UNIVERSITY OF CAPE COAST

HOSPITALITY MANAGEMENT COMPETENCY REQUIREMENTS

FROM TERTIARY GRADUATES IN GHANA: INDUSTRY AND

ACADEMIA PERSPECTIVES

BY

GRACE ANTHONY

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DECLARATION

Candidate's Declaration

     I hereby declare that this thesis is the result of my own original work and that no part of it has been presented for another degree in this university or elsewhere.

Candidate's Name: Grace Anthony

Signature:………………………   Date:…………………….....

Supervisors' Declaration

     We hereby declare that the preparation and presentation of the thesis were supervised in accordance with the guidelines on supervision of thesis laid down by the University of Cape Coast.

Principal Supervisor's Name: Dr. Ishmael Mensah

Signature: ....   Date: ....

Co-Supervisor's Name: Dr. Edem Kwesi Amenumey

Signature: ....   Date: ....

ABSTRACT

The importance of competent human resource to the development of the hospitality industry cannot be under estimated. However, literature and complaints from industry suggest a competency gap between the requirements of industry and the competencies of graduates of higher learning institutions.

The main objective of the study was to assess the hospitality management competency requirements of the hospitality industry in Ghana from the perspectives of industry and academia. Employing a sequential mixed methods approach, questionnaire and an interview guide were used to collect data. Data was analysed through factor analysis, ranking, one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA), and independent and dependent samples t-test.

The findings showed industry's preference for leadership, administrative, conceptual and technical competencies. Academia on the other hand, favoured conceptual, leadership, administrative and technical competencies. Except for the ability to establish hygiene standards and being able to develop contingency plans, there were no statistically significant differences in the views of industry and academia on the competency requirements for the hospitality industry. The study also showed significant competency gaps along all competencies with administrative competency showing the widest competency gap within the industry.

It was concluded that, there are gaps in the competency requirements and available competencies for the hospitality industry. It is recommended that there is the need for greater collaboration between academia and industry in producing competent graduates for the hospitality industry in Ghana.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

DEDICATION

To my children, Eddy and Phebe

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

ANOVA	Analysis of Variance
GTDP	Ghana Tourism Development Plan
CVF	Competing Values Framework
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
HOTTCATT	Hotel, Tourism & Catering Training institute
HCIM	Hotel, Catering & Institutional Management
GIMPA	Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration
UCC	University of Cape Coast
SLT	Social Learning Theory
UEW	University of Education, Winneba
GTA	Ghana Tourism Authority
MoT	Ministry of Tourism
GTUC	Ghana Technology University College
SPSS	Statistical Product for Service Solution

CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

Background to the Study

The word 'hospitality' connotes a sense of 'warmth' provided to guests for a fee. The hospitality industry is one of the oldest industries (Ottenbacher, Harrington & Persa, 2009). It dates back to the earliest times of inn keeping that provided accommodation, food and beverage services to travellers. The industry has close relationship with the travel industry as its main focus has been to serve travellers, to make them feel at home away from home (Jones, 2002). It is one of the largest and fastest growing industries that provides employment, tax revenue and makes substantial contribution to the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) of many countries (Ottenbacher, Gnoth & Jones, 2006). The industry is estimated to employ about 10 percent of the global work force both directly and indirectly. In the United Kingdom, for example, the industry contributes about £36.1 billion to the economy and employs 2.4 million people directly and it is envisaged to create 475,000 jobs by 2020 (British Hospitality Report, 2013).

In Ghana, the tourism and hospitality sector is seen as a major potential engine of growth and development. The ability of this industry to generate employment and reduce poverty has never been under estimated. The sector is currently the fourth largest foreign exchange earner for the country. The industry is also said to have employed 340,000 people in 2011 and this figure is expected to rise to 487,000 in 2017 (MoT, 2013). In 2011, the

tourism sector contributed 4.4 percent to Ghana's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). With regards to tax revenue, the sector generated USD 194 million in 2010 and this figure is also expected to rise to USD 1.3 billion by 2027 (MoT, 2013).

In spite of its importance, the hospitality industry has difficulty in attracting and maintaining well motivated, trained and qualified human resource to provide the service needs of customers (Ottenbacher et al., 2006). This is because there are a lot of challenges for workers in the industry. These include poor image and remuneration, improper placement in the organisational structure, lack of career progression and growth as well as odd working hours (Jones, 2002).

The constant interaction between employees and guests which is typical of service industries must be managed effectively by ensuring that guests get all the attention they require to make them satisfied. A satisfied guest usually becomes very loyal making repeat visits and positive word-of-mouth advertisement. Since the industry is people-oriented, social skills and ability to communicate are valuable assets for both managers and subordinates. The competent manager is expected to manage the employee-guest interface to resolve service breakdowns. He or she must have the skills to provide sufficient support to employees, motivate them, train them, and handle their personal problems which could affect their service delivery. The manager is expected to resolve internal conflicts and return disgruntled guests to a state of satisfaction after service failure.

To provide qualified employees for the industry, tertiary educational institutions have introduced programmes and courses in hospitality and

tourism management to train students (Brotherton & Wood, 2008). People trained by these institutions are expected to have the right competencies to occupy lower, middle and top level management positions in the hospitality industry (Starkey, Hactchuel, & Tempest, 2004). In Ghana, the training of students for the hospitality industry was initially done by vocational institutions such as the Hotel, Tourism & Catering Training institute (HOTTCAT), with the aim of improving the skills of hospitality industry workers. The Polytechnics in 1992 were upgraded to the status of tertiary institutions, awarding Higher National Diplomas (HNDs) in Hotel Catering and Institutional Management (HCIM). In 1996, the University of Cape Coast (UCC) begun a Bsc. Tourism degree programme. Currently, both UCC and Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) award degrees in Hospitality Management. There are also various private universities and colleges running diploma and degree programmes in hospitality management in the country. In the Central and Western Regions of Ghana, UCC, Cape Coast Polytechnic and Takoradi Polytechnic are the higher learning institutions running the hospitality management programme.

For the tertiary institutions to effectively achieve the goal of equipping people with skills for careers in the hospitality industry, there is the need for well designed and implemented curricula. According to Akyeampong (2007), the curriculum is expected to achieve a balance between 'thinking and acting' (cognitive and psychomotor skills). This suggests that there is the need for a collaborative relationship between academia and industry in turning out graduates for the industry. This is even more important in the hospitality

industry as it covers the three domains of cognitive, affective and psychomotor skills.

The course content of the hospitality management programme include food and beverage (F&B) service and management, housekeeping operations and management, front office operations and management, food production operations and management, hospitality accounting hospitality marketing and entrepreneurship. The hospitality programme requires students to gain knowledge, skills and develop appropriate personality traits for the hospitality industry (Jauhari, 2006).

Hospitality operations require a high level of competent managers and supervisors to ensure increased staff performance which will lead to organizational success. Competency may be defined as the knowledge, skills, and attributes and the connections between having these and being able to perform a task effectively (Quinn, Faerman, Thompson & McGrath, 1996). Seal, Naumann, Scott & Royce-Davis (2010), described competency as a capability or ability that leads to a successful outcome. Millar, Mao & Moreo (2010) posits that, the exact definition of what competency is will depend on the industry involved. Even within the same industry, each segment may require a different set of skills to consider one as competent. For instance, the competency requirement for F&B managers may be different from that of hotel managers. The hospitality manager needs a set of knowledge, skills and attributes to be able to work effectively in the industry. According to Jauhari (2006), there is a strong correlation between competencies and employee performance. The competent hospitality manager is expected to be equipped

with the knowledge, skills and attitude vital for effective performance in the various sections of the industry.

