

Human Resource Potential and Challenges for Floriculture Tourism in Himachal Pradesh

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ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History

Published Online: 15April2019

Keywords

Human Resource Potential and Challenges, Floriculture products, Floricultural Tourism.

ABSTRACT

Human resources take active role in the modern economic scenario of any country. The abundant physical resources alone cannot benefit the growth of the country without human resources concept, which transfers physical resources into productive resources. The difference in the level of the economic development of the countries is largely a reflection of the differences in quality of their human resources. The key element in this proposition is that the values, attitude and quality of the people of the country that determine its economic development. Further, involvement of the HR is highly mandatory for the nation's growth and prosperity as there has been shift from automotive manufacturing to computerization and further shift from manual to personalized reviews. Himachal Pradesh is a hilly state and is most suitable for farming various floriculture products. As a wide variety of floriculture is grown here, the state attracts tourists various flower lovers, the business people and even the floriculture importers and exporters. Besides floricultural attractions, the natural and climatic beauty of this state convinces many business visitors to consider holidaying here while visiting a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural, or agri-business operations for the purpose of enjoyment, education, or active involvement in the activities of the farm or operation. Today the concept of traditional tourism has been changed. Some new areas of the tourism have been emerged like agro-tourism. Promotion of tourism would bring many direct and indirect benefits to the people. Floricultural tourism, one of the an innovative agricultural activities, has a great potential in Himachal Pradesh but there are some challenges as well like small floriculture farm holdings, unorganised sector and also lack of appropriate Human Resource to manage and market floriculture and floriculture tourism.

1. Introduction

According to M.J. Jucious, "Human Resource refers to whole system consisting of interrelated, interdependent and interacting physiological, sociological, psychological and ethical components. As, tourism is one of the fastest growing industries in the world, therefore, the need for Human resource and its Appropriate Management is of substantial importance.

The number of tourists worldwide has been registering phenomenal growth and it is expected that this number would shortly touch 1.5 billion. Tourism contributes about 11% of the world workforce and 10.2% of the global gross domestic product. The dynamic growth of this industry is evident from the fact a new job is added to the sector every 2.5 second. Nature has bestowed Himachal Pradesh with unique beauty and splendour with its lush green valleys, snow covered Himalayan ranges, a serene, peaceful, hospitable and comfortable environment ,smiling people and a rich cultural heritage - which tourists would be hard put to find elsewhere. Tourism contributes nearly 8% of the State Domestic Product. With careful planning and infrastructural development, the floricultural tourism can be developed which and can propel this contribution even to the tune of proposes to increase it to 15%.

Further, as tourism industry has become the biggest source of income for lots of countries and most of these countries use it for employment generation and growth in economic development. Paying attention to nature, flowers and plants in urban environments also causes increased rate of flowering and planting around the world. WTO announced that

more than 50% of travels which took place in world are for enjoying from natural and watching natural attraction as location and climate gives a very powerful potential in producing flowers and plants and of course a compete table one in world.

2. Significance and Need of the Study

Today the urban people's world is restricted in the closed door flats, offices, clubs, television, videogames, spicy fast food, computer, and internet and so on. They can see nature only on television or screen of the computers. Moreover, some people living in the cities do not have relatives in villages and they never visit or stay in villages. These peoples want to enjoy rural life but there are many problems of such type of facilities. Hence, it is opportunity to the farmers cultivating floricultural products for development of the floriculture-tourism to create additional income sources.

Himachal Pradesh is known to be rich enough for possessing natural resources besides the traditional skills of its people. The concept of socio-economic development was non-existent in the princely hill state before 1948. Solitary efforts were made by some of the bigger rulers to open schools, a dispensary or a sarai in their states. The entire terrain was not easily approachable. The inhabited areas were separated by rivers and river lets without any bridges and culverts. Besides basic amenities of life such as hygienic drinking water, electricity, medical and health care facilities were either absent or negligible. Thus, the entire state had certain peculiar features.

Agricultural tourism (Floriculture is a part of Agriculture) has become a necessary means for many small farms' survival. By diversifying business operations, farm operators are able to ensure a more stable income. This is because the activities related to agricultural tourism in general and floriculture tourism in particular can occur during those times of the year when the crops may not be in season. Some studies have found that these tourism operations often benefit their surrounding communities by drawing tourists to the area. The economic boost by the increase in traffic can be beneficial to rural areas.

For many people who visit farms, especially children, the visit marks the first time they see the source of their food, be it a diversified streams of income.

