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ZLATIEVA M.,
3 course, 15a group, FTB SUTE

Scientific Adviser
Tkachuk T., *PhD in Economics, Associate Professor*
(SUTE, Kyiv)

APPROACHES TO PERSONNEL MANAGEMENT IN THE HORECA SEGMENT: CHALLENGES IN THE PERIOD OF MILITARY CONFLICT

The modern restaurant and hotel business in Ukraine is undergoing real tests and surprises with its stability and unity. The full-scale war made the hospitality industry extremely difficult, turning it into an inability of restaurateurs to engage in strategic long-term development planning for their establishment, focusing only on the short term [1].

The current state of the restaurant and hotel business market in Ukraine in the conditions of a long war shows a significant decline, by about 25% compared to February 2022 [2]. This decline was particularly noticeable in regions heavily affected by the conflict, such as Kharkiv, Mykolaiv, Zaporizhzhia and Luhansk, where the market decline exceeded 50%. On the other hand, positive dynamics are observed in the western regions, in particular in Lviv and its surroundings, where the number of establishments of the hospitality industry has increased by approximately 30%. Despite the difficulties, more than half of the pre-war number of restaurants and cafes reopened across the country by May 2022, albeit unevenly in different regions. In Lviv, for example, in the spring 2022 almost 500 food establishments opened, positioning the city as the restaurant capital of the hospitality industry of Ukraine.

Amid challenging circumstances, the restaurant industry in Ukraine is adapting to changing market dynamics. Smaller, flexible formats like cafes, coffee shops, bakeries, and fast food places are gaining popularity among restaurateurs. Bars have struggled due to alcohol bans and fewer openings. There's a shift towards simpler, home-cooked food due to ingredient availability and cost concerns, aggravated by supply chain disruptions and currency fluctuations affecting imports.

Despite obstacles, entrepreneurs are innovating to sustain their businesses. Some have transformed their venues into volunteer centers to aid communities during the crisis. The impact of war extends beyond economics, affecting logistics, staffing, and security. Cities like Kharkiv and Kyiv, known for culinary activity, have seen significant declines in restaurants due to population outflows, shelling, and economic instability caused by conflict [2].

Forecasting the development of the hospitality industry market in Ukraine, the path to recovery remains uncertain. While some regions show signs of resilience and growth, others continue to struggle with the profound effects of war. Nevertheless, in the management of establishments in the hotel and restaurant business, in the market there is a collective determination to persevere, introduce innovations into the activities of enterprises and recover, which once again emphasizes the stability, flexibility and adaptability of the hospitality sector of Ukraine to external challenges [1].

Among such challenges, innovative approaches were taken during the military conflict. Social entrepreneurship, which is characterized by entrepreneurial activity aimed at positive innovative changes in society, acquires special importance, in particular for the restaurant business, in wartime conditions. This involves solving such key issues as:

1. Organization of the restaurant as a center for free meals for those who need it (refugees, immigrants from regions under occupation);
2. Employment of immigrants;
3. Provision of safe conditions for visitors to stay in restaurants and hotels during air raid signals and other probable wartime challenges.

Social entrepreneurship faces heightened challenges amid the Russian Federation's aggression against Ukraine and the imposition of martial law. The restaurant and hotel industry, like the broader economy, bears a dual burden–social and economic. These businesses emphasize social responsibility by allocating profits towards non-commercial ventures

such as charity, humanitarian aid for displaced persons, and support for Ukraine's Armed Forces. This approach prioritizes societal impact over mere profit generation, reflecting a commitment to community well-being amidst crisis.

Many entrepreneurs of the restaurant and hotel business during the war directed the activities of the establishments to support the population of Ukraine. The hospitality industry quickly adapted its activities to the requirements of the martial law, including in terms of management. Hospitality establishments began preparing food for military and internally displaced persons and providing free temporary accommodation. All of this was made possible through collaboration with landlords, food suppliers, volunteers and local residents [3].

To sum up, against the background of the ongoing military conflict in Ukraine, the restaurant and hotel business faced unprecedented problems, with a noticeable decline in market development, logistical and technical obstacles, and security problems of staff and consumers staying in establishments, which collectively affected the management of establishments. However, despite such obstacles, the hospitality industry in Ukraine continues to face external challenges and has a strong potential for further recovery and development in the post-war period [2].

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