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HUMAN RESOURCE MANAGEMENT IN PUBLIC FOOD SERVICE

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Abstract: Human resource management is an essential element in the efficient operation of public food service units, as their success largely depends on the quality of the staff and the way they are organized and coordinated. In restaurants, canteens, or other similar establishments, employees not only prepare and serve dishes but also directly contribute to the customer experience, influencing the unit’s image and reputation. In this context, human resource management involves a set of activities including recruitment, selection, training, evaluation, and employee motivation. All these processes must be carried out in an organized manner and adapted to the specific nature of the food service industry, where the pace of work is intense and the requirements regarding quality and hygiene are very high. Human resource management in public food service also faces certain challenges. Among these are high staff turnover, the lack of qualified workforce, and the stress specific to this field. In order to cope with these difficulties, managers must adopt effective staff retention strategies and create a stable and motivating work environment. In conclusion, human resource management plays a crucial role in the success of public food service units. Through careful recruitment, continuous training, efficient work organization, and employee motivation, superior results can be achieved both in terms of service quality and customer satisfaction. Thus, human resources become a strategic factor in the development and competitiveness of this sector

Introduction

The food service sector represents an important component of the service economy, playing a significant role in satisfying consumer needs and in the development of tourism and the local economy [5], [13]. Restaurants, cafeterias, and other food service establishments contribute not only to providing food products, but also to creating consumption experiences in which service quality plays an essential role [11]. In this context, the performance of these establishments largely depends on the efficiency with which human resources are managed.

Human resources represent a determining factor in ensuring the quality of services provided in food service establishments, and their management becomes a strategic element for achieving competitive advantage [1], [3]. Unlike other fields, in this sector the direct interaction between employee and customer is constant, while the behavior, competencies, and attitude of the staff directly influence consumer satisfaction and the organization’s image.

At the same time, activities within food service establishments present a series of particularities that require a specific approach to Human Resource Management. The work pace is intense, schedules are often flexible or extended, and the requirements regarding compliance with hygiene and food safety standards are very strict. In addition, staff must possess not only technical competencies, but also communication and customer relationship skills, which increases the complexity of the selection and training process.

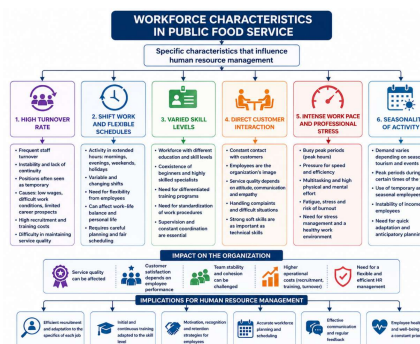
Material and method

In carrying out the present paper, a theoretical and analytical and best practices in Human Resource Management approach was used, based on the study of specialized literature in the field of Human Resource Management, with an emphasis on the food service sector. Both Romanian and international literature sources, scientific articles, and case studies regarding the organization and management of human resources in restaurants, cafeterias, or catering services were consulted.

The main method used was documentary analysis, which allowed the identification of the main characteristics of the workforce in this sector, such as high staff turnover, shift work, varying levels of qualification, direct interaction with customers, professional stress, and seasonal activity. In addition, the comparative method was used by correlating information from different sources in order to highlight general trends.

Results and discussions

The workforce in the food service sector presents a series of distinct characteristics that directly influence Human Resource Management practices. These particularities derive from the nature of the activity, the work pace, and the constant interaction with customers.



High staff turnover represents one of the most important characteristics of the workforce in the food service sector and, at the same time, one of the greatest challenges for Human Resource Management. The organization of shift work and the need for flexible schedules represent defining characteristics of the food service sector, being closely related to the nature of the services provided. The varied qualification level of staff represents an essential characteristic of the workforce in the food service sector, reflecting the diversity of roles and responsibilities existing within this field. Direct interaction with customers represents one of the most important characteristics of activity in food service and, at the same time, an essential element distinguishing this sector from many other economic fields. An intense work pace and high levels of stress represent defining features of activity in the food service sector, being closely related to its operational specifics. Seasonality of activity represents another important characteristic of the food service sector, having a significant impact on the organization and management of human resources.

Conclusions

Human resource management is an essential factor in the efficient operation of food service establishments, directly influencing service quality and customer satisfaction. The specific nature of this field requires an adapted approach, characterized by flexibility and a focus on the needs of both employees and customers.