



Students Perception towards Vocational Courses in Hospitality Sector

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ABSTRACT

The study 'Students Perception Towards Vocational Courses in Hospitality Sector' is an endeavor to understand awareness of hospitality students about the vocational courses being offered in hospitality education.

Vocational education plays a significant role in providing trained and skilled labor to the market and various sectors. It also gives equal opportunity to the students who can not cope up with the mainstream or conventional education system. The vocational courses are designed in a way that they are meant to impart skills which make a candidate ready for employment or entrepreneurship. It contributes towards the economy of the country by creating many opportunities for the graduates in different sectors and at all levels of employment.

The authors have attempted to understand the perception of hospitality management students towards such courses in the same sector which can create greater employment opportunities for them on completion of the course.

A structured questionnaire was designed to collect data from the hospitality students. There were 131 responses received. The responses were analyzed and it was concluded that the students were aware about vocational courses in hospitality sector and most of them opined that these courses are more effective in enhancing practical skills which are essential for employment. The hands-on experience gives more confidence to the graduates when they enter the industry as employees or become a part of economy with some entrepreneurial venture. Some students who are pursuing traditional courses in hospitality sector would like to opt for some vocational course as well.

It can be concluded that the vocational education is perceived to be quite important from employment and skills enhancement point by the hospitality graduates. The traditional education can be modified on the lines of vocational education, which will be beneficial, or the students, hospitality industry and Indian economy.

Key Words: Vocational Education, Hospitality Sector, Skills Enhancement

INTRODUCTION

India has a large population which is young population and amounting to almost half of total population of the country. India is called as a young nation. We have thousands of graduates passing out every year from various streams. As per the survey of Economic Forum, only about twenty five percent of these graduates possess skills required for employment. The graduates have acquired knowledge but lack in skills which are needed to carry out the job responsibilities.

As the name indicates, vocational courses prepare students for specific occupation or employment, using their talent and skills. These courses focus on specific technical skills so as to make the students ready for jobs. The meaning of word "Vocation" is "Work-Related". So when an individual is pursuing a vocational course, it means that he/ she is acquiring a specific job-related skills which will be beneficial for getting employment.

In an article by Dr. Jyoti Sharma, published in Daily Excelsior, the need and importance of vocational education was emphasized. The article included the thoughts of Director NIOS, Mr. S K Sinha, who feels that a country like India should have job opportunities for blue-collar jobs as well. For a developing nation, it is required to create job opportunities at all levels and not only concentrate on emphasizing on white-collar employment avenues.

Vocational education gives students a broader perspective which goes beyond bookish knowledge and helps them use the hands-on skills as a part of learning process. The greatest advantage of vocational courses, as mentioned by Mr. Sinha is that it gives employment opportunities to the aspirants who cannot fit into the conventional education system. If these



courses are implemented effectively, they can provide skilled labor to various industrial and manufacturing sectors. He quotes an example of Germany, who emerged to be massive industrial power with the help of vocational training offered at different levels in the education system. The structure of such courses involves more of hands-on training and very few contact classes which covers the theory component. (Dr Jyoti Sharma - Vocational Education in India by Daily Excelsior)

Dr. Ved Prakash, former chairman of UGC states the importance of vocational education in the light of NEP 2020. He states that the vocational education will continue to grow in demand and popularity. As per the NEP 2020, the education as a whole will concentrate more on development of skills and being justified to all levels of society and will be inclusive of education as well as hands-on training.

The main objective of implementing the vocational programs is to offer courses which will be offered by keeping in mind the aspects like abilities, aptitude and their interest in a particular field. This would lead to employment on large scale in various sectors. It will help in reducing the unrest and frustration amongst youth which mainly arises due to unemployment. Dr. Prakash states that the chief cause of unemployment is non-productive education.

The aim of education should be imparting skills and not only literacy and gaining knowledge. Going further, the skills acquired should be of international standards and could be used worldwide.

A country like India has two main advantages i.e., massive human resource, especially in the form of youth and constantly growing economy and industries due to liberal global business policies. (Dr. Ved Prakash – The Daily Guardian)

History of Vocational Education in India:

As mentioned earlier, the main objective of education is to enhance abilities, skills, attitude and understanding about the employment process. Vocational education is a step nearer to this whole attempt of gaining employment. It is a type of education where the candidate is given specialized training and education to excel in a specific area. It includes lot of sectors and avenues for employment at various levels of jobs.

