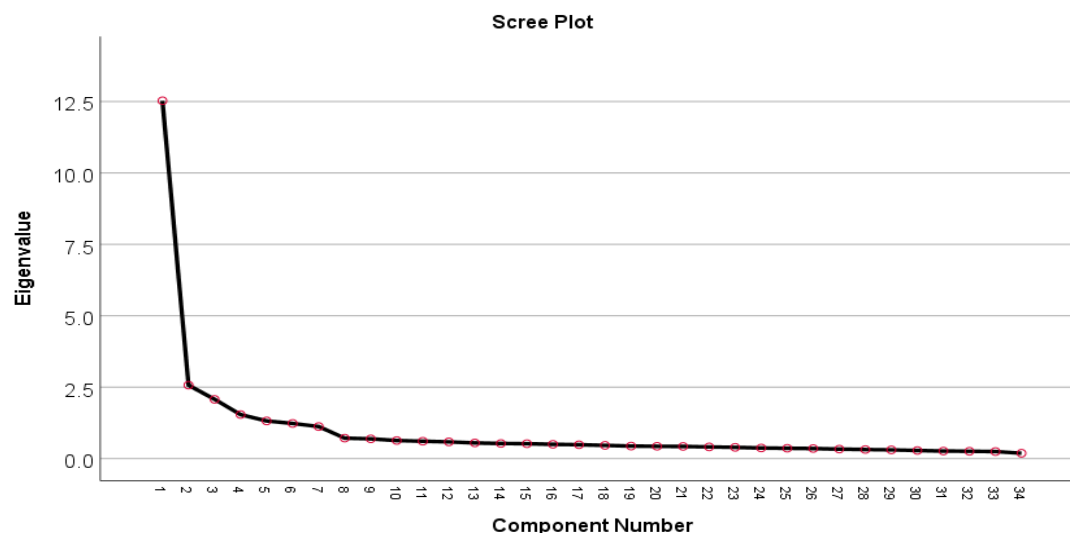
### **Analysis**

**Factor Analysis:** The factor analysis is validated after comparing the value which has been obtained from KMO and Bartlett’s Test of Sphericity. Researcher has obtained the output value of more than 0.9 in this test which depicts the set of variables are going to be an excellent result to ascertain the viability of the data for factorisation. Each measure serves a distinct purpose in evaluating the suitability of the dataset.<sup>xiii</sup>

<b>KMO and Bartlett's Test</b>		
Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin Measure of Sampling Adequacy.		.945
Bartlett's Test of Sphericity	Approx. Chi-Square	9586.268
	df	561
	Sig.	.000

**Table 3: KMO and Bartlett’s Test Value**

The below mentioned components which have come out from factor analysis are the outcome of Eigen value which is more than 0.5. In the literature review it has been identified that eigen value must have the value above 0.5. The derived factorization is mentioned below along with output of eigenvalue which defines the perfect combination of common factors among prescribed structured schedule.



Graph 1: Eigenvalue and component graph

Rotated Component Matrix<sup>a</sup>

	Components				
Statements (from structured schedule)	Factor 1 - Degree of awareness pertaining to academic structure	Factor 2 - Perception towards hospitality readiness	Factor 3 - Perception focus of education placement towards industry	Factor 4 - Attributes of respondents towards industry	Factor 5 - Perception towards industry expectations from prospect candidate
The infrastructure of your organization is satisfactory	.690				
Internship shows a glimpse about the industry to the students.	.652				
The curriculum of hospitality/ tourism education is updated as per today's market need.	.650				
To build a career in hospitality communication skill is important.	.645				

