STATUS OF FOOD PREPARATION STRATEGIES AND INNOVATIONS IN HOTEL INDUSTRY: A SURVEY OF HOTELS IN CHANDIGARH TRICITY

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Abstract

Innovation in hospitality industry has played a critical role in meeting the demands of the customer. Due to its intangible nature and fierce competition, and to improve its performance, it is a necessity for hospitality industry to continuously keep itself upgrading. The millennial customer are impatient and are always looking forward to try something new, thus innovation is the only factor which can lead the hospitality industry to survive in the longer run. The focus of the current study is to investigate various innovative strategies that are being followed by hotels in Tricity and to investigate the said topic, a structured questionnaire was sent to around 100 employees from various hotels working in (a). Food Production and (b). Food and Beverage Service and 97% respondents felt that innovation is the key element for the success of any business establishment. The findings further reveal that feedback from customers is the key driver which forces the hospitality industry to innovate continuously. The study concludes with a fact that for the survival of hotels in tricity it is very important to keep them engaged in innovating customer service methods and food preparation techniques.

Keywords: Innovation, Feedback, Food Preparation

INTRODUCTION

Innovation is crucial for economic globalization and it is also pertinent to strengthen industrial competitiveness. In some nations, innovation is emerging as a driver of economic growth and prosperity (Stockdale, 2002; Fagerberg and Godinho, 2004). Innovations are also a benefit for businesses and a vital source of enhanced service industry performance (Hertog, Broersma and Ark, 2003). In the economy of many nations, tourism plays a major role in services and contributes to economic growth and job creation, as well as to the creation of revenues Tourism and hospitality industry is the India’s fastest growing industry which gives a significant contribution in the GDP. India's travel and tourist business is growing rapidly since 2000. According to research, the travel and tourism sector would provide Rs 8.22
trillion, or 7% of India’s GDP, and 37.4 million jobs, or nearly 9% of total employment, by the end of 2015.

Many authors have defined innovation in their own unique way. Schumpeter, who is also known as father of innovation. According to him, innovation is a fresh and only approach towards a problem or finding new methods of doing things. Entrepreneurship refers to replacing an old thing today for a new diverse thing tomorrow (Śledzik, 2013). Burgelman, Maidique and Wheelwright (1996) suggested that, “Innovations are the result of the idea generation, which may be characterized as a collection of actions that result in new, competitive goods and services, as well as new manufacturing processes and delivery systems.”. Drucker opined that innovations should indeed be perceived and used as a chance to create a new or distinct product or service (Drucker, P. F. 2002). Innovation as per Kanter (1995) employs any new thought that can address issues. Rodriguez, Williams and Hall (2014) focused on three major points which encompass innovation. These are implementation of policy, different types of innovating themes emerging as well as their results and consequences. Further, successful collaborations also play an important role in encompassing the three pointers laid by them.

The customers of today are well educated and are aware of the choices that they make. Moreover, the disposable income of families has increased which has led to increased dining out experiences among them. Since customers are always in continuous demand of asking for something new, the hospitality industry continuously faces a tough competition with the threat of shutting down. Hence, it becomes very tough for organization to survive, especially those who are not able to come in consonance with the demands of the customers. The only way to overcome these challenges is through innovations, which may be for a product, for services, food or technology. Novelty is the key for survival and growth in the current new service development. Innovations have come out to be an effective strategic tool among hospitality professionals to keep their customers excited and happy by bringing something new on the table every now and then (Brentani and Cooper., 1992).

Further, organizations nowadays face growing social and economic change, hence, a higher degree of competition. Under turbulence, they must be effective not just in competing under price and quality challenges, but also in demonstrating adaptability and creativity in the way they do things. Sustainability will come with innovation and new ideas. Innovation is like evolution. It keeps on changing with respect to sustainability. It is important for an
organization to improve so as to the work improves. Measurement, analysis, improvement and innovation are all a part of better performance in an industry (Harvey, 2007).

