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Significant developments and emerging issues in Human Resource Management

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Introduction

The relationship between Human Resource Management (HRM) and business performance has been high on the agenda of many hospitality organisations for nearly two decades. Yet establishing that relationship remains elusive, with organisations seeking to deploy 'best practice' methods or more contingent approaches such as 'best fit' or 'bundles' of HR practices, in pursuit of a positive impact on the bottom line. It is here that academic research has made, and can continue to make, a contribution through systematic and rigorous empirical studies in various organisational settings. Not only is this invaluable evidence that organisations may learn from, but also it forms the basis for more critical scrutiny among the many students across the world studying HRM as a core module on hospitality management courses.

While 'soft', resource-based and value-added HR policies are deemed essential to achieve the delivery of high service quality and customer care, the reality is somewhat different. Although there are exceptions (for example, Hoque 1999a, b; Haynes and Fryer, 2000), most research concludes that 'the industry could do better' (for example, Price, 1994; Worsfold, 1999; McGunnigle and Jameson, 2000; Lucas, 2002, 2004). Perhaps most concern centres on 'hard' cost-driven HR policies, where staff are treated as 'another resource' to be deployed, and not as humans with aspirations and potential. Few would disagree that people, like any other resource, have to be as utilised effectively and as efficiently as possible, but this should not be achieved at the expense of personal dignity or wellbeing. Hence for many employees, they seek a satisfactory experience at work, good relationships with their superiors and peers, and a fair reward for the effort they have contributed. To keep their side of the bargain, organisations have a duty to ensure HR issues are high on the agenda and fit coherently with other strategies, and that the organisation's HR will is instilled in their managers through appropriate training and development in all aspects of people management.

Our approach

Our analysis is based on a review of refereed articles, discussion papers and short papers in key academic journals during 2002 and 2003. While the use of just two years means we can only offer a snapshot view, it does enable us to identify those issues that are current on the research agenda, and those that are not.

Hospitality journals

The main focus is on a selection of the most highly regarded journals dedicated to hospitality management research. This journal (IJHM) and the International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management (IJCHM) are UK-based. The Cornell Hotel

and Restaurant Administration Quarterly (CHRAQ) and the International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration (IJHTA) are American-based, while the Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management (JHTM) is Australian based. Most of them draw contributions from across the world, although CHRAQ tends to a largely North American output. All journals cover a wide-ranging list of topics of interest to academics, educators and managers, although where they place their emphasis differs. Thus the IJHM is published with the support of the International Association of Hotel Management Schools, while the IJCHM has links with the industry's professional body, the Hotel, Catering and International Management Association.

Each volume of these journals, with the exception of IJHTA, contains between four and seven issues each year. In the IJHM refereed articles are normally 6,000 words, and discussion papers 3,000 words, whereas the word limit for articles and viewpoints in the IJCHM is normally 5,000 words and 2,500 words respectively. Although length of the different contributions and their mix determines the annual total output of contributions, as a general rule the more issues per annum the greater the total number of papers. Hence, over the two years under review, the IJHTA contains the largest number of total papers (165), followed by the IJCHM and CHRAQ (112 papers each), the IJHM contains 61 contributions and the JHTM 54 papers.

In attempting to isolate those contributions that are HRM-related from the grand total of over 500 papers we have used the broad criterion that they can be classified in one of four ways. The broad classifications used are general HRM, employee resourcing, employee development and employee relations. This process is inevitably subjective, and we have used HRM not only to signify approaches that attempt to link HRM to other strategic developments, but also to denote other HRM issues, such as culture, and service quality (SQ). The basis for classification is the authors' choice of key words, our own key words where none are given and the title of the paper. In some cases the key words can belie what is clearly a topical HR issue, such as the service orientation of contact employees. We also include articles that appear to focus on education but are clearly related to management development or career development.

HRM is clearly an important topic within all the hospitality journals, with over 100 published papers in this field. The IJCHM has published two special editions dedicated to HRM over the review period. One addresses the impact of strategic HR on organisational performance, while the other is concerned with various approaches to learning, including action learning, workplace learning and organisational learning.

