PROBLEMS FACED BY WORKERS OF ECONOMY RESTAURANTS IN BANGALORE

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Abstract :

Workers of economy restaurant in Bangalore city face various problems regarding the salary, rigidity in work schedule, uncomfortable working environment, conflicts with higher ups, workers and customers. These problems are causing stress among the workers; hence workers attrition rate is increasing in these types of restaurants. 45 workers from 15 restaurants were interviewedto collect data. Major findings are that the workers are having heavy work schedule and not getting sufficient breaks during their working hours. Workers getting very less days of leaves to meet their family and not getting adequate rest during health related problems. The effect of not meeting with the family for long period is causing stress among them. The workers are not getting their salary on-time and that is increasing the attrition rate in the restaurants. The work environment is not suitable for the workers and they do not feel comfortable working in the restaurants. The workers even come across various conflicts with the higher ups, co-workers and customers which also lead to the attrition. The article throws light on some of these problems in budget class restaurants in Bangalore.

Keywords: *Hotel Industry,Attrition, Work Stress, Employees, Work Environment.*

Introduction

Restaurant work tends to be fast-paced, stressful, repetitive, and physically taxing. Working extra hours is common, but overtime often goes unpaid.Increasingly, restaurants are choosing to employ workers on a part-time or temporary basis to avoid paying for benefits, and turnover is high.While maintaining a high rate of turnover is actually costly for employers, it is standard in the industry, and prevents workers from feeling secure in their jobs. The lack of job security also discourages workers from speaking up about working conditions and is a source of stress in itself. Restaurant workers are at risk of numerous workplace injuries including slips, cuts, and burns. In addition, they are exposed to extreme temperatures, especially indoor heat.Despite these hazards, employees do not always receive safety training, and if they are injured, they may not have access to the treatment that they need.Workers who lack paid sick days often cannot afford to take time off and must go into work while ill, posing a threat to their well-being as well as to public health.

A restaurant is a business which prepares and serves food and drinks to customers, either paid before the meal, after the meal, or with an open

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account. Meals are generally served and eaten on premises, but many restaurants also offer take-out and food delivery services. Restaurants vary greatly in appearance and offerings, including a wide variety of cuisines and service models ranging from inexpensive fast food restaurants to high-priced luxury establishments. Restaurants range from inexpensive and informal lunching or dining places catering to people working nearby, with simple food served in simple settings at low prices, to expensive establishments serving refined food in a formal setting. The economy restaurants are mainly those restaurants where price of food is low and there is no any value added services. The main aim is to prepare the food at most cost effective way and sell it at more affordable price to common man or public. The most of the customers for this type of budget class restaurants are middle class people and below middle class people.

Restaurants provide for the maximum density employment opportunities to the widest variety of human resource in terms of education and skills. They are facing many Human Recourse related challenges these are broadly related to employee shortage, employee retention and turnover issues. Employee turnover is always a major problem for restaurants. The workers in the restaurants are facing lots of problem which is leading not only to high employee turnover but also causing troubles in day to day operations, adding to cost and damaging the business.

Restaurants Workers

Cooks: Cooks prepare, season, and cook a wide range of foods. The various types of restaurant cooks are:

Institution and cafeteria cooks: work in the kitchens of schools, cafeterias, businesses, hospitals, and other institutions. For each meal, they prepare a large quantity of a limited number of entrees, vegetables, and desserts, according to preset menus. Because meals are usually prepared in advance, cooks seldom take special orders.

Restaurant cooks: prepare a wide selection of dishes and cook most orders individually. Some restaurant cooks may order supplies, set menu prices, and plan the daily menu.

Short-order cooks: prepare foods in restaurants and coffee shops that emphasize fast service and quick food preparation. They usually prepare sandwiches, fry eggs, and cook French fries, often working on several orders at the same time.

Fast-food cooks: prepare a limited selection of menu items in fast-food restaurants. They cook and package food, such as hamburgers and fried chicken, to be kept warm until served. For more information on workers who prepare and serve items in fast-food restaurants, see the profiles on food preparation workers and food and beverage serving and related workers.

Private household cooks and personal chefs: plan and prepare meals in private homes, according to the client's tastes and dietary needs. They order groceries and supplies, clean the kitchen, and wash dishes and utensils. They also may cater parties, holiday meals, luncheons, and other social events. Private household cooks typically work for one full-time client. Some private household cooks and personal chefs are self-employed or employed by a private cooking company, regularly making meals for clients.

