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www.aarf.asia, Email : editoraarf@gmail.com

THE FEATURE SCOPE OF HOSPITALITY & TOURISM EDUCATION IN ODISHA, INDIA

Dr. Rasmi Kanata Roul,

Assistant Professor, Department of Hotel and Tourism Management,
Central University of Rajasthan,

NH-8, Bandar Sindri, Dist-Ajmer-305817, Rajasthan, India

Email ID: rahulchefs@gmail.com

Dr. Rajashree Sutar,

Assistant Professor, Department of Hotel and Tourism Management,
Central University of Rajasthan,

NH-8, Bandar Sindri, Dist-Ajmer-305817, Rajasthan, India

Email ID: sutarr59@gmail.com

ABSTRACT

In today's competitive market, educational institutions emphasize hands-on experience. Among various branches of education, Hospitality & Tourism education plays a pivotal role and is in high demand. Hospitality & Tourism education is a skills-oriented professional course that offers boundless career opportunities across various fields. Even though India has made great progress and has a rapidly developing economy, it still faces many unresolved issues, including unemployment. In an increasingly competitive employment market, students and graduates must develop the skills to manage their careers and succeed in life. Refining our professional skills and service etiquette allows us to cater to individual performances, which mainly depend on our versatility. Studying tourism and hospitality management offers a wide range of professional advantages and countless opportunities. As a dynamic, rapidly growing industry, it offers continuous learning opportunities alongside significant economic growth and international travel. The global tourism and hospitality industry is a major pillar of the economy, generating an estimated 250 million jobs, accounting for approximately 10% of total employment worldwide. The Ministry of Tourism and various non-governmental organizations have introduced key skill-building initiatives in the hospitality industry, including courses such as Hunar se Rozgar Tak and Entrepreneurship Development Programmes (EDP), as well as partnerships with private firms such as BVG India. This paper will highlight the

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necessity for students to utilize the scope of education in the hospitality sector for employment. This paper identifies and connects gaps in current and future research, as well as in perceptions of hospitality and tourism education in Odisha. This publication is an important resource for hoteliers, stakeholders, fast food counters involved in tourism and hospitality education, as well as academicians, parents, students, and tourism practitioners, and it fosters the growth of hospitality education for future researchers. Today's hospitality education is the passport for employment in the field.

Keywords: Hospitality education; Tourism education; Employability; Hospitality Industry

INTRODUCTION

The hospitality industry serves as an alarming engine of global economic development, employment creation, and cross-cultural understanding (Airey et al., 2014; Hsu, 2018). In India, the hospitality industry is experiencing rapid expansion, driven by both domestic demand and international interest in the country's traditional culture and diverse landscapes (Kumar, 2018; Kumari, 2024). Odisha's unique blend of traditional temples, extensive, lovely coastline, vibrant rural hinterlands, and emerging modern architecture has significant untapped potential as a major tourist destination (Mohanty et al., 2019). However, capitalizing on these impactful requirements of a well-designed educational structure can provide the hospitality industry with a skilled, professional, and adaptable workforce (Pani & Sharma, 2015; Mohanty & Mohanty, 2019).

The education in hospitality and tourism sectors in India is at a critical stage, struggling with issues related to the educational structure, curriculum relevance, and the challenge of aligning academic outcomes with the dynamic and glamorous demands of the hospitality industry (Chathoth & Sharma, 2007; Dahiya, 2013). The success of the hospitality sector depends entirely on the quality and relevance of the education and practical skills imparted by hospitality and tourism institutions (Airey & Tribe, 2010). This connection requires continuous examination of current skilled educational policy and future supervision to ensure graduates are not only employable but also equipped to drive innovation, skill, and excellence in service (Pani et al., 2015; Kusumawardhana, 2019).

This research examines the future scope of hospitality and tourism education in the state of Odisha. The study aims to examine the existing landscape critically, identify the key elements of the problem and the challenges confronting educators and students, and provide planned opportunities for growth and innovation. Specially attempt to understand the prevailing professional skill gaps between industry expectations and educational output (Mohanty & Mohanty, 2019), the potential role of

creativity like rural tourism, traditional culture is reflected on rural tourism and its create impact for attracting tourists (Mohanty et al., 2019), distance learning in professional skill development program in hospitality education is creating important image (Nayak et al., 2021), and the changing sense of stakeholders towards the education of professionalism (Mohanty, 2018).

