

A Study On The Training And Development Programs For Improving Business Operations In The Field Of Travel And Tourism Areas Under Kerala Cooperative Tourism Sector

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ABSTRACT

The tourism and hospitality industry Kerala, India has experienced significant growth in recent years, with cooperative societies playing an increasingly important role. However, the lack of adequate training and development initiatives has hindered the ability of these cooperatives to deliver high-quality services and remain competitive. This study aims to investigate the importance of training and development for enhancing the performance of tourism and hospitality businesses operating under the Kerala Cooperative Tourism Sector. The research employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative surveys and qualitative interviews. A sample of 150 employees and 30 managers from various tourism cooperatives in Kerala were surveyed to assess their perceptions of current training practices, skills gaps, and the impact of training on job performance. Additionally, semi-structured interviews were conducted with 15 industry experts and cooperative leaders to gain deeper insights into the challenges and opportunities related to training and development in the sector. The findings reveal significant positive relationship between the provision of training and employee performance. Job satisfaction and customer satisfaction. However, the results also highlight the inadequacy of current training initiatives in the Kerala Cooperative Tourism Sector, with many employees reporting insufficient training opportunities and a lack of alignment between training content and job requirements.

Keywords : Travel, Tourism, hospitality, training, development, Kerala, cooperatives, employee performance, service quality, cooperative societies, human resource management

INTRODUCTION OF KERALA COOPERATIVE TOURISM SECTOR

Despite the potential of the Kerala Cooperative Tourism Sector to drive sustainable tourism growth, several challenges have hindered its development. One of the key issues faced by tourism cooperatives is the lack of adequate training and development initiatives for their employees and members (Rajendran & Suresh, 2019). Many cooperatives struggle to provide their staff with the necessary skills and knowledge to deliver high-quality services and adapt to the changing demands of the tourism industry (Nair & Rajan, 2020). This skills gap has led to inconsistent service quality, low customer satisfaction, and reduced competitiveness of the cooperative tourism sector (Pradeep & Rajasenan, 2021).

Researcher in this study is the lack of adequate training and development initiatives in the Kerala Cooperative Tourism Sector and its impact on the performance of tourism and hospitality businesses. Despite the recognition of the importance of human resource development in the tourism industry (Baum, 2015; Okumus et al., 2018), there is limited research on the specific training needs and challenges faced by cooperative tourism enterprises in developing economies like India (Singh & Jamal, 2021).

The second section presents the findings on the current state of training and development practices in the cooperative tourism sector, based on the descriptive statistics of the survey data and the qualitative insights from the interviews and focus groups. This section includes tables on the availability and frequency of training programs, as well as the types of training programs offered. The third section reports the findings on the perceived importance and effectiveness of training. Based on the descriptive statistics of the survey data and the qualitative insights from the interviews and focus groups. This section includes tables on the perceived importance and effectiveness of training, as well as excerpts from the interviews and focus groups illustrating the key findings and patterns.

The fourth and fifth sections present the findings on the impact of training on employee and organizational performance. Respectively, based on the correlation and regression analysis of the survey data and the qualitative insights from the interviews and focus groups. These sections include tables on the correlation matrices and regression results, as well as excerpts from the interviews and focus groups supporting the quantitative findings.

OBJECTIVES

To assess the current state of training and development practices in the Kerala cooperative tourism sector

HYPOTHESES

There is a significant positive relationship between the provision of training and development initiatives and employee performance in the Kerala cooperative tourism sector

PROCEDURES AND FINDINGS

The key findings of the study highlighted the relative prevalence and diversity of training and development practices in the cooperative tourism sector, but also revealed significant gaps and challenges in the coverage, relevance, and effectiveness of these practices. The study provided strong empirical evidence of the positive impact of training on various indicators of employee and organizational performance, such as job satisfaction, organizational commitment, job performance, service quality, customer satisfaction, and financial performance. The study also identified several critical success factors and best practices for effective training and development in the cooperative tourism sector, such as strategic alignment, participatory approach, contextualized content, blended learning methods, and continuous learning culture.

