

# A Study of Hospitality Students' Perception towards the Industry

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**Abstract:-** The hospitality sector is one of the fastest growing industries and the success of the hospitality industry is depend on the competent manpower. Hospitality students represent the future of the industry and play a crucial role in its continued success. As such, it is important to understand the perceptions and attitudes of hospitality students towards the hospitality industry. This research paper primary aims to investigate the perception of hospitality students towards the hospitality industry in the National Capital Region (NCR) of India. The second aim of this research to identify the relation of nature of work, social status and pay & benefits with commitment to the hospitality industry. A structured questionnaire was used to collect the data from the students studying in different institutes in National Capital Region of India. Descriptive statistics and Pearson correlation were used to analysis the data. Students have a generally positive perception of the hospitality industry but have concerns about work-life balance, long hours, and stressful work conditions. Social status correlates positively with commitment to the industry, and compensation and benefits influence students' perception. However, there are doubts about long-term commitment and future prospects. Perceptions are shaped by societal beliefs, parental expectations, and personal experiences. The findings have important implications for the industry in terms of addressing concerns and improving the perception of students towards the industry.

**Keywords:-** Students, Perception, Hospitality Industry, Education, Perception.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry is a vital component of the global economy and is constantly evolving to meet the changing needs of consumers. It is an industry that has a significant impact on the growth of the economy, the creation of jobs, and the development of local communities. In recent years, the hospitality industry in India has witnessed significant growth, and it is expected to continue to grow in the future. According to IBEF report, India's tourism and hospitality industry is a significant contributor to the country's economy, with a total contribution of 6.8% of the total GDP in 2019, amounting to Rs. 1,368,100 crore (US\$ 194.30 billion). The sector also accounts for 8% of the total employment in India, providing 39 million jobs in 2020. According to the Ministry of Tourism, the industry contributed INR 16.91 trillion (USD 233 billion) to the GDP

in 2020. The Indian travel market is expected to reach US\$ 125 billion by 2027, with the airline travel market estimated at ~US\$ 20 billion and the hotel market at ~US\$ 32 billion in 2027 (IBEF, 2022). The Indian hotel market is projected to reach ~US\$ 52 billion by 2027, driven by the growing demand from travellers and sustained efforts of travel agents to boost the market (IBEF, 2022). By 2028, international tourist arrivals are expected to reach 30.5 billion and generate revenue over US\$ 59 billion, with domestic tourists expected to drive the growth, post-pandemic. In August 2022, foreign tourist arrivals in India were 498,243 with a positive growth rate of 437.3% as compared to August 2021 (IBEF, 2022). Bangladesh had the highest percentage share of foreign tourist arrivals in India during August 2022 (24.89%), followed by the USA (16.93%), UK (10.74%), Australia (3.77%), and Canada (3.44%).

The hospitality industry has been recognized as a crucial economic sector that generates significant employment opportunities worldwide. However, studies have reported a shortage of qualified employees, indicating a negative perception towards the industry (Richardson, 2008; Dilbag & Amandeep, 2017).

As the NCR of India is a significant hub for the hospitality industry, with numerous hotels, resorts, and restaurants. Hospitality students in this region have a unique opportunity to learn and grow in a diverse and challenging environment. Hospitality students represent the future of the industry and play a crucial role in its continued success. As such, understanding students' perceptions towards the industry is essential to address the challenges faced by the industry, attract and retain skilled employees and promote a positive image of the industry among potential future employees.

### ➤ Objectives

This research paper primary aims to explore the perception of hospitality students towards the hospitality industry in the National Capital Region (NCR) of India. The second aim of this research to identify the relation of nature of work, social status and pay & benefits with commitment to the hospitality industry.

### ➤ *Hypotheses*

The below-cited hypotheses have been developed for this study:

H1: There is a positive relation between nature of work and commitment to the hospitality industry.

H2: There is a positive relation between social status and commitment to the hospitality industry.

H3: There is a positive relation between pay & benefits and commitment to the hospitality industry.

## II. LITERATURE REVIEW

The hospitality industry is one of the fastest-growing industries worldwide, and it contributes significantly to the global economy. However, despite the industry's potential for career growth and job opportunities, there is a growing concern about the perception of hospitality students towards the industry. Studies have shown that a significant proportion of hospitality students are not interested in pursuing a career in the industry. This literature review examines the perception of hospitality students towards the industry and the factors that influence their career decisions.

**Richardson (2008)** found that many Australian hospitality students were not interested in working in the industry due to factors such as unattractive jobs, low pay, low-status careers, physically repetitive jobs, inadequate opportunities for involvement and advancement, lengthy working hours, and being precise by managers. **Maxwell et al. (2010)** discovered that experiences in the hospitality sector decreased the possibility of joining the industry as a future career. Students who were interested in pursuing a career in the industry preferred challenging jobs and fair employers who provide career growth systems and secure jobs that could improve retention.

However, some studies have found positive attitudes towards working in the hospitality sector. **Tracy Lu and Howard Adler (2009)** reported that most Chinese undergraduate students expressed a desire to work in the industry due to high salaries, exciting jobs, and opportunities for personal development. In **Dilbag and Amandeep's (2017)** study, students perceived hotel management courses positively, leading to an increase in their awareness of the hotel management course. Moreover, various studies have found that exposure to the industry can change students' perceptions. **Amit Datta and Babita Jha (2015)** found that students' attitudes toward the industry changed from positive to negative after industrial exposure due to stress and factors such as low salary, lengthy working hours, and lower social status. **Anoop Kumar et al. (2014)** found that students' perceptions changed as they progressed to study and after industrial exposure, and fewer students intended to join the hospitality sector as a career.

Gender differences in perception towards the hospitality sector were explored in **Anoop Kumar et al.'s (2015)** study, which found that females did not have a favorable attitude towards pay and progress opportunities offered by the industry. **Le et al. (2018)** identified and investigated factors influencing tertiary students' perceptions

towards hospitality careers in the Vietnamese context. They found that HE respondents were less positive and less committed to a career in the hospitality sector than VET college respondents. In **Walmsley et al.'s (2020)** study, only a small number of students found working in the hospitality industry appealing. Employer interviews supported the idea of an 'ignorance barrier' for young people looking for work in the hospitality sector. Recently, **Irada Yusila Yunus et al. (2021)** investigated students' perceptions towards tourism and hospitality sectors using a self-administered questionnaire. The results identified three dimensions: awareness, employability, and value.

In conclusion, research has found that hospitality students have mixed perceptions towards working in the industry, with some students having positive attitudes due to high salaries, exciting jobs, and opportunities for personal development. However, others have negative perceptions due to factors such as unattractive jobs, low pay, low-status careers, and lengthy working hours. Exposure to the industry can also change students' perceptions, and gender differences can influence their perception of pay and progress opportunities.

## III. METHODOLOGY

In order to achieve the study aim, a quantitative research method was employed. The study population consists of hospitality students enrolled in various universities and colleges in the NCR region. A sample size of 650 students was collected using a convenience sampling technique.

Data collection was done through a structured questionnaire that consisted of close-ended questions. The first section was constructed to get the demographic profile of the respondents. The second section was constructed on four parameters. It consisted of questions related to students' perception of the hospitality industry. These parameters were "nature of work," "social status," "pay and benefits," and "commitment to the hospitality industry;" The statements under these four parameters recorded on a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree to strongly disagree). The questionnaire was designed based on the literature review and previous studies conducted in this area.

The data collected was analyzed using descriptive statistics, such as frequency distributions, means, and standard deviations. The data was also analyzed using inferential statistics, such as correlation tests, to identify significant relation between variables. The Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) software was used for data analysis.

## IV. RESULTS AND DISCUSSIONS

### A. Demographic profile of respondents

The majority of the respondents were male (77.2%) and unmarried (93.1%). About 57.2% of the students came from a rural background, while 42.8% were from urban areas. Family annual income of up to 3 lakhs was reported

by 56.3% of respondents. In terms of the programme being pursued, the highest percentage was BHM/BHMCT (48.0%), followed by B.Sc. H&HA (28.6%). Most of the respondents were pursuing their studies in private universities (31.4%).

The majority of the respondents (88.0%) preferred to be a part of this study. Only a few students (24.2%) reported that they have relatives/parents associated with the hospitality sector.

<i>Variables</i>		<i>Frequenc y</i>	<i>Percentag e</i>
<i>Gender</i>	Male	502	77.2
	Female	148	22.8
<i>Marital Status</i>	Married	33	5.1
	Unmarried	605	93.1
	Not prefer to say	12	1.8
<i>Your Background</i>	Rural	372	57.2
	Urban	278	42.8
<i>Family Annual Income</i>	Up to 3 Lakhs	366	56.3
	3-6 Lakhs	123	18.9
	6-10 Lakhs	89	13.7
	Above 10 Lakhs	72	11.1
<i>Programme Pursuing</i>	B.Sc. H&HA	186	28.6
	BHM/BHMCT	312	48.0
	M.Sc. H&HA	24	3.7
	MHM/MHMC T	99	15.2
	B. Voc.	29	4.5
<i>Year of Study</i>	First-year	182	28.0
	Second year	201	30.9
	Third year	203	31.2
	Fourth-year	64	9.8
<i>Institute you are studying</i>	Central University	58	8.9
	State University	163	25.1
	Private University	204	31.4
	Deemed University	0	0
	Central IHM	56	8.6
	State IHM	86	13.2
	Private IHM	83	12.8
<i>The preferred choice of the study</i>	Yes	572	88.0
	No	78	12.0
<i>Relatives/parents associated with the Hospitality sector</i>	Yes	157	24.2
	No	493	75.8

## *B. Descriptive Statistics*

### ➤ *Nature of Work*

Students have a positive perception of the hospitality industry in terms of its interesting and challenging nature of work, skilled employment opportunities, opportunities for learning something new every day, and its open nature to people from all walks of life. However, there are concerns about the adverse impact of the nature of work on family life, long working hours, and stressful work conditions in the hospitality industry. Students also feel that working in the hospitality industry provides opportunities to interact with celebrities and foreigners, which can be seen as a positive aspect by some students. Overall, the perception of students towards the hospitality industry is generally positive, but there are also concerns about certain aspects of the industry that need to be addressed.

### ➤ *Social Status*

Family and friends of the students are proud of them for choosing the hospitality industry as their profession, which suggests a positive perception of the industry in their social circle. The belief that working in the hospitality industry is a respected and prestigious occupation is prevalent in Indian society, which might influence the students' perception of their chosen profession. However, there is also a prevalent belief in Indian society that individuals studying hospitality will end up working as waiters or waitresses, which could create a negative perception of the industry among the students. The students do not feel that individuals working in the hospitality sector are undervalued in society, indicating a positive perception of their profession. It is perceived that parents are unlikely to want their children to marry someone who is in the hospitality sector, which might affect the students' career choices and their perception of the industry. Despite the potential societal pressure, the students themselves are proud to tell their friends and family about their job in the hospitality sector, which indicates a positive self-perception of their profession. The students also believe that the hospitality industry has a positive impact on society, as it helps in poverty elimination, zero hunger, and well-being, which could further enhance their perception of the industry.

Overall, the responses suggest that the perception of the hospitality industry among the students might be influenced by societal beliefs and parental expectations, but the students themselves have a positive perception of their profession.

### ➤ *Pay & Benefits*

It can be inferred that the perception of hospitality students towards the hospitality industry may be influenced by their views on pay and benefits. The students may feel that the industry does not provide adequate compensation to support a satisfactory standard of living, and that the perks and benefits offered are insufficient. They may also value the provision of meals during work as an important component of the overall compensation package. Therefore, the perception of the hospitality industry by students may be

negatively impacted by their perception of the pay and benefits offered in the industry.

**Table 1: Descriptive Statistics**

<i>Variables</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>S.D.</i>
<b><i>Nature of Work</i></b>		
Jobs in the hospitality sector are interesting and challenging to me	4.4062	.75380
The majority of employments in the hospitality sector are skilled	4.1354	.87956
Hospitality jobs allow me to experience a sense of independence and liberty	3.7138	1.08837
Jobs in hospitality are stressful	3.8108	1.07049
Hours of working in the hospitality industry are excessively long	3.9769	1.19362
It's truly wonderful to interact with celebrities and foreigners when working in the hospitality sector	4.1385	.97230
The nature of work in the Hospitality sector has an adverse impact on the family life of workers	3.8815	1.11156
Hospitality jobs offer opportunities for learning something new every day	4.0985	.90342
Hospitality industry is open for jobs to people from all walks of life	4.0123	.95661
<b><i>Social Status</i></b>		
My family and friends are proud on my profession in Hospitality sector	3.7923	1.08283
In Indian society, working in the Hospitality industry is considered a respected and prestigious occupation	3.7277	1.17420
There is a prevalent belief in Indian society that individuals studying Hospitality will work as waiters or waitresses	4.0123	1.10462
I feel that individuals who work in the hospitality sector are undervalued in society	3.8046	1.18815
Parents are unlikely to want their daughters or sons to marry who's in the hospitality sector	3.4646	1.12383
I am proud to tell my friends and family about my job in the hospitality sector	3.9108	.97648
Hospitality industry helps in poverty elimination, zero hunger and well being	3.7692	1.03661
<b><i>Pay &amp; benefits</i></b>		
In my opinion, the salary for many roles in the hospitality sector is inadequate to support a satisfactory standard of living	4.1369	.96056
Hospitality Industry provides rewards for good performance	4.0246	.75873
In the hotel sector, the number of perks and benefits is insufficient	3.8492	.90131
Providing meals during the job is an essential component of the overall compensation package	3.8908	.94961

<b><i>Commitment to the Hospitality industry</i></b>		
I am delighted to have chosen hospitality as a career option and view my professional future in the sector	3.8954	.93130
I wouldn't desire my siblings to pursue study or work in the hospitality sector	3.4185	1.22013
After successfully completing the programme, I am certain that I will not remain in the hospitality sector	3.3092	1.29050
I recommend the students pursue a job other than this sector	3.4185	1.22894
Pursuing Hospitality as a professional option was a bad decision	3.1246	1.33745
I suggest hospitality careers to my friends and family members	3.8062	1.07039

➤ *Commitment to the Hospitality industry*

The perception of hospitality students towards their commitment to the hospitality industry may be positive, as the statement "I am delighted to have chosen hospitality as a career option and view my professional future in the sector" received a relatively high score. This suggests that students may have a sense of enthusiasm and optimism about their career prospects in this field. The perception of hospitality students towards recommending the hospitality sector to others may be mixed, as the statement "I suggest hospitality careers to my friends and family members" received a moderate score. This suggests that while some students may be willing to promote the industry to others, there may also be some reservations or concerns that could impact their endorsement. The perception of hospitality students towards discouraging others from pursuing the hospitality sector may be negative, as the statements "I wouldn't desire my siblings to pursue study or work in the hospitality sector" and "I recommend the students pursue a job other than this sector" received relatively low scores. This suggests that students may have some doubts or negative experiences that make them hesitant to encourage others to pursue careers in this field. The perception of hospitality students towards their long-term commitment to the industry may be uncertain, as the statements "After successfully completing the programme, I am certain that I will not remain in the hospitality sector" and "Pursuing Hospitality as a professional option was a bad decision" received relatively low scores. This suggests that students may have some doubts or uncertainties about their career path and future prospects in this industry.

*C. Hypotheses Test:*

Based on the correlation table, it can be inferred that there is a significant positive correlation ( $r = 0.307$ ,  $p < 0.01$ ) between the nature of work and commitment to the hospitality industry among hospitality students. This suggests that students who perceive the nature of work in the hospitality industry positively are more likely to be committed to the industry.