The provision of competencies is the core mandate of academia. As put by Okeiyi, Finley, & Posel (1994), it is important for educators to continually provide industry relevant competencies, as the industry is people related and technologically changing. Industry on the other hand needs competent human resource to perform effectively. It is against this backdrop that this study wishes to investigate the views of academia and practitioners on the required hospitality management competencies in the Western and Central Regions of Ghana.

Problem Statement

The importance of quality human resources in the hospitality industry can never be underestimated. The right human resource gives a competitive urge to an organisation over its competitors. This is because employees have knowledge and skills which make their output unique in each case. In all service industries, the human resource is one of the highly-rated secrets for success (Lee, Khan & Ko, 2008).

To this end, tertiary institutions are running programmes in hospitality and tourism management to supply the human resource needs of the industry. However, the National Tourism Development Plan of Ghana (2013- 2027), highlights a huge gap between the quality of human resource requirements for the industry in the Ghana. This gap is the cause of the non attainment of the high professional standards expected of the hospitality and tourism industry in the country. It is therefore relevant to assess the views of academia and industry, in an attempt to bridge the gap. This is because academia is expected

to produce the right calibre of human resource for the hospitality industry (Koenigsfeld, Perdue, Young & Woods 2011). The 2013-2027 National Tourism Development Plan recommends the need for studies on the required human resource needs of the industry by academia to bridge the gap in the human resource needs of the industry.

On the issue of the linkage between academia and industry, the Ghana Tourism Development Plan (2013-2027), states that,

> ....*to date there is no defined relationship between academia, especially tertiary institutions and sectors of the tourism industry. This has created a gap in tourism research being conducted by academia without direct linkages to the development of the industry. It has also affected the quality of output of the institutions since students do not have a grasp of the practicalities of the tourism industry. An establishment of strong mutually beneficial linkage between academia and tourism industry will foster the development of the tourism industry in Ghana* (p. 256).

This study therefore sought to find out what skills are required to make the human resource capital of the hospitality industry in Ghana competent.

According to Okeiyi, Finley, & Posel (1994), it is important for educators to continually provide industry relevant competencies to students as the industry is people related and technologically changing. Most studies on competency requirements for the industry focussed on those of the hotel segment (Baum, 1990; Chung-Herrera, Enz & Laukau, 2003; Hsu and Gregory, 1995; Kay & Russette, 2000; Lin, 2002; Nelson & Dopson 2001; Siu 1998; Tas 1988, Tas, LaBrecque & Clayton, 1996; Tsai et al., 2006). The

relatively few studies that looked at the hospitality industry in general, focussed on the general competencies for the industry to the neglect of the various segments within the industry (Ashley et al., 1995; Breiter & Clements, 1996; Enz et al., 1993; Kriegl, 2000; Su et al., 1997; Tesone & Ricci, 2006). Okeiyi et al. (1994) and Horng and Lu (2006) on the other hand, are the few that focussed on the food and beverage segments solely.

Also, it is important that a curriculum is reviewed from time to time to take new trends into consideration (Koenigsfeld et al., 2011) so that, students would be given up-to-date training to prepare them adequately for the constantly changing industry. However, some of the courses taught at some tertiary institutions may not match the needs of industry. This situation is likely to result in a mismatch between labour demand and supply in the hospitality industry in Ghana. This could be one of the reasons why expatriates are engaged to occupy middle and top management positions.

It is therefore important to investigate the hospitality management competencies from both the views of academia and industry. This is because how well the curriculum meets the expectations of students and industry on the required set of competencies needed in the work place is very important for business performance (Starkey et al., 2004). For students to develop competencies, they must acquire knowledge and also have the opportunity to put the knowledge to practice (Quinn et al., 1996).

This study however, sought to investigate the competency requirements of both the hotel and food and beverage segments in the Central and Western Regions of Ghana. This study sought to find answers to the following questions;

1. What competencies do managers of hospitality establishments consider as important for hospitality operations?

2. What competencies do educators consider as important for hospitality operations?

3. What are the differences in the competency requirements of educators and managers?

4. What competency gaps exist within the hospitality industry?

Objectives of Study

The main objective of the study was to; Assess the competency requirements of the hospitality industry in Ghana.

The specific objectives were to:

1. Examine the competencies that managers consider as important for hospitality operations,

2. Examine the competencies that educators consider as important for hospitality operations,

3. Analyse the differences in the competencies considered as important by educators and managers, and

4. Assess the competency gaps within the hospitality industry.

Significance of the Study

This study will help to identify the discrepancies (if any) between competencies taught in the classroom and what industry requires. This will help to inform educators on the state of the hospitality management curriculum and how it meets the needs of the industry. The findings will then

be a reference point for researchers wishing to investigate the hospitality programme and its relevance to the hospitality industry in Ghana.

The study will also contribute to knowledge by informing academia of what industry expects of them and vice versa. This will then inform academia about adjustments that need to be made to their course contents. The findings will also help increase the employability prospects of students in the industry. This is because, the findings will make graduates and students aware of what knowledge and skills expected of them for managerial roles in the industry.

The study is also likely to bridge the communication gap between academia and industry with regards to the hospitality programme and profession in Western and Central Regions of Ghana. According to Maher & Greaves (2007), graduates must ensure their employability, skills and potential for successful career by developing the right attitude in this challenging and competitive business environment. It is therefore essential for students to know the competencies required by industry and avail themselves in developing the right competencies for the industry. This can be done by being exposed to the right kinds of knowledge and skills in the teaching environment.

Finally the findings may help bring to the fore, the need to restructure the hospitality curricula in these institutions, which will help improve the employability of students into the industry as well as providing a baseline data for further studies on competency issues in the industry.

Scope and Delimitation

The study focussed on higher learning institutions currently running the hospitality management programme and star-rated / graded hotels and

restaurants in the Central and Western Regions of Ghana. Though graduates from these higher learning institutions could be employed anywhere in the country, hospitality industries within these regions may have their operations influenced by the culture of the location of the business. The study did not take into account other types of lodging operations like guest houses and budget hotels, neither did it consider other non- graded eating outlets.

The sample for the study was drawn from the hospitality industry and academia. Respondents from the industry were managers of hospitality industries in the study area. Managers generally graded the performance of graduates in their establishments only. Their views on what competencies graduates possess are therefore limited to the study area only. Caution must therefore be taken in the generalisation of the findings.

Definition of Terms

Competency: The knowledge, skills and attitude required to perform a job successfully.

Competency models: A descriptive tool, aimed at identifying, grouping and summarizing the set of competencies that might be needed in performing a task very well (Chung-Herrera et al., 2003). This may be presented diagrammatically to enhance its appeal.

Conceptual competency: Cognitive skills of comprehending important elements of a job (Sandwith, 1993).

Soft/ generic/ transferrable competencies: These are competencies that are required across various industries, organisations and jobs. Their use is not limited to a specific task. These competencies include communication, problem solving and leadership competencies.

Hard/ technical competencies: Knowledge, skills and attitude necessary to perform a specific task

Emotional intelligence (EI): Ability to understand and control emotions of self and others.

Organisation of Thesis

The thesis is divided into five chapters. Chapter One focuses on the background to the study, research problem, research questions, objectives, significance of the study, scope, delimitations and definition of terms. Chapter Two reviews related literature as well as the theoretical and conceptual underpinning of the study. Chapter Three explains the methods of data collection and analysis adopted for the study. Specific sub-headings here include the study area, study design, sampling techniques and research instruments. Ethical issues as well as data processing and analysis are also highlighted. Results from the field and its discussions are presented in Chapter Four. The final chapter summarises the main findings, gives a conclusion and suggests recommendation for further studies.

CHAPTER TWO

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter provides an overview of relevant literature on competency requirement issues in the hospitality industry. It presents literature mainly from the views of industry and academia with regards to the different hospitality segments. The chapter also highlights definitions of competency by different authors and researchers as well as the differences in views of academia and industry. This chapter further advances theories and models that that inform the study.