Mother Nature is an open door school without brick walls, observes carefully, explores the hidden treasures and learns something or the other. India is agricultural country, and Floriculture is a branch of agriculture. There are versatile cropping and floriculture cultivation patterns in India. People residing in the large cities always have the urge to know about how the various agricultural products, they use, are grown, cultivated and reaped. This curiosity of many had given rise to the concept and business of **Agri- tourism or agro- tourism and even flori tourism in a state like Himachal Pradesh.** This type of tourism involves any floricultural based operation or activity that brings visitors to a farm or ranch. Flori- tourism has different definitions in different parts of the world, and sometimes refers specifically to farm stays. Floricultural tourism includes a wide variety of activities, including buying produce direct from a farm stand, navigating a corn maze, slopping hogs, picking fruit, feeding animals, or staying at a bed and breakfast on a farm.

The present study is an attempt to examine the benefits and applicability of floriculture tourism business in Himachal Pradesh for growth and adaptability of Human resources and its Challenges in Himachal Pradesh Tourism Industry.

Keeping in mind the need and scope of the study, the following objectives have been framed.

3. Objectives:

1. To understand the framework for Promotion of Floricultural Tourism in Himachal Pradesh for HR Management.
2. To know the various motivations/objectives of Floricultural Tourists and to explore the HR Potential
3. To understand the Problems Hindering Promotion of Floricultural Tourism in Himachal Pradesh on account of inadequate HR.
4. To make some recommendation for better HR Management for promotion and attraction of floricultural tourism in Himachal Pradesh.

4. Nature and Scope of the Study

The study includes their benefits and problems as well as it includes appropriate framework regarding establishing floriculture-tourism centres in Himachal Pradesh. The present study was conducted on the basis of a small set of primary data collected from 30 big Floriculturists have their farm houses in the Palampur district of Himachal Pradesh. The aim was to extract the potential for HR employment/engagement potential there.

5. Data Sources and Research Methodology

The data have been also furnished from the related articles, research papers, reports and some other related documents. Some ideas have been also taken from the Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation, horticulture department and also collected primarily for the present study. For knowing about the scope and potential of the importance of floricultural tourism in Himachal Pradesh, discussion on the various pre framed concepts/ideas was held with the floriculturists/ garden owners/ experts and exporters of floricultural produce, HR experts. Besides, the suggestions of these respondents were noted. A total of 30 respondents got their responses and comments registered. This exercise was undertaken from 3rd March 2020 to 17 March 2020.

It has been observed that there is an ample scope of attraction of tourists on the basis of floriculture attractions in Himachal Pradesh as a whole and in Palampur district in particular and that this scope can further be enlarged by doing away the problems like adequate HR involvement and improving some basic amenities for the tourists. Also as to professionally manage this vast potential there is the need and scope for more and efficient HR, therefore, HR potential and challenges for Floriculture Tourism in Himachal Pradesh were also explored.

As the study is an exploratory one in nature being the preliminary one. The opinions and suggestions have been synchronised and the summary of the same is given below.

6. Importance of Floricultural Tourism in Himachal Pradesh and HR Potential

From the generalisations about the available secondary literature and the opinions/views contributed by various respondents, it has been observed that there is an ample scope for promotion of floriculture tourism in Himachal Pradesh as some experts have shared that agricultural tourism is the holidays' concept of visiting a working farm or any agricultural, horticultural, or agri-business operations for the purpose of enjoyment, education, or active involvement in the activities of the farm or operation. As Himachal Pradesh is blessed with a large and good variety of floriculture produce, therefore there is an ample scope for promotion of floriculture tourism. In general floriculture tourism is the practice of attracting travellers or visitors to an area or areas used primarily for floriculture purposes and for the appropriate management of these tourists, appropriate HR and Skills are utmost necessity.

7. Framework for HR Practices and need for Promotion of Floricultural Tourism in Himachal Pradesh

As on the issue of scope of floriculture tourism there was a pre conceived notion of a good scope, the issue about the necessary framework for initiating the concept and make it reality, the viewpoints about the necessary framework were explored with the respondents. The opinions/views/suggestions obtained have been summarised below.

The concept of floriculture tourism consists the involvement of private sector, the farmers / tourism service providers. Tourism service providers can act as both hosts and guides to the visiting tourists. Floriculture tourism centres offer clean, hygienic environment with modern facilities for comfort

of visitors. Tourists may generally preference to visit the farms which have a good variety of floriculture. Floriculture tourism provider is supposed to provide home cooked food, stay facilities and show and guides the visitors the floriculture harvesting and introduce to him the village way of life through various participatory activities besides letting them enjoy the lap of nature with a lot of flower beds around. Thus, the theme for such tourism may be named as Garden Tourism and as Garden Tours require advance planning and this is a pleasurable activity. The tourist guides/companies should arrange travel for groups and well as individual who like to visit and explore Floriculture and Horticulture Industry. With the team of experienced Floriculturist and Naturalist who would be able to understand the need and requirements first and then suggest the best travel program for the same. Experienced bilingual guides should travel with the tourists so that the visitors may have best knowledgeable experience throughout the tour. So on this account also it was pointed out that if HR is adequate and efficient, the floriculture tourism is naturally going to expand in Himachal Pradesh.