Woods Despatch in 1854 suggested that Indian youth needs practical education which will help the nation in long run and will have a major contribution towards national development. Taking it further, The Hunter Commission in 1882 studied the system of secondary education and suggested that the at secondary level, students should be offered variety of courses. Also, the commission recommended that there should be two diversions introduced at the second stage where one branch will train students to pass through the University Entrance Exams and the second branch will have practical approach, providing the students with commercial training with very little theoretical aspect. But these recommendations were completely unnoticed by the government.

In 1929, Hartog Committee suggested that more options should be introduced at the end of Middle School stage, which in turn can form technical or industrial training schools. In 1936-37, two experts from vocational education field, Messer's Abbot and Wood were invited by Central Government to provide guidance towards vocational education.

They studied the problems being faced in the existing system of vocational education and proposed a hierarchy of vocational institutions which would be operated parallel to the general education. The experts recommended a new category of institutions called "Polytechnic Institutes". Based on these recommendations, many provinces started with commercial, technical and agricultural institutes which were providing practical knowledge through various vocational courses.

Post-independence, in 1952-53 the Secondary Education Commission recommended that only the higher secondary schools should run the vocational courses. The implementation of this suggestion was done by forming multipurpose higher secondary schools in different states of India. 250 such schools were established as a part of first Five-Year plan.

Parallely, a considerable number of high schools were changed into multipurpose higher secondary schools and that lead to considerable increase in such institutes all over the country.

At the same time, efforts were taken to encourage students to take up a suitable occupation or set-up their own business based on the knowledge and skills acquired through vocational education.

The second plan had a provision of establishing 90 Junior Technical Schools where general & technical education could be provided. The program also had a provision of including workshop training over the period of 3 years.



In due course of time, the education plans were taken for review and changes were made as per the directives given by Central Advisory Board of Education. During the fifth Five-Year plan, the Central Ministry of Education suggested a scheme of Vocationalisation of Higher Education and was implemented in few higher secondary schools.

Ultimately the importance and effectiveness of vocational education was understood and the new form of education provided numerous vocational courses. The students thus had a choice of various vocational subjects and programs in the field of higher education.

In the year 1974-75, AICTE (All India Council of Technical Education) suggested that there should be proper linkages formed between industry and educational institutes. Also, creating Teachers Training Centers in the management education was recommended.

Understanding the importance of practical education, the Kothari Commission in 1964 stated that many jobs do not require the candidates to have a degree from a university. Even a higher secondary student who has completed a vocational course and is well-trained can accomplish the required job.

In the current Indian scenario, there are more than thirteen thousand it is (Industrial Training Institutes) established under DGET (Directorate General of Employment & Training) and MSDE (Ministry of Skill Development and Entrepreneurship). These institutes train almost one third of the students.

NCF (National Curriculum Framework), 2005 stated that vocational educational can be effectively implemented outside the limits of conventional school education system. The same can be imparted with the help of various Polytechnic Institutes, Industrial Training Institutes and Community Colleges. The program was carried forward through National Vocational Education Qualification Framework (NVEQF) in 2012 and continued with NSQF (National Skill Qualification Framework) in 2014. Simultaneously, he NSDC (National Skill Development Council) framed the National Occupational Standards (NOSs) to scale the employable skills. It has given a proper platform to implement the suggestions stated in NEP 2020.

Vocational Education in India – Need of the hour

Employability of graduates is a major concern for the country. According to a survey only 25% of the graduates from different streams are reported to be employable. It clearly indicates that there is a need for practical education which will prepare the graduates for jobs in various sectors and the grave situation of unemployability can be dealt with in an organized manner.

The problem of unemployability is quite serious as it is the second-highest country which has a young population. About forty one percent population is of 15 – 19 years of age group. It is important that this young population should be turned into task-force.

Vocational skills are considered under the MSDE (Ministry of Skill Development & Entrepreneurship). Govt. of India introduced the first program, Skill India Development Mission with the collaboration of public & private sector in July 2015.

In continuation with the above endeavor, UGC launched a degree program called Bachelor of Vocation (B.Voc.). This program focused on the undergraduate level. This would accelerate the rate of employment, where the graduates can become a part of economy in-terms of employees or entrepreneurs.

In 2011, Tata Institute of Social Sciences initiated the SVC (School of Vocational Education) under the guidance of AICTE and the project was proposed by Ministry of HRD, Govt. of India. The program implemented Work Integrated Training Program.

