Abstract:

There have been several studies about the quality and availability of skilled workforce in the hospitality industry (e.g. Nickson, 2010). The UK hospitality sector is very diverse in terms of the range of business it represents, the range of occupations within it, the types of customers it serves and the nature of the people employed within occupational groups. It is dominated by restaurants, public houses and hotels which are typically small enterprises employing fewer than 10 people. Lucas and Mansfield (2008)

Employment in the hospitality industry is characterised by the following issues:

• An unpredictable and ad-hoc demand for services;
• A high level of customer contact;
• Low levels of labour productivity;
• Low wages across a range of occupations;
• High rates of labour turnover; and
• High level of hard-to-fill vacancies.

The hospitality workforce is characterized by over reliance on specific types of workers who are marginalized within secondary labour markets, in particular; young people, students, women, ethnic minorities and migrants. There is a high proportion of part time workers throughout the sector. Profit maximisation is pursued through the use of flexible working practices, which underpins the notion that people are employed as a resource or a cost to be minimized and controlled, rather than nurtured and developed. (Nickson, 2013)

According to Walsh, Masako and Taylor (2007), the greatest volume of turnover occurs among a hotel’s front-line and back of the house employees. Managerial level employees proactively manage their careers and control their professional development by seeking out jobs and organisations that meet specific criteria important to them.

This study aims to investigate skill shortage within the hospitality industry in the United Kingdom, focusing on hospitality businesses in London and analyse management response. It seeks to analyse the current business practices in employee management and skills enhancement to identify best practices and areas for improvement.

References: