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THE IMPACT OF THE HUMAN RESOURCES TRAINING ON THE TOURISM DEVELOPMENT

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ABSTRACT

In times of globalization and more expressed interaction in such a complex and unstable environment, the human resources have an economic mission, and represent a major starter of economic development. This paper examines the key issues that affect the role and management of the human resources in tourism.

Today, the modern tourism in the world is characterized by new organizational and schematic mechanisms as dynamic processes that increasingly challenge in the 21st century tourism, not only as an integral part of the economic development - but also as a factor of crutial meaning to its development.

The human resources as a critical dimension in frame of successful delivery of tourisam service have influence on the successful performance of the tourist companies that largely take care of people through the concept and process of training of personnel who are contemporary reflection of the measure rhetorics of the people and for the organization presenting the greatest value.

INTRODUCTION

Human resources in tourism is not a new phenomenon, but it is great recognition for its impact and management implications that has on the development of the tourism sector. Wood (2003, p.93) adopts the definition of management of people and talk about "development philosophy and practice managing people using various human traits, orientations, dispositions in meeting the ethical rules in the implementation of organizational goals".

People are a critical dimension within the successful delivery of the tourism services. "The story of successful tourism is one that is largely about people - how they are recruited, how they are managed, how they are trained and educated, how they are valued and rewarded, and how they are supported through a process of continuous learning and career development" (Failte Ireland, 2005a, p.8). The reflection of the 'soft' rhetoric of people as an organization's greatest asset" (Bolton & Houlihan, 2007, p.1) may have had equal veracity at various points during the development of tourism over the past century, but the practical implications in terms of the role that people play, will have been interpreted in different ways at varying points.

In particular, there is an apparent paradox in the dramatic evolution of the global tourism sector over the past half century and within it, the manner and conditions in which people deliver tourism services have remained timeless in many aspects but also subject to significant change. The debate about labor intensity, the number, training and cost of people required to work in many areas of tourism, has set discussion of the skills necessary to deliver quality tourism services, incomes and working conditions and the role that technology plays in both - supporting and changing this delivery. At the same time, tourism work must be set alongside major economic reconstruction, and reconstruction of the labor market within the post-industrial societies so that direct comparison works.

This later formed an important element of the early industrial sociology in the emerging service sectors. Tourism work now sits alongside and is compared to other activities within the dominant service economy of the developed countries, and the analytical paradigm for such comparison should consider employment opportunities in the sector in a rather different light. The work then focuses on a large number of themes which allow us to evaluate the extent of change and its impact on the practice of the management of human resources in contemporary tourism, considering the consequences of global and social forces on perceptions of work and careers; the impact of ICT on work and training in tourism; and finally, changing interpretations of skills within tourism.

THE ROLE OF HUMAN RESOURCES IN TOURISM

This primary economic justification for investment has been underpinned in a large part of its history (Bolton & Houlihan, 2007, p.1), whether in the frame of personnel management, strategic human resource management, management with high commitment, or the management of human capital. This is manifested in a range of good practices, adopted by companies recognized for their leadership in the management of people within the tourism sector. Failte Ireland (2005a, 2005b) presents a ground-breaking strategic plan for human resource development within the Irish tourism which is predicated upon the argument that "good HRM practices will be adopted because they deliver bottom line profitability" (Fig.1).

Flexibility	… As evidenced in the preparedness on the part of the enterprise to match their demands on staff time as far as possible with the available supply of time from workers, and to recognize the work-life balance that must be managed in a contemporary society.
Participation	… As evidenced in the preparedness to encourage the staff to be involved in a local decision-making, and to exercise some influence over the patterns of their working day.
Performance & Management	… As evidenced in the regular systems of performance review to ensure that individual and team performances are delivering the service standard and business results expected of it.
Recognition	… As evidenced in the attribution of credit to high-achievers within the peer group, and the celebration of the achievements of high-performing individuals and teams.
Reward	… As evidenced in the payments (monetary and non-monetary) that are linked to performance, and that are clearly understood by staff to track the profitability of the enterprise.
Communication	… As evidenced in the routine dialogue with staff, in the openness and accessibility of management, and in regular feedback loops and follow-through actions.
Learning&Development	… As evidenced in the ready access to on-site learning opportunities, support for learning progress through attendance at off-site courses, and a continuous emphasis on on-site team development.
Empowerment	… As evidenced in the active support and guidance of staff so as to enable them to participate in the workplace in the manner described above.