Academic Versus Skill Training

One of the main aims of educational training is to prepare the trainee for 'life', that is, the future activities which are expected to make the person useful in the society (Tyler, 1950). Though this objective of education is accepted by all stakeholders, there are however, different views on the appropriate method and content to use in achieving this.

Perrenialists are of the view that education should be purely theoretical whilst others like the competency-based advocates propose for more practical training approach. A significant others also propose for a middle grounds where theory and practice is to be blended. This means that, higher education should expose the learner to the general view of the world, so that the graduate is able to apply these general theories when they face real life situations. Perrenialists believe the curriculum should include courses like history,

languages and religion. The practical oriented group advocate for the acquisition of hands on skills by graduates to easily function in the manufacturing industry or entrepreneurial activities. The problem with this view however, is, what happens when changes occur in the business environment or when the need arises?

Morrison and O'Mahony, (2003) and Tribe, (2002) are of the view that a programme like hospitality which has its roots in vocational education requires the balancing of the vocational and the liberal aspects of the curriculum. Akyeampong, (2007), supports this assertion and advocates for logistics for practical experience in the country's tertiary institutions.

Competency Defined

The term competency has been defined differently by various authors and researchers. Tas (1988), defined the term as the activities and skills needed to execute a task efficiently. Burns (1972), on the other hand saw competencies to be the abilities, which a student is expected to learn and exhibit behaviourally. It is also the skills necessary on the job (Spowart, 2011).

Earlier, Coll, Zegward & Hodges (2002), described a competent person as an individual possessing skills and attributes relevant to the performance of a task. These skills according to Hind, Moss & McKellan (2007) make the individual employable therefore calling competency 'employability skills'. As simply put by Wynne and Stringer (1997), competencies, are the things people have to be (personality), know (knowledge) and do (skills), to achieve the outputs expected from their job.

On the contrary, Hodges and Burchell (2003), explained the term to be more of an individual characteristic and attributed it to personality trait rather than skills. Some of the earliest studies of competency by Boyatzis (1982) and McClelland, (1973) defined the term as those personal characteristics which ensured superior performance. Competency has been defined as the knowledge, skills, and attributes and the connections between having these and being able to perform a task effectively (Quinn, Faerman, Thompson & McGrath, 1996). Spencer & Spencer (1993), defined competency as the basic features of a person which is associated with a superior performance in a situation. Seal, Naumann, Scott & Royce-Davis (2010) also described competency as a capability or ability that leads to a successful outcome. Millar, Mao & Moreo (2010) further supported this definition, adding that, the exact definition and description of what competency is will depend on the industry involved. The views of these researchers (Boyatzis, 1982, Hodges & Burchell, 2003, McClelland, 1973) on the definition of competency might have been shaped by the school of thought that, 'leaders are born and not made'. This is likely to have influenced their views and definition of competency which is purely based on in-born traits.

Others also defined competency by relating it to the link between the learning environment and the working environment. For instance, Delamarc & Winterton (2005) in Kim, Seo & Hyun, (2011), defined 'competencies as the abilities and skills to integrate education and training, and aligning both the needs of the labour and promoting mobility for individuals'. Also, Millar et al. (2010) argue that, the skills, abilities and knowledge is what the student is expected to learn in the classroom.

From the various definitions and descriptions, competencies can be said to be the knowledge, skills and attitude required for effective job performance. It recognises the value of knowledge, skills, personal attributes and characteristics, as well as establishing the connections between having these and being able to perform effectively. This knowledge, skills and attitude is acquired through prior training in a guided environment, which ensures that the graduate is employable. Moreover per the various definitions, competencies may be acquired through education and training. It is expected that competency can only be called so when it is positively related to the execution of a task by an individual. Those factors that enable a person to be competent include knowledge, attitude and skills which are exhibited outwardly. If these competencies are not translated into behaviour, they remain innate and less valuable. However, all the definitions by the various authors tend to be saying similar things (knowledge, skills and attitude) by using different languages. This makes the definition of competency very much the same with the only difference being what is responsible for this competency (traits or acquired skills and knowledge or a combination of all).

Competency Requirements of the Hospitality Industry

Different authors advocate for different sets of competencies for the hospitality industry. According to Bareham and Jones (1988) as cited in Chen and Hsu (2007), hospitality management students require, operational analysis, on-the-job training, negotiation, management of service encounter, approaches to social training, managing changes and creativity skills to perform effectively. A study by Partlow (1993) identified 27 competencies needed by students at the bachelor degree level. The competencies identified

include, conceptualising managerial responsibility, developing goals and objectives, developing procedures and policies, developing standards and many others.

Tas (1988), undertook a mail survey of hotel managers, and skills for solving guest problem, ethical standards, maintaining a professional appearance, good communication skills and relationship with customers and employees were found to be the important competencies required by managers.

Similarly, Baum (1990) also used a mail survey to unearth important competencies from hotel managers' perspectives, where property legal responsibilities and employee motivation were also found to be important in hotel management as well as similar findings of Tas (1988). Hsu & Gregory (1995), Lin (2002), Nelson & Dopson (2001), Siu (1998), Tas et al. (1996); all used mail surveys to solicit responses from hotel managers on the essential competencies for their jobs. Most of the findings showed human-relation skills which included leadership skills, communication skills and problem solving skills as some of the essential competencies for these hotel managers. Conceptual skills were also found to be quite important.

Many other studies focussed on the hospitality industry in general (Ashley et al., 1995; Breiter & Clements, 1996; Enz et al., 1993; Kriegl, 2000; Su et al. 1997; Tesone & Ricci, 2006) using different set of respondents and methods of data collection to investigate the competency needs of the industry. For example, Enz et al. (1993) used a mail survey to sample the views of graduate students, faculty and industry representatives on the competency requirements for the industry. Graduate students ranked forecasting of future

trends, managing and leading groups and problem identification and solution as the most important competencies. Faculty on the other hand, saw problem identification, conceptual thinking and current industry knowledge as the most relevant set of competencies whilst industry representatives rated acting in an ethical manner, leadership and communication skills were the three most important things that a competent person in the industry should posses.

Using a brainstorming session, Ashley et al. (1995), gathered from industry executives that, people's skills, communication skills, ability to develop service orientation and problem identification and solving skills as some of the competencies required for the industry. Through a personal intercept survey, hotel managers stressed the development of teamwork skills, effective listening and communication skills as some of the vital management competencies for the industry (Tesone & Ricci, 2006).

Also, some of the studies on competency requirements for the industry were undertaken with specific focus on a particular specialised area in the industry. Okeiyi et al., (1994); Horng & Lu (2006), looked at the competency requirements for the food and beverage segments of the hospitality industry. In these studies, human relation skills were ranked the number one competency need for the F&B segment.

Moreover, other studies compared the competency needs of some specialised areas within the industry (Agut et al., 2003). Whilst others looked at unique aspects of club management, culinary arts and competency needs (Koenigsfeld et al., 2011; Perdue, Ninemeier & Woods, 2000; Riggs & Hughey, 2011; Zopiatis, 2010), others still compared the views of different stakeholders; educators, industry and students, and various combinations of

these. Millar et al. (2010) conducted a study, using an exploratory qualitative approach, to identify competencies that students need to possess looking at it through the lenses of educators and industry professionals in the lodging and food and beverage industry. Per the findings, educators and professionals in the food and beverage segment seem to agree on administrative, conceptual, technical and leadership domains but not on interpersonal competencies. This they claim might be due to the fact that, most of the educators involved in the study had worked in the industry and had brought this knowledge to the class room.

As compared to the lodging industry, educators and industry differed in the competencies required. Whilst industry placed high premium on technical skills, educators emphasised conceptual competencies. Millar et al. (2010) employed a small sample size of 16 interviewees and this is likely to affect the generalisation of the results (Creswell, 2009).

