Talent Management in the Hotel Industry of Pune City: Role of Social Media and Social Media Influencers

Asst. Prof. Merle Almeida
Bharati Vidyapeeth (Deemed to be) University
Institute of Hotel Management and Catering Technology
Pune, India
dsamerle8080@gmail.com
Orcid: 0000-0001-6042-6589

Asst. Prof. Gaurav Gomase
G H Raisoni School of Hospitality Management, Nagpur
gauravgomase21@gmail.com
Orcid Id: 0000-0002-7050-4613

Assoc. Prof. Dr. Charuta Gajbhiye
LAD College of Hotel Management and Catering Technology, Nagpur
charushambarkar@gmail.com
Orcid id: 0000-0001-7457-0100

ABSTRACT

Influencer marketing is growing leaps and bounds in recent years and is a force in contemporary persuasion. The persistent growth of social media platforms has allowed their users to view them as valuable information sources and firms to adopt them as effective marketing tools. Our aim was to understand the role that social media and social media influencers plays in acquiring talented staff for the Hotel Industry and the acceptance of social media influencers and social media platforms by the industry. Through the study it has been seen that some of the HR Managers are already hired social media influencers and using social media platforms for hiring and retaining talent into the organizations during the discussion; the others realised that they should be hiring and using social media influencers and platforms for hiring and getting the right talent. Those already using are extremely satisfied with the results and would be continuing to do so and spread over new upcoming platforms (if available) to increase visibility in future. It has been realized that the individuals are more likely to follow social media influencers and hence it has become a necessity to hire them to get the right talent with appropriate experience.

Keywords: Social Media, LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, YouTube, Best Practices, Influencer Marketing, Influencer Marketing Best Practices, Influencer Marketing Strategy

Introduction

Social Media is a place where netizens across the world meet each other virtually and share a dialogue with each other. It is a super set beyond communication and a tool for social interaction. Its popularity is amongst today's gen Y and Gen X and to an extent baby boomers are the late adopters.

An influencer is someone who can influence others. A social media influencer is someone who wields their clout through social media. When an influencer is hired to promote products or services; that is influencer marketing.

Companies today have changed its view of the last 10 years of reviewing and managing talent. According to jobvite 89% of the companies have selected social media to manage talent since 2011. The trend has big implementation on the way employment process has changed. But the key point is what we can learn from the new age recruitment.

We have noticed that the companies are changing from a slow-moving culture to a super-fast-moving culture. In this world of speed, today, talent is the most critical in finding quick talent and talent which is quick (the thought process). A high performing work place can fierce the horizon and adapt as per the environment. Even the world of recession and high unemployment quality talent has never been in such high demand.

Today the tools have ensured that the professionals take charge of their own career, which has never been seen before. Professionals have come across LinkedIn, Facebook, Twitter, etc., to build brands, connecting to recruitment sites, updating their profiles even when they are not in search of a job.

This enables the recruiter to get quality information up to date. This also helps the recruiter to have a pool of data other than just active job seekers.

How about using social media influencers to attract talent? Promotion of a product is way different from promotion of n experience and even more so, when working with an organisation.

Social media influencers are not just promoting brands on their pages, but also jobs. Companies which require talent in bulk such as BPO's are using these influencers to attract their talent in drives to be part of their workplace. The reason is clear – Each of these influencers have a million of followers. Theory suggest that social media influencer have an

impact on attitudes as they are likely to be perceived as credible, likable and similar to their audience, attributes that research shows facilitates persuasion. Credibility leads to internalization of source attributes; likability can produce a halo effect; and similarity elicits, social comparisons such as the interference that if a communicator refers to a particular goods or services as preferable; the followers consider it apt for themselves too. (O'Keefe, 2016; Perloff, 2020).

Objective of Study

1. Measure and add to our knowledge the role that social media and social media influencers plays in acquiring talented staff for the Hospitality Industry.
2. Explore today's challenges faced for finding talent and to what possible extent that social media and social media influencers play to target talent.
3. To review the current and future situation of social media and social media influencers in finding appropriate talent.

Review of Literature:

Oncioiu, Anton, Ifrim, Mândricel (2022) stated that the worldwide employment landscape continues to change due to new technologies, especially automation, online collaboration tools and artificial intelligence. The lack of qualified workers and the increasing number of jobs for e-tourism workers is a challenge to maintain the daily operations of developing a digital recruitment strategy and communicating a good employer brand. The results highlight the great importance of building strategies because professional communication in social networks is the key to successful work with sustainable human resources practices.

Chabbra, Mehta, Panackal (2020), stated that in the future years the millennials would make up for almost three fourth of the workforce and social media has taken over every aspect of their lives. Through their desk research they highlighted that employers attract potential talent that fir in their vision, mission and culture through social media.

Karamustafic, Samra; Stockmaster, Taylor; Palladina, Skye; Harris, Aurora; and Perloff, Richard M. (2020), report an exploration of the qualities that online influencers display in their persuasion attempts, advancing the literature by seeking to spell out the particular strategies they employ to influence the masses.

With steady growth in the adoption of social media, it remains a growing area of interest for recruitment (Perrin & Anderson, 2019).