It was the first ever program introduced in the field of education in India. the focus of the program was to impart job-specific skills amongst graduates. The program incorporated ‘Earn While You Learn’ concept where the students could earn stipend when they were working in the industry as a part of the degree program.

Vocational Courses in Hotel Management:

The Bachelor of Vocation program in hotel management is a 3 years degree program, imparting knowledge & skills essential for hotel industry. With the growth pace of Tourism & Hospitality industry, it has a huge requirement of skilled manpower.



The three years degree curriculum includes knowledge of all operational departments like Front Office, Housekeeping, Food Production/ Culinary, Food & Beverage Service, Sales & Marketing. It also includes ancillary subjects like Business Law, Human Resource Management, Financial Management and Entrepreneurship Development.

The program also includes internship or industry exposure where students are expected to work in the industry to understand the operations of each department.

The skills which are important to work in the hotel industry are Communication skills, Grooming, Confidence, Leadership, Punctuality, Time-management and Teamwork. The vocational courses impart these skills amongst students and prepare them to serve in the hotel industry as well as other service sectors in hospitality industry.

There are few renowned universities which offer vocational courses in hospitality sector. Savitribai Phule Pune University, University of Lucknow, Tezpur University, Andhra Loyola College and MGCGV, Chitrakoot are few to name.

The research is an attempt to understand the awareness of these vocational courses amongst the students. It is natural that the students generally have knowledge about traditional courses and colleges or institutes offering such courses. But as seen from the above literature, it is quite evident that the vocational education is more effective in shaping the professionals for any sector. It is much needed in the service sector where the employees are expected to serve the guests with required service standards and make sure that the services lead to guest satisfaction.

The literature was reviewed to understand the perception of the students towards vocational education.

LITERATURE REVIEW

D. Rathidevi, Dr M.V Sudhakaran (2019) in the research paper “Attitude of Students towards Vocational Education with Reference to Chennai City” has studied the perception of students towards vocational education. Authors stated that the Vocational Education makes the students ready for employment. Whereas the traditional Education covers only theory component and Vocational Education imparts practical skills. While undertaking the research the authors collected the data from 158 students, from different schools in city of Chennai. The authors have used five point Likert scale for evaluation from the respondents. Thirteen students related to the understanding of students were listed and responses were collected on the same.

The results showed that the students were not very confident about Vocational Education and also gender wise there were lot of differences amongst the students towards Vocational Courses. Analysis showed that most of the male students preferred Vocational Education than female students. Parameters like number of siblings, birth order, education of parents, and type of family were considered while taking the responses. Most of the students were not aware about Vocational Education the scope and opportunities of Vocational Education. To some extent the vocational subjects can be introduced from secondary level of schooling.

SobiaNazakat, Syed Afzal Shah& Syed Munir Ahmad (2017) in the study “Students ‘Awareness and Choice about Vocational Education at Secondary Level” the paper focused on the knowledge and their preference towards Vocational Education. The study focused on the knowledge of the students about the Vocational Education and to know about the willingness of their parents to join Vocational Education as a career. The inputs were taken from 400 secondary school students of Haripur district by using Stratified random technique.

For analyzing the data frequency t-test and percentage were used. Results show that most of the students agree that Vocational Education is important for career; the knowledge about the vocational education should be impacted by the teachers. Even the parents stated that vocational Education will be useful for their wards. Gender wise there was no difference seen in their knowledge about Vocational Education in Secondary level.

Ly Thi Tran, Sri Sojetminah (2016) in the research paper ‘Get Foot in the Door’: International Students’ Perceptions of Work Integrated Learning have focused on how Vocational Education learning is essential to assist students in developing their career skills and help them to get better jobs. The setting for Vocational Education was a concern for stakeholders, institutions and the students from different countries. The study answers the different meaning to Vocational Education which the students from other countries have understood.

The responds were taken from 105 students and Bourdieu’s thinking tools of capitals were used to evaluate the data. The research shows that Vocational Education not only helps in giving jobs to the students but also help them in getting



prestige, honor and recognition. The study in particular shows the way Vocational Education helps in the personal growth of the students.

Gerry Rayner, Theo Papakonstantinou (2015) in their study “Student perceptions of their workplace preparedness: Making work-integrated learning more effective” have focused on student placement and their opinion about Vocational Education and how Vocational Education has helped them to have more career options and also help them to be ready for workplace environment. The students were given a questionnaire few months after their placements which were related to what they have learnt and how it has helped them.