Food Service Managers: Food service managers are responsible for the daily operation of restaurants and other establishments that prepare and serve food and beverages. They direct staff to ensure that customers are satisfied with their dining experience. Besides coordinating activities of the kitchen and dining room staff, managers ensure that customers are served properly and in a timely manner. They monitor orders in the kitchen and, if needed, they work with the chef to remedy any delays in service. Some food service managers, including those who manage their own business, deal with suppliers and arrange for delivery of food and beverages and other supplies. Some also plan or approve menus and set prices for food and beverage items.

Food service managers are responsible for all functions of the business, related to employees. Managers also schedule work hours, making sure that enough workers are present to cover each shift. During busy periods, they may expedite the service by helping to serve customers, cashiering, or cleaning tables. Food service managers also plan and arrange for cleaning and maintenance services of the equipment and facility. For example, they arrange for linen service, heavy cleaning when the dining room and kitchen are not in use, trash removal, and pest control when needed.

In addition, managers perform many administrative tasks, such as keeping employee records; preparing the payroll; and completing paperwork to comply with licensing, tax and wage, unemployment compensation, and Social Security laws. Although they sometimes assign these tasks to an assistant manager or bookkeeper, most managers are responsible for the accuracy of business records.

Full-service restaurants (those with table service) may have a management team that includes a general manager, one or more assistant managers, and an executive chef. Managers add up the cash and charge slips and secure them in a safe place. Many managers also lock up the establishment; check that ovens, grills, and lights are off; and switch on the alarm system.

Servers: Waiters and waitresses take orders and serve food and beverages to customers in dining establishments. Waiters and waitresses, also called *servers*, are responsible for ensuring that customers have a satisfying dining experience. The specific duties of servers vary considerably with the establishment in which they work. In casual-dining restaurants that offer simple fare, such as salads, soups, and sandwiches, servers are expected to provide fast, efficient, and courteous service. In fine-dining restaurants, where more complicated meals are prepared and are often served over several courses, waiters and waitresses provide more formal service. They emphasize personal, attentive treatment at a more leisurely pace. Waiters and waitresses often meet with managers and chefs before each shift to discuss the menu or specials, review ingredients for potential food allergies, or talk about any food safety concerns. They also discuss coordination between the kitchen and the dining room and review any customer service issues from the previous day or shift.

Many entrants are in their late teens or early twenties and have less than a high school education. Waiter and waitress jobs are a major source of part-time employment for high school and college students, multiple jobholders, and those seeking supplemental incomes. Some

waiters and waitresses can acquire more skills by attending relevant classes offered by public or private vocational schools, restaurant associations, or large restaurant chains. However, employers are more likely to hire and promote employees based on their people skills and personal qualities than on their education.

Restaurants and Hotels in Bangalore city

The diversity of the food available is reflective of the social and economic diversity of Bangalore. Roadside vendors, tea stalls, South Indian, North Indian, Muslim food, Chinese and Western fast food are all very popular in the city. Udupi restaurants are very popular and serve predominantly vegetarian food. The Chinese food and the Thai food served in most of the restaurants are customized to cater to the tastes of the Indian population. Bangalore can also be called a foodie's paradise because of its vast varieties of foods and edibles with a touch of Bangalore's uniqueness and tradition.

Some of the renowned traditional Bangalore vegetarian restaurants are MTR, Vidyarthi Bhavan, Udupi Krishna Bhavan, Ramakrishna Lunch Home, Hotel Sharavathi, New Krishna Bhavan, Janatha Hotel, Central Tiffin Room, Restaurants at Janardhana Hotel and Chalukya Hotel and Ullas to name a few.