Other HRM-related journals

In addition we also consider more mainstream HRM journals. These are Human Resource Management Journal (HRMJ), Asia Pacific Journal of Human Resources (APJHR), the British Journal of Industrial Relations (BJIR), the Industrial Relations Journal (IRJ) and Employee Relations (ER). Most are aimed at academics, although for example HRMJ is endorsed by the UK's HRM professional body the Chartered Institute of Personnel and Development. However, the number of contributions on HRM in hospitality is inevitably small, totalling just seven over the two-year period. These journals present papers on HRM and employment relations form a very wide range of industries and services, not all of which have been featured. Hence it is

useful to note that the hospitality industry (HI) is of interest to a small number of 'mainstream' HR academics.

What HRM issues are topical and emergent?

Hospitality journals

Rather than present a 'broad brush' approach, which runs the risk of losing some important details, we have decided to present a series of tables that both describe and theme the topical and emergent issues. Each table contains the central topic of each paper, illustrated by the actual title or a slightly annotated version of it. The essence of each paper is captured by the key words. We then theme each paper as HRM, employee resourcing, employee development and employee relations, in a number of cases using a multiple-choice approach. Finally we identify the number of HRM papers from the total number published.

The IJHM analysis is shown in Table 1. Some 28 per cent of papers are concerned with HRM, mostly in hotels and restaurants. Over the two years, none is themed as general HRM, and the other three categories are pretty evenly featured, with employee relations winning by a short head. However, in 2003, employee development and employee relations together account for the bulk of the papers. Employee development has centred on managers and front-line service workers, while the issues of tipping has been the main employee relations issue. Although the tables do not show the research methods used by the researchers, in the interests of simplicity, we can note that quantitative research using survey is the predominant approach taken.

Table 1 about here

The ICJHM picture over the two years is shown in Table 2. Clearly the fact that 40 per cent of papers are HRM-related owes much to the publication of two issues dedicated to HRM in 2002, and these cover a good range of different sectors beyond hotel and restaurants, including theme parks, mountain resort operations, airports and private clubs. Employee development emerges as the largest theme, in part influenced by one of the special issues, which contain nine papers on learning. Employee relations, closely followed by general HRM follow next. The latter would not have featured so prominently had the other special edition not focused on HRM and organisational performance. Taking 2003 on its own highlights the importance of employee relations, with employee development and employee resourcing a little way behind. The scope and mix of topics, including Sabbath-keeping in the Caribbean and smoking policies in UK pubs, also reflects this journal's claim to be a niche for the latest developments in contemporary ideas across the different sectors of the HI. Interestingly a majority of the papers is based on qualitative research methods, including case studies.

Table 2 about here

One-fifth of the CHRAQ papers, summarised in Table 3, is concerned with HRM issues. Employee relations is the main theme over the two years, with employee resourcing and employee development together accounting for a similar number of papers. Collective bargaining and legal issues have been key employee relations

issues over the period. In 2003 there were more than double the number of HRM papers compared to 2002, mostly in employee relations and employee development, but they do not fall into clearly identifiable categories or themes. Although researchers most commonly use quantitative methods, a qualitative approach has been used as the basis for one-third of these papers, most notably in employee relations.

Table 3 about here

HRM is not a popular topic within the IJHTA, summarised in Table 4, as only 7 per cent of papers deal predominantly with either with general HRM and employee development, with employee relations some way behind and employee resourcing rarely featuring at all. The issues presented in this journal focus generally on the ways in which HRM is operationalised in hospitality organisations and the methods for hospitality employees development. The journal has a global perspective, investigating issues within a range of world regions. The primary method of research emerging from this journal is quantitative, with much of the analysis using either descriptive analysis, Factor Analysis (such as Doran, Haddad and Chow, 2003; Pennington-Gray, Beland, and Sklar, 2002) and ANOVA (see, for example, Harris and Durocher, 2003).

Table 4 about here

Just over ten per cent of the JTHM's papers are HRM and employee relations-related, as shown in Table 5. Although small in number, employee development issues have attracted the most interest. This journal is a relatively new journal having replaced The Australian Journal of Hospitality Management. The journal provides special editions for papers presented at both the Council for Australian University Tourism and Hospitality Educators (CAUTHE) as well as for best papers presented at the Council for Hospitality Management Educators (CHME). Given that the journal encompasses tourism and hospitality issues, there is minimum attention given to HRM issues. Tourism, as an area for HRM research, is less developed than is hospitality research and this trend is illustrated by the number of articles in JTHM. Those papers that are included, however, have tended to focus on wage issues and industrial disputation. There is a greater focus on the employee relations in these papers than perhaps evident in other journals.