The questionnaire was circulated to 45 students out of which 42 responses were received. From the responses it was noted that the Vocational Courses were as per what they have learnt and what job were they doing. Vocational Education helps the students in getting the jobs that they are looking for.

The Vocational Education is useful for the students who have not completed their graduation in context to getting better job opportunities and the students also felt that the Vocational Courses help them to add value and to them. Vocational Environment also helps the students to adjust the work place environment and they get good experience by working with other professionals of the same field.

It was concluded that undergraduates from science field should have more knowledge from Vocational Programs and the structure of the Vocational program should be in such a way that it should help in better placements.

Nombeko Felicity Dwesini (2015) in the article “Assessing learners’ preparedness for work-integrated learning (WIL) at Walter Sisulu University, South Africa” the researcher has studied the efficiency of Vocational program as to what the students learn in theory and how much can they apply in practicality as required by the professional environment considering Water Sisulu University in South Africa. Secondary Education Institutes in south Africa are making lot of efforts to balance between theory of Vocational Courses with the in hand experience that is required and is essential for the work place environment. Vocational skills help in having hand in hand experience of the theory that the students learn with the practical skills.

The students that were taken were the Hospitality students from Water Sisulu University who have to undergo six months industrial training in different hotels in South Africa. The data that was collected was from group of students one who had finished the orientation program and had completed the vocational courses. The majority of the students thought that their readiness for the Vocational Courses is high and the study therefore will help them to improve the effectiveness of the Vocational Courses for the hospitality students. The study also focused on the qualities that are needed for work place environment and knowing the responsibilities in the professional place. The research also contributed towards what the respondents was expected to do and what can they expect back.

NamrataTognatta (2014) in the research paper “Technical and Vocational Education and Training in India- A Study of Choice and Returns” the author has identified that India has made a lot of progress in primary education but there needs to be more improvement in secondary education. The education at the higher level faces lot of problems and needs to be closely monitored. As the results, in the secondary education are not very encouraging as it faces lot of challenges and poor performance at the secondary level have resulted in remarkable shortfall at the work force level. Research shows that almost 14% of the fresher’s have graduation degree. The study shows that poor performance at the secondary level result into less salaries and mediocre wellbeing. Due to inadequate results of jobs and education, India is making policies to focus on training of vocational and technical education so as to encourage the potential candidates for the programs.

A long piece of writing is required to understand the training requirements of the country and how vocational education can help in developing employment. The education and training should consider the social and family background of each individual while making the policies. As the training and education decides on the jobs that the candidates will get after the vocational courses, the policies should consider factors like how many students enroll for graduation courses after secondary education. So it is important that the vocational courses are introduced at the secondary level for better skill development.

Catherine Bédoué, Jean François Germe, Tom Leney, Jordi Planas, Marianne Poumay, Russell Armstrong (2010) in the study “New and emerging issues in vocational education and training research beyond 2010” have discussed the



challenges and the issues that are faced during the conduct of vocational training courses. The paper focuses on the factors that impact the Vocational training courses in European countries.

The research also focuses on uncertainties that are related to Vocational education and training and how it affects the labor market in Europe. The research also wants to contribute to the creative and different ways that can be used in Vocational Courses. The authors strongly agree that Vocational education and training is very important for the social and environmental development of Europe. The paper has also tried to give emphasis on the points that are not looked upon which includes training for the people who are already working for years and people who have come from other countries.

Mitali Das (2013) in the research paper “The Vocational Education Experience in Guwahati City-An Empirical Study. it is discussed that Guwahati a city in north eastern region is a city with lot of economic and social impact. It is also a city of education as there are lot of institutes which offer lot of different educational streams and this also includes lot of Institutes offering various education. Guwahati city offers different kind of Vocational Courses which is defined by UNESCO as a course that is defined to get specific skill set for one particular job. The paper clarifies that by doing such Vocational Courses help the labor to get the right kind of jobs and also give them long lasting employability.

The paper focuses on the right kind of exposure that is given to Vocational Courses in the Guwahati city. The research also shows the different aspects of Vocational Courses in the city and how it can be practically implemented. The study also finds out about the family background of the students in Guwahati, the qualifications that are required and the merit that is given by the institute. It also studies the bridge between the Colleges and the Industry for better placements.