Asree, Zain & Razali (2010) investigated management competency in service operations, the findings revealed that, management competency played an important role in improving guest relations and profit levels. Some studies have proven that hospitality managers require conceptual, technical, interpersonal, administrative, leadership, financial and accounting competencies to be efficient (Perdue et al., 2000; Sandwith 1993).

Moreover, a study by Nolan, Conway, Farrell & Monks (2010), in Ireland which sought to determine whether there was agreement amongst hospitality management graduates and employers with regards to the very important competencies required in the hotel business. They also looked at how these two stakeholders perceived the relevance of the training they

received for the industry, with emphasis on the acquisition of the essential competencies. Both groups rated interpersonal skills, professional knowledge skills as very important competency domains. However, whilst employers regarded teamwork and cost control as important, graduates on the other hand rated managing poor performing staff and identifying training needs of staff as important. In all employers were fairly satisfied with the competencies in information technology, operational skills and financial knowledge of graduates of the hospitality programme. Ultimately, leadership and communication skills were rated as the major factors used to determine how successful a graduate will be in the industry.

A number of studies in the area of competencies for the industry have recommended the importance of generic competencies/skills (Spowart, 2011, Ring, Dickinger & Wörber, 2008; Raybould & Wilkins, 2005) which they claim are essential for effective performance. Kalarkgyrou & Woods (2011) conducted a study in Las Vegas and Nevada, USA, to find out what competencies training professionals in the industry required for their jobs. According to them, teamwork, inspiration-motivation, creativity, mentoring, keeping current, proactiveness, active listening, staying healthy, training measurement, consistency and love and compassion for the profession were the competencies required by training professionals for the twenty-first century. They then recommended that these qualities should be looked out for in prospective professional trainers in the hospitality industry.

Industry Perspectives on Hospitality Management Competency Requirements

Over the years, studies have been conducted to assess industry's views of the required competencies for the hospitality industry. For example, Nolan et al. (2010) conducted a study in Ireland using a survey of 41 industry employers and graduates. The finding revealed that industry rated customer service and maintaining professional ethics and standards as critically important. Cost control and team work were also highlighted to be important. It also criticized how well higher education programmes prepared graduates for the industry. Okeiyi et. al (1994) reported on acting in an ethical manner, taking leadership positions and supervision as vital skills that make food and beverage managers competent. In another study, Tas (1988) undertook a mail survey of 75 top US hotels. Managers in the lodging segment ranked problem solving skills, ethical standards, professional appearances, communication skills, good customer relation skills and establishing and maintaining a working relationship with employees as vital. Though the three studies (Nolen et al., 2010, Okeiyi et. al, 1994, Tas 1988) looked at different segments of the industry at different places; hotel, food and beverage and lodging repectively, ethical competency was common in all their findings as an important requirement.

In a later study, Baum (1990) identified solving guest problem skills, hygiene and safety compliance, communication skills, working relationship with employees, professional appearance, customer relation, property legal responsibilities and employee motivation were mentioned by managers as the vital competencies for the hotel manager. In a study by Enz et al. in 1993,

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industry representatives approved of acting in an ethical manner, taking leadership position and communicating with clients as important capabilities for the hospitality industry. Ashley et al. (1995) used brainstorming session to expose competencies vital for the industry from industry executives. People skills, creative thinking ability, financial skills, communication skills (both written and oral), service orientation, total quality management, problem identification and problem–solving skills, listening skills, customer feedback skills and computer skills were found to be highly associated with competency. Similar studies by Breiter and Clements (1996); Hsu and Gregory (1995) highlight human-relation and communication skills as being unique for the industry. The emphasis on human relation skills may be because the industry itself is a people-oriented industry, therefore the need for good human interaction skills.

One of the few studies that highlighted conceptual competency from industry was Tas et al. (1996). Using Sandwith's (1993) competency model, interpersonal, leadership and conceptual skills were the three most important competency domains reported for hotel managers.

Zopiatis (2010) looked at how the industry rated competencies for chefs in the culinary segment in Greece. Technical competencies were found to be most important for culinary industry. Kay and Russette (2000) was just one of the few competency studies which employed a mixed method (in-person interview and survey) approach to find out from 52 managers which competencies they perceived as relevant. Adapting Sandwith's (1993) competency model, leadership, technical and interpersonal competencies were found to be highly required for the industry. These studies (Agut et al., 2003;

Kay & Russette, 2000; Zopiatis, 2010), mentioned the skills needed to perform specific activities (that is, technical skills) as one of the important skills also for the industry.

International hospitality managers sampled by Kriegl (2000) through a mail survey on which competencies they considered as important for effective performance, mentioned cultural diversity, interpersonal skills, managerial flexibility, adaptive leadership, motivation among others. In Spain, Agut et al. (2003) sampled the views of hotel and restaurant managers. Both respondents stressed on technical management competencies for these segments. Also, industry rated communication skills, emotional quotient, guest request management, good customer relations and diverse cultural knowledge as essential competencies for the industry (Tsai, Goh, Huffman & Wu, 2006). Respondents in studies by Agut et al. (2003) and Kriegl (2000) rated diverse cultural knowledge as important.

It can be observed that, the views of industry practitioners on what knowledge, skills and attributes are needed for the industry have been frequently investigated. This might be because, what industry considers as relevant is what it expects of new entrants into the industry. The views of industry are important and a constant review of their perspectives is necessary for the dynamic hospitality industry. However, transferable/ soft skills have been stressed by industry, except for Agut et al. (2003), Kay and Russette (2000) and Zopiatis (2010) which reported technical skills/ hard skills requirement for the industry. Also, a study that examines the competency requirements of the entire hospitality industry segments is relatively lacking.

Academia Perspectives of Hospitality Management Competency

Requirements

As compared to studies on the views of industry, those that sought the views of Academia on competency requirement issues are quite few (Enz et al., 1993; Millar et al., 2010; Okeiyi et al., 1994; Tsai et al., 2006). This might be so because, the views of industry is thought to be more relevant. However, the views of academia are also important since they "produce" the required man power for the industry. This then identifies what academia embeds in students and then further points out which competencies that are lacking.

Enz et al. (1993), in a mail survey, identified problem identification, conceptual thinking and current industry knowledge as the requisite competencies for the industry. One of the few studies which reported findings on the food and beverage segments of the industry is Okeiyi et al. (1994). Educators in this study perceived human relations, customer relations, leadership skills and supervision as the competencies for this industry. It is however baffling how this study distinguished human relations competency from customer relations competency, since human relations competency encompasses customer relations competency as well.

Using a web survey, Tsai et al. (2006) reported communication (oral and written) skills, relationship with other departments, emotional quotient, new staff orientation, employee motivation, contingency decision plan, health and safety regulations implementation, personal policies and management procedures as some of the competencies required for the hotel business.

In 2010, Millar and his colleagues used an exploratory qualitative research technique to identify competencies that students should possess upon

completion of the hospitality undergraduate programme. After interviewing five educators in food and beverage and two food and beverage professionals, as well as three industry professionals each (lodging and food and beverage), educators in food and beverage highlighted conceptual and technical skills which was in agreement with that of industry. They however, differed on interpersonal competencies domain. Educators believed leadership and communication skills were very important. With regards to lodging management, educators suggested students should be conversant with technical skills; front desk and marketing skills, conceptual, administrative hotel laws and interpersonal skills.

Academia's views on competency requirements have always strongly favoured conceptual abilities. This might be because, the ability of the mind to think and analyse issues critically has always been one of the focuses of higher education.