The implications of the findings suggested the need for a more holistic, participatory, and sustainable approach to training and development in the cooperative tourism sector, that involves the active engagement and empowerment of all stakeholders, and that contributes to the economic, social, and environmental goals of the sector and the region. The study provided valuable insights and recommendations that can inform and guide the future research, policy-making, and practice in this field, and that can contribute to the development of a more resilient. Competitive and responsible tourism industry in Kerala and beyond. Component practices are relatively common in the The study revealed that cooperative Kerala, with the majority of enterprises providing some form of allaying to their employees. However, the frequency, duration, and types of raining vary considerably across enterprises, and there are significant gaps and limitations in the coverage and relevance of the raining offerings. The most common types of training provided are technical skills, customer service, and safety and security, while soft skills, leadership, and diversity training are less prevalent.

The perceived importance and effectiveness of training are generally high among employees and managers, with the majority recognizing the critical role of training in enhancing their skills, knowledge, and competencies, and improving their job satisfaction, organizational commitment, and job performance. However, some challenges and limitations are also noted, such as the lack of relevance, applicability, follow-up, and evaluation of the training content and outcomes. The study provided strong empirical evidence of the positive impact of training on various indicators of employee and organizational performance, using both quantitative and qualitative data and analysis. The findings showed significant associations between training participation and perceived effectiveness, and jobs Satisfaction, organizational commitment. job performance, service quality, customer satisfaction, and financial performance, even after controlling for relevant demographic and organizational factors.

The study also identified several challenges and barriers to effective training and development in the cooperative tourism sector, such as resource constraints, lack of management support, employee-related factors, training design and delivery issues, and external environmental factors. These challenges highlight the need for a more collaborative, integrated, and Sustainable. Approach to training and development that involves the participation and support of all stakeholders, and addresses the systemic and structural issues that affect the sector.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF RESPONDENTS

The survey sample consisted of 350 employees and managers from various cooperative tourism enterprises in the Kerala region, having worked in their current organization for 1-5 years. This suggests a relatively stable workforce in the cooperative tourism sector, with a significant proportion of employees having several years of experience in their current organization. The sample includes a diverse range of age groups, education levels, job positions, and tenures, effecting the various characteristics and experiences of the workforce In the sector However, this important to note that the sample may not be fully representative of all cooperative tourism enterprises in Kerala, as it is based on a limited number of enterprises and locations, The sample may also be subject to selection bias, as it includes only those employees and managers who were willing and available to participate in the survey. Despite these limitations, the demographic profile of the survey respondents provides a useful context for interpreting the findings of the study and assessing the generalize ability of the results lo the broader population of employees and managers in the cooperative tourism sector in Kerala.

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	189	54%
Female	161	46%
Age		
18-24 years	56	16%
25-34 years	122	35%
35-44 years	116	33%
45-54 years	42	12%
55 years and above	14	4%
Education level		
Diploma or lower	63	18%
Bachelor degree	203	58%
Masters degree	70	20%
Doctoral degree	14	4%
Job position		
Front office	112	32%
Food and beverage	98	28%
House keeping	70	20%
Sales and marketing	42	12%
Management	28	8%
Tenure		
Less than 1 year	56	16%
1-5 years	189	54%
6-10 years	77	22%
More than 10 year	28	8%

The tenure of the respondents ranged from less than 1 year to more than 10 years, with the majority with male (54%) female 46% the majority of the respondents 68% were in the group of 25-44 years indicating a relatively young work force in the cooperative tourism sector . in the terms of education level the majority respondents had bachelors degree while 24% had masters degree or higher , and 18 percentage had a diploma or lower education level. This suggests a relatively well educated workforce in the cooperative tourism sector, with a significant proportion of employees having higher education qualification. This job positions of the respondents were diverse, with 32% working in front office and customer service role , 28% in food and beverage service , 20% in housekeeping and maintenance , 12% in sales and marketing , and 8% in management and administration roles . the distribution reflects the various functional areas and hierarchical levels of the cooperative tourism enterprises The demographic profile of the survey respondents suggests that the sample is representative of the target population of employees and managers in the cooperative tourism sector in Kerala.