Auderzet (2018) Social Media Influencers (SMI's) are increasingly approached by brands to promote products, a practice commonly called influencer marketing. SMI's can take advantage of their influence to obtain personal rewards by entering into partnerships with brands. The findings provide recommendations on how SMI's and marketers might come together to be a win-win relationship situation while preserving SMI's authenticity.

A number of clinical studies have begun to use social media ads or posts for all or part of their recruitment, with reports of varying success. (Darmawan et al., 2020; Topolovec-Vranic & Natarajan, 2016).

Kamlesh Dangi, Group Head – Human Resources, InCred - "In the employer brand-building context, it depends on the organisation if it is in a major scale-up mode. In that case, the organisation needs to go out of its way to increase its workforce, and this would be an exceptional effort."

Manish Majumdar, former head – HR CoE, Novo Nordisk - "While fighting for talent in an employee market, any edge over competition goes a long way. Finding innovative ways to attract talent is not a leisure activity, but a necessary one. In that context, it makes sense to hire social-media influencers to attract talent."

Jitender Panihar, CHRO, MoEngage Inc - "Social Media Influencers just provide reach, which is more useful while promoting a product. However, one cannot compare experiences with products. People buy an experience or an opportunity when someone who has already lived it retells it."

Research Methodology

Our respondents are HR Managers, Training Managers and Talent Managers of 03 Star, 04 Star and 05 Star Hotels of Pune city. A total of 57 hotels responded to the survey. The primary data was collected through an online questionnaire survey.

Secondary data was gathered from previously completed research work including journal publications, online data banks and numerous websites.

Discussion:

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Employer branding is a holistic approach. Social network offers a whole host of opportunities for increasing the visibility of and strengthening the employer market. As these networks are so widely used and accessible, they are the most cost-effective way of communicating with prospective employees in direct and regular manner while also allowing the companies to highlight their strengths and show themselves to be a great workplace. This enables potential applicants to get to know the employer brand, the day-to-day life with a particular employer and come to trust them; which increases the likelihood that they will apply in the future. Last but not the least, smart employer branding no only makes sense for recruitment but also helps retain valued staff in the long term.

Once a company has taken the decision to establish its presence on social media to strengthen its employer brand, it should look at the important issue of social media channels handling successful staff recruitment in a professional manner and integrating this into the employer branding strategy, instead of leaving it down to individual actions.

Many companies have taken a decision to create a separate account for recruiting staff as the Marriott brand has done on their Instagram account @marriottcareers. An alternative is to expand accounts that already exist, with Migros' LinkedIn channel being one example. This channel features employer **branding content** alongside posts to **reach out to their clientele.**

An employer branding strategy never stands still; however, it should have a clear storyline with a uniform editorial tone, the content should be diverse as possible using tailored formats ranging from articles, images and videos to target the right talent group. Content should be updated regularly to keep the community updated. Each social media channel should be monitored closely with a view of checking and optimising the content and its effectiveness.

A survey earlier conducted showed that 77% of marketers say that their prospective customers rely on industry experts. From educational content to sharing their favourite software solutions to the most stable company and job reliability; they are interested in hearing from thought-leaders or influencers from the niche. Today top company brands are investing in social media influencers as there is a rise of influencer marketing in the social media space over the past few hours. Infact the influencer industry is projected to reach $16.4B by end of 2022.

The reason many companies are looking for social media influencers to be part of their marketing strategies:

1. **They Make the Brand Relatable:** The social media influencers have been able to create a relationship with their followers and have become trusted voices within their niche. Influencers add the human touch needed to elevate the brand and stand out amongst the competition in today' social media realm.

2. **They Spread Brand Awareness:** Instead of remaining dependent on the current audience for traction; many hospitality companies find it easier spreading their brand message through the power of social media and social media influencers. By utilizing influencer marketing to its fullest potential; the target audience can be given a feeling of reality of your brand.

3. **They Bring in More Sales:** The people trust the social media influencers. Not only the right talent manpower could be gotten through these influencers; but hotel services and sales could be increased because they are propagating the brand name. A digital relationship is built with the influencer and people feel they are buying something on a personal decision rather than an advertisement or promotional strategy.

In the last year two years more and more people have turned to social media for quick entertainment and distraction; but an increase in budding influencers and bloggers has been seen too. The rising popularity of influencers marketing is hidden from none; interestingly, what has come as a by-product of the expansion of the industry is a surge in focus on influencer talent management.

Brands today are allotting much larger marketing budgets specially to influencer marketing. As branded content increases so does content creation. The number speaks for themselves-a majority of brands (59%) have a standalone budget for content and 75% of them intended to dedicate a budget to influencer marketing in 2021.

It is interesting to note that 63% of marketers have increase their influencer marketing budget this year and as the graph continues to rise from every direction; here is where Influencer Talent Management comes in picture. For most part, influencer talent management does exactly what it says; manage influencer talent. However, it is what is under this large gamut of 'manage' that makes things captivating. Earlier, talent management was rather restricted to either an HR and /or celebrity or artist management. Lately, as the very impact of influencers and their content has increased, so has the need for managing this umbrella of talent.

