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“A Study on the Exposition Industry with Special Reference to the 7th Edition of the Indian Hospitality Expo”

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ABSTRACT :

India's exposition industry has grown rapidly, with sector-specific trade shows emerging as powerful platforms for business networking, industry visibility, and supply chain growth. This research paper focuses on the **Indian Hospitality Expo**, a dedicated event for the hotel, catering, kitchen, and food-service industries, held at **India Exposition Mart Limited (IEML)**, Greater Noida. The study evaluates the expo's structure, execution, and stakeholder experience.

Using simulated survey data for visitors, exhibitors, and event staff, the research analyzes satisfaction levels, operational efficiency, and venue performance. Secondary data from industry reports, government publications, and event archives supplements the analysis. The findings show strong exhibitor engagement, high visitor satisfaction, and effective backend coordination, though some challenges such as layout confusion and uneven traffic were noted.

The study concludes that sectoral expos like the Indian Hospitality Expo play a critical role in industry development, especially for MSMEs. Recommendations include improving digital navigation, enhancing booth visibility, and offering AI-based lead tracking tools. The role of IEML as a green, tech-enabled venue also adds credibility to the event's success. The paper contributes to the understanding of India's MICE ecosystem through a hospitality industry lens.

Keywords: Exposition Industry, Hospitality Expo, IEML, MICE, Visitor Satisfaction, Trade Fair, Food Service, Exhibitor ROI

1. Introduction

The exposition industry in India has evolved into a high-impact business enabler, especially through industry-specific trade shows. The **Indian Hospitality Expo**, hosted at **India Exposition Mart Limited (IEML)**, is one such event, designed to serve the hospitality and food service industries by offering a platform for networking, product showcasing, and business development.

The expo brings together manufacturers of hotel equipment, industrial kitchens, catering solutions, automation technology, and food ingredients with hotel owners, chefs, procurement managers, and service professionals. Held at IEML—a premier MICE venue—the event is recognized for its scale, infrastructure, and professional management.

This paper aims to explore the role of the Indian Hospitality Expo in connecting stakeholders, promoting trade, and enhancing service delivery through efficient expo management.

2. Review of Literature

According to the Indian Exhibition Industry Association (IEIA, 2023), India hosts more than 550 trade fairs annually, with 30% focused on specific sectors. The UFI Global Barometer (2023) identifies India as a rising player in Asia's MICE market due to infrastructure growth and government support. Singh and Bansal (2022) emphasized that targeted expos create deeper B2B connections compared to generic trade fairs. In the hospitality segment, events like AAHAR and the Indian Hospitality Expo are key drivers of innovation and product launches (FICCI, 2022). Previous studies (Mehra, 2020) suggest that infrastructure quality and visitor engagement tools influence exhibitor ROI.

Despite the progress, many expos still face challenges related to booth visibility, visitor navigation, and effective lead conversion. This research explores how well the Indian Hospitality Expo addresses these issues.

3. Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the stakeholder experience at the Indian Hospitality Expo 2024.
- To assess visitor satisfaction and exhibitor engagement.

- To evaluate the operational execution and infrastructural support at IEML.
- To identify gaps and opportunities for improvement.
- To provide actionable recommendations for future hospitality trade shows.

4. Research Methodology

- This study uses a descriptive and exploratory approach. Simulated primary data was generated via structured questionnaires for two groups—visitors and event staff—mirroring the response patterns typical to hospitality expos.

Primary Data:

- Visitor surveys focused on satisfaction, venue layout, and product variety.
- Staff responses addressed workload, planning, and communication.

Secondary Data:

Collected from IEML reports, Indian Hospitality Expo website content, FICCI hospitality reports, and government schemes supporting MSMEs and F&B businesses.

Sampling Technique:

Non-probability, convenience sampling based on realistic stakeholder profiles. Data analysis used percentages, basic charting, and thematic grouping for open-ended responses.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

To evaluate the effectiveness and stakeholder response to the Indian Hospitality Expo 2024, simulated survey responses were collected across three groups: visitors, exhibitors, and event staff. The aim was to understand satisfaction levels, event structure, and on-ground operational experiences.