The tourism sector has the potential to generate high employment growth through a mix of hotels, transport, shopping, food, entertainment, and other areas. It is the Hospitality sector that binds together many other employment-generating sectors through backward and forward linkages. Tourism is a highly labor-intensive business. It not only creates direct employment but also creates opportunities for indirect employment. By integrating existing studies and analyzing the specific cultural context of Odisha, this research aims to shed light on how professional courses can be better aligned to foster sustainable tourism development and enhance the employability of local people (Pani et al., 2015). Most probably, this study provides a comprehensive overview of the state of hospitality research, tourism, and hospitality education in the place, and lays the groundwork for a more effective and impactful tourism and hospitality education ecosystem (Sharma, 2024; Oram et al., 2025).

The hospitality and tourism sector represents a broad range of career opportunities in industries that include: -

- Hotels and resorts
- Restaurants and commercial food service
- Meeting and event planning
- Tourism destinations and attractions
- Leisure, recreation, and sports management
- Airlines, cruises, and other transportation
- Environmentally sustainable and cultural tourism development
- Spa and wellness management

As a vast, dynamic, and growing industry, the hospitality and tourism sector provides tremendous opportunities for ambitious students who enjoy working with people. The hospitality and tourism industry operates in a highly competitive environment. Students in hospitality and tourism management programs are well-rounded, with a combination of business and life skills in high demand with employers.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

A Review of Indian Hospitality and Tourism Education:

The National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT) serves as the apex body, and around 80 institutes, including 21 central institutes and 25 state government institutes. To ensure academic standards nationwide, the national council developed an academic curriculum for its courses. Initially, it offered a three-year diploma after 12th or 10+2; this was upgraded to a three-year bachelor's degree in 2002 through negotiations with IGNOU. This partnership was established when both NCHMCT and IGNOU signed a Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) in New Delhi on March 11, 2002 (Kumar, 2018).

The National Council for Hotel Management and Catering Technology (NCHMCT), in cooperation with IGNOU, began a Master's degree in Hotel Administration following a 2002 memorandum of understanding circulated to IHMs (NCHMCT, 2002). During this time, many private hospitality and tourism institutes were established, and many of them issued unauthorized degrees, diplomas, and certificates. Many private hospitality and tourism colleges are affiliated with UGC-recognized universities (www.ugc.ac.in) for degree studies and require AICTE approval for technical education standards, thereby enhancing both recognition and quality of education.

Research on hospitality and tourism education in Odisha, India, emphasizes the hospitality sector's significant economic and employment-generating potential, alongside persistent challenges in curriculum mapping, quality, and alignment with industry standards. This review integrates existing research to establish the content and identify the gaps in current understanding, particularly in relation to the state of Odisha.

The Growth and Strategic importance of the Tourism industry in Odisha:

Researcher identifies Odisha as a prime tourist destination whose vast array of religious, ancient, and traditional sites remains significantly under-leveraged in the global tourism market. The hospitality and tourism industry regularly contributes to the state's GDP, according to the Odisha Tourism policies (2024 and 2025), which aim to promote sustainable, green tourism while creating employment opportunities. Research indicates a consistent increase in visitors' footfall pre-pandemic, underscoring a growing demand for hospitality services and the corresponding need for a skilled workforce. Researchers have specifically identified the scope of niche areas, such as rural tourism in Odisha, and have demonstrated that the necessary skill sets are in place (Mohanty et al., 2019).

Issues and challenges in Hospitality and tourism Education:

All over India, hospitality and tourism education (HTE) faces regular challenges. Researcher provides a gentle opinion, contending that despite government support for the Ministry of Tourism-led Institute of Hotel Management (IHMs). The hospitality and tourism education sector is plagued by deficient infrastructure, a scarcity of qualified and skilled faculty, and inconsistent accreditation standards across private institutions (Kumar, 2018). Highlight the need for an innovative course structure and the impactful role of technology in enhancing the competitiveness and productivity of hospitality education (Dahiya, 2013). Additionally, a recurring criticism in the literature is the disconnect between educational institutions and the hospitality industry they serve. Existing educational curricula frequently prioritize theoretical models, whereas hospitality and tourism industries emphasize professionalism and expertise in practical and soft skills, resulting in a notable mismatch between graduates' skills and employers' expectations.

The Skill Gap between Industry and Academia:

In regional contexts such as Odisha, the misalignment between educational outputs and professional requirements in the hospitality and tourism sector is notably acute. This study clearly examines the professional skill gap in hospitality education and the local hospitality sector in Odisha (Mohanty & Mohanty, 2010). Their analytical approach determines a clear divergence between the theoretical concepts taught in academic settings and the applied, on-the-job abilities required by the hospitality industry. Bridging this gap requires a combination of both theoretical knowledge and practical training to be effective. Explore the evolving nature of Hospitality and Tourism Education, its direct impact on employability, and propose that traditional curricula are insufficient to meet modern demands (Pani et al., 2015). The challenge is further compounded by the hospitality and tourism sectors sometimes treating industrial or vocational trainees as a source of cheap labor, which can negatively influence students' perceptions and motivation toward the hospitality and tourism industry as an achievable career path (Mohanty, 2018). Performed an empirical analysis to evaluate the changing attitudes of students and parents toward hospitality and tourism education within the state of Odisha.