Influencer talent management today has evolved drastically from what it was when it started. An increasing number of influencers are now looking to be represented by talent management experts. Talent Management experts, today, not just handle the onboard talent but take care of everything at the backend, from A-Z. These experts are storehouse of skills; starting from brand outreach and branded content, to storytelling and managing finances, to name a few.

What came as a repercussion of radical change in content consumption, has now become imperative for the industry, Influencer talent management bridges the gap between brands and influencers to ensure a seamless experience. Every brief is decoded and each brand is connected to an influencer that perfectly fits the brief. This is then followed by carefully curating content which not just fulfils the brief, but also tells a story that caters to the influencers niche. The content planning process in itself can be quite taxing – branded content tends to see a lot of back and forth between talent and the brand and this is where talent management experts step in. These experts are able to oversee content, along with managing finances, curating insights and becoming a PR expert for the influencers.

With the newly announced final draft of Advertising Standards Council of India (ASCI) guidelines for influencers and branded content, it is becoming evident that branded content and influencer management is only set to rise. As these guidelines are put into effect, the challenge is how to create organic yet branded content, and keep up with the guidelines is something the industry will struggle with in the beginning. Here is again, where talent managers will come into picture. From understanding the very requirement of the guidelines, to ensuring it is followed by their talent is something that will be of key importance.

From merely being a 'managerial' task, to now being a one-stop-shop for all things influencer related; influencer talent management has come a long way.

Being able to provide the perfect end-to-end solutions for all influencers (& brands) on-board by a team of experts is commendable. The team takes on responsibility for email handling, brand content, calendar management and in some cases, each plan is customised to suit the influencers requirement.

It is believed that customers prefer content that 'looks organic' and not advertised, however; it is paramount to understand the immense hard work that goes into creating a single piece of content that satisfies stake holders. Influencer talent management as an industry wasn't given its due importance or gained prominence till recently.

As per the survey connected with 57 hotels in and around Pune City, below are the statistics discussed from HR point of view in relation to Talent Management. The HR department has realised that the challenges need to be reviewed and resolved through new techniques. Using technology and modern methods is apt and the right decision in order to stay in competition.
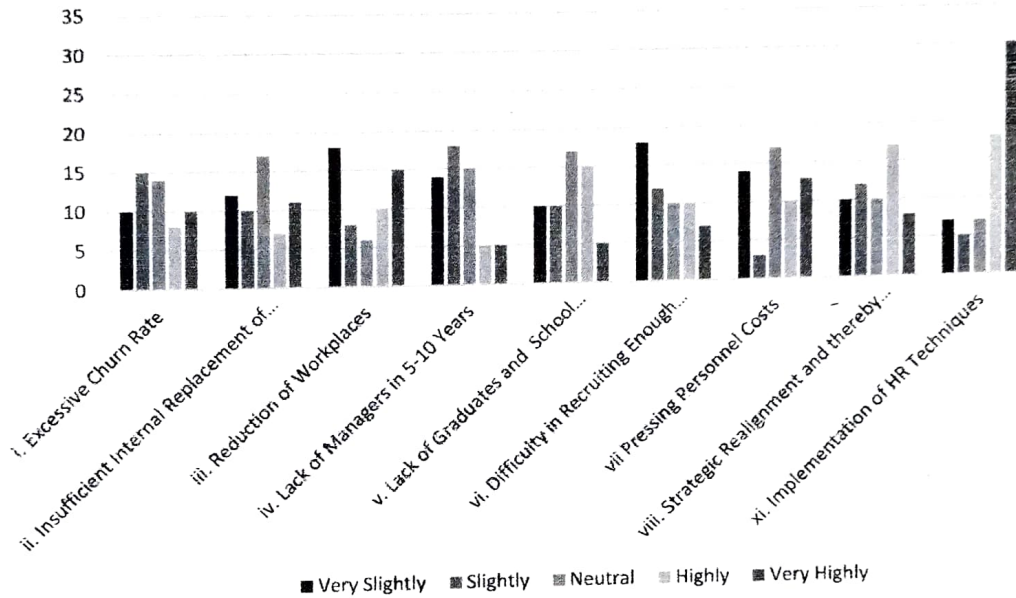
HR Challenges Estimated

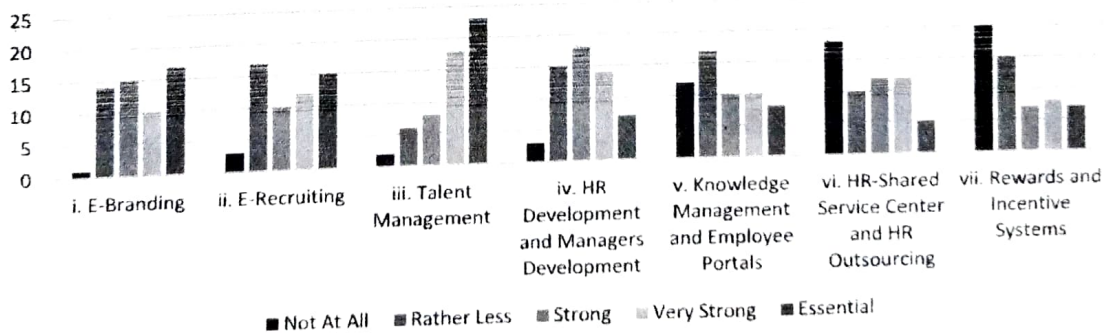Fig. 01: HR Challenges Estimated

HR Concepts in Near Future

Fig. 02: HR Future Concepts

As we have seen in Fig. 01 and Fig. 02 that the HR Managers have already perceived that for their organizational survival, with the millennials and the extensive use of technology and

trends, moving in the same direction would be the apt and a prompt solution for change in direction of reviewing and sourcing the exact talent for the perfection of the organization.