Table 1: Summary of Some Studies on Competencies in the Hospitality Industry

Researcher/ Year	Respondents	Findings of important competencies
Bareham & Jones (1988) in Chen & Hsu (2007)	Hospitality industry managers	Operational analysis, on- the-job training negotiation, service encounter management, social training, managing changes and creativity skills

Table 1 continued		
Tas (1988)	Hotel managers	Guest problem solving skills, ethical standards, professional appearance, good communication skills and good staff and customer relationship
Baum (1990)	Hotel managers	As Tas (1988), and also, employee motivation and property legal responsibilities
Hsu & Gregory (1995)	Hotel managers	Communication and leadership skills (human-relations skills)
Lin (2002)	Hotel managers	Communication and adaptation to environmental changes competencies
Nelson & Dopson (2001)	Hotel professionals	Identifying and solving problems, leadership abilities, cost control and positive customer relationships
Siu (1998)	Hotel managers	Communication skills, team competencies, leadership, customer concern, personal drive, decision making, results orientation and commercial concern
Kay & Russette (2000)	Hotel managers	Leadership, technical and interpersonal skills

Table 1 continued

Chung–Herrera et al. (2003)	Hotel executives	Self-management, strategic positioning, critical thinking, communication, interpersonal skills, leadership and industry knowledge
Tsai et al. (2006)	Hospitality educators and Hotel professionals	Educators: include communication, departmental relationships, emotional quotient, employee motivation, contingency -decision plan, health and safety regulation, understanding of policies and procedures. Hotel Professionals: communication, emotional quotient, guests request management, positive customer relations development, knowledge of diverse cultures, professional image and ethics, professional appearance
Ashley et al. (1995)	Hospitality industry executive	Peoples skills, creative thinking ability, financial skills, communication skills, developing service orientation, problem

Table 1 continued

		identification and problem solving skills, listening skills, customer feedback
Breiter & Clements (1996)	Hospitality industry experts	Leadership, communication, employee relations, training and organising skills.
Tesone & Ricci (2006)	Hotel managers	Teamwork, effective listening, verbal and written communication skills, ability to project a professional image, empathizing with guest experience
Enz et al. (1993)	Hospitality graduate students, faculty and industry representatives	Graduate students: forecasting future trends, managing and leading group process and problem identification Faculty : problem identification, conceptual thinking, and current industry knowledge Industry representatives: acting in an ethical manner, taking a leadership position and communication with clients.

Table 1 continued

Kriegal (2000)	International hospitality managers	Cultural sensitivity, interpersonal skills, managerial flexibility, adaptive leadership, international motivation, intercultural competencies
Su et al. (1997)	Hospitality industry professionals and programme administrators	Hospitality professionals: peoples skills, leadership and service orientation Programme administrators: people skills, oral communication skills, and listening skills
Okeiyi et al. (1994)	Hospitality students, educators and industry practitioners	Students: human relations, customer relations, leadership skills and supervision. Educators: human relations, cost control, leadership skills and supervision Industry practitioners: human relations, customer relations and leadership skills
Agut et al. (2003)	Hotel and restaurant managers	Technical competency: economics-financial management, computing and language Generic competency: job performance efficiency, self- control and social relationships

Table 1 continued

Zopiatis (2010)	Culinary chefs	Technical competencies
Nolan et al. (2010)	Hospitality management graduates and employers	Graduates: interpersonal skills, professional knowledge skills, managing poor performing staff, identifying staff needs
		Employers: teamwork, interpersonal skills, professional knowledge skills and cost control
Millar et al. (2010)	Educators and industry practitioners in lodging and F&B segments	Educators; F&B: sanitation and food safety laws, conceptual, technical, finance, leadership and communication skills
		Lodging: conceptual, administrative, interpersonal skills.
		Industry; F&B : communication, leadership and people skills
		Lodging: interpersonal, conceptual and technical competencies
Partlow (1993)	Educators and industry managers	Conceptualising managerial responsibility, goals and objectives development, procedures and policies development and standards establishment

Source: Adapted from Millar et al. (2010)

Differences in Competencies Considered Important by Industry and Academia

In a study by Enz et al. (1993), faculty stressed conceptual and problem identification competencies, whilst industry highlighted ethical behaviour, leadership and communication skills as most important for the industry. In one of the few studies that investigated competency needs of the food and beverage segment (Okeiyi et al., 1994), educators and industry seemed to be in agreement on human relations and leadership skills but not on cost control and supervision abilities. The agreement between educators and practitioners is likely to be due to the understanding they both have of the food and beverage segment. This segment of the industry relates to preparation and service of meals to people, therefore, ability to relate well and motivate subordinates to keep a cheerful appearance all the time will be a plus for a successful career in this segment of the industry.

Similarly, hotel professionals and educators (Tsai et al., 2006) agreed on communication skills, emotional quotient and understanding hotel characteristics. They however did not agree on a number of competencies and skills. For example, whilst educators appreciated the need for new staff orientation, health and safety regulation implementation, contingency decision plan, understanding hotel policies and management procedure abilities, industry saw them not to be essential. These differences might be because, practitioners have become used to the application of these competencies therefore taking them for granted. On the contrary, industry professionals flagged guest request management, customer relations development, knowledge of diverse cultures, and ethics as important but educators thought

otherwise. Furthermore, the study by Tsai et al. (2006) was one of the few that brought emotional intelligence to the fore despite this competency being associated with successful performance in competency literature (Boyatzis 2008; Boyatzis & Ratti 2009; Emmerling & Boyatzis 2012).

Theoretical Framework

Curriculum and Curriculum Theory

Tribe (2002) defined curriculum as the total learning experience which is made up of various courses filled with knowledge, competencies and attitudes. Theory on the other hand can be said to be an analytical tool for understanding, explaining and making predictions with regards to a given subject matter (Njogu, 2012). 'A set of interrelated constructs, definitions and propositions that present a systematic view of phenomena by specifying relations among variables with the purpose of explaining and predicting a phenomena' is how Kerlinger (1973) as cited in Creswell (2009), defined theory.

According to Kliebard (2004) curriculum development may be described as an activity that gives a step by step attention to the question of what should be taught. He further argues that curriculum theory has its origin in the thoughts of humans through their curiosity, activity and problems. This suggests that theories go through various stages of evolution and refinement, as one tries to address a certain situation. Curriculum theory therefore gives guidance to what is to be taught. Curriculum theory is a set of related educational concepts that affords systematic and illuminating perspective of curricula phenomena (Glatthorn, Boschee & Whitehead, 2009).

Different languages have been used to differentiate the various views of this theory. Heubner (1986) identified six different languages often used by theorizers of the curriculum. These according to him are; descriptive, explanatory, controlling, legitimizing, prescriptive and affiliative. The assumption therefore is that, curriculum theory varies according to how the theorizers view and discuss it. The way the theory is discussed is dependent on the situation prevailing at the time of the theorizers (history, time and place). For Kliebard (2004), this might be the reason for the different definitions of the term. He also suggested developing a curriculum should illustrate the attention given to the step-by-step question of what should be taught, why and how.

Literature available on curriculum theory points out the differing views of how the curriculum should be planned, developed, implemented and evaluated. For instance, Dewey as cited in Erkiliç (2008) centred his theory of the curriculum on the learner in a democratic environment. Gay (2001); Villages and Lucas (2002), advocated for a curriculum that is culturally and ethnically diverse in nature. Bobbitt (1918); Tyler (1950) among others expected the curricula to guide practice and help educators to make appropriate choices. According to them, educational experiences should meet the goals of the chosen educational system. Tyler, (1950) further proposes that the curricula should be revised from time to time in order to keep tune with the society, working and general life. This suggests that, designing the curricula is a cyclical approach of developing, implementing, monitoring, and carefully observing outcomes. Data available from the outcomes are then used to refine the curricula (Burks, 1998).

