Factors Affecting Hospitality Industry

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Social, Multi-Cultural, and Environmental Issues Affecting Hospitality Industry

**Question One**

COVID-19 has affected the performance of most industries because of the lockdowns and restrictions kept in place by most governments to curtail the spread of the virus. The hospitality and tourism industry has been severely affected as a result of the virus. The hospitality industry has experienced substantial financial losses and a decline in the growth of its industry (Biwota, 2020). The industry has been forced to make changes by dealing with the effects of COVID-19, including downsizing its workforce due to the enormous financial losses. The tourism and hospitality industry has also been hit substantially with the virus because people fear making flights to their destinations.

The travel restrictions also affect the tourism industry because tourists rely on flights to reach their tourist destination sites. It has also been difficult for the hotel industry to have customers book their hotels because most fear the spread of the virus and have preferred staying in their homes rather than traveling and hotel bookings. As a result of the pandemic's effects, new trends have developed to save most industries from collapsing and sustaining their businesses. Current business practices involve working remotely by creating a virtual environment at the workplace (Djeebet, 2021). Most industries have taken the effect of virtual technology to help them promote the safety of their customers. The tourism, travel, and hospitality industry is no exception. They have also developed virtual measures to tackle the crisis.

Consumers have created a new trend with relying on their mobile phones to conduct their daily activities. Consumers can visit tourist sites virtually through the use of their mobile phones instead of visiting the places. Virtual reality and augmented reality have been developed in the tourism and hospitality industry to meet the new trends in the market (Djeebet, 2021). The pandemic has created fear among travelers and forced them to change their consumption patterns by relying more on mobile phones. Customers also look forward to hotels that have maximized their measures concerning COVID-19 and follow all the efforts put in place by the government to control its spread. The safety hygiene guidelines practiced by hotels and the travel industry are what customers look for when making their hotel and travel bookings or ordering food online.

Augmented and virtual reality has also shaped the events industry because of the new trends concerning COVID-19 protocols. Social distancing has become a need for most businesses; therefore, people prefer watching events from their gadgets such as mobile phones instead of visiting the places because it puts their health at stake with the virus still looming (Yeoman, 2013). These new changes have both positive and negative influences on the hospitality industry. Augmented and virtual reality will increase competition in these industries and enhance their customer's needs. It will also be cost-effective to the business that chose to use them for their operations. The disadvantage will be on the employees. Most employees will lose their jobs because technology will replace some of their roles. Increasing safety and cleaning measures is advantageous for the hospitality industry because it will increase customer satisfaction, thus increasing their economic performance. I believe the adoption of these new practices should be aligned with the goals of the organization. The organization should also consider their effectiveness and cost measures to implement them.

**Question Two**

The hospitality industry faces the challenges of employing competent and skilled employees and those who have no skills. Thus, the industry has a lower turnover and attracts employment opportunities to employees. The employment of immigrants solves the employment issue faced in the hospitality industry (Rasic, 2010). Most of the labourers hired to work in the hospitality industry usually are foreigners who do not have skills. Immigration policies created by the government require the hospitality industry to rely on skilled workers and ensure that their workers have the proper documents to be considered legal in the country. The hotel industry has to ensure they have an electronic employment verification system (E-Verify). The E-verification system, as part of the new reform, changes the hospitality industry. The hospitality industry is faced with incurring additional costs to train their workers and pay them good salaries. Previous to the change in policy, the hospitality industry relied on immigrants because they were willing to accept low wages due to their economic situations and challenges back home.

The hospitality industry took this advantage because they knew immigrants were desperate for employment opportunities. Immigration reforms in the United States prevent illegal immigrants from entering and working in the country. The strict laws and policies concerning immigration affect the hospitality industry because most workers lack skills. The government of the USA has developed specific measures to increase stronger borders to prevent illegal immigrants in the country. The government has increased the number of patrol officers at the border points to ensure that only legal migrants will be eligible for employment in the United States. The hospitality industry relies on immigrant workers because it finds it challenging to employ workers in the USA. After all, they are not enough. Social security cards were also implemented in the USA to deal with immigration; this also affected the industry because it reduced the number of illegal immigrants who did not have the social security numbers to work in the country. The H-2B visa type reform makes it difficult for the industry to have enough labourers because the whole process takes time and is tiresome (New American Economy, 2021).

The H-2B visa was implemented to allow immigrants to secure employment in the USA for a temporary period but has proven ineffective because it consumes more time during the application process. These reforms continue to affect the immigrants because they create employment opportunities for skilled Americans (New American Economy, 2021). In contrast, they continue to be paid low wages and hold labour-intensive positions in the hospitality industry. Their efforts and commitment to work make the industry thrive in business while being paid low wages. Reforms such as DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Action) took effect on 2012 has been a relief for the hospitality industry because it prevents the deportation of young immigrants and provides them with employment opportunities (Wong et al., 2019). The hospitality industry has benefited from this reform because it can now depend on immigrants to work in its industry.

I believe that immigration reforms should be part of the major discussion in lobbying groups such as the American Hotel and Lodging Association or the National Restaurant Association. The reason is that these groups should aim at addressing some of the challenges facing immigrants in their industry and promote their welfare because they play a crucial role in the hotel industry by contributing a more significant percentage to its success. Addressing immigration reforms should not be centred on the benefit to the hospitality industry but rather the interest of the immigrants because, without their labour to the hospitality industry, it would not be thriving.

