

PRACTICAL ASPECT OF HOSPITALITY STAFF CREATIVITY

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Abstract. The *subject* of the study is the theoretical and applied aspects of the formation of creativity of personnel in hospitality industry establishments. *Methodology.* In the research process, general and special research methods were used, in particular: general and special scientific methods – to ensure the achievement of this goal; abstract-logical and dialectical methods of analysis – to substantiate theoretical propositions and conclusions. The method of collecting information – a sociological survey – was used for the practical identification of the research results. The *aim* of the article is to determine the main aspects of personnel creativity formation and its impact on the success of hospitality establishments. The *results* of the study showed that the key qualities of human creativity are the production of ideas, adaptation and flexibility to changes, the ability to take risks, and the creativity of personnel helps to solve administrative problems in the organization, adaptation and flexibility to changes, increases the level of competitiveness of hospitality industry establishments in a competitive environment. *Conclusions.* Human creativity is manifested not only in a person's ability to produce new ideas, solutions, projects, but also in flexibility, adaptability to environmental conditions that arise in the process of life. The management of hospitality institutions should pay more attention to the process of training their employees, improving their qualifications in order to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of human creativity, which will allow the team, based on the knowledge gained, to clearly understand how to show their creativity. Today, in the conditions of war in Ukraine, the situation of the state in general indicates a high level of creativity of employees in the hospitality sector, because flexibility and adaptation to changes, production of new ideas, self-education in conditions of war are the best indicators of the activity of institutions in terms of the level of creativity of personnel. Motivation for creativity should be both internal and external, because employees who feel internal motivation to perform tasks are doing work for pleasure and out of their own interest or desire to overcome a particular individual challenge, and external motivation is associated with external incentives, goals, or pressures that can motivate an employee to perform a particular task. The process of managing the creativity of employees in catering organizations should be preceded by a step-by-step method of determining the ability of employees to think creatively and whether the management style is typical for a given organization today. Only after the analysis of these factors it is necessary to formulate methods of stimulating the development of creativity of employees. The results of the study show that the most effective methods of stimulating the creativity of employees in the hospitality industry are the management's trust in the employees, the ability to listen to their ideas, joint team-building activities, and care for the physical health of the employees.

Key words: creativity, idea, flexibility, adaptability, risk, hospitality industry, motivation, war.

JEL Classification: M54, L80

1. Introduction

The rapid development of civilization shows that human creativity is able to change and develop under the influence of certain aspects, events, etc. Studying the evolution of mankind, one can see the great

creative potential of humankind, which is manifested in human interaction with the environment (making tools such as bows, spears, knives), adaptation to difficult operating conditions (development of ideas, exchange of ideas, introduction of innovations).

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Today, the creativity of personnel can be considered the best method and strategic way to achieve success in business, to face risks and problems that arise in the company. The creativity of employees in the hospitality industry is particularly relevant, because it is one of the most important criteria for evaluating the success and competitiveness of the organization, as it manifests itself in the provision of a suitable working environment, transforming the acquired knowledge and skills into effective results that meet the wishes of guests. Progress in all aspects of life requires constant work on the development of creativity of employees, encouraging the creation of new ideas, projects, innovative decisions, forming new team relationships within the team and with guests.

The analysis of scientific publications shows that the works of many foreign and domestic scientists are generally devoted to the study of creativity. Issues of personnel creativity are described in the scientific works of V. Brych (Brych, 2018), T. Bashuk, M. Khyzhnyak (Bashuk, 2013), C. Dimitrova-Burlayenko (Dimitrova-Burlayenko, 2017) and others. Theoretical and practical aspects of personnel creativity formation are reflected in the works of D. Veretenko, N. Prokopenko, O. Harun, A. P. Yehorshin and I. V. Guskova. The works of D. Krikunenko (Krikunenko, 2012), N. Ivanova (Ivanova, 2022), D. Kucherenko (Ivanova, 2022), K. Protsak (Protsak, 2016), and O. Prosovich (Protsak, 2016) are devoted to approaches to the development and management of personnel creativity. However, despite the research on creativity in general and staff creativity, the problem of understanding staff creativity in hospitality organizations and its impact on organizational success remains unexplored.