Differences in views have caused the varied classification of this theory. Some authors have classified it into soft and hard curriculum (McNeil, 1985). Pinar (1978) grouped them into traditionalist, conceptual empiricists and reconceptualists. Cognitive-process, curriculum-as-technology, self-actualisation, social reconstruction-relevance and academic rationalism orientation was how Eisner and Vallance (1974) grouped the views on the theory whilst examining the conflicting conceptions of curriculum. Each of these classifications has been examined and criticised differently. Glatthorn (1980), classified curriculum theory into four, based on their domains of enquiry. These are structure-oriented, value-oriented, content-oriented and process-oriented theories.

Curriculum theory no matter the view has an ultimate goal of preparing the student for life through the best possible way. As put by Bobbitt (1918: 42 as cited in Millar et al., 2010), "The central theory of curriculum is simple. Human life however is varied and consists in the performance of specific activities. Education that prepares for life is one that prepares definitely and adequately for these specific activities. This requires only that, one goes into the world of affairs and discover the particulars of which their affairs consist. This will show the abilities, attitudes, habits, appreciations and forms of knowledge that men need".

One major purpose of higher education is to prepare students for the field of work (Starkey et al., 2004). Curriculum therefore ensures linkage between institutions and industries to ensure that, what is required of the hospitality graduate is what is taught the learner. Simply put, the hospitality educator should prepare students for the work in the hospitality industry. This

they do by embedding in them competencies expected of them in field of work.

Philosophies of Education- Experimentalism

Philosophy is one important aspect of every education process. The philosophical approach practised by an institution or educator influences the approach employed in guiding learners through their preparation for life (Sadker & Sadker, 1994). According to Walden (2007) as cited in Erkilic, (2008), philosophy in the learning process is the basis on which students and educators build knowledge.

Authors basically categorise philosophies of education into perennialism, essentialism, progressivism, reconstructionism and experimentalism. Perennialism is an inflexible philosophy of education. Training in this case is rigid in structure. The curriculum is made up of courses like history, logic, foreign language, moral development among others.

The essentialist education philosophy on the other hand places emphasis on traditional education, mind development and core curriculum by defining reality based on the physical world. Existentialism, advocates for a personal interpretation of the world, where the definition of reality is independent on the individual. Therefore, learners are helped to know themselves and their place in society.

Progressivists build on the previous philosophy of existentialism and believe education should focus on the whole learner, rather than content or educator. In their view, the curriculum content should be drawn from questions and interests of the student. Contrary to this view is the reconstructionist who propose that education should be revolutionary in

nature. It argues that education is expected to create a new order. Students are therefore trained to spearhead this new social order.

Turning out students to perfectly fit into the field of work and society is related to the experimentalist philosophy of education. Experimentalism is an educational philosophy that stresses on the achievement of specific results. This philosophy supports the assertion that the world is dynamic and therefore competencies required by workers are likely to change over a period of time. Curriculum therefore must be adjusted to reflect these changing needs (Klingstedt; 1972 in Millar et al., 2010).

Moreover, experimentalists believe that the truth is what works right now and proposes curriculum improvement by constantly researching to evaluate the requirement of the world from the student. The educator is expected to encourage learners to participate in discovering and experiencing the world in which they live (Erkilic, 2008).

Social Learning Theory

Social Learning Theory propounded by Albert Bandura, posits that, people learn from one another through observation, imitation and modelling. Contrary to pure behaviourism, it is seen as a bridge between behaviourist and cognitive learning theories. It is worth mentioning that behaviourist place outmost emphasis on expressed behaviour with a neglect of the mental and affective actions supporting the behaviour (Gnoczi, 1996).

The SLT highlights the role of attention, memory, and motivation. Bandura (1977) further noted that people learn by observing other peoples' behaviour, attitudes and outcomes of those behaviours. This theory explains human behaviour in terms of continuous reciprocal interaction between the

mind, behavioural and environmental influences. Attention, retention, reproduction and motivation are the necessary conditions for modelling behaviour effectively (Bandura, 1977).

A notable difference between Bandura's SLT and behaviourism is that, the former believes that the world and a persons' behaviour cause each other, whilst the latter asserts that the environment causes ones behaviour. The SLT rules out creativity, as it states that, people learn new behaviours only by watching others do it. It describes the learner as an individual who cannot imagine situations and decide the best course of action and the best way out. It also insists on observational learning without which it believes no appropriate behaviour can be exhibited.

Competency Models

Competency models are generally descriptive and aim at identifying, grouping and summarizing the sets of competencies that is needed in performing a job very well in an organisation (Millar et. al., 2010). A competency model may also be said to be a collection of knowledge, skills and abilities and behaviours which define a successful work output or performance in an organisation. This performance is with regards to a particular task and therefore, competency models focus on behaviour rather than personality trait (Chung-Herrera et al., 2003).

These models are used by human resource managers as the basis for selecting and hiring the right person for a job. Managers at all levels also use these models for identifying, training and development needs of employees and prospective employees. Competency models are also used for measuring performance (Chung-Herrera et al., 2003).

Competency models can take various forms, but most of these models firstly give a definition of each specific competency domain. The activities that define the competency cluster are then described based on the behaviours related to the competency. The model may then be presented diagrammatically to further improve its description and appeal.

Katz's Model

Katz (1955), proposed a model depicting the skills of an effective administrator or manager. He identified three different abilities that a leader should possess to guarantee effective performance. These he identified to be technical, human and conceptual skills. He further observed that the amount of each skill required by the manager is correlated to the level of management. That is, top level managers require more conceptual skills than human skills and technical skills in that order. Middle level managers are said to require equal amounts of the three skills whilst lower level managers are expected to require more of the technical skills to be efficient (Walker, 2012).

Iceberg Model

Iceberg model (Spencer & Spencer, 1993) is a model which situates skills and knowledge as 'discussable' and observable. These skills they referred to as the visible section of the iceberg. Self concept, values and personality traits are not visible and observable, rather, these are the backbone that set the professional behaviour in motion. According to them, the invisible factors are the basic features of a person that leads to superior performance. They further posit, the intangibles are central competencies and can hardly be developed whilst the surface (tangible) competencies are easily developed.
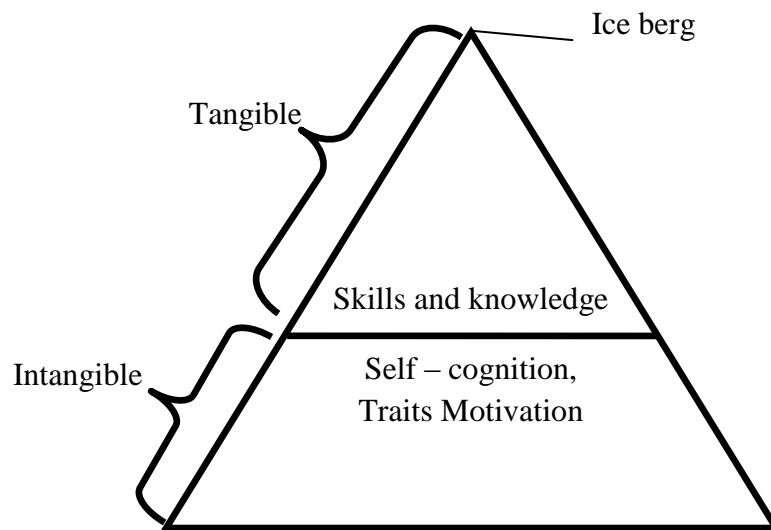
Figure 1: Iceberg Competency Model

Source**:**   Spencer & Spencer (1993).

Competing Values Framework

Quinn et al. (1996) developed a framework; the Competing Values Framework. This framework seeks to identify and explain significant management competencies. From the view of Wadongo, Kambora and Odhuno (2011), this framework allows for the examination of key managerial competencies.