**Question Three**

1. Unconscious bias refers to a situation where judgment has been granted in favour of another person, group, or thing compared to the worthy one. One's cultural beliefs shape unconscious bias about certain aspects concerning people and life in general. People develop stereotypes about specific issues and behaviours through cultural ideas and systems that unintentionally bias those around them (Maslakci & Sesen, 2019). Unconscious biases often lead to misunderstanding because people become misjudged. After all, the other party uses their cultural beliefs and values to understand others. As a hotel manager, I would address cultural biases by creating an inclusive work culture where all the cultures based on age, gender, sexuality, religion, sexual orientation, ethnicity, and nationality will feel represented. The training process will include all employees from different backgrounds to make it more effective and create a diversified culture (Burke, 2018). The training will involve the creation of modules that provide real scenarios of the hotel industry. The employees are supposed to learn through those scenarios to know how well they can relate with each other and serve customers better. The training emphasizes the necessity of overcoming unconscious bias in the workplace and encourages a culture that promotes respect and inclusion of people's culture in the hotel industry. The training process will also focus on changing customer service to boost their cultures and show respect by observing their norms and beliefs. It will help the hotel retain its customers and develop an excellent business-customer relationship. Creating a diversified culture will also entail working closely with employees from different cultures to understand how they work and view certain things. Thus, it will be easier to relate to them and customers from their culture.
2. The training structure will create modules to help the employees understand and learn effectively. Understanding the customers' cultures served by the hotel will be a topic I would like to address during the training process. The employees need to understand the customers' cultures to meet their needs and respect their views and opinions. The training will involve making the employees know how to serve the different customers associated with the hotel to make them feel respected and an integral part of the organization. The employees will also be trained to handle customers who unconsciously become biased and negatively impact their emotions. Preparing the employees to handle situations where the customers act unconsciously biased will help them mentally and emotionally prepared to handle the situation (Johnson, 2021). The hotel industry operates with many people from different backgrounds, and it has a personal touch on the employees who work at the hotels. It is not only the employees who can be unconsciously biased but also the customers. It is essential to prepare the employees for such cases where they feel customers are disrespectful to handle the situation without affecting the business relationship with the customers. The training programs aim to train the employees with the right skills to deal with unconsciously biased customers. It is also to create a work culture that focuses on including different diversities at the organization. The training process also develops respect for the employees' cultures by understanding and respecting their opinions. Cultural diversity at the workplace will promote their motivation and their engagement.

**Question Four**

1. Technology has shaped how the hotel industries render its services to its customers. Hotels are adopting new changes in technology to meet their customers' expectations and needs. Social media is used widely by hotels to market their business and increase the number of customers (Davronov, 2021). Social media has created a platform whereby the customers can give remarks about their experiences in certain hotels and the services offered, thus attracting other customers to those hotels. Through social media, other customers can look at their hotel ratings from the experiences shared by the customers to make their decisions concerning their preferred hotels. Hotel app development has also increased customer satisfaction because hotel management serves customers quickly and effectively. The apps on the customer's mobile devices can make their hotel bookings quickly because they are more convenient. The new technology has made it easy for the hotel industry to tap the right customers making it effective to serve them appropriately. Improved technology has increased the hotel's interaction with its customers through digital capabilities such as artificial intelligence.
2. Technology plays a crucial role in helping businesses to enhance customization and personalization. Through technology, businesses are trying to make their services have a personal effect on the customers to increase their marketing strategies (Katsikeas, Leonidou, & Zeriti, 2019). Customization and personalization have helped drive the profits and sales of businesses. Thus, it has a positive impact on the hospitality industry. The reason is that it increases marketing. Customers can give recommendation and their reviews through the technologies deployed by a business. Through technology, the business develops a good communication channel with its customers that enables them to change the negative remarks they receive from their customers. Positive remarks by the customers also attract other customers to buy services and products from the business. Technological advancements are shaping every industry, and as a result most the business will operate virtually to keep up with the trends of the market and enhance their customer's experience. Programs are being developed to enable the business to increase its personalization to impact its customers. As a result, technology cannot hinder the strategy of businesses to increase their customization and personalization.
3. Hotels are embracing new technological advancements to increase their customer's expectations. Facial recognition is being used by hotels such as Marriot to grant customers access to their rooms (Morgan, 2020). The use of facial recognition reduces the check-in time for customers making the hotel services more effective. Hotels are also using voice recognition to allow customers to have access to hotel services. Hotels are also using robots for cleaning services and giving guests assistance when they request hotel services. The use of robots reduces the operational cost of the hotels by making them cut the number of workers. Hotels have also developed chatbots that allow guests to receive services on a 24-hours-7-day basis and quickly (Morgan, 2020). Hotels such as Hilton hotel have developed apps that would enable their customers to access their mobile key rooms using their mobile app. The service is convenient because it saves customers time. These new technological developments and implementation in the hotel industry increase their performance, but the use of robots by the hotels should be limited. Robots lack a personal touch, unlike humans.

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