Rishi Kumar, ShrvanthMandava & Venkata Sandeep Gopanapalli (2019) in the research paper “Vocational training in India: determinants of participation and effect on wages” throws light on the fact that India needs to have enough jobs for the people as there is always a demand for labor as there is always a need for skill enhancement. The paper also throws light on how vocational courses have an impact on the salaries of the labor segment.

To analyze the need for Vocational courses the logit and multi-nominal logit models are used. The factors that were considered were social and family background and how the vocational courses help in deciding the salaries, to analyze this factor regression model is being used.

The results that were shown after the analysis is that people who stay in urban areas do not want to join the vocational courses. Male are more interested in receiving the formal training and by receiving a formal vocational training the increase in salaries was seen by 4.7%. The primary sector has noticed a salary increase by 36.9% and workers who had attended vocational courses in secondary phase have got in increment by 17.6%.

It was concluded that if you attend Vocational Courses the chances of you getting higher salaries increases and male who live in urban areas have been able to attend the Vocational training successfully.

Indra Prasetyo, Nabilah Aliyyah, Rusdiyanto, Heru Tjaraka, Nawang Kalbuana, Arif Syafi'ur Rochman (2021) in the article “Vocational Training Has an Influence on Employee Career Development: A Case Study Indonesia” the authors have identified that how training when on the job helps in a better career. Quantitative approach by taking the responses from 135 workers by using sampling method probability for 100 employees using sapling method and to analyze linear regressions was used.

The authors concluded that on the job training is beneficial for the employees to have better career in big organizations, medium scale companies were used by the researchers.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

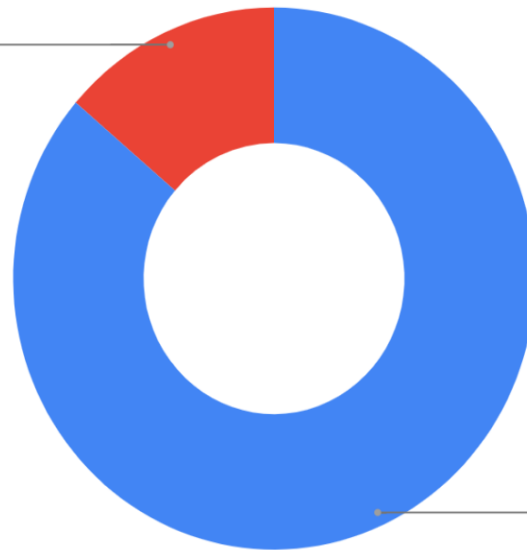
The study was carried out amongst the students studying in the Hospitality Sector. We wanted to understand the awareness of students pursuing Traditional course and their perspective towards Vocational course. The response was collected from the students who are a part of the Hospitality Sector and are aware of the various streams. A structured questionnaire was designed and circulated through Google forms and 131 responses were collected. The first section included all the demographic details of the respondents while the second section had questions related to awareness and their willingness to undergo Vocational Courses.

Data Analysis:

The data collected was analyzed with the help of statistical charts. The data interpretation is presented below with the help of charts.

Gender

Female
13.7%



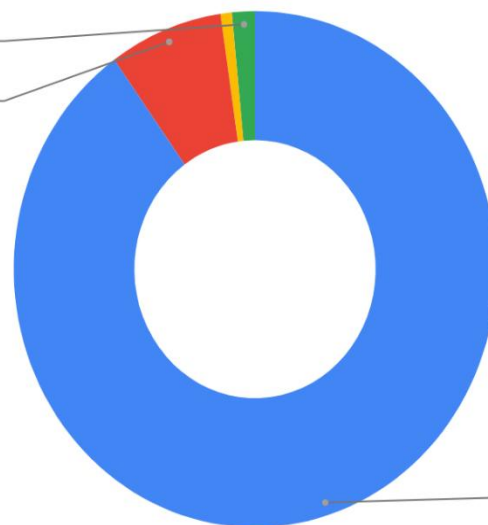
Male
86.3%

Fig 1: Gender of Respondents.

Across the survey done majority of the respondents were Male – 86.3% while the female respondents were only 13.7 %.

Courses being Pursued

Post Graduate
1.5%
4 years degree
7.6%



3 years degree
90.1%

Fig 2: Courses which are currently pursued by the respondents.

Most of the respondents are pursuing 3 years degree i.e., 90.1 %, while 4 years degree is opted for by only 7.6 % respondents and 1.5% respondents are pursuing postgraduate course.

