1. **Title**

Innovative Student Trainee Motivation: *A Case Study of* student trainee motivation at the Grand Park Hotel, the training hotel of the Salzburg Tourism School in Bad Hofgastein

2. **Originality of Research/Context/ Background**

The research area of employee motivation has always been the major focus of managers as well as researchers. While there has been a focus in research circles on employee trainee motivation, *little to none research has been conducted on* the specific area of student trainee motivation.

The Grand Park Hotel is the training hotel of the Salzburg Tourism School in Bad Hofgastein. As part of their curriculum, students attending the Salzburg Tourism School must work for 60 hours per semester at the Grand Park Hotel. However, student trainees completing their compulsory hotel internship at the Grand Park Hotel often suffer from low levels of motivation, thus resulting in sub optimal levels of performance & dissatisfaction with the vocational training provided at the Grand Park Hotel. The fields of organizational behaviour and motivation must be critically analysed to come up with an innovative trainee motivational model to improve the motivational levels of the student trainees at the Grand Park Hotel.

3. **Aim:**

- *To* improve the motivation levels of student trainees at the Grand Park Hotel, the training hotel of the Salzburg Tourism School in Bad Hofgastein
Objectives:

- To identify innovative motivational factors specific to student trainees at the Grand Park Hotel
- To derive an innovative student trainee motivation model that can be used to improve the motivation levels of the student trainees at the Grand Park Hotel
- To provide the management of the Grand Park Hotel with innovative recommendations on how to improve the motivation levels of student trainees

4. Research Question

What innovative student trainee motivational methods can be used to improve the motivational levels of student trainees at the Grand Park Hotel, the training hotel of the Salzburg Tourism School in Bad Hofgastein?

5. Theoretical Framework

According to the literature (Brandstaetter and Otto, 2009; Pinder, 1998), organizations face great difficulties in supporting and motivating employees since they lack knowledge about the terms and conditions under which people perform.

The term motivation is originally derived from the Latin word ‘movere’ which means to move. Motivation is defined as “those psychological processes that cause the arousal, direction and persistence of voluntary actions” (Kreinter and Kinicki 2008, p.210), “characterized by a certain level of willingness on the part of the employee to increase their effort, to the extent that this exertion also satisfies a predefined need or desire they hold” (Beardwell and Claydon 2007, p. 491) and “the processes that account...”
for an individual’s intensity, direction and persistence of effort toward attaining a goal”. (Robbins 2005, p.170).

According to Beardwell and Claydon (2007), there are 2 main approaches to motivational theory: content and process theory.

Content theory (also known as need theory) focuses on the motivational factors of an individual that affect direct behavior, such as “instincts, needs, satisfaction” (Kreitner and Kinicki 2008, p.210). Beardwell and Claydon (2007) believe that such theories regard motivation as the product of those motivational factors that compel an individual to act with the aim of satisfying his or her needs. Content theories include Maslow’s hierarchy of needs, Alderfer’s ERG theory, Herzberg’s motivator – hygiene theory and McClelland’s learned needs or three needs theory. However, these theories do not explain how motivation is influenced by the interaction of the employee with his work environment (Porter et al, 2006). This limitation led to the creation of the process theory approach to motivation.

The other major approach to motivation theory falls under process theories of motivation. The process theories focus mainly on “explaining the process by which environmental factors and cognitions influence employee motivation” (Kreitner and Kinicki 2008, p.210). Process theories also aim to describe “how personal factors and environmental factors interact and influence each other to produce certain kinds of behavior” (Osland et al. 2007, p.109). Process theories of motivation are based on early cognitive theories that believed that conscious human decision making is the basis for employee behavior (Rollinson, 2002). Process theories include expectancy theory, equity theory, goal setting theory and reinforcement theory.

6. Research methodology

This thesis uses the case study of the Grand Park Hotel, the training hotel of the Salzburg Tourism School in Bad Hofgastein. In the case of this thesis research, the case
of the Grand Park Hotel was chosen since there has been little to no research in the field of trainee motivation at the Grand Park Hotel. \textit{In order to conduct the research for this thesis, a combination of primary and secondary research methods will be used.}

\textbf{Secondary Research}
First secondary research was undertaken by conducting a review of the existing literature of books, journals articles and papers etc. on the topics of organizational behaviour & motivation.

\textbf{Primary Research}
Firstly, \textit{5 – 7 experts} will be interviewed to identify motivational issues specific to trainees. Then, \textit{ca. 40 current students} will be about motivation issues related to the Grand Park Hotel. This research will be conducted via self-completion questionnaires handed out to them by the student trainee coordinator on completion of their student training at the Grand Park Hotel.

7. \textbf{Detailed Timetable}

1 September 2014: Planned Date of Submission

1 June – 1 July 2014: Introduction, Literature Review
1 July – 1 August 2014: Research Methodology, Empirical Research
1 August – 1 September 2014: Data Analysis, Conclusions

8. \textbf{Existing literature:}