During the survey conducted we found that since the HR Managers have realised that they need to shift resources for procuring perfect talent and through the below figures we have discussed the areas, elements and social media that has been currently identified and will be their future plan of action if not yet and the outcome shows that Talent Management and Social Networks and Influencers are slowly and steadily collaborating with each other.

Use Social Media Influencer and/or Social Media Platform to Hunt Talent

Fig. 03: Use Social Media Influencer and/or Social Media Platform to Hunt Talent
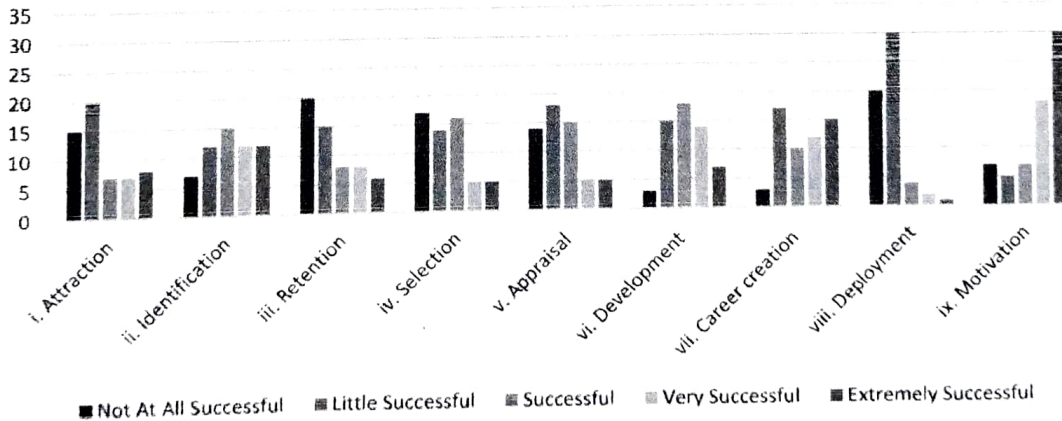
Talent Management Elements

Fig. 04: Elements of Talent Management

The below chart indicates hotel's opinion that about being connected with social media platforms and influencers may be to an extent a possibility to be able to procure and manage to acquire talent for the hotels.

Effectiveness of the listed Talent Management Instruments for an organization

Legend: ■ Not At All Successful   ■ Little Successful   ■ Successful   ■ Very Successful   ■ Extremely Successful
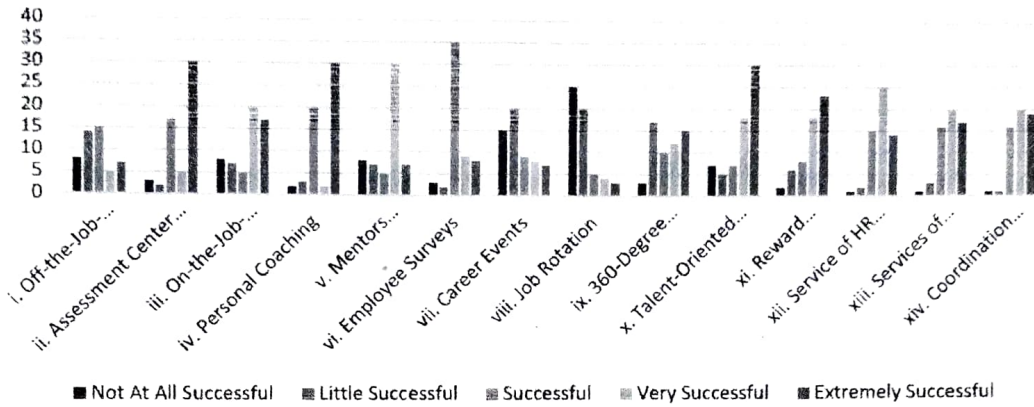
Fig.05: Talent Management Instruments of an organization

The below table shows the futuristic acceptance of HR implementing the listed e-recruitment techniques in their organizations