The Muslim food of Bangalore is unique as it delivers an interesting blend of Mughlai food, Hyderabadi Muslim or Nawabi food as it is called with a distinct Bangalorean flavor. TheMM Road in Fraser Town is renowned for its unique collection of around 5 to 6 Muslim restaurants, 3 to 4 Mughlai takeaways, a Chinese restaurant and 2 Arabian themed restaurants. Empire Restaurant of Shivajinagar is very famous and has its own chain of restaurants throughout Bangalore. The Chandni Chowk area of Shivajinagar also has concentration of tightly packed restaurants and tea shops, where business booms behind closed shutters until the wee hours of daylight. Arabian food is also slowly on the rise with Shawarma and Falafel gathering some popularity. Bangalore also has some fine dining and specialized restaurants that cover various foods of the world. For good Mangalorean and Konkan style seafood, there's Kudla, Mangalore Pearl and Sa-na-dige. The city also is known to have really good Italian and new-age continental food in places like Sunny's on Lavelle Road and Olive Beach. The various restaurants in the five-star Hotels in the city also offer some very authentic and delicious meals. Some of these include Blue Ginger, Raj Pavilion, and the many 24-hour cafes these hotels run.

Objectives

- To identify the various problems faced by workers of economy restaurants.
- To identify the factors influencing the stress among economy restaurantsworkers.
- To understand the reasons for increase in workers attrition rate.

Methodology

The exploratory research design was adopted due to the nature of the study. Exploratory research provides insights into and comprehension of an issue or situation. The exploratory designs are appropriate for the present study as it explores problems of workers in in Economy restaurants and also tries to understand the consequences of the same.

An informal interview was conducted with workers in various economy restaurants in the first stage to understand the hotel environment, nature of work etc. and in the second stage a formal personalinterview was conducted with the workers with pre-set questions.

Sampling

Convenience sampling method was adopted to select the respondent based on their availability when the researcher visited the restaurant and their willingness to answers. The 45 workers from 15 economy restaurants were interviewed to collect the data.

Data Collection

Primary Data: Survey method was used to collect the primary data through personal interview by the researcher witha set of predicated questions.

Secondary Data: Secondary data were collected through online sources and journals.

Analysis and Discussion

The respondents are workers in the selected economy restaurants in Bangalore. 90% of the respondents are male and 60% of the respondents are in the age group of bellow 40 years.Most of them are dropout at high school level of their education and few of them are dropout from pre-university level. Five of them have completed their under graduation.

Out of the total respondents selected for the interview, approximately 40% are suppliers or servers, 20% are cleaners, 30% are cooks and remaining 10% are cashiers in the restaurants.

Qualitative analysis was presented in this section which was based on the data collected through personal interview with the restaurant workers. The outcome of the interview i.e., problems faced by workers in the economy restaurants are discussed below.

Heavy Work Schedule

One of the problems the workers facing in the economy restaurants are heavy work schedule. It can affect their health also. Due to heavy work schedule workers cannot keep their patient and they may face some conflict with their co-workers or with the customers and attrition rate in the economy restaurants also high. Reasons for heavy work schedule are:

- **Long Working Hours**

Number of hours the respondents are working in a day

Working Hours	Number of Respondents
7-8	4
9-10	20
11-12	21
Total	45

Working for long hours can make the workers stress physically and mentally. The working for 11 – 12 hours is very long duration. The majority of the workers said it is 9 or more than 9 hours of working. It will make them very tired, stressful and they will notbe able to perform better.

- **Short break**

The workers working in the economy restaurants are getting very short breaks because of the ever visiting customers into the restaurant. The workers will not get good break because many of these types of restaurants will not be closed for couple of hours during the day. Hence workers get short period of interval to take rest in between.

Number of hours break time the respondents are getting during the working hours

Break Time during Working Hours (hrs.)	Number of Respondents
0-1	20
2-3	16
4-5	9
Total	45

The above table shows that the workers are not getting sufficient time between their heavy work schedules. They will be tired working for 6 – 8 hours continuously. Hence they may be frustrated and cannot work properly and also they might not be able to provide good service to the customers.

- **Customers Crowd**

Another reason for short breaks is thatcustomer crowd in the restaurant on some occasions like weekend, festivals. In such occasions the workers will not get sufficient break.

Delay in payment of Salary

Salary is the key factor for any worker working in any economy restaurant. Due to workers not getting their salary on time will increase the rate of turnover in the economy restaurant. Most of the workers who work in the economy restaurants face this problem. It was found that more than 70% of the respondents are not getting their salary on time. It is also of the reason for increase in turnover ratio in hotel industry. The main causes for delay in payment of salary are:

- **Improper Inventory management**

Inventory management system in the most of the economy restaurants is very poor. Their payment schedule for the inventory also not structured. It leads to heavy investment on inventories and they left with very less amount to pay salary on time.

