

Professional Cooking as Area of Interest: Study in context of Female students of Hospitality Course

Dr.Hardaman Singh Bhinder

Assistant Professor

Department of Tourism, Hospitality and Hotel Management

Punjabi University, Patiala

Abstract

Several cookery shows are motivating the young prospects to opt cooking as a profession. Through cooking women provide the family with the nourishment. Women have long been associated with being in the kitchen and would be able to transfer their home cooking skills into professional field. It was found that the numbers of female executive chefs is lower than the males. Professional food production areas are today male dominated. Present paper aims to explore Study Hotel Department Preferences as Area of Interest among Female hotel management students. A total of 60 questionnaires were distributed to the female students, out of which only 49 were found complete and usable. Finding reveals that very less percentage of female students preferred to make their career in hospitality sector as a professional chef. Rather it was found that majority of them rated that in case if they opt hospitality sector, they will prefer to work in guest service areas such as hotel reception, housekeeping etc.

Key Words: Profession, Dominated, Transfer, Preference, Housekeeping.

Introduction

Travellers visiting tourist destinations requires outlets which offer quality food dishes. For extending gastronomic experiences to tourists requires trained and competent chefs and service staff. Hospitality institutes are playing an important role in training future manpower requirements of tourism and hospitality sector. In comparison to earlier times now days many female students are also taking up hospitality and culinary skill courses at the undergraduate level but it was found that very less percentage of female students take up food production area and very less turn up to the highest position of the kitchen brigade in star hotels. Male counter parts are still dominating this field. Male dominance means that limited number of women in culinary field in professional setups. Cooking is considered to be women's work but the majority of men are in positions as professional chefs in star hotels and restaurant.

However few females have attempted to break this dominance and gained Executive chef positions national and internationally. Job profile of executive chef is not just about cooking but to learn all aspects of food and beverage business. Head chef needs to be updated with managerial and administrative aspects of successfully running the kitchen. Advancement in a chef career is considered highly meritocratic. Several stories and memories related to interactions with food have examples of culinary efforts of mainly grandmothers, aunts, sisters etc. This seems that the main player in home kitchens was women but when it comes to professional culinary kitchen, women's were not equally represented. Riley (2008) pointed out that majority of females prefer to work in areas that have normal routine shift that is eight to four o'clock where break and lunch hours are included. **Monica, Dorothy et al (2014)** attempted to explore how and why few females are there in the kitchen and as well as their absence in the position of executive chef in Zimbabwe. Study was carried out in Rainbow tourism group hotels of Zimbabwe. A total of 30 Respondents were approached and comprises of included 5 male Executive chefs, 5 Sous chefs, 5 female chefs from other sections like larder/sauce/roast/soup and vegetables sections in the kitchen, 5 students on industrial attachment, 5 pastry chefs, 5 lecturers taking/teaching Culinary Arts courses. Findings of the study revealed that majority of respondents entered the Industry due to passion, this also includes females. It is discovered that lack of experience, attitude and lack of confidence are the major barriers to Executive Chef. However social, physiological and infrastructural factors are the most challenges which are observed as obstacles which hinder females from reaching executive chef positions. The researchers discovered that; females tend to create their own glass ceiling, caused by their negative attitude towards kitchen jobs. However majority of the responses were from married respondents, hence married females are the most affected. This means

that work- family conflict is the major challenge deterring females in the Executive chef position. These involve long working hours often into the late hours of the night and on weekends.

Objectives:

1. To Study Hotel Department Preferences as Area of Interest among Female students.

Hypothesis

1. There is no significant differences exist for department preferences to work among female students in terms of their parental education and family background.

Research Methodology:

Respondents selected for the study consist of female students pursuing three year degree course in Hospitality & Hotel Management (B.Sc H&HM). Students were randomly selected from the first semester of University campus and its affiliated Hotel Management institutes. A total of 60 questionnaires were distributed to the female students, out of which only 49 were found complete and usable. Data analysis comprises of percentage analysis and Chi square test was applied to test the hypothesis.

Table 1 shows Demographic Profile of the Respondents:

Table No.1	Level	Percentage	Frequency
Parent educational level	12th	18	9
	Graduate	29	14
	Master	29	14
	Ph.D	6	3
	10th	8	4
	Illiterate	10	5
	Total	100	49
Parent Occupation	Occupation	Percentage	Frequency
	Govt. Employee	27	13
	Agriculture	37	18
	Private Job	22	11
	Business	14	7
	Total	100	49
Department Preference	Department	Percentage	Frequency
	Front office	33	16
	Housekeeping	39	19
	F &B Service	12	6
	F& B Production	16	8
	Total	100	49

Table 2		Area of interest
Parent educational level	Chi-square	22.993
	df	15
	Sig.	.084
Family background	Chi-square	24.221
	df	9
	Sig.	.004

Findings:

Department Preferences as Area of Interest: It was found that there is no significant difference exists among female students for department preference in terms of Parental education level, where as in terms of their family background there is significant difference exist. Respondents parental educational level wise majority of them are interested to work in Housekeeping department of the Hotel ,where as in terms of family background wise ,respondents belonging to business background have the preference to work in Food Production department where as respondents belonging to private job have preference towards Front office and remaining to Housekeeping Department.

Conclusion:

Majority of them preferred to work in the Housekeeping and Front office and very less percentage of respondents was found to be interested to work in Food Production. Moreover majority of them are keen to do jobs after completion of their course. It was found that those who are interesting to work in kitchen prefer to work in pastry section than the hot kitchen .But when you are in a chef's uniform, it does not matter whether you are man or women, what matters how you create different dishes that extend gastronomic experiences to dinners. .Some of popular female professional chef such as Chef Veena Arora (Chef de cuisine-Imperial hotel) Chef Kamini Jha (Head Chef-The Oberoi),Madhu Krishnan(Chief Exe.Chef-ITC Grand Maratha) and Nita Nagaraj(Corporate chef-Jaypee Hotels) have established them in the Indian hospitality sector .Faculty members and industry professionals should counsel the female students and motivate them to pursue careers apart from housekeeping and front office by highlighting students key competencies and suggest them area where they can excel

References

- **Monica, Dorothy. , F, Zengeni & EdnahTendani (2014).**The Absence of Females in Executive Chef Position in Zimbabwean Hotels: Case of Rainbow Tourism Group (RTG).*Australian Journal of Business and Management Research*. 3 (10) ,01-18
- **Riley M. (2008).** Hospitality Management; London; Pitman Publishing.