E-Recruiting Instruments

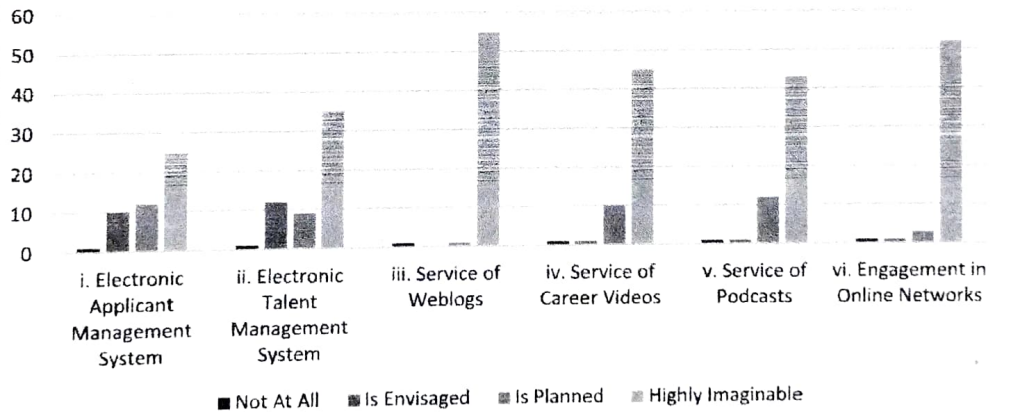Legend: ■ Not At All   ■ Is Envisaged   ■ Is Planned   ■ Highly Imaginable

Fig. 06: E-Recruiting Instruments

During our survey, it was suggested that some goals of the listed goals be connected with Talent as employee would always ask the question and want to know the benefits and future journey within the hotels. Our next figure tells us about the goals and the agreement with the hotels that they could be successful, if they create goals in advance for Talent Management.

Goals pursued by Talent Management

Goal	Percentage
Employer Branding	100%
Employee Satisfaction	100%
Succession Planning of Employees	78,94%
Succession Planning of Managers	78,94%
Employee Loyalty	78,94%
Performance Improvement	70,17%
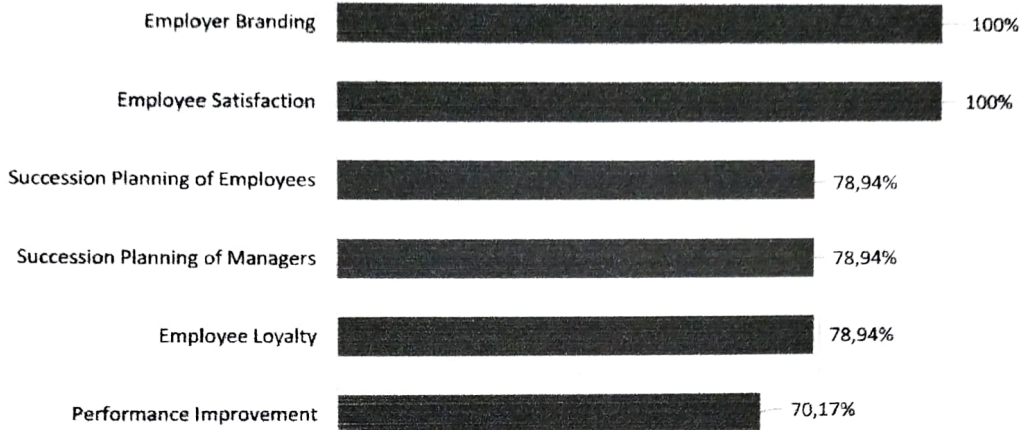
Fig. 07: Goals pursued by Talent Management

Social Platforms Currently Hotels Associated With

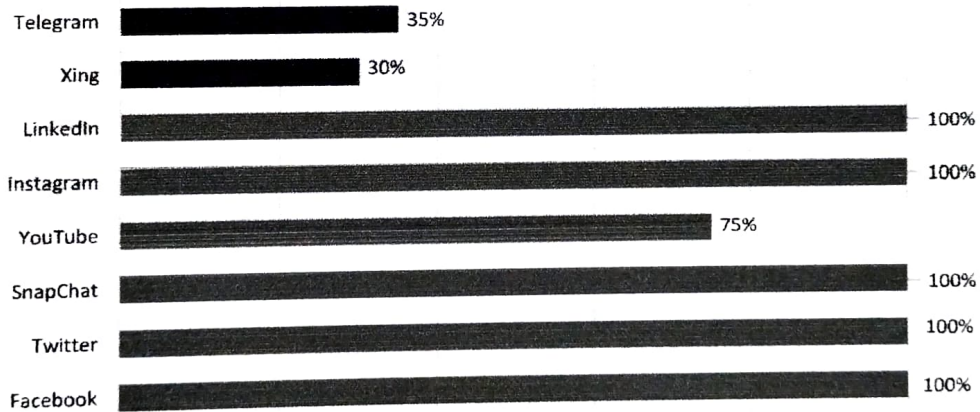| Platform	Percentage
Telegram	35%
Xing	30%
LinkedIn	100%
Instagram	100%
YouTube	75%
SnapChat	100%
Twitter	100%
Facebook	100%