Quinn et al. (1996) identified eight managerial roles and 24 management competencies linked to each role. The roles they identified as; innovator, broker, producer, director, co-ordinator, monitor, facilitator and mentor. Each organisational outcome (adaptation and change, maximization of output, consolidation and continuity, human commitment) are important aspects that make up the ultimate constructs of organisational and managerial effectiveness.

Sandwith's Competency Model

There are however, many other competency models which try to describe the competencies needed by industries, organisations, and specific jobs. However, one of the most influential and reliable competency models is the Competency Domain Model by Sandwith (1993). This model categorises competencies into five domains:

1. Conceptual /creative domain

2. Leadership domain

3. Interpersonal domain

4. Administrative domain

5. Technical domain

The five domains have a purpose of helping managers to identify and categorise significant competencies for specific jobs (Millar et al., 2010). Attention is drawn to the fact that some knowledge and skills oftentimes overlap. This may be so because, a manager's job does not solely rely on a specific task.

This model is perhaps the most frequently used in competency studies because, any managerial activity could easily be placed under one of the domains. For example, negotiation skills and communication skills can be placed under interpersonal domain, visioning and planning under conceptual domain, motivation and teamwork can also be placed under leadership domain. This model also offers a better way for a researcher to easily modify and define various competent activities they wish to measure. Chung-Herrera et al. (2003), Kay & Russette (2000), Koenigsfeld et al. (2011), Millar et al.

(2010), Perdue et al.,(2000), Tas et al. (1996) and Tsai et al. (2006), have all used and developed their own competency models with this model as a guide.

The conceptual domain refers to cognitive skills, which are related to comprehending important elements of the job. Cognitive skills require being aware of one's responsibility in the organisation. Conceptual / creative domain relates to the organisation, its current ideas, and projective ideas. The leadership domain borders on the skills to relay and execute those ideas. Leadership is very vital to any industry, as it creates the vision and ultimate direction. A leader is able to only succeed with the help of employees through effective leadership. If the leader does not have the 'pulling' along ability, it will be difficult to move the organisation forward. The interpersonal domain has to do with the inter communication between colleagues, superiors and subordinates as well as customers. Oral, written, telephone communication skills, conflict and negotiation skills are all part of this domain.

The administrative domain relates to rules and regulations that an organisation must follow. It also involves knowing about them, educating others about them and enforcing them. The administrative domain is typically made up of marketing, financial and accounting, human and professional resource clusters. The last domain is the technical domain, which involves those skills necessary to perform a specific task. Unlike administrative domain, this domain will incorporate skills that do vary across job types (Sandwith, 1993). For this study the technical domain would be made up of the front office, housekeeping and food and beverage competencies.

Conceptual Framework

Figure 2, presents the conceptual framework for the study. The hospitality industry is at the receiving end of the human resource being produced by higher learning institutions. According to Jones (2002), the lodging and the F&B segments of the industry are the major employers in the industry. The industry is also the provider of actual services for consumption by the customer; who is seen as the most important person of the hospitality business. The perspective of industry with regards to what competency is required for industry is very important.

To provide the human resource needs for the industry is the core mandate of academia. As put by Starkey et al. (2004), higher learning institutions are to prepare the graduate for the field of work. Being the supplier of workforce for the industry, their views on what competency is required for the industry is equally important. Academia's views show what it embeds in the products based on what they think is required of them for the industry. The views of both industry and academia with respect to conceptual, leadership, interpersonal, administrative and technical competency requirements for the industry are the main focus of this study.

It is expected that there is a constant interaction between the two stakeholders for the excellent integration of graduates into the industry. Industry for instance, expects graduates to possess certain competencies necessary for the job whilst academia is also expected to instil into graduates these competencies. How similar or different the views of these two stakeholders are, have an implication for the industry.
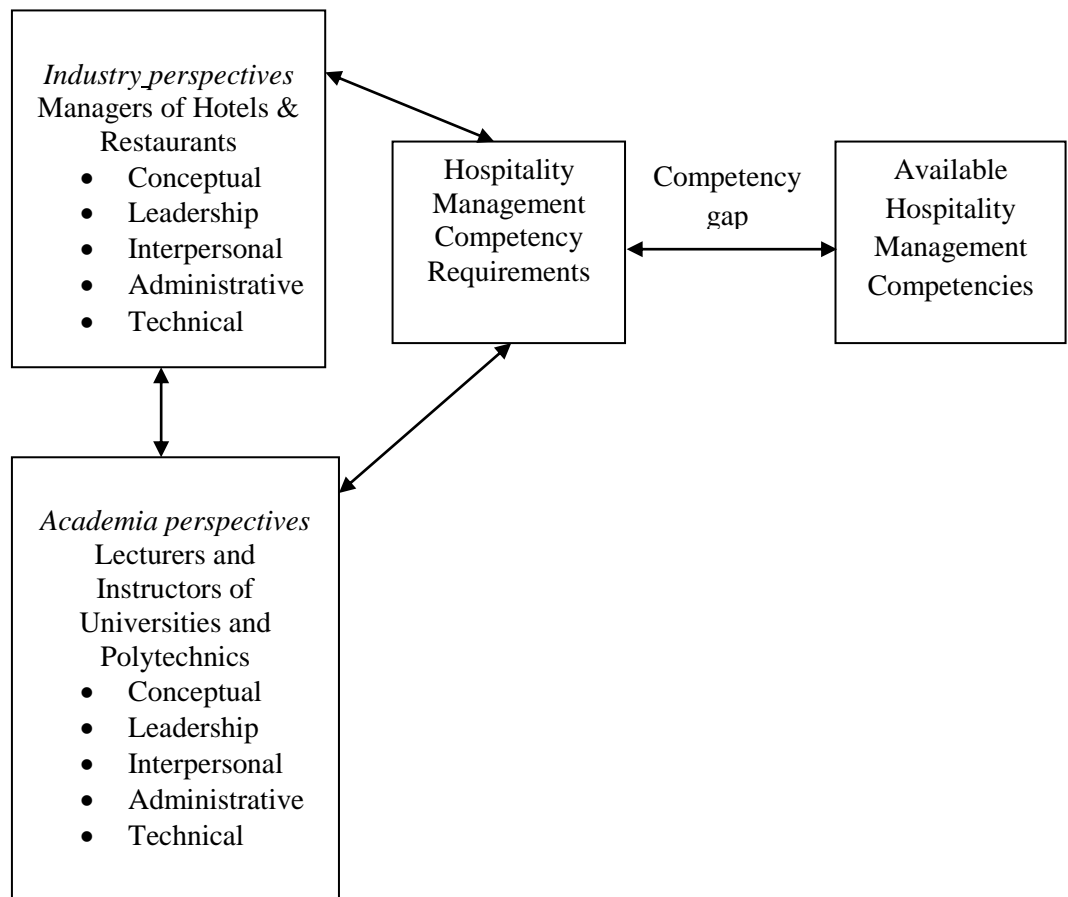
Figure 2: Conceptual Framework of the Study

Source: Author's construct (2015)

Hospitality management competency requirements for the industry, is the knowledge, skills and attributes that is required for superior performance in the industry (Millar et al., 2010). This requirement may however be different from the available hospitality management competencies that graduates possess. The disparity between the hospitality competency requirements and the available hospitality management competency is the competency gap.

Summary

The chapter examined the various definitions of competency from different perspectives. It then highlighted the similarities and differences in competency requirements for the industry. It further discussed the theoretical foundations of the study where theories like curriculum and curriculum theory, experimentalism and social learning theory were presented and their relevance to the study explained. Different competency models were also discussed and the most appropriate one was adapted. Finally, a conceptual framework was developed to guide the study.

CHAPTER THREE

METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This chapter describes the methods that were employed for data collection and analysis. It also describes the study area, study design, research paradigm, data and sources, target population, sample size determination and sampling procedure. Data collection instruments, fieldwork challenges, ethical considerations and analytical tools used were also highlighted.