- **Uneven Cash inflow**

The economy restaurants have uneven cash inflows because of the variation in thecustomers visit. In some of the situations the customer will be less which willaffect the cash inflows of the economy restaurant.

Lack of Holidays

The workers working should get holidays for good number of days because the Economy restaurant runs all days a week and the workers works for long hours. The leaves must be given as to come out form the hectic schedule and have some free time for relaxation and family. The adequate leave should be given for them who are suffering from some health issues. Reasons for the lack of holidays are:

- **Shortage of Workers**

If any worker wants to take a leave in place of that worker there should be a backup who can manage the same work. If there are no other backup workers then the holidays may not be given to the workers.

- **More Absenteeism**

If any worker is in the list of high absenteeism then that worker will not get holidays. He may also not get sufficient leaves when heis suffering from some health issues continuously for a period of time.

Work Environment

Work environment plays a vital role in any organization restaurants are not excused. 68% of the respondents said that there is no good or comfortable working environment in the restaurants where they are working. Most of the cooks have expressed their dissatisfaction about maintenance of kitchens. If the kitchen is not good to work, workers will face many problems regarding their health. There are many other reasons which are contributing to the bad or uncomfortable work environment which makes the workers to quit their job.

- **Improper Ventilation**

The most common in the economy restaurants are the no proper ventilation. The economy restaurant's kitchen will be very hot due to cooking of food, to reduce the heat proper ventilation should be made from which the hot air and smoke is sent out. Improper ventilation will cause the various health problems like asthma and several lung diseases. Due to not feeling comfortable in work environment the many of the workers move to the other economy restaurants which increases worker attrition rate.

- **Improper residential facility**

The workers of the economy restaurants who are away from their home and come to work for them the economy restaurants provide the rooms to stay. These rooms will be small and congested. Due to small rooms the workers will not feel comfortable and the conflicts may take place between the co-workers.

- **Cleanliness**

The most of the economy restaurants will look clean and fresh in the counters that shows the status of the economy restaurants but inside where the utensils are washed will be dirty and stinky. The workers will not able to work in that environment which creates unhealthy work environment. This will also lead to increase in the attrition rate of the workers.

Conflicts

The workers will face conflicts with the management for their salary, leaves and other factors which causing stress them. Due to stressful work,employees do not perform well and the conflict may occur between the higher ups and the workers. The workers working in the economy restaurants may face conflicts with their co-workers due to lack of co-ordination between them. If a worker does not do the work seriously and shows laziness in the work then it may make the other workers to do more work which leads to conflict.

For various reasons workers have conflicts even with customers. All these are contributing to stress and as a result they will be unhappy with the management and leaves the job.

Respondents having conflicts with Higher-ups, Co-workers and Customers

Conflicts with	Respondents (%)
Higher-ups	75
Co-workers	64
Customers	82

Note: Each row must be read independently.

- **Lack of co-ordination**

The economy restaurant is the place where the workers should do the work in a systematic way. The workers should work as a team and divide equal work among everyone. If anyone shows the laziness or not work then that will affect other workers in the economy restaurant. This may result in the conflicts among the workers and may increase the attrition rate.

- **Autocratic nature of higher ups**

The autocratic nature of the higher ups will generate some of the strictness towards the workers. This strictness towards the workers may lead to affect them mentally and to their performance. Due to autocratic nature of the higher ups the conflict may arise.

- **Lack of skill in handling customers**

The conflict may arise with the customers who are not satisfied with the serviceprovided by the workers. When there is more footfall of customers than workers might not able to take careof each and everycustomer properly. The customers may get angry and starts having words with the customers andconflict may arise. This conflict with customers may result in conflicts with the higherups and it may lead attrition of the worker.The lack of skills in handling the customers also leads to conflicts. These kinds of conflict are mostly seen among new workers who do not know how to handle the customers.

Away from Family for a long period

The family plays an important role in an individual's life and being away from the family will make the workers to think every time about their family. The stress can possibly occur due to not meeting their family members for a longer

period of time. The workers whose family lives around Bangalore or other parts of Karnataka normally meet their family once in one to two months. Whose family lives in other states meet their family once in six months or once in a year. They may come to earn money for their family but away from family makes anyone depressed.It makes them mentally upset and can also affect their work.