It has been noticed that despite the fact that scientific literature has long considered the food industry to be a low-innovative-intensity sector (Martinez and Briz., 2000), innovation has played an increasingly important role in recent years in the food industry, which represents the largest manufacturing sector in the European Union (Menrad, 2004; Traill and Meulenberg, 2002). Moreover, the food business is often seen as a mature and slow-growing business with a low level of Research and Development (R&D) expenditure and can be described as conservative in comparison to the sort of innovation supplied to the market. The food industries have undergone major social, economic and technical developments in the recent decade. These showcase an important effect on the entire food processing chain, from agriculture to food processing and distribution to ultimate customers. The industry is also characterized by a competitive climate which has fostered substantial changes in food demand and the supply chain and which has led to innovation being an unavoidable activity required for firms' success (Costa and Jongen, 2006).

In prior years, notably in the food business, manufacturing costs have been minimized and customer requirements have been little considered (Bigliardi and Galati, 2013). Over the past few years, the industry has displayed growing focus on the safety and value of good quality food, health, welfare and consumer happiness. The industry has developed a procedure called "chain inversion." This method shows the role performed by the customer, who shows his preferences for food to the producers. In comparison with this reversal, innovation has become essential for businesses within the field allowing the establishment to create new product range which meets the changing demands of customers (Fortuin and Omta, S 2009).

In a nutshell, companies have the requirement to innovatively build new items. Through these approaches novel technologies and new business models have been implemented. These new product development methods are usually still reliant on internal innovation in most food industries. However, the new items are developed by a restricted but increasing number of food enterprises by using some technology solutions from other firms. This underlines the challenge of certain firms in the internal management and management of innovation (Sarkar and Costa, 2008).

In lieu of this, the success of new services in the hotel business is dependent not only on the practical elements of service delivery, but also on the investments of time and effort.
that establish the personality of a hospitality business. This viewpoint emphasizes the need of excellent human resource management as part of the process of introducing new services in the hospitality sector (Hoque, 2013). One of the characteristics of food service industry is that it is highly heterogeneous. No two companies will want to give the same services, thus it becomes all the more challenging and difficult to think of different innovations in service sector (Miles, 2000). Therefore, the pull towards innovation is quite powerful and it plays a pivotal role in supporting and increasing the competitiveness of the foodstuffs sector (Capitanio et al, 2010).

Studying the aspect of innovation in food industry is essential to perceive how the industry works and what the customers want. Understanding innovation can thus help in developing better strategies to keep the food industry upbeat, further enhancing the food preparation and nourishment.

Keeping the rationale in forefront, present study explores the status of Food Preparation Strategies and Innovations in Hotel Industry in Chandigarh Tricity’. This study has following specific objectives: (i). To assess food Preferences of the customers in Chandigarh tricity (ii). To evaluate food related Strategies of hotels in Chandigarh tricity (iii). To perceive innovations and strategies practiced in food preparation in hotels of Chandigarh tricity

**LITERATURE REVIEW**

Earle (1997) concluded that in the food sector, technical innovation is combined with social and cultural innovation. Innovation happens throughout all stages of the food production process, be it harvesting, primary and secondary processing, manufacturing, or distribution. A new or enhanced consumer product or service is the pinnacle of innovation. Food technology innovations might be concentrated on a single area. To produce food that meets the nutritional, personal, and social requirements wishes of all populations, food industry innovation strategies must be founded on the complete technology in the food system and concerned not just with technological changes but also with social and environmental changes.

Traill and Meulenberg (2002) gave insight on the classic discussion over "demand-pull" against "technology-push" and "a combination of both" is said to be oversimplified. The case studies' recommendations are backed up by quantitative data from a survey of food producers. The facts presented in this paper, suggested improvements and innovations, are critical for businesses and policymakers concerned with efficiency and effectiveness.
Mark-Herbert (2004) in his research analysed businesses that aspire to prosper in this industry must adopt new management techniques, especially for identifying important technology. Depending on the institutional circumstances, several strategies for gaining access to these new technologies may be used.

Pinggali (2007) stated that the food sector faces significant challenges as a result of changes in the sector's economic and non-economic environments, changes in lifestyles, possible climatic changes, global increases and changes in food consumption, all of which have an impact on the input supply industries and agriculture, as well as food processing, distribution, and retail.