The aim of the study is to determine the main aspects of personnel creativity formation and its impact on the success of hospitality industry establishments.

2. Retrospective and modern analysis of research on personnel creativity

One of the first authors to describe the essence of creativity was the psychologist E. Torrens, who defined the term creativity as the process of developing sensitivity to problems, to the deficit or disharmony of existing knowledge, which motivates a person to look for a new and optimal way of solving them. According to Professor Torrens, the creative act is divided into the perception of a problem, the search for a solution, the emergence and formulation of hypotheses, the verification of hypotheses, their modification and the finding of the result (Doktor E. Pol Torrants, 2023).

A. Maslow played a significant role in improving the concept of "creativity", who understood creativity as a natural characteristic of a person that develops

independently and is characterized by the full use of talents, abilities and opportunities (Abrakham Maslou, 2020). Researcher D. Renzulli characterizes creativity as a feature of human behavior that is expressed in original ways of obtaining a product: achieving a solution to a social or economic problem as a result of new approaches to it from different points of view (Renzulli, 1977). Accordingly, the authors define the creativity of personnel as the ability to use intellectual capital and obtain results in the form of a new product, process, service (innovation) (Hrabovs'ka, 2017).

According to the authors, creativity is manifested not only in a person's ability to generate new ideas, solutions, and projects, but also in flexibility and adaptability to environmental conditions that arise in the course of life. Thus, the authors offer their own interpretation of *creativity as a feature of human behavior that is accompanied by flexibility and adaptability to the conditions dictated by the present, the ability to produce new ideas, solutions, projects and their successful transformation into real results*. In other words, the authors propose to consider creativity not only as an imaginary human property, but also as the ability to turn one's own ideas into a real result.

Researchers of creative management and economics emphasize three components of creativity: the creative component (the ability to create fundamentally new forms or a new combination of already known elements), the fundamental nature of a creative idea (creativity should lead to fundamental changes in the nature of competition or consumption in a given market), and result orientation (Donets, 2006).

In recent years, Ukrainian business has suffered significant losses, first due to the pandemic, and today – due to active hostilities on the part of Russia. The hospitality industry has suffered almost the greatest losses. On the brink of economic collapse, the hotel and restaurant business is now more than ever forced to show creativity, flexibility and initiative in order to maintain financial stability. Therefore, the importance of studying the influence of staff creativity on the activities of hospitality establishments is extremely important.

For a deeper study of creativity and in accordance with the analysis of scientific sources, it is suggested to highlight the following manifestations of creativity:

1. *Flexibility and adaptability to change*. This manifestation of creativity indicates a person's ability to produce new ideas (solutions, projects) in accordance with changes in the environment, which should improve the results of previous work. For example, the war in Ukraine caused a lot of damage in the hotel and restaurant business, which led to the closure of many restaurants and hotels in February-March 2022. The war hit the southern and eastern regions the hardest, and by the end of May 2022,

37% of Ukraine's catering establishments had closed, the sector had lost 60% of its workers, and profits had been cut by more than half (How the Ukrainian restaurant business is adapting to the challenges of war: analysis, 2022). Thanks to the creativity of the management and the employees of the hospitality industry, the restaurant and hotel business is recovering today, as more than 2,000 new establishments have been created, which shows that each employee has managed to adapt to difficult changes in the environment, to be flexible in certain decisions, and to produce new ideas, among which the voluntary work in restaurants occupies an important place.