8. Motivations/Objectives of Floricultural Tourists and to explore the HR Potential

Out of the various respondents who understood the concept of floriculture tourism appropriately contributed their opinions about the various attractions/ reasons and objectives for which floriculture tourists may be attracted. Thus depending upon the reasons for visiting of the tourists, the HR must match their expectations. The following opinions were listed.

- Visit of different farms growing varieties of flowers.
- Explore whole Sale Market
- Institution visits
- Exchange with Horticulture Department..
- Meeting with Importers & Exporters
- Floriculture product manufacturer
- Agro Industry
- Machinery units

Besides the above main objectives, these tourists also explore enjoyment by and Other than this the itinerary will also have time for relaxation, sightseeing, shopping etc. This all clubbed together may make the travel for floriculture pleasurable. This is possible only if appropriate and adequate HR practices are followed.

Similarly tourist can be attracted to enjoy the beauty of diverse flowers which abound in Himachal and are only found in florist shops in the cities. Tourist can be educated about the different species of flowers where the technical aspect of their growing and gift them with essences such as lemon oil, rose water and other aromatic species.

9. Problems Hindering Promotion of Floricultural Tourism in Himachal Pradesh on account of inadequate HR.

On the basis of discussion about the reasons for the Floriculture Tourism not having attained any significant contribution in the Tourism sector of Himachal Pradesh, it had emerged that even the floriculture sector itself is not properly flourished and is lacking various infrastructural and administrative issues and that the various operations were not properly and professionally handled. **There is a lot of lack of**

appropriate Human Resource in this core sector itself and thus the potential contribution of floriculture sector to the tourism is just marginal. Besides these HR issues, this sectors also has many infrastructural, administrative and operational problems. Some respondents added that the Floriculture sector of the state is not utilising its Tourism potential because Floriculture Tourism is not in the core agenda theme of any tourism promotion department/agency.

10. Recommendations

Out of the various viewpoints and suggestions given by various respondents, the following recommendations have emerged.

For the initiation and prosperity any industry/business, there is always a need appropriate and qualified Human Resource. In case of promotion of floriculture tourism in Himachal Pradesh the various concerned departments/parties and the tourism department and agencies must take care that appropriate and adequate human resource should be deployed to handle the various operations and tasks. As has been observed and opined by various respondents, there is a lot of gap on this aspect both in the Floriculture sector as well as in the Tourism sector in Himachal Pradesh. Hence it is suggested that a lot needs to be done to take care of this issue to make the tourists fully satisfied and make them promote Floriculture Tourism by sharing among the various other potential tourists about their useful and fruitful experiences.

Also as many respondents have stated that though floriculture in Himachal Pradesh has a lot to offer both in terms of variety and quality but the lack of this sector being unorganized and non availability of the other support systems and infrastructure, the potential is not fully explored. So, on these guidelines, the Government should take up steps for making this an organized sector may be by starting a separate department/ministry so that this sector can fully grow. Besides, the Tourism department should also add and promote a separate tourism theme for Floriculture lovers and arrange special tours for the tourists seeking to visit Himachal Pradesh for Floriculture watching, business, business and study etc.

Besides the above, it has also emerged out of the opinions of some of the respondents that The government must constitute a high powered community of experts/administrators and stakeholders who come up with specific recommendations based on area characteristics. At the same time financial aid and advice how to benefit from the scheme must be formulated because this can go along with in tourism promotion in Himachal Pradesh on account to addition of tourists for attraction of floriculture and thus to improve the income of the various floriculturists by boosting the floriculture production and growth. As it was highlighted, by some respondents, that Himachal Pradesh Tourism Development Corporation 'HPTDC' and Himachal Road Transport Corporation 'HRTC' should play appropriate role for better employability and Hr development by providing appropriate facilities and guidance to the floriculture tourists visiting Himachal Pradesh, therefore it is also suggested that the state should especially train the staff of these organizations enabling them to adequately meet the expectations of the tourists.

Further as it is almost time tested concept that in an organization human resources are treated as one of the basic

resources or inputs, which are to be utilized to the maximum possible extent in order to achieve individual and organizational/ sector goals, therefore there is a high need for mapping the HR requirements and meeting the same appropriately as Floriculture Tourism in Himachal Pradesh has a vast potential. Also an organization's/ Sector's performance

and resulting productivity is taken as directly proportional to the quantity and quality of its human resources, therefore it is also recommended that adequate HR training and development practices should be adopted for promotion and development of Floriculture Promotion in Himachal Pradesh.

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