Further, Boland (2008) has presented emerging trend towards personalised nutrition that is becoming mainstream in affluent society with a goal of general good health. It was concluded that there is potential for mass customisation, that cannot be done without innovation to keep personalised nutrition healthy and appetizing on a wide front.

Fryer and Versteeg (2008) have enlisted the major components of food sector. The authors argued that food safety, health and well-being, high quality, convenience, pricing, the environment and sustainability are the major components in the food sector. With the rise in consumer interest in health and wellness in recent years, the food sector has been offered new chances to produce new functional and nutritious goods, making it a highly inventive and innovative business.

Rama (2008) exhibited innovation under three primary subjects, (i) internal and external factors of innovation at the company level, (ii) role of both the market and competition and (iii) special characteristics of innovation in the Food and Beverage service business. The author argued that the internal variables of innovation are mostly concerned with the scale of the firm, technological innovation experience and the availability of infrastructure that is complimentary to innovation.

Ju (2012) identified the essential elements that influence product innovation in the food business, and investigated their functions in a Chinese food firm. According to the findings, the variables influencing product innovation might vary depending on the target sector and its features.

Kemp (2013) has reported that majority of new food and beverage items have failed in the marketplace due to non-involvement of customers in the food innovation process. The author suggested that by making customers a part of the innovation process can increase the likelihood of successful innovation. Consumer-driven food and beverage innovation, in
which goods are designed to fulfil consumer requirements, is possible due to a customer-centric business culture and the utilisation of relevant consumer feedback throughout the innovation process.

Kuhne et.al. (2013) have explored the attributes of innovation capability. They explained that trust, social pleasure, non coercive power, and reputation are the factors influencing the quality of a relationship between the firm and customer. Moreover, chain connection quality attributes in improving innovation capacity.

Bombaywala and Riandita (2015) elaborated the interactions and linkages between food industry players, especially in Sweden, and highlighted the key drivers of food processing and packaging technology development. The study was based on the information of innovation processes of key packaging solution providers (PSPs) and process equipment manufacturers (PEM), their collaboration, information exchange, and involvement with food manufacturing firms (FMC). The findings of the study stated that, the role of processing and packaging suppliers in the food sector is "contractual" in nature, whereas ingredient suppliers are more mature participants in the innovation process.

**RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

This study is entirely based on primary data collected through structured questionnaire. Data is collected from hotels of Tricity i.e., Chandigarh, Panchkula, Mohali. Purposive Sampling has been used for taking representative sample for the study. In total, 100 employees from various hotels working in (a). Food Production and (b). Food and Beverage Service have been surveyed.

The proposed sample was studied with the help of self-designed questionnaire to gather information regarding the parameters mentioned above. The questions were kept simple, unambiguous, and free from any kind of religious or cultural bias and suitable to Indian context. Some questions were put to them in different manners so that accurate information could be obtained from them in a polite manner.

Demographic information
This included questions related to their age, sex, address, education and job title and designation were asked.

The respondents were asked questions related to

What innovation means to them
From where do they get innovative ideas for creative cooking
From where do they get ideas for creative presentation
They were asked questions related to whether nutritional care with respect to calories, allergies, safety measures etc. was taken or not

**Results and Discussions:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Demographic Aspects</th>
<th>Feature</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>79.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Female</td>
<td>21.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment</td>
<td>Full time</td>
<td>93.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Part time</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Educational attainments</td>
<td>12th</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Under Graduation</td>
<td>59.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Diploma</td>
<td>28.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Post-graduation</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Computed by Authors using Primary Data*

Table 1 describes demographic features of surveyed respondents. It was observed that there are 79% males and 21% females in the sampled respondents. It was seen from the hotels that the percentage of full-time employees are 93% and of part-time ones are 7%. Data also reveals that qualified employees are more as compared to unqualified employees as there are 3 percent employees with 12th level education, 59 percent undergraduates, 28 percent diploma holders and 10 percent post graduates.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Food preferences of the customers</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vegetarian</td>
<td>26.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-Vegetarian</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ovatarians</td>
<td>40.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Source: Computed by Authors using Primary Data*