Leaves

More than 55% of the workers with whom interview was conducted are not satisfied with the leave policy of the restaurants where they are working. Sufficient leaves are very important for them to visit their native place and more over economy restaurants run all days a week and the workers work for longhours.

Salary

Another factor which is contributing the workers turnover in hotels, in particular economy restaurants is the salary what they are paying. 50% of the respondent workers feel that they aregetting less salary for their work and they even compare with other restaurants. It is de-motivating them to work in restaurant and workers tend to leave the job and move to another economy restaurant.

Lack of appreciation

Out of the total respondents 75% of have the opinion that they are not appreciated for their good work in the restaurants. They expect appreciation from their higher ups which will motivate them to work more effectively. They complain that supervisors or managers or owners take the liberty to scold for various reasons but they do not show their goodness when they did some good work or something more than what expected from them.

Findings

- Majority of the workers are not satisfied with the salary, holidays, leave policy, facilities given, work schedule and work environment in the economy restaurants in Bangalore.
- Many of them have favourable opinion about their owners but they are not happy with their immediate bosses and work conditions.
- Stress among the workers in the restaurantsdue to above discussed reasons is the major problem in the economy restaurants which is leading to many other problems for the owners of the restaurants.
- The stress is affecting the workersperformance in the restaurant and leading to conflicts with the higher-ups, co-workers and customers.
- Many of the workers are leaving the restaurants within a short period of time due to work stress, conflicts, salary and leave problems.
- The high turnover of workers is a major problem for economy restaurants inBangalore. The workers attrition is the outcome of reasons discussed in the previous section.
- In addition to high attrition in the restaurants there is shortage of labour in the industry which is also one of the reasons for stress among the workers.
- Many economy restaurant workers are not finding a stable place towork for a longer period.
- There is lot of labour supply not only from

different parts of Karnataka but also from other states in the country and Nepal.

- Demand for workers and labour laws are helping them in getting better salary but not offering solutions for their core problems. The laws are not so effectively implemented in all respect. At the same time these workers are unorganized.

Conclusion

The problems facing by the workers of the economy restaurants in Bangalore were discussed the paper based on personal interview. These problems are causing stress and increases attrition rate. The main reasons for all these problems are heavy work schedule, inadequate leaves and bad work environment. These things are making the workers to feel stressful and affecting their performance. The economy restaurant workers attrition rate is also at high level because of delay in payment of salary, compulsory over time duty and conflicts. The conflict with the customers, higher ups and co-workers is demotivating them to a greater extent. Appreciation is the key factor for motivation for anyone but unfortunately the managers and bosses in restaurants are not encouraging them to work effectively. The economy restaurants are facing the problem of shortage of workers and high attrition rate. To control the attrition rate they should provide reasonable facilities, leaves, little flexibility in the work schedule and very important is empathy towards them and little concern towards their problems. It will create long lasting impact of the workers and makes them to work with commitment and dedication.

Suggestions

- The workers should get sufficient break during their working hours. They must be given at least 2 – 4 hours break during their working hours which can reduce the stress level in the workers and they can work more effectively.
- Workers who are away from their home should get special leaves at least once in a year. Theeffect of not meeting the family members for a long period is creating many other problems. They should be given leaves to meet and spend some time withtheir family once in a year. It will make them to work with more involvement.
- In majority of the restaurants, due to delay in payment of salary workers are de-motivated. The management should pay the worker's salary on-time so that it will reduce the attrition ratein the economy restaurant.
- To improve working environment in the economy restaurants exhausts should be installed sothat the smoke and hot air in the kitchens will be ventilated outside. The hygiene should be maintained. Proper residence facility must be provided.
- The workers attrition rate increasing because of the conflicts. The work should be systematically scheduled and unnecessary burden on the workers must be avoided. The higher ups should communicate with the workers and should maintain a healthy relationship with them.
- The supervisors or managers should see that the customers are handled properly by the workers and in case of any disturbances they must immediately respond to the situation. Unnecessary targeting on the workers or for everything pointing towards workers must be avoided.

- Motivation plays a very important role in any workers life. The workers must beappreciated for doing good job.
- The new workers must be given on the job training to equip them with the required skill.
- The workers require empathy and support during their emergencies and health issues. If management shows little care about them, they will become loyal towards the restaurant.

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