2. *Degree of change.* According to the authors, human creativity can be manifested in two degrees of change – radical and gradual. In the first case, creativity is seen as the development of new technologies, programs, products, etc. Incremental change is characterized by the improvement of the existing technology, program, product. But both degrees of change are a manifestation of human creativity. For example, the state of war in Ukraine forced the owners of the hotel and restaurant business to radically revise the development strategy and concept of their establishments, which made it possible to make the appropriate decision – to close or change the "rules". Accordingly, the market was left to the enterprises that were able to radically change the concept of their own institution and organize a team, or there was a cooperation of institutions of different spheres of activity (a coffee shop and a bookstore).

3. *Focus on the result.* According to the authors, a person's creativity is never in "standby mode" but manifests itself in real actions that encourage them to "turn on." That is why creative staff at enterprises will not be afraid to communicate their ideas to management, take risks, make certain decisions, and analyze their mistakes.

3. Practical aspect of the impact of staff creativity on the activities of hospitality industry institutions

To more effectively achieve the goal of this study, a survey was conducted, the main purpose of which was to identify the impact of staff creativity on the activation of hospitality industry establishments.

The main *hypotheses* of the questionnaire were determined: the creativity of employees contributes to the solution of administrative problems in the organization, adaptation and flexibility to changes; the creativity of employees increases the level of competitiveness of hospitality industry establishments in a competitive environment; the key qualities of

creativity are the production of ideas, adaptation and flexibility to changes, the ability to take risks.

The research was conducted online using a Google form, the link to the questionnaire was distributed through social networks, Telegram and Viber groups, and e-mail. The survey was conducted between March 25, 2023 and April 10, 2023.

The survey involved 60 employees of the hospitality industry and more than 10 hospitality enterprises in Lviv Oblast in particular: restaurant "DEFILIADA" (city of Novoiavorivsk, Yavoriv district), restaurant "Andreano" (city of Novoiavorivsk, Yavoriv district), restaurant and recreation complex "Lake District" (Pustomyty, Lviv Oblast), restaurant "Zharovnia" Na Zamku (Lviv), restaurant "Boykivska gostyna" (Lviv), "Gazda Group" (Lviv), restaurant "Wine & Meat" (Lviv), restaurant "Med" (Lviv), restaurants "Rebernia" of the chain "Emotions !FEST Holding" (Lviv), restaurant "Stargorod" (Lviv), restaurant "MARINAD Meat Bar" (Lviv), restaurant "Nota Bene" (Lviv).

Among the respondents, 22.4% (13 people) are owners, managers of the establishment; 31% (18 people) are administrators, 46.6% (29 people) are waiters, bartenders, baristas, chefs, cooks.

The results of the study show that hospitality workers identify creativity at a very superficial level, as most of them (59.3%) believe that employee creativity is manifested either through the production of a new idea, project, or self-development and self-learning, or adaptation and flexibility to introduce certain changes in the institution (Figure 1). On the other hand, 40.7% of respondents believe that all of the skills listed are evidence of an employee's creativity. Thus, it is believed that based on the results of this issue, the management of hospitality industry institutions should pay more attention to the process of training their employees, improving their skills to gain a deeper understanding of the concept of human creativity, which will allow the team to clearly understand how to show their creative potential based on the knowledge gained.

One of the main goals of the strategic development of today's hospitality industry enterprises should be the effective management of employees' creativity, which should be based on the following principles: helping employees to achieve the best results by maintaining their interest; the responsibility of managers to increase creativity and eliminate the arbitrary division into administrative and creative workers. According to the results of the study, today 57.6% of catering enterprises use methods to stimulate the creativity of employees, 35.6% – partially, which is a positive dynamic.