Table 2 reveals food preferences of the customer as reported by surveyed employees. Data brings out that among the customers served by the surveyed employees, there were 34% non-vegetarian, 26% vegetarians and 40% ovatarians.
Table 3: Status of Innovation and Strategy in Surveyed Hotels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No.</th>
<th>Questions asked</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Do you think innovation in food industry attracts customers?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>93.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>7.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Is innovation a key to success of hotel?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>84.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>16.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Do you think feedback is important?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>94.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Does feedback effect your culinary?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>87.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>Do you change food items as per feedback?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computed by Authors using Primary Data

Table 3 shows that majority of the employees of the hotels (97%) reported that the innovation is a key of success of the hotels. There are 84% employees who agreed that the feedback is important and key to keep on working towards innovation. Importance of feedback is accepted by 94% surveyed employees. Majority of the employees (90%) accepted that they change food items as per the customer feedback. 100% employees change food items as per feedback they get from their customers as reported by Brentani and Cooper (1992) that innovation keeps the excitability of bringing in something new.

Table 4: Food related Strategies used by Surveyed employees

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Strategies/Questions Asked</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Is nutrition an important aspect?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you keep a calorie count of food items you prepare?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>88.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you think the customers who come to eat are health conscious?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>90.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>10.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Do you take care of customer's food choice during their allergies?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Do you follow safety measures while storing food?</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>No</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computed by Authors using Primary Data

Table 4 exhibits food related strategies used by surveyed employees. Data report that 100% employees consider the nutrition as an important aspect. It comes out that 88% employees keep calorie count of items they prepare and 12% do not keep calorie count of...
food items they prepare. Out of total, 90% employees reported that customers served by them are health conscious. All the employees take care of customer’s food choice in case there are any allergies. Also, all the surveyed employees take safety measures while storing food.

Table 5: Innovations and Strategies practiced in Food Preparation in surveyed hotels

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Innovation and Strategy practiced/Questions asked</th>
<th>Responses</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Cooking skills</td>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>69.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Good</td>
<td>23.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Average</td>
<td>8.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Do you take interest in</td>
<td>Making grocery list yourself</td>
<td>18.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Purchasing food ingredients for cooking</td>
<td>34.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Cooking and presenting dishes</td>
<td>35.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Supervising fellow assistants</td>
<td>13.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Do you buy packaged foods</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>2.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>6.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>92.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Substitute with a spice or herb that tastes similar or is found in similar dishes</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Never</td>
<td>65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. How often is new recipe tried</td>
<td>Weekly</td>
<td>11.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Monthly</td>
<td>85.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Once in three months</td>
<td>3.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>once in six months</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. Usage of safety measures</td>
<td>Employees taking safety measures</td>
<td>100.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Employees not taking safety measures</td>
<td>0.0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Computed by Authors using Primary Data

Data showed that 69% employees have excellent cooking skills, 23% employees have good cooking skills and only 8% employees have average cooking skills. According to the research, 85% employees try recipes monthly, 11% employees try recipe weekly, 1% try once in six months and 3% employees try recipes once in three months. All the surveyed employees used the substitute with a spice or herb that tastes similar or is found in similar dishes. It comes out that the 18% employees have the interest in making grocery list, 34% employees are interested in purchasing food ingredients, 35% are interested in cooking and presenting and 13% are interested in supervising. The safety measures taken by the
employees while preparing food was surveyed. Data showed that all the employees strictly abided by the standard safety measures while preparing food.

CONCLUSION

Innovation plays a pertinent role in food industry. It leads to raising excitement and expectations among the food makers as well as the customers. It was inferred that respondents felt innovation attracted customers and aided success to hotel industry. Nutrition is an important aspect in culinary art. Feedback from customers is an essential component of better output and enhancement for innovative skills. Innovation is not just about cooking but also on how the dishes are presented. 35% respondents took interest in cooking and presenting dishes. 85% try out new recipes every month to empower their innovative skills. In order for a company to survive it must set the most efficient strategic goals, identify the needs for the implementation of those goals, train their employees and give them the appropriate knowledge and skills. In order for any organisation to have a successful training procedure, it should motivate employees to improve their skills, and reward their learning afterward. Hence, innovation is an important aspect in hotel industry as it not only increases creativity of employees, but also attracts customers to try the cuisines.

REFERENCES


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