Table 5 about here

When we put the findings from these five journals together over the two years, employee development (in 42 papers) and employee relations (in 40 papers) feature most often, followed by employee resourcing (in 26 papers) and general HRM (in 24 papers). In 2003 the number of HRM papers has increased slightly from 50 to 53, which in some respects can be said to represent a net gain, given that two issues of IJCHM were devoted to 18 specially commissioned pieces on HRM and learning.

Other HRM-related journals

The presence of papers that are concerned with the HI in mainstream journals is a function of a small group of researchers looking at a topic that is of particular relevance to the HI. Hence in the UK-based journals (HRMJ, BJIR, IRJ and ER) three groups of researchers are responsible for two papers each. These address the UK's first National Minimum Wage in small hospitality firms (Gilman *et al.*, 2002;

Arrowsmith *et al.*, 2003, anti-union tactics in McDonald's in Germany (Royle, 2002a, b), and organisational culture and tipping behaviour in the HI (Ogbonna and Harris, 2002a, b). The APJHR has only a small focus on hospitality as a research site with Whitehouse (2003) providing an overview of gender and pay equity issues within the Australian scene.

Conclusions and future issues

HR research in hospitality journals is predominantly replicating mainstream HR research. This is potentially due to the newness of the research area and the lack of research to underpin more adventurous research. While there are some attempts to break from this mould (see, for example, Hoque, 1999 and Lucas, 2004), most of the research cited here has tested HR theory from the generic HR theory. It is time for hospitality researchers to push the boundaries of theory making and propose theory that hospitality specific, relevant and useful. The topics of emotional labour and emotional intelligence, for example, have been explored to some extent by hospitality HR researchers, but has been “hijacked” by mainstream HR academics as new and innovative research areas. Hospitality researchers have not been sufficiently confident to claim certain areas, theories and topics as their own. It is timely to do so now.

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Table 1 International Journal of Hospitality Management

YEAR	TOPIC	KEY WORDS	THEME	HRM	TOTAL
2002					
21 (1)	0			0	6
21 (2)	HI culture profile: individual values, organisational culture and person-organisation fit as predictors of job satisfaction	Culture, job satisfaction	E Res, E Rel	1	7
21 (3)	0			0	6
21 (4)	Enhancing hotel managers' organisational commitment	Commitment	E Rel		
	Core and periphery: flexible workforce model in hotels	Flexibility	E Res		
	Attitudes towards training in licensed retail	Training	E Dev		
	Turnover's relationship with sales, tips, and service in restaurants	Turnover, tips	E Res, E Rel	4	12
Sub-total				5	31
2003					
22 (1)	Psychological empowerment of non-supervisory employees in restaurants	Empowerment, demographics	E Res, E Rel		
	Hourly employee retention in small and medium attractions (Amusement parks)	Retention, turnover	E Res		
	Service orientation for contact employee in casual-dining restaurants	'Attitude'	E Res, E Dev		
	Women and men in hotel management - gender and career development issues	Gender, career development	E Res, E Dev		
	Magnitude effect of tipping	Tips	E Rel	5	8
22 (2)	None				7
22 (3)	Effect of training on occupational status of food service employees	Learning, training	E Dev		
	Learning orientation and hotel expatriate manager experience	Learning, training	E Dev		
	Competency needs of Spanish hotel and restaurant managers and their training demands	Training, competency	E Dev		
	Tipping in restaurants	Tips	E Rel		
	Restaurants tips and service quality: weak relationship or measurement	Tips, SQ	E Rel	5	7
22 (4)	Evaluation of action research as vehicle for individual and organisational development	Organisational development, learning organisation, HRD, cross-cultural communication	E Dev, E Rel		
	Tipping behaviour: disconfirmation of expectation perspective	Tips	E Rel	2	8
Sub-total				12	30
Total				17	61