Among the main methods of stimulation, the most popular are salary increases and payment of bonuses

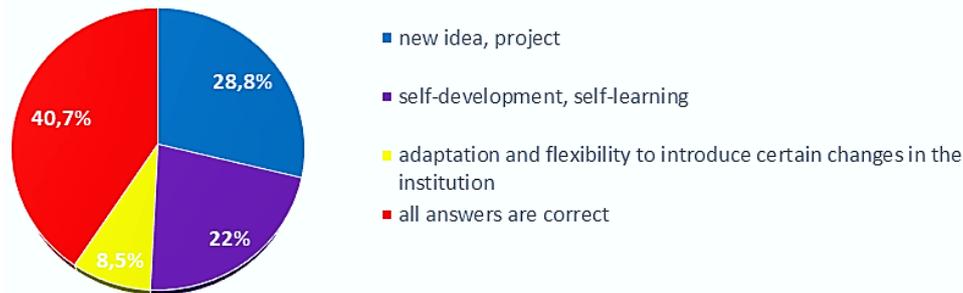


Figure 1. "What, in your opinion, is the evidence of an employee's creativity?"

(48.3%), as well as praise in front of the team (15.5%), free participation in trainings, courses (13.8%), free meals (5.2%), less active methods are subscriptions to sports facilities, trips on expeditions, rest in thematic places.

It is worth noting that 91.5% of respondents believe that the creativity of employees contributes to solving administrative problems in the hospitality industry. Thus, the company's management should pay considerable attention to staff creativity management and motivate its development. According to the authors, the choice of methods for stimulating staff creativity depends on the individual characteristics of each team member. In order to determine such methods, it is suggested to make a psychological portrait of each employee and to create an appropriate database of such information, on the basis of which incentive methods can be developed in accordance with the individual characteristics of a person.

Each person's creativity is influenced by many factors, including experience, culture, environment, education, mindset, intrinsic and extrinsic motivation, monetary rewards, etc. According to Steve Jobs, the founder of Apple Corporation, creativity is most influenced by experience, "Creativity is just connecting things. When you ask creative people how they did something, they feel a little guilty because they didn't really do it, they just saw something. It seemed obvious to them after a while. That's because they were able to connect experiences they've had and synthesize new things. And the reason they were able to do that was that they've had more experiences or they have thought more about their experiences than other people." (What is creativity and how is it formed? 2021). According to Tereza Amabail's model, in addition to experience in a particular field, creativity requires creative thinking skills that promote independence, risk, and new perspectives on problems, as well as motivation, such as the willingness to address a problem from internal motivations (curiosity, love of work, satisfaction from finding non-standard decisions, etc.), rather than from rewards or external observation (Voytushenko, 2019).

No less important factor influencing creativity is the environment: family, educational system, professional team, friendly atmosphere, general condition and development of the state. Today, in the conditions of war in Ukraine, the general state of the country indicates a high level of creativity of employees in the hospitality sector, because flexibility and adaptation to changes, production of new ideas, self-education in conditions of war are the best indicators of the activity of institutions in terms of the level of creativity of personnel.

The results of the survey (Figure 2) show that the environment (52.5%), motivation (49.2%) and monetary reward (45.8%) have a greater influence on the development of creativity in hospitality workers. Unfortunately, education has minimal influence on human creativity (8.6%). These data do not have a positive dynamic, because they indicate a negative influence on the development of human creativity, although, in fact, thanks to education it is possible to teach creative thinking algorithms and encourage independent search for answers.

Scientists claim that a monetary reward cannot be the motivation of a creative person, because it is much more important for a representative of the creative class to receive favorable working conditions and to get satisfaction from the results of his work. Therefore, the management of catering establishments should pay attention to the methods of stimulating the creativity of employees and take appropriate measures.

It is also worth noting that the motivation for creativity should be both internal and external, because employees who feel internal motivation to perform tasks are doing the work for pleasure and out of their own interest or desire to overcome a certain individual challenge, and on the other hand, extrinsic motivation is related to external incentives, goals or pressures that can motivate an employee to perform a certain task.