**Table 2: Pearson Correlation between Nature of Work and Commitment to the Hospitality Industry**

		NOW	CTHI
NOW	Pearson Correlation	1	.307**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	650	650
CTHI	Pearson Correlation	.307**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	650	650

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

The below table shows a significant positive correlation ( $r = 0.551, p < 0.01$ ) between social status (SS) and commitment to the hospitality industry (CTHI). This suggests that students with a higher social status may be more committed to the hospitality industry compared to those with a lower social status.

**Table 3: Pearson Correlation between Social Status and Commitment to the Hospitality Industry**

		SS	CTHI
SS	Pearson Correlation	1	.551**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	650	650
CTHI	Pearson Correlation	.551**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	650	650

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

There is a significant positive correlation between the two variables, PAY and CTHI, with a correlation coefficient of .381\*\*. This indicates that as the "PAY" variable increases, there is a tendency for the "CTHI" variable to increase as well. The positive correlation suggests that the perception of the hospitality industry among students is influenced by the level of pay in the industry. This implies that higher pay may lead to a more positive perception of the industry among students. Therefore, the relationship between PAY and CTHI is meaningful and important in understanding the perceptions of hospitality students towards the industry.

**Table 4: Pearson Correlation between Pay & Benefits and Commitment to the Hospitality Industry**

		PAY	CTHI
PAY	Pearson Correlation	1	.381**
	Sig. (2-tailed)		.000
	N	650	650
CTHI	Pearson Correlation	.381**	1
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.000	
	N	650	650

\*\* . Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

**V. CONCLUSION**

The study aimed to investigate the perception of hospitality students towards the hospitality industry in terms of nature of work, social status, pay and benefits, and commitment to the industry. The findings suggest that students generally have a positive perception of the industry,

but there are also concerns about certain aspects of the industry that need to be addressed.

The nature of work in the hospitality industry was perceived as interesting and challenging, providing skilled employment opportunities and opportunities for learning something new every day. However, there were concerns about the adverse impact on family life, long working hours, and stressful work conditions. Social status was found to have a significant positive correlation with commitment to the hospitality industry, indicating that students with a higher social status may be more committed to the industry compared to those with a lower social status. The perception of students towards pays and benefits in the industry was found to be influential in their perception of the industry. The provision of adequate compensation and benefits may lead to a more positive perception of the industry among students. The commitment of students to the hospitality industry was found to be positive overall, but there were also uncertainties and doubts about their long-term commitment and future prospects in the industry. Overall, the study suggests that the perception of hospitality students towards the hospitality industry is influenced by societal beliefs, parental expectations, and personal experiences. The findings have important implications for the industry in terms of addressing concerns and improving the perception of students towards the industry. The study also highlights the importance of providing adequate compensation and benefits to attract and retain talent in the hospitality industry.

**VI. IMPLICATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Based on the findings of the study, it is recommended that the hospitality industry should focus on improving the perceived benefits and compensation packages offered to its employees, as this could improve the perception of the industry among students. There should also be efforts to address concerns around the impact of the nature of work on family life and work-life balance. To attract and retain talent, the industry should also highlight opportunities for growth, skill development, and professional advancement. There is also a need to challenge societal stereotypes and beliefs around the industry, particularly those that may discourage individuals from pursuing careers in hospitality. Overall, efforts to improve the perception of the industry among students can have a positive impact on recruitment and retention of talent, which is crucial for the growth and success of the industry.

**VII. LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE DIRECTIONS**

One limitation of this study is that it was conducted in a specific region of India, which may not be representative of the perceptions of hospitality students in other parts of the country or even globally. Additionally, the sample size of 650 students may not be large enough to provide a comprehensive understanding of the perceptions of all hospitality students in the NCR area.

Future research could include a larger and more diverse sample size to provide a more comprehensive understanding

of hospitality students' perceptions in the NCR area and other parts of India. Additionally, comparative studies could be conducted to explore differences in perceptions of hospitality students across different regions and cultures. Finally, qualitative research methods could be used to gain deeper insights into the factors influencing hospitality students' perceptions of the industry.

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