Fig. 1 HRM good practice - eight recurring themes
Source: Failte Ireland (2005a) & Failte Ireland (2005b)

Bolton and Houlihan (2007) bring one human dimension in the HRM review and consider that these dimensions are unit - dimensional in their focus on employer benefits so that they ignore any notion of reciprocity. They effectively propagate their assessment of the HRM as contract in terms of its humanity (Fig.2).

What sorts of humanity does HRM address?
- Bring us your emotional labor and intelligence, although not your emotional needs;
- Bring us your ideas, although not your objections;
- Bring us your creativity, although not your misbehavior;
- Bring us your loyalty, as long as we need you;
- Work to our codes and procedures, but remain flexible;

- • Bring us your motivation
- • Be a team member, member, although we will manage you as an individual;
- • Develop, but on our terms, and towards our goals, and
- • Listen and communicate, but don't develop human conflicts, and we won't listen to you in the same way.

Fig. 2 HRM contract Source: (Bolton & Houlihan, 2007)

Bolton and Houlihan's case is simple. They give arguments in favor of flexibility at workplace among other forms of accommodation and change in the workplace which generally is business- and employer-oriented. Notwithstanding flattery that advocates recognition of the employee lifestyle requirements and work-life balance, some of which is enshrined in legislation addressing matters such as maternity leave, compensation of employees, the overwhelming evidence that indicate reciprocity with regard to flexibility and accommodation in the workplace is relatively rare, both for employees (Bolton & Houlihan, 2007, p.28) and among volunteer workers within the tourism sector (Lockstone, 2005).

Within the tourism businesses, the process of organizational attraction and reduction in specialist human resource staff means that many human resource responsibilities have substantially been delegated to front line managers (Bond & Wise, 2003, p.58). Brewster and Larsen (1992, p.409) suggest that there are a number of reasons why many human resource activities have been delegated to line managers, including: cost reduction, providing a more comprehensive approach to HR Management, and placing the responsibility with the people who are most responsible for it. Reinwick's (2003, p.262) study indicates that line managers are now responsible for a larger number of employees than ever before, which in turn means that there are more issues in this area for them to manage. Storey (2001, p.3) suggests that if the workforce is so critical to organizational success, the responsibility for human resource activities rests with all line managers and should not be left to the HR specialists. While larger organizations have undoubtedly invested in providing managers with the new HR skills necessary for the responsibilities identified, there is little evidence that the majority of smaller tourism businesses have done much to meet this need. As a result, it is arguable that the quality of human resource management is worsen.

The new approaches to human resource management suitable for a complex sector such as tourism is, remain contentious and the evidence suggests that larger organizations have become more professional in their application of key HR principles within the workplace, but that such professionalism frequently remains absent in smaller businesses. The idea of reciprocity in workplace flexibility, can also be absent in large extent when organizations implement wider HR policies and practices. People management may be recognized as a concern for everyone holding a responsible position within the organizations, but there is little evidence that those charged with this responsibility have a full comprehension of what this strategic role means in practice. This failure or neglect is not just carw at the level of the tourism company, but reflects a charge that can equally be directed at tourism development policies and practices at a community, regional or national level. Liu & Wall (2006, p.159) are rightly critical of this neglect when they state that "tourism's human resource issues are poorly conceptualized and the many studies of tourism development approaches (both theoretical and practical) provide no consolidation of useful recommendations to situate the human dimension as an integral part of a comprehensive planning framework for tourism". This time there is little evidence that this recent criticism has any less validity today than in the mid-1980s, and this is a real indictment of the large number of master plans and similar documents for tourism.

PERSONNEL TRAINING IN THE TOURISM SECTOR

Perceptions of working lives in the distinctions between working and non-working lives, or as Hochschild (2003) puts it "family life had become like 'work' and work had become more like 'home'". Adler (2004, p.28) reinforces this notion in his discussion of that how initiation of new workplace practices, based on interdependence, can be spread into the home and change domestic behavior in terms of a weakening of traditional gender roles. Constant movement between working life segments allow individuals frequent mobility between different sectors of the economy, periods of study within models of lifelong learning and episodes that consist of travel or volunteering sabbaticals.

Vocational mobility is greatly facilitated by recognition of the underpinning "generic" skills which today provide a wide spectrum of education and working experience that allow easy transition of both formal (qualifications-driven) and informal (experience-driven) transitions, particularly within the tourism sector's weak labor market conditions. Writing more than a decade ago, Riley (1993) concludes that moving towards a future of leads to "rising insecurity of job tenure, more unsocial hours working, more uneven workflow, a greater sense of immediacy in tasks", what is the model that production industries use, taking the low range skills service industries as the tourism is. The concept of a career within this sector for all but a minority of positions in managerial responsibility, is of limited and decreasing value. The role of education and training in the context of changing working lives, both within the external college

environment and within the industry itself, is to support mobility, entry in working life environment, re-entry to the sector and development in relation to new technologies and products. This represents a fast-moving, ever-changing and challenging model of lifelong learning which, in the future, will play an important role in support of the "popular" sector of the tourism industry.