Fig. 08: Social Media Platforms Currently Hotels Have Registered

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Social Media Platforms

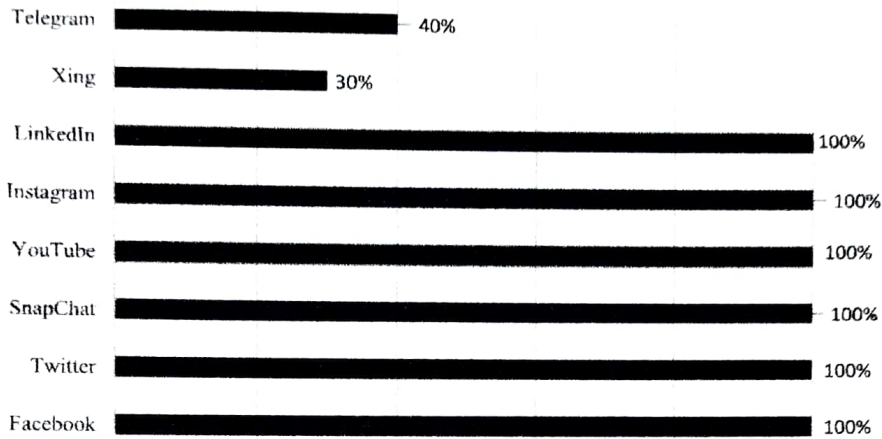| Platform	Value
Telegram	40%
Xing	30%
LinkedIn	100%
Instagram	100%
YouTube	100%
SnapChat	100%
Twitter	100%
Facebook	100%

Fig. 09: Social Media Platforms Hotels Want to Register with in Future

We see that hotels are on social media platforms and are using it to the fullest of their knowledge in acquiring talent and would increase their visibility on the various platforms in the future. However, though hotels are increasing their visibility on social media and are increasingly wanting their employees to register, like, follow and subscribe to their channels, webpages

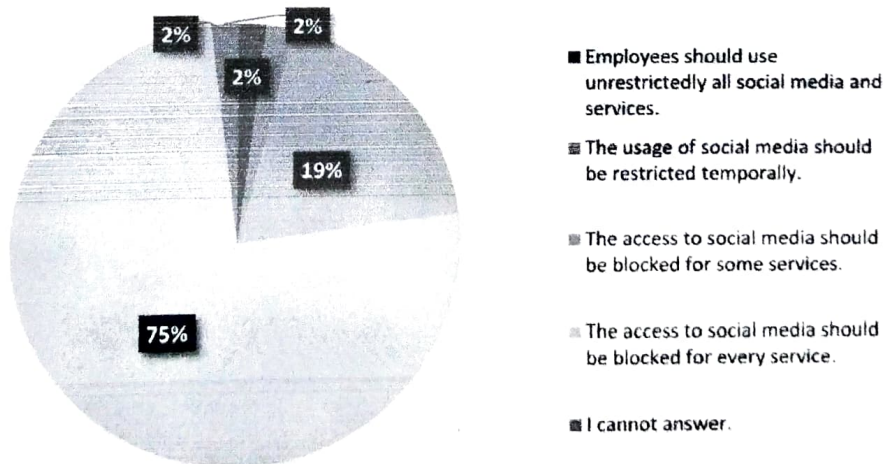## Employees be allowed to use Social Media on Company Time

2% 2% 2% 19% 75%

- Employees should use unrestrictedly all social media and services.
- The usage of social media should be restricted temporally.
- The access to social media should be blocked for some services.
- The access to social media should be blocked for every service.
- I cannot answer.

Fig. 10: Employees be allowed to use Social Media on Company Time

Use of Full Integrated Systems

- All areas are independent of each other.
- We are partially integrated.
- We are between not integrated and partially integrated.
- We are between partially and fully integrated.
- We are fully integrated.
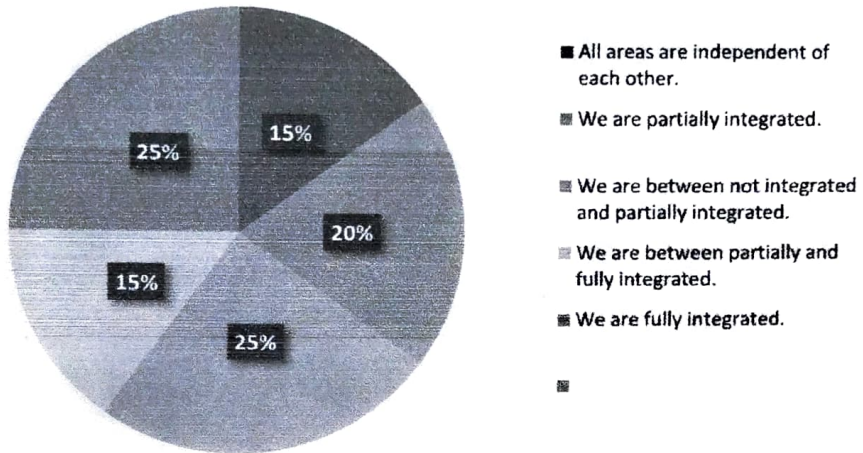
Fig.11: Use of Full Integrated Systems