Much of the research literature is devoted to identifying the traits that characterize "creative people. Research has shown that many creative people share a set of basic (core) characteristics, but above all it is "openness" – both "openness to

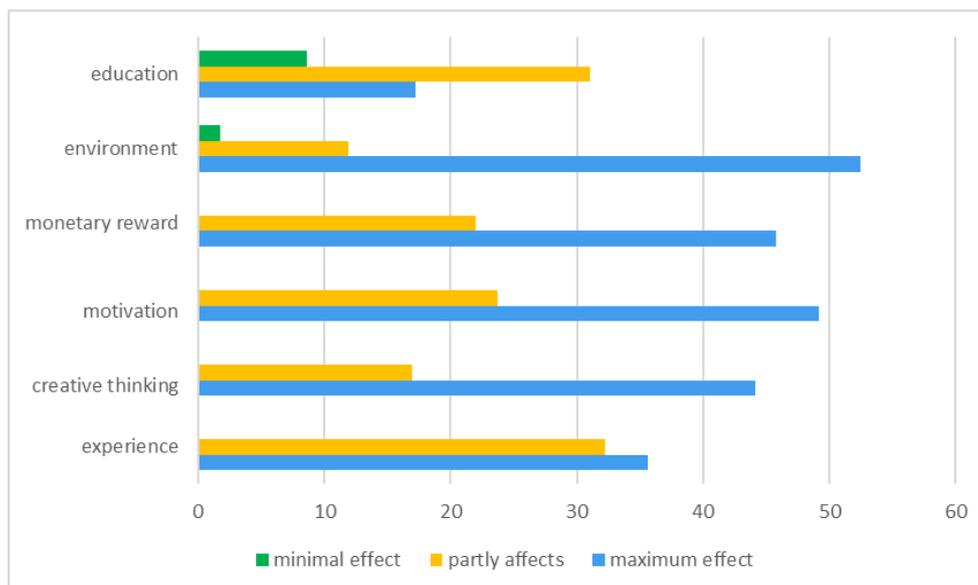


Figure 2. Factors influencing the creativity of hospitality industry staff

experience" and "openness to intelligence". That is, it is the only personality dimension that is significantly and positively correlated with creative achievement in all areas (PISA-2021, 2022). It is thanks to openness to experience, intelligence that a person is able to produce new ideas, projects, etc.

Perseverance, resilience, and creative self-efficacy have been identified as attitudes that influence creativity by providing a person with both a strong sense of purpose, a clear vision of goals, and a belief in one's ability to achieve those goals (PISA-2021, 2022). The research shows that most of the respondents can be considered creative individuals, as 57.6% often produce new ideas, 83.1% like to take risks, 83.1% know how to be "original" in their work, 69.5% always achieve their goal, 91.5% believe in a positive result when they start a new business.

Sternberg R. believes that creativity includes an individual's ability to take reasonable risks, willingness to overcome obstacles, internal motivation, tolerance of uncertainty, readiness to oppose the opinion of others (Pavlenko, 2016). Therefore, the results of the survey confirm the assumptions above, as 83.1% of the respondents like to take risks, 96.6% analyze their own mistakes and are self-critical in the performance of tasks.

4. Conclusions

The process of managing the creativity of employees in catering enterprises should be preceded by a

step-by-step method of determining the ability of employees to think creatively and whether the management style is typical for the given enterprise today. Only after the analysis of these factors it is necessary to formulate methods of stimulating the development of creativity of employees. The results of the study show that the most effective methods of stimulating the creativity of employees in the hospitality sector are management's trust in employees, the ability to listen to their ideas, joint team-building activities, care for the physical health of employees (subscriptions to the gym, swimming pool, etc.).

In today's difficult operating conditions, it is not enough for hospitality establishments to provide quality services in order to be successful in their field, as there are more and more similar services on the market and competitors every year. Therefore, the creation of a unique service and the adoption of effective, extraordinary creative solutions come to the fore.

The analysis of the conducted research shows the confirmation of the hypotheses regarding the survey, namely that the key qualities of creativity are the production of ideas, adaptation and flexibility to changes, the ability to take risks, and the creativity of personnel helps to solve administrative problems in the organization, adaptation and flexibility to changes, increases the level of competitiveness institutions of the hospitality industry in a competitive environment.

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