CURRENT STATUS OF TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT PRACTICES

"In today's competitive tourism market, we cannot afford to have a workforce that is not properly trained and skilled. Training is not just about improving individual performance, but also about building the capacity and resilience of our organization as a whole. It helps us to adapt to changing market conditions, to innovate and improve our services, and to attract and retain high-quality talent." However, some participants also noted the challenges and limitations of the current training programs in the cooperative tourism sector, such as the lack of relevance and applicability of

sector, with greater emphasis on the specified needs and contexts of the enterprises and their employees and impact of Training on Employee Performance The survey results and qualitative data provide evidence of the impact of training on employee performance in the cooperative tourism sector in Kerala, the correlation matrix of the key variables related to training and employee performance, based on the survey data.

presents the results of the regression analysis of the impact of training on employee 162 performance, controlling for demographic variables such as age, gender, education level, job and tenure. Research had contributed to the

improvement customer satisfaction, and financial performance. For example, one manager stated: Training is not just an expense for our organization, but an investment in our most important assets or people. By providing regular and relevant training programs to our employees, we are building the capacity and capability of our organization to meet the changing needs and expectations of our customers, and to compete effectively in the market. We have seen tangible benefits from our training investments, such as increased customer loyalty, positive word-of-mouth, and higher revenue and profitability." Another employee highlighted the impact of training on the innovation and continuous improvement of the cooperative enterprise:

"They learn from the best practices and experiences of other enterprises, and we bring back these insights and apply them to our own context. Through training, we are able to stay up-to-date with the latest trends and technologies in the tourism industry, and to continuously improve and innovate our services and processes." However, some participants also noted the challenges and limitations of the current training programs in the cooperative tourism sector, such as the lack of alignment between the training and the strategic goals and objectives of the organization, the lack of measurement and evaluation of the training outcomes and impact, and the lack of integration between the training and the other human resource management functions.

CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS TO TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT

"Have a more strategic and integrated approach to training and development, with clear metrics and indicators for measuring the impact and return on investment of our training programs." Overall, the survey results and qualitative data provide strong evidence of the positive impact of training on organizational performance in the cooperative tourism sector in Kerala. The 34 findings highlight the strategic importance of training for the long-term success and sustainability of the cooperative enterprises, and the tangible benefits of training investments in terms of service quality, customer satisfaction, and financial performance.

However, the findings also reveal some of the challenges and limitations of the current training programs in the sector, such as the lack of alignment with organizational strategy, the lack of measurement and evaluation of training outcomes and impact, and the lack of integration with other human resource management functions. These findings underscore the need for a more strategic, integrated, and evidence-based approach to training and development in the cooperative tourism sector, with greater emphasis on the alignment with organizational goals and objectives, the measurement and evaluation of training outcomes and impact, and the integration with other human resource management functions such as performance management, compensation, and career development. Lack of infrastructure and facilities -Low priority and commitment support -Resistance to change and innovation -Lack of communication and involvement -Low motivation and engagement employee-related factors High turnover and absenteeism Diversity and language barriers Lack of relevance and customization Training design and delivery Lack of practical and hands-on learning - Lack of follow-up and reinforcement - Seasonality and market fluctuations External factors Competition and technological changes - Legal and regulatory requirements. The results show that the main challenges and barriers to training and development in the cooperative tourism sector can be grouped into five main themes: resource constraints, lack of management support, employee-related factors, training design and delivery, and external factors. Resource constraints were one of the most frequently mentioned challenges by the participants, particularly the lack of financial resources to invest in training programs and infrastructure.

The research study employed a mixed-methods approach, combining a quantitative survey of 350 employees and managers from various cooperative tourism enterprises in Kerala, and qualitative interviews and focus groups with key stakeholders, including cooperative leaders, government officials, and industry experts. The data were analyzed using a range of statistical and thematic techniques, and the findings were interpreted and discussed in relation to the research objectives and questions, and in comparison with the existing literature and knowledge in the field.

CONCLUSION

The study aimed to investigate the importance of training and development for enhancing the performance of tourism and hospitality business operating under the Kerala cooperative tourism sector. The research is motivated by recognition of the critical role that human resource development plays in the success and sustainability of cooperative tourism enterprises and the need for empirical evidence and practical recommendations to guide the design and implementation of effective training and development initiatives in the sector. The study concentrated on investigating the importance of training and development in enhancing the performance of tourism and hospitality enterprises within the cooperative tourism sector of Kerala. This research is motivated by the recognition of the critical role that human resource development plays in the success and sustainability of cooperative tourism organizations. Additionally, it underscores the need for empirical data and practical recommendations to guide the formulation and implementation of effective training and development initiatives in this field. The research employed a variety of methodological strategies,

including conceptual analyses, case studies, surveys, and qualitative interviews, thereby creating a comprehensive and varied evidence base for the investigation.

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