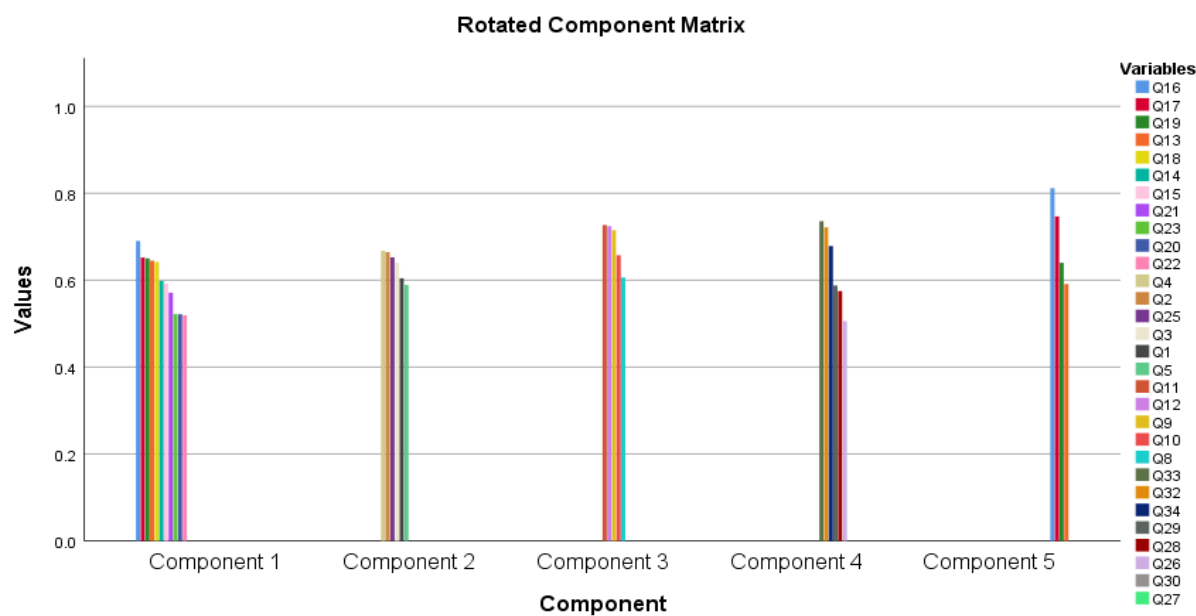
As a future hospitality professional, you are open to work on public holidays and festivals.	.642				
Internship is an important element of hospitality curriculum.	.598				
Hospitality subjects should be introduced from school to develop interest and create awareness among the students.	.592				
Practical learning is of great importance in hospitality education.	.571				
Medium of teaching in hospitality should also focus on vernacular languages.	.522				
The course is helping you to develop skills along with knowledge.	.668				
Having any skill is very essential for getting a job	.664				
More industrial exposure should be incorporated in the curriculum of hospitality education	.652				
You are satisfied after joining the hospitality course	.640				

Placement after pursuing hospitality education is easy.		.604			
Hospitality education is a more about practical knowledge.		.589			
It is essential for a hospitality student to attend classes on regular basis			.727		
Grooming is essential for building career in hospitality.			.724		
As a student one should focus in all the departments to build a successful career in hospitality sector			.715		
Hospitality education is a job-oriented course			.657		
The initial days of career in hospitality industry is challenging.			.606		
The initial salary after placement is satisfactory.				.736	
Pursuing hospitality education brings positive changes in the personality of a student.				.722	
Working hours in the hospitality sector is hectic.				.678	

Focusing more on hospitality education can help in reducing unemployment.				.588	
In comparison with other educational fields there is less awareness about the hospitality education among the people of India.				.575	
There is a need of four-year graduation programme in hospitality education.				.506	
Hospitality education helps in skill development of a student.					.812
In hospitality education there should be choice based credit (Elective subjects)system option to gain knowledge of others fields also.					.747
The working hours of hospitality professional is fixed and balanced.					.640
Balancing the personal and professional life is easy for a hospitality professional					.591

Table 4: Rotated Component matrix





**Graph 2: Component and Eigen value graph**

### Results and Interpretations

The analysis of approximately 500 data reveals that the 34 variables are quite significant and appropriate for identifying the various components. Based on outcome of analysis, 5 unique components have been identified, namely:

**Factor 1 -Degree of awareness pertaining to academic structure:** This structure covered the awareness and satisfaction of the students in terms of their curriculum, infrastructure, and their approach towards the preparedness of the industry. Variables like satisfaction towards the infrastructure, and curriculum were placed in this factor. The other variable was about perception and awareness towards the industry needs, like, communication skill, practical learnings, flexibility towards the working schedule. This factor gives an idea about the awareness the students are having towards the industry and the curriculum they are studying and whether the curriculum is meeting the need of the industry or not in the views of students.

**Factor 2- Perception towards focus of hospitality education towards placement readiness:** The variables placed under this factor are about the skill development, industrial exposure, and their perception regarding the placements after completing the course. The respondents are aware that the hospitality education is more about practical knowledge and skill development plays a major role in it. The respondents are satisfied after joining the course and the have a positive hope towards their placement.

**Factor 3 – Attributes essentials for the industry:** The variables like attendance, grooming, knowledge and their perception about the job is placed under this factor. The factor depicts that how much the respondents are aware the factors that are important for the placement.

**Factor 4 - Perception towards industry expectations from prospect candidate:** The variables regarding the industry culture and the impact of hospitality in society were placed in this. Perception towards industry expectations from prospect candidate is measured. Salary, working hours, change in personality after pursuing the course, unemployment and hospitality education were parts of this factor.

**Factor 5 - Impact of skill development in work culture:** Impact of skill development in work culture. The work culture and developed skilled of prospects candidates has a unique demand in the industry. The analysis reveals that four-year education plan gives more focus in developing the skill in terms of performing in industry.

## Conclusions

The existing education policy and the new education policy are aiming towards proficiency in industry as well as academic strengthening. However, the research says there must be a wide scope of more skill development and industry suitability. To better understand the perception of the students towards the industry 5 factors were discovered related to academic structure, placement readiness, attributes, industry expectations and skill development. New education policy should include these factors while its implementation. Industry performance has a direct influence from education policy. The hospitality education policy is built upon growth of prospective students pertaining to maximum degree of fitment in the industry

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