Suitable Areas to Use Social Media
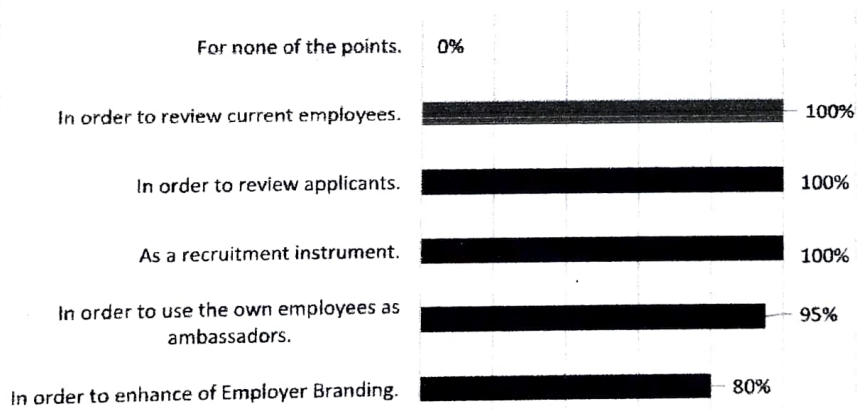
For none of the points.	0%
In order to review current employees.	100%
In order to review applicants.	100%
As a recruitment instrument.	100%
In order to use the own employees as ambassadors.	95%
In order to enhance of Employer Branding.	80%

Fig.12: Suitable Areas to Use Social Media

Reasons to use Social Networks
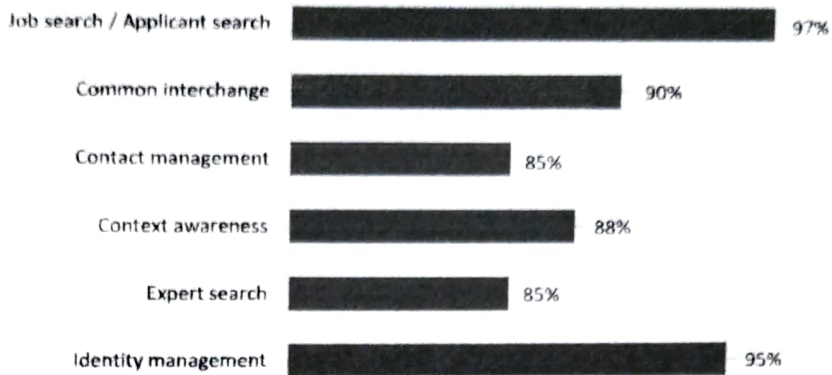
Fig. 13: Reasons to use social networks

Social Media the future of Talent Management

- Social media will play an increased role in HRM.
- Social media is only a temporary fashion and will decrease in future.
- Social media will be an important, if not the most important role in HRM.
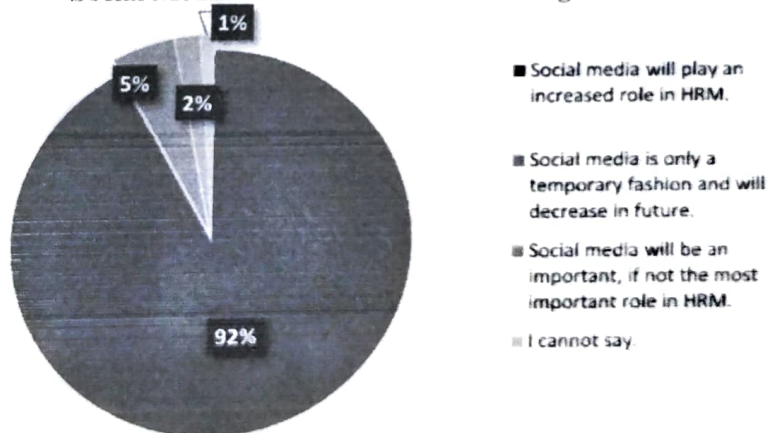- I cannot say

Fig. 14: Social Media the future of Talent Management

Employer Brand

'Employer brand' is a term used to represent the firms standing and appeal to customers from the viewpoint of a potential employer. It also describes the values the company uphold for its personnel. Employer branding is utilized in the contemporary business sector of talent acquisition as the below figures discuss the strategies hotels use to promote the company and