Innovation, Perceptions, and Future Direction:

The literature explores the human dimensions of hospitality and tourism education, addressing the critical roles of both educators and students. The study reveals that, although there is latent in the sector, concerns about career progression, demanding work schedules, and low compensation ultimately undermine both recruitment and retention (Mohanty, 2018). To resolve these persistent

challenges, researchers have proposed several creative solutions and explored the role of distance and open education, using IGNOU (Indira Gandhi National Open University) as a case study, in offering necessary professional skills training, which provides a flexible solution for a diverse place like Odisha (Nayak et al., 2021). Current discussions on curriculum maps highlight the need for a forward-thinking framework that incorporates sustainability, technological advancements, and global trends, while maintaining strong local relevance (Kusumawardhana, 2019).

LITERATURE SUMMARY AND RESEARCH GAPS

The existing literature provides a robust foundation for analyzing the general challenges in Indian hospitality and tourism education and specifically delineates the unique tourism potential in and around Odisha. Despite evidence of a specific hospitality and tourism education professionalism skill gap and the potential for niche markets, few studies bridge Odisha's specialized hospitality and tourism policies with the creative training programs required to meet future demand. This study focuses on specific local hospitality and tourism aspects rather than on integrating educational infrastructure development with the precise, emerging needs of Odisha's tourism market. This paper synthesizes these findings to serve actionable strategies for developing Odisha's hospitality and tourism education to meet the demands of the future hospitality industry.

RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The study aims to examine hospitality and tourism education in Odisha, with a specific focus on evaluating emerging challenges and future opportunities in the state.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This paper uses a descriptive study to examine the hospitality and tourism education landscape in Odisha, drawing on a comprehensive literature review and secondary data analysis. The study uses a mixed-methods quantitative and qualitative approach, synthesized from many studies that used a range of methodologies, e.g., surveys, statistical analysis, and interviews.

Collection of Data: Researchers collected data from existing sources.

The sources are from:

- **Academic Journals:** Skill gap analyses, peer-reviewed articles focusing on hospitality and tourism education in Odisha, industry trends, and curriculum development (Reference provided).

- **Reports and Publications from Government:** Documents from the Odisha Tourism department, Ministry of Tourism, and the Tourism and Hospitality Council (THSC), which served data on tourist statistics, policy initiatives, and skill gap assessments.
- **Conference Books and proceedings:** Edited volumes and conference papers promoting originality and scope of hospitality and tourism education in the sector.
- **Websites of Office:** Data collected from the institute and university websites offering the course in Odisha to understand the current curriculum maps.

This depends on the existing literature, which allows for a wide, provisional understanding of the study problem without engaging primary data sources. By relying on existing literature rather than primary data collection, this study achieves a comprehensive and contextualized perspective on the research problem.

DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

In Odisha, hospitality and tourism education is evolving from traditional vocational education towards a service-oriented academic ecosystem (Kumari, 2024). It is undergoing a major evolution, driven by Odisha's strategic plan to become one of Asia's top tourism destinations. Nowadays, academic learning has shifted completely from theory to practice, aligning with the industry's approach to cultivate a skilled professional workforce.

- **Job creation and Economic integration:** Hospitality and Tourism now contribute more than 13% Odisha's GDP. The state Government's vision for 2025 is to create more jobs in these sectors.
- **Bridging the skills gap between education and apprenticeships:** A major achievement in 2025 was the rollout of apprenticeship-integrated degrees. The hotel and tourism industries have reached a remarkable milestone in filling the gap between theory and practice. These hospitality courses provide students with mandatory practical knowledge before graduation.
- **Value Creation Pathways:** In 2026, global hotel brands such as Taj (Vivanta), Hyatt, Sorover, Fortune ITC group, and Radisson are expanding in Puri and Bhubaneswar, driving a surge in demand for hospitality professionals. The growth of the tourism and hospitality industries provides high earning potential to graduates.

The outlook for tourism and hospitality education in Odisha is unprecedented. The scope for tourism and hospitality education in Odisha is to develop frameworks aligned with the state's vision. The

state is changing local unemployment challenges into an advantage by strategically empowering its youth to be competitive innovators in the global tourism and hospitality sector.

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