Table 2 International Journal of Contemporary Hospitality Management

YEAR	TOPIC	KEY WORDS	THEME	HRM	TOTAL
2002					
14 (1)	Employee induction in licensed retail	Induction, retention	E Res		
	Individual and organisation return from management development programmes	Management development	E Dev		
	General manager turnover and root causes	Turnover	E Res	3	7
14 (2)	0			0	6
14 (3)	Employee turnover in private clubs	Turnover, retention	E Res		
	Training methods: manager's preferences in private clubs	Training, competencies	E Dev		
	"Bridging the gap" between hospitality management programmes and the private club industry	Career development, management development	E Dev		
	Present and future competencies for club managers	Competencies	E Dev	4	7
14 (4)	HR practices and service quality in theme parks	HRM, SQ	HRM		
	Unique training: mood indicator is an employee's tool	Training, development, teamwork	E Dev	2	5
14 (5)	Fragments of HRM: evidence from WERS	HRM, employee relations	HRM, E Rel		
	Dilemma of operating strategic approach to HRM in visitor attraction sector	HRM, employee development	HRM, E Dev		
	HRM and universalism: one best way (mountain resort operations)?	HRM, motivation, empowerment	HRM, E Rel		
	HR practices in achieving quality enhancement/cost reduction: volunteers in tourism organisations	HRM, pay	HRM, E Rel		
	Making functional flexibility stick: outcomes for stakeholders (hotels)	HRM, flexibility	HRM, E Res		
	Organisational change programmes: centre stage for HRM (airports)?	HRM, organisational culture/change	HRM, E Rel		
	Strategic HRM and business performance (hotels)	HRM, SQ	HRM		
	Strategic perspective to HRD in tourism	HRD	E Dev		
	Emotional harmony: dissonance and deviance at work	HRM, OB, training, culture	HRM, E Dev, E Rel	9	9
14 (6)	Organisational and cross-cultural challenges facing international hotel managers	HRM	HRM	1	6
14 (7)	Why managers learn best at work?	Action/workplace/organisational learning	E Dev		
	Learning from change	Change management, workplace/organisational learning	E Dev		
	Accredited corporate learning	Action/workplace/organisational learning	E Dev		
	Cascading organisational learning	Action/ workplace/organisational learning	E Dev		
	Capturing organisational learning	Knowledge workers, action/organisational learning	E Dev		
	Re-defining focus of workplace learning	Action/workplace learning	E Dev		

	Delivering management development through action learning	Action/workplace/organisational learning	E Dev		
	High performance learning at work	Action/workplace/organisational learning	E Dev		
	Building a corporate university	HRM, action learning	HRM, E Dev	9	9
Sub-total				28	49
2003					
15 (1)	Hospitality management education	Management development	E Dev		
	Tourism and hospitality education	Training and development	E Dev	2	7
15 (2)	Work values of foodservice managers (restaurants)	Work ethic, culture	E Rel		
	Service quality and HR practices (theme park)	HR, SQ, employee communication	HRM, E Rel		
	Smoking policies in UK pubs	Health and safety	E Rel	3	8
15 (3)	Cuba: profile of tourism education strategy	Vocational training	E Dev		
	Future of hospitality education in Grenada	HRD	E Dev		
	Sabbath-keeping in Caribbean HI	Diversity	E Res, E Rel		
	International hotel managers and key Caribbean challenges	Ethnicity	E Res, E Rel	4	13
15 (4)	Organisational climate and service quality	Culture, SQ	HRM, E Rel		
	Job satisfaction and organisational commitment in fast food	Job satisfaction, commitment	E Res, E Rel		
	Training and retention of chefs	Turnover, discipline, hours, pay	E Res, E Rel	3	7
15 (5)	0			0	7
15 (6)	Seasonality in tourism employment: HR challenges	HRD, temporary workers	E Res, E Dev		
	People and quality (hotels)	SQ, staffing, HRM	HRM, E Res		
	E-MBA action learning: lessons for hospitality leaders	Competencies, action learning, knowledge management, HRD	E Dev	3	12
15 (7)	Organisational commitment: hotel managers	Culture, attitudes	E Rel		
	Sex discrimination in licensed trade	Discrimination	E Rel		
	Management attitudes and perceptions of older employees (SMEs)	Diversity, age	E Res, E Rel	3	7
Sub-total				18	63
Total				46	112