Awareness about Vocational courses in Hospitality sector

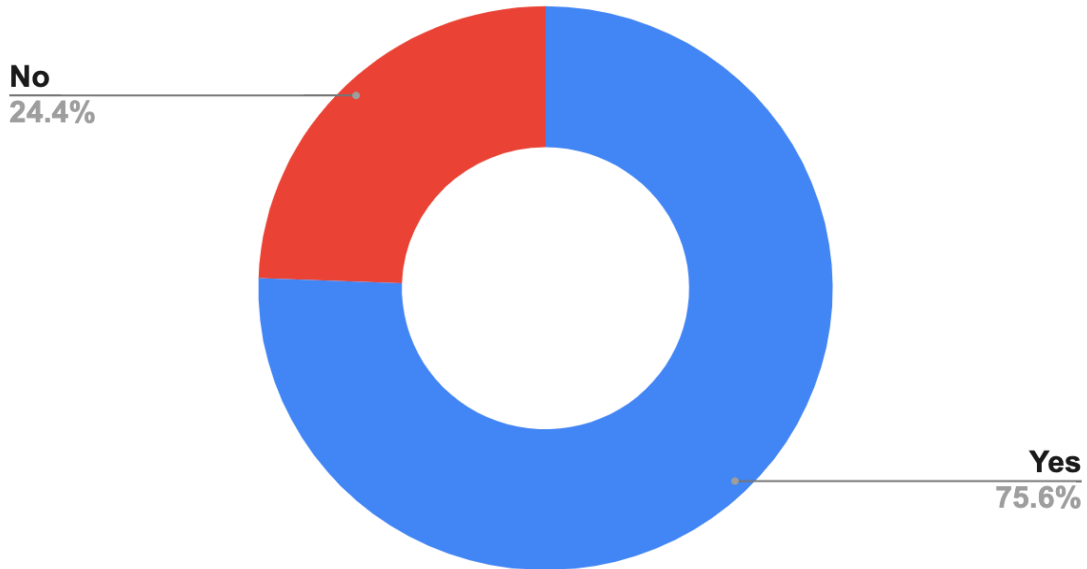


Fig 3: Awareness about Vocational courses offered in Hospitality Sector.

Most respondents, i.e., 75.6%, are aware of various vocational courses offered in the Hospitality industry. However, 24.4% of respondents are still ignorant about vocational courses and various such programs offered.

Preference towards Vocational course and Traditional course

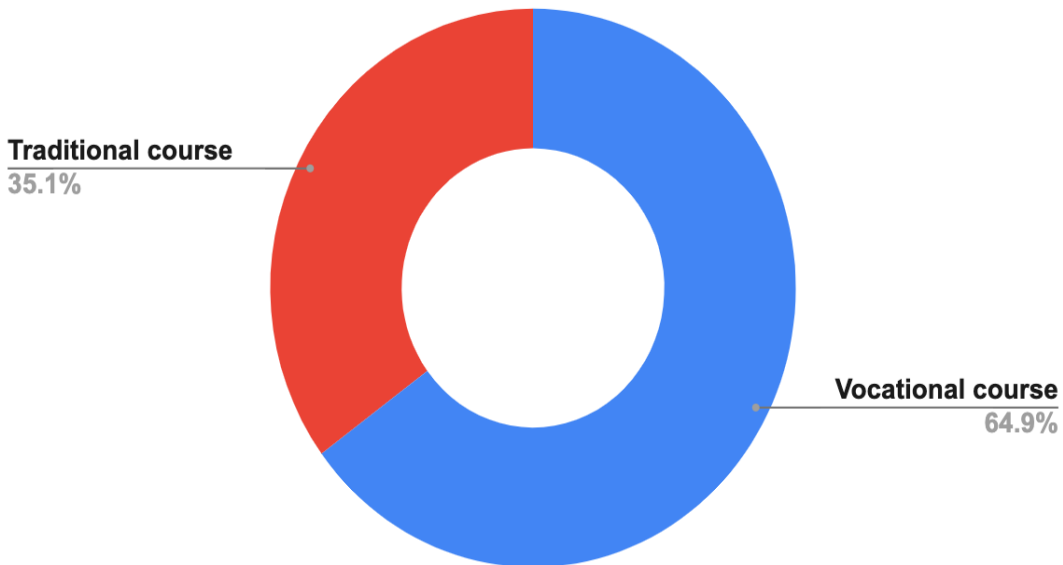


Fig 4: Respondents preference towards Vocational course or Traditional course.