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raise the expectations of the new recruits and convey to present workers as well that it is an excellent place to work in. HR Managers have also identified various aspects/ variables which they uses as competitive advantages in war with competitors to attract and retain talent.
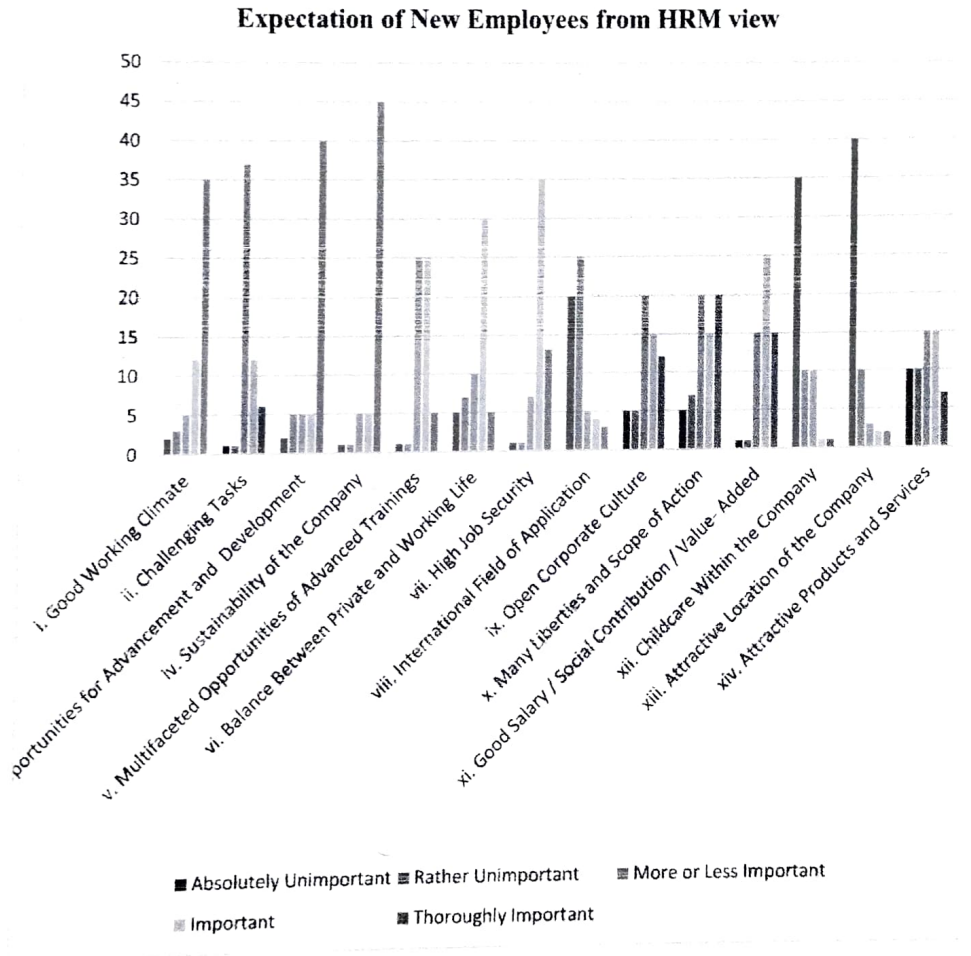
Expectation of New Employees from HRM view

Fig 15: Expectation of New Employees from HRM view

Most decisive competitive advantages in the "War for Talents"

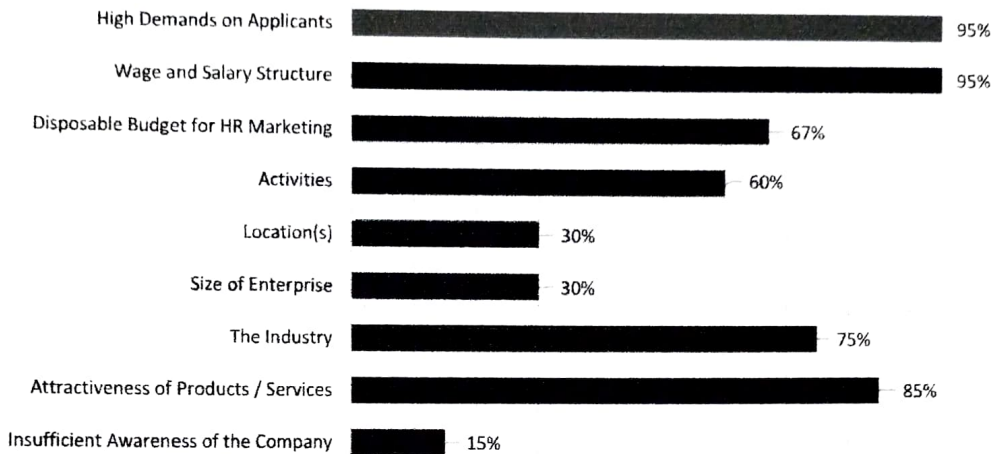| Category	Percentage
High Demands on Applicants	95%
Wage and Salary Structure	95%
Disposable Budget for HR Marketing	67%
Activities	60%
Location(s)	30%
Size of Enterprise	30%
The Industry	75%
Attractiveness of Products / Services	85%
Insufficient Awareness of the Company	15%

Fig. 16: Most decisive competitive advantages in the "War for Talents"

Conclusion:

The aim of the research was to fill gaps by investigating whether hotels used social media platforms and social media influencers in order to acquire the right talent. The literature review that has enabled us to analyse the data with some insights in mind. Through the research it has been found that hotels are steadily moving towards digitalization and are reviewing potential talent connected through social media platforms and influenced by social media influencers. SMI's trustworthiness and expertise are important drivers of moderating the relationship between attractiveness and intention and the degree of influence tends to be stronger to followers.

As the hospitality industry has turned its eyes towards social media and social media influencers to acquire the right kind of talent required so has the social media and social media influencer changed the way it functions. This new digital industry has evolved every step of the way and will continue to do as times progress. Through the acquired data it has been observed that most of the hotels are aware that digitalization is the need of the hour and considering the millennials and to acquire younger talent it is the most appropriate need of the hour for talent acquisition.

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Bharati Vidyapeeth
(Deemed to be University)
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