The response to global trends in tourism, by educational and training providers, has been obvious and mixed. Baum (2000, p.198) points to the institutional and cultural barriers to change within most educational systems, factors that mitigate against the adoption of common tourism programs and qualifications across national boundaries, notwithstanding the intentions of initiatives such as the Bologna agreement in Europe.

The range of national case studies that address educational and training themes in tourism and the wider economy also points to the intransigence of diversity (see, e.g., Airey & Tribe, 2005; Budhwar & Debrah, 2001; Hofmann Johnson & Lefever, 2000; Hsu, 2005). At the same time, there has been a growth in programs in tourism education offered to a worldwide audience online and demand for education in this field through overseas study in Australia, Hong Kong, the UK, the USA and elsewhere remains high. However, such provision is largely structured upon demand from students from developing countries seeking to acquire skills and knowledge as imparted by academic and professional experts in the developed world. This is a questionable model of knowledge-transfer and one that Botterill and Baum (2006) describe as neo-colonial in impact. It is similar to the underpinning assumptions behind the growth of tourism education in many developing countries over the past 20 years, assumptions that see European and North American models delivery that are uncritically in places in the colleges and universities of recipient countries.

Those planning for human resource development in tourism may need to be more responsive to the challenges and opportunities presented by fragmented learning and working lives, and recognize, as Adler and Adler (2004) describe, the diversity of motivations and interests that workers typically contribute into their employment relationships with tourism sector employers. Change, with regard to this theme, has moved employee aspirations for reciprocity in the utilization of flexibility higher on the agenda so that notions of workplace flexibility, as introduced by Atkinson (1984,p.28) and others, can no longer be seen solely in terms of approaches that are designed to benefit organizational needs, but to realization of individual needs. With the assessments of the impact of ICT on work in tourism we can highlight: the importance of changes in the workplace linked to a wide range of issues, including perceptions of time and work intensity within the workplace; organizational fragmentation; flexibility and enabling the recognition of work-life balance issues in the workplace; the polarization of skills and the decline in demand for less skilled workers; disparities in remuneration linked to use/non-use of ICT in the workplace; outsourced working; home and teleworking; social inclusion, ICT and the workplace; ICT and knowledge management; and technology substitution among a much wider range of concerns. These changes in the workplace mirror wider adoption and use of technology within society and, in many aspects, feed off familiarity with expectations of technology that stem from everyday life. However, ICT created new forms of work in tourism, notably through the application of ICT and its use in distribution and management of key functions such as yield. The advent of specialist Internet travel companies present is clear evidence of this change, but the growth of specialist electronic distribution is complemented by website communications, marketing and booking options within virtually all "traditional" tourism companies so that the boundaries between them and e-companies has decreased greatly. ICT has also changed the role of management information within the sector, allowing far greater depth and access to key information about guests and their behavior. These developments have created demand for technology specialists in the tourism sector and also for new marketing and management skills in a more general sense, allowing companies to maximize the benefits they derive from e-business.

Conclusion

In the light of external change, certain aspects of human resource management in tourism demonstrate evolution over time, by responding across the breadth of the contextual environment within which tourism is located - notably in socio-cultural, market-related and technological terms. Such change is clearly evident within some of the large tourism companies in transport, entertainment and accommodation. At the same time, the headlines of change do not reflect reality across the totality of the tourism sector. There is a real contrast between major multinational tourism companies and smaller operators within some sub-sectors of tourism (particularly accommodation and restaurants) which contain areas of work where many things have not changed over the past 20 years - productivity remains stubbornly low, working conditions are poor and remuneration levels are well below national averages in many countries (Riley, Ladkin, & Szivs, 2002). In some areas of tourism, businesses have been unable to cope with the pressures of external change-induced competition so that, for example, work opportunities in traditional travel agents have declined in many countries. By contrast to the developed world, in poorer countries, the picture is rather more homogeneous whereby much work in economies that offer low cost for employment, including that of the tourism sector, has been at the margins of the overall employment experience. At the same time the growth of tourism has a major role in developing counties shows that the tourism sector has

become an important source of employment and extension and in the technical terms build in different ways through social, educational, cultural and economical context.

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