Of the responses received 64.9% of the respondents preferred Vocational course over Traditional course. At the same time 35.1% of respondents still prefer to study a Traditional course.

Course which offers more practical exposure

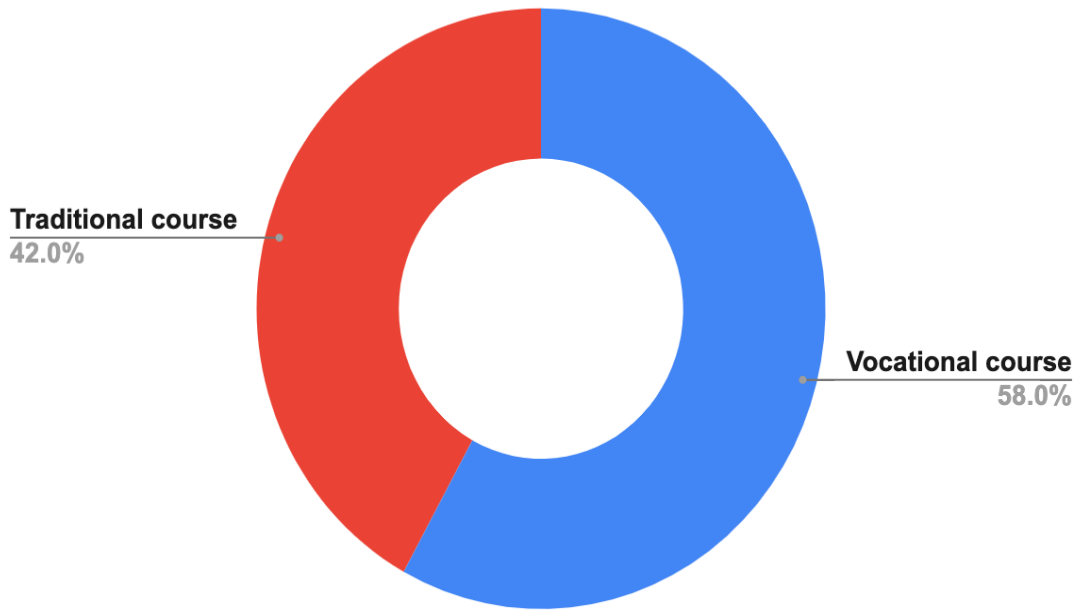


Fig 5: Practical Experience.

Of the responses received 58% of respondents feel that Vocational courses gives more practical or hands on experience as compared to Traditional courses and 42% respondents perceive that traditional course also provide adequate practical experience.

Willingness to do Vocational Course in addition to regular course

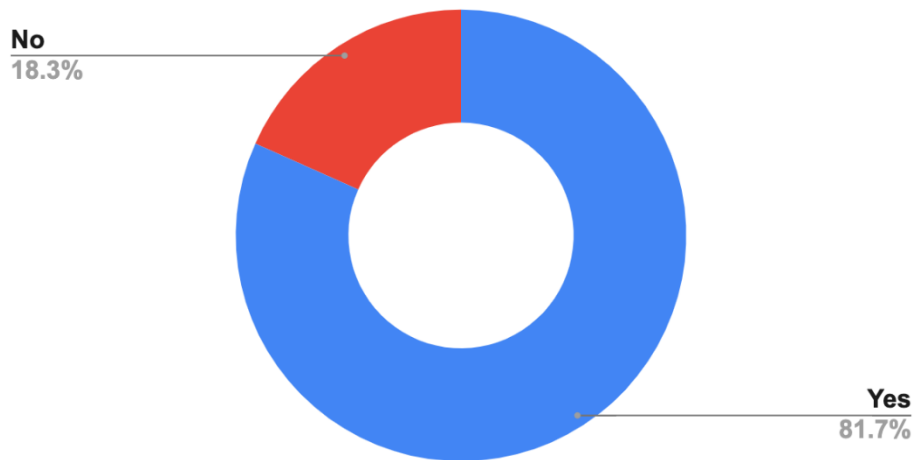


Fig 6: Willingness to do Vocational course in addition to your regular course.

