Management of human resources and recruitment in Hotel Groups

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Tourism is an activity that, in Portugal, according to official statistics, has continued to grow and is today one of the main engines of development. Hospitality is, in turn, one of the most important tourist activities, as it provides tourists with lodging, food and beverage services and other services that provide them with integrated experiences. These services must be well articulated among the employees and coordinated by the Hotel Group management team (GH), as the guests have increasingly demanding objectives, needs and expectations. Therefore, as the experience involves a high level of emotional intensity and affection, qualified professionals in Hospitality Management are required, and it is important to recruit and select the right people and boost their performance and motivation (Costa, 2012). The GH use various sources of recruitment (Gallego, 2007), namely in higher education institutions (IES) (Vieira & Marques, 2014). In tourism, investment in 'human capital' is late (Salgado, 2007) and it is noted that not all GH have a human resources (HR) department.

The present study intends to know how the GH in Portugal manage the human resources, especially in its recruitment and development, in the perspective of the course coordinators (CC) in HEI with a degree in Hospitality Management of the public subsystem (LGHP) and GH. The methodology adopted was qualitative, based on the multiple case study method incorporated (Yin, 2014). The GH are the case study I and the LGHP are the case study II. During the review of the literature, a bibliographical research was conducted, exploratory interviews were conducted with academic researchers from the area of tourism, participant and non-participation observation were conducted, and participation in scientific seminars, congresses and conferences were done. At the observation stage data were collected through semi-structured interviews with 12 GH and 6 CC of the LGHP, analysis of information on the websites of the GH and IES, document analysis and records of archives of the courses, direct observation participant and journal entries. Content analysis was performed through the NVivo 10 software for interviews and manually for the remaining sources (Bardin, 1977; Coutinho, 2014; Creswell, 2007; Yin, 2014).

In terms of HR management, we conclude that the international GH have more advanced HR management policies, investing in their employees to achieve a high performance that, as a rule, is higher than that of Portuguese GH. There are GH with advanced HR management policies, others with only good practices and the rest only do administrative management. At the recruitment level, it is noted that the GH are more demanding and organized, since most of them already have an HR department. GH with a strong and recognized brand in the market receive many spontaneous applications. The main source of GH recruitment is the internships, although they draw on a variety of sources. The GH, in particular international and some Portuguese, have career plans and incentives to retain and develop their employees. This study contributes to reinforce and increase research in the hotel sector, which is still scarce; know how GH works and value HR management. As a qualitative methodology was used through the built-in multiple case study method, the results apply only to the population and the analysis units under study.

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