Table 3 Cornell Hotel and Restaurant Administration Quarterly

YEAR	TOPIC	KEY WORDS	THEME	HRM	TOTAL
2002					
43 (1)	Competency-based structured interviewing (meat purveyor)	Competencies, selection	E Res, E Dev	1	7
43 (2)	Using job satisfaction and pride as internal marketing tools (hotel/casino corporation)	Job satisfaction	E Res	1	9
43 (3)	0			0	9
43 (4)	Strategic and operational roles of HR as emerging model	HRM	HRM		
	Balancing internal candidates' job-performance data with external candidates' selection test results	Selection	E Res	2	10
43 (5)	Workers' rights following military service	Employment rights	E Rel		
	Job sharing: potential tool for hotel managers	Job sharing	E Res		
	Collective bargaining after Sept 11: job security and workplace security?	Collective bargaining, job security	E Rel		
	Collective bargaining re: health and safety issues (hotels)	Collective bargaining, health and safety	E Rel		
	Safety and security of US hotels	Health and safety	E Rel	5	11
43 (6)	Arbitration of employment discrimination lawsuits	Employment rights, discrimination	E Rel	1	8
Sub-total				10	54
2003					
44 (1)	How achievement of HR goals drives restaurant performance	HRM, performance	HRM		
	Employee selection: how simulations change picture for minority groups	Selection	E Res		
	Organisational citizenship: comparison between part-time and full-time service employees	Commitment	E Rel		
	Guest perceptions of hotel quality: which employees count most (hotel front desk)	SQ	E Dev	4	9
44 (2)	Applied research in managerial communications: link between knowledge and practice	Managerial communication	E Rel	1	14
44 (3)	Smoker-free regulations: effects on employment and sales	Health and safety	E Rel		
	Grooming future hospitality leaders: a competencies model	Competencies, management development	E Dev	2	8
44 (4)	0			0	7
44 (5/6)	Loyalty: a strategic commitment	Commitment	E Rel		
	Comment on loyalty: a strategic commitment	Commitment	E Rel		
	Evaluating hotel GM's performance: case study in benchmarking	Managerial performance	E Dev		
	Update and extension to evaluating hotel GM's performance: case study in benchmarking	Managerial performance	E Dev		
	Tip levels and service: update, extension and reconciliation	Tips	E Rel		
	Labor scheduling	Labor scheduling	E Res	6	20

Sub-total				13	58
Total				23	112

Table 4 The International Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Administration

YEAR	TOPIC	KEY WORDS	THEME	HRM	TOTAL
2002					
3 (1)	Recruitment and retention practices in independent and chain restaurants	Recruitment, retention, restaurants	E Res, E Dev	1	10
3 (2)	Measuring Personal Service Quality: An analysis of hotels in the People's Republic of China	Service quality, customer satisfaction, personal service	E Rel	1	24
3 (3)	Hong Kong and New Orleans: A comparative study of perceptions of restaurant employees on sexual harassment	Sexual harassment, restaurant employees, perceptions	E Rel, E Dev	2	10
	The impact of culture on self-service on technology adoption in the hotel industry	Customer service, culture	HRM		12
3 (4)	Examining the influences of senior discount usage in the hospitality industry	Older adults, employee training	E Dev	1	14
Sub-total			E Rel	5	70
2003					
4 (1)	A pilot study of the Florida Randolph-Sheppard Program for vision-impaired foodservice managers	Vision-impaired, disabilities, foodservice management	E Dev, HRM	2	14
	The measurement of job satisfaction: An empirical study of frontline employees in the Northern Cyprus hotel industry	Job satisfaction, frontline employees	HRM, E.Dev		16
4 (2)	An examination of quality management in luxury hotels	Quality management, TQM	HRM	2	26
	Cross-cultural service encounters in the hospitality industry and the effect of intercultural sensitivity on employee performance	Service encounter, cross-cultural, intercultural sensitivity	HRM		15
4 (3)	The relationship between corporate culture and performance in Bahrain Hotels: Findings and management implications	Corporate culture, organisational performance	HRM	2	14
	The effects of music on room attendants' work performance – an exploratory study	Work performance, productivity, quality, room attendants	E Dev		10
4 (4)	0			0	0
Sub-total				6	95
Total				11	165

Table 5 Journal of Hospitality and Tourism Management

YEAR	TOPIC	KEY WORDS	THEME	HRM	TOTAL
2002					
9 (1)	0			0	0
9 (2)	Minimum wage, minimal effect: The impact of the national minimum wage on small regional hotels	Small hospitality firms, employee relations, pay	E Rel	2	9
	Instigating practice-led research in service industry sectors: The licensed club sector	Commitment, management practices	HRM		7
Sub-total				2	16
2003					
10 (1)	The selection and training of workers in the tourism and hospitality industries for the performance of emotional labour	Selection, training, emotional labour	E Res, E Dev, HRM	3	10
	Service quality assessment of restaurants in Darwin	Service quality, customer service, training	E Dev		11
	Industrial disputation and trade unions in registered clubs	Employee turnover, trade unions, conflict resolution	E Rel		10
10 (2)	The benefits of training to pub retailers: A study for the Punch Pub Company	Training, employee workplace performance	E Dev	1	7
Sub-total				4	38
Total				6	54