Many of the respondents i.e., 81.7% of respondents feel that they should take up some additional vocational training in addition to regular course of study to gain more practical experience. While 18.3% of respondents do not feel the need for it while pursuing a regular course

Effectiveness of Vocational Course in Increasing Employability in Hospitality sector

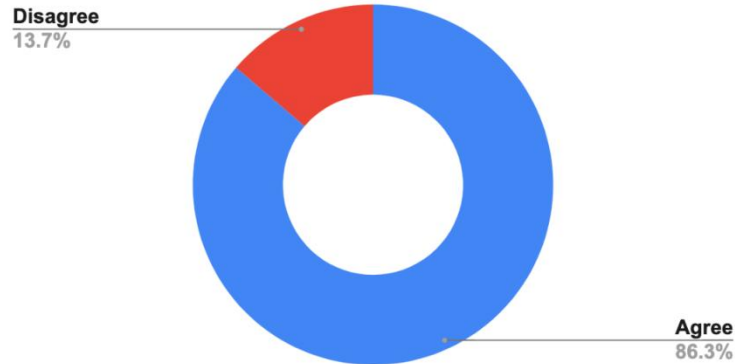


Fig 7: Effectiveness of Vocational Courses in Increasing Employability

86.3% of the respondents feel that vocational courses make you more efficient and give you enough practical experience which helps you get better employment. However, 13.7% respondents disagree with it and feel that Vocational courses do not increase employability.

Employers preference while hiring students from Vocational courses in Hospitality Industry

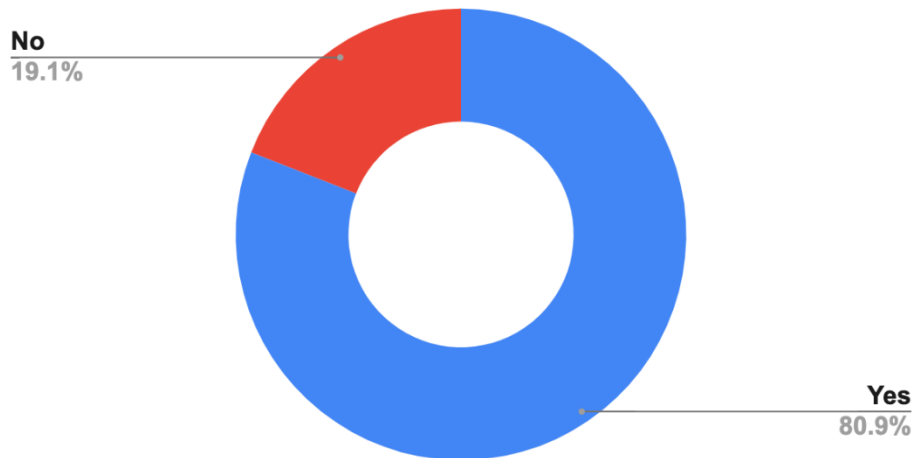


Fig 8: Employers preference while hiring students.

80.9% of respondents feel that employers prefer to hire students from Vocational courses as they are more competent and well equipped with practical knowledge, while 19.1% respondents deny.

FINDINGS

- The results show that respondents are aware about the various Vocational courses offered in Hospitality Industry.
- It has also been observed that Vocational courses are in more demand as compared to Traditional courses.
- There is a general understanding that Vocational courses give you more practical experience than Traditional courses.
- When students have more hands-on experience, they are very confident, and it makes them more employable.
- It was also observed that students are willing to do additional course along with their regular degree as it makes them more competent.
- Vocational courses get its employees ready for workplace which is helpful while performing various tasks.



- Vocational education is the term itself denotes the students are specialized and therefore they have more chances of employment as compared to others.
- Another benefit is that hands-on work activities allow direct application of acquired knowledge.
- This education provides stable jobs as these are the jobs whose demand is never fulfilled

CONCLUSION

Vocational courses are need of the hour. Students are interested in undergoing vocational courses as they provide them more hands on experience. Students also feel more competent while appearing for interviews as they have adequate industry exposure and know what is expected out of them. Vocational courses are designed in such a way that they impart skills which makes students ready for employment. Even employer prefers to hire such candidates as they do not require lot of training. Vocational courses also provide equal opportunity to students who do not pursue traditional degree. Also, it has been observed that lot of universities and institutes have started providing the option of vocational courses as it gives more hands on experience than just theoretical knowledge.

SUGGESTIONS

- It has been observed that students are interested in doing vocational courses so a greater number of colleges and universities should provide that option.
- Vocational courses should be given equivalent weight age as that of Traditional courses.
- Multiple skill development programmers should be introduced in the form of Vocational courses.
- Greater job opportunities should be created for candidates who undergo short term courses.

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