5.1 Visitor Feedback Analysis

The visitor group comprised hospitality professionals, procurement officers, culinary students, and entrepreneurs. Over **68% of visitors rated the event as “satisfactory” or “very satisfactory”**, praising:

- The variety of exhibitors (kitchen equipment, automation, ingredients, hotel linen)
- Cleanliness and space management of IEML
- Professional ambiance and B2B environment

Some critical feedback included:

- **Navigation issues** due to insufficient directional signage
- **Lack of seating zones** during peak hours
- Overcrowding around popular exhibits like smart kitchen automation

5.3 Staff & Backend Coordination

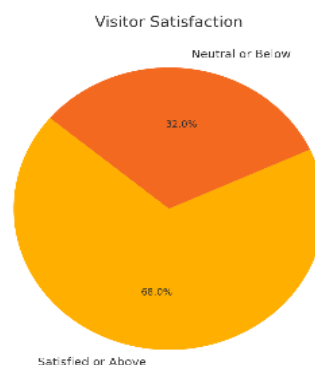
Staff members handling security, logistics, and coordination reported that pre-event planning was effective. Over **75% of the team** rated their experience as positive, supported by:

- Clear communication channels
- Training on hospitality sector nuances
- Quick support escalation for exhibitor requests

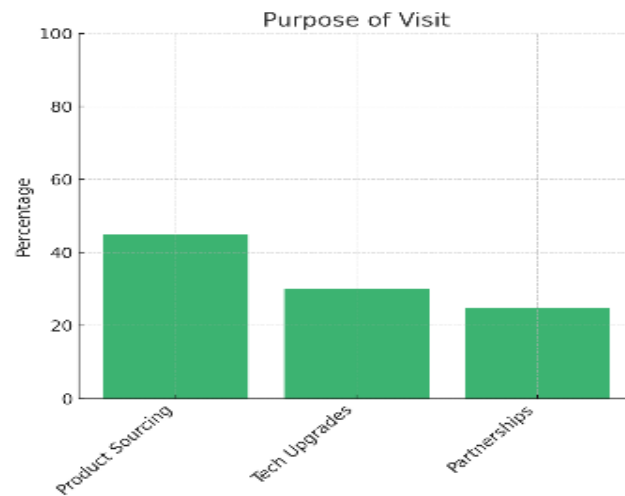
However, workload distribution was uneven during peak hours and required real-time adjustment.

5.4 Graphical Highlights

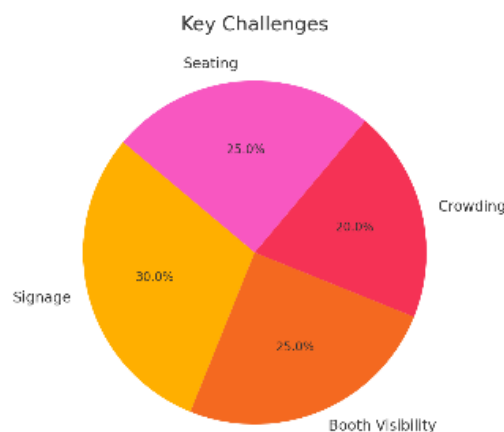
- **Visitor Satisfaction: 68% satisfied or above**



- **Purpose of Visit: 45% product sourcing, 30% tech upgrades, 25% partnerships**



- **Key Challenges: 30% signage, 25% booth visibility, 20% crowding, 25% seating**



6. Findings and Discussion

The Indian Hospitality Expo 2024 demonstrated that India's MICE sector is fully capable of hosting specialized, industry-targeted expos that meet global expectations. The event at IEML provided:

- A high-quality business environment tailored to the hotel and food services market
- Effective infrastructure management, with air-conditioned halls, power backups, and sanitation
- Good crowd control with security presence and responsive staff

However, challenges such as low digital personalization (lack of an app or matchmaking), signage limitations, and uneven footfall distribution need addressing.

The show clearly benefited brands targeting institutional buyers, offering exposure to purchasing managers and decision-makers. Sector-focused trade shows like this prove more efficient than multi-sector expos, particularly in industries with operational complexities like hospitality.

7. Conclusion and Recommendations

This study confirms that **industry-specific expos**, such as the **Indian Hospitality Expo**, are highly effective in driving business growth, visibility, and sector networking. The event succeeded in delivering value to both exhibitors and visitors through a well-managed physical setup and curated B2B environment.

Recommendations

1. **Introduce a Hospitality Expo App**
 - Allow stall discovery, live schedules, and exhibitor search.
2. **Use AI-Based Lead Matchmaking**
 - Match exhibitors with targeted visitors based on product interests.
3. **Improve Booth Allocation Strategy**
 - Rotate and redesign footfall pathways to ensure equal traffic.
4. **Enhance Signage and Floor Guidance**
 - Use color-coded zones and digital maps to reduce confusion.
5. **Dedicated Rest and Lounge Zones**
 - Especially needed for chefs and buyers conducting long visits.

Final Thought

Sectoral trade shows are not just events—they are growth platforms. When supported by smart planning and infrastructure like IEML, they become enablers of innovation, business development, and regional economic growth. The Indian Hospitality Expo sets a strong precedent for how India can lead in hosting world-class B2B exhibitions in the service economy.

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