Central and Western Regions of Ghana

Central Region which has Cape Coast as the regional capital is located in the south of Ghana. The region shares boundaries with Ashanti and Eastern Regions to the north, Western Region to the west, Greater Accra Region to the east and the Gulf of Guinea to the south. According to the 2010 census, Central Region covers 9,826 square kilometres of Ghana land area with a population of 2,201,863. The region has eight per cent of accommodation distribution in the country (GTA, 2012). The region also has 23 star- rated hotels and 17 graded restaurants and numerous guest houses and budget hotels (GTA, 2012). The Central Region is known for education, tourism and industrial minerals. It is also said to be the hub of tourism in Southern Ghana as it abounds in many tourist attractions like castles, forts and beaches. The region has two public universities; University of Cape Coast (UCC) and University of Education, Winneba (UEW) as well as the Cape Coast Polytechnic. Currently UCC runs hospitality management programmes to the

Doctor of Philosophy level. Cape Coast Polytechnic runs a Higher National Diploma in Hospitality Management.

Western Region is also located in the south of Ghana and it is bordered by Ivory Coast to the west and the Central Region to the east. The region has a population of 2,376,021 and constitutes nine per cent of the accommodation distribution in the country. It has Sekondi-Takoradi, a twin city as its capital. There are 59 star-rated hotels and 24 graded restaurants in the region (GTA, 2012) as well as numerous guest houses and budget hotels. The area has attracted a number of tertiary institutions running tourism and allied programmes. Hospitality operations have also had their fair share of the oil benefits as the region has attracted new hotels and restaurants. The Western Region has pristine beaches, many large rivers and the famous Nzulezu Stilts village. The region has some tertiary institutions running hospitality and tourism programmes. These are Takoradi Polytechnic, Ghana Institute of Management and Public Administration (GIMPA) and Ghana Technology University College (GTUC).

Central and Western Regions are chosen because, Central Region has a university, which is a pioneer in hospitality management training in the country. Therefore, a study investigating the views of academia cannot be complete without the views of such educators. Western Region which shares boundaries with the Central Region is becoming increasingly attractive to investors in the industry due to the commercial exploration of oil in the area. The phenomenon has led to the entry of some higher learning institutions like GIMPA and Ghana Technology University College (GTUC) running hospitality management programmes.
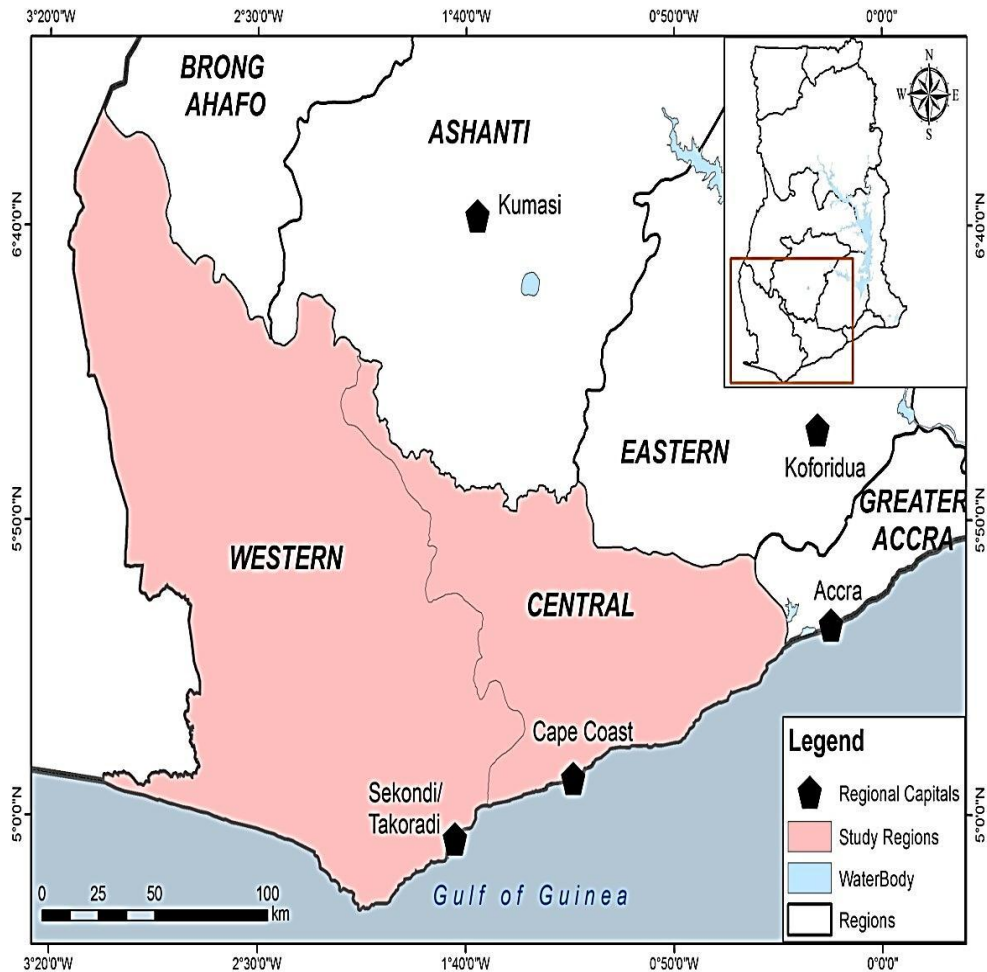
Figure 3: Map of Study Area

Source: Cartography Unit, Department of Geography and Regional Planning, University of Cape Coast (2015).

Research Paradigm

This study was guided by the pragmatist research paradigm. The pragmatist worldview takes into account both the positivist and interpretive paradigms. To the positivist, reality can be observed, measured and predicted. This paradigm supports the assertion that, the truth is out there and is independent of human consciousness. What is real is therefore defined same by all. On the contrary, interpretivist posits, reality is in the minds of people and what is true is socially constructed based on interaction. Reality to this

group of people is subjective and is defined differently by the individual involved (Sarantakos, 2012). Also, positivist emphasise quantitative measurements whilst interpretivists rely on qualitative measurement techniques. Pragmatism therefore focuses on the research problem rather than the research methods. It gives the researcher the freedom to mix both quantitative and qualitative assumptions in a research (Creswell, 2009).

To employ a mixed method is to combine both qualitative and quantitative inquiry approaches in a study. According to Creswell & Clark (2007), using a mixed method is more than simply collecting and analysing qualitative and quantitative data. It also involves the use of both approaches together, so that the overall strength of the study is greater than either qualitative or quantitative research.

The study employed a sequential mixed method. According to Creswell (2009), sequential mixed method procedures are those in which the researcher expands on the findings of one method with another. Simply, this means that, a study may be initiated using a quantitative data collection and analysis, then followed up with a qualitative data collection and analysis or vice versa. If the former is the case, large samples are used to begin with and fewer cases subsequently.

Study Design

Descriptive research is a form of research that aims to describe social systems, relations or social events, by providing background information about the issue on board, and also stimulating explanations (Sarantakos, 2012). This study was descriptive in design, because, it aimed at describing the competency requirements from the views of industry and

academia. It sought to address the question 'what' competencies do academia and industry consider important for the hospitality industry. Descriptive researches are also used to obtain information about the current status of a phenomenon as well as describing what is there.

Data and Sources

This study used both primary data and secondary information. Primary data was collected from educators (academia) and managers (industry or human resource managers) in the industry. The primary data was collected by the use of a self administered questionnaires and interviews with academic heads of department and some managers. Secondary information was also used, mainly accessed from GTA (list of hospitality facilities), competency list (Perdue et al., 2000, Sandwith, 1993), books, journals and also the internet.

Target Population

The study targeted educators from tertiary institutions running the hospitality and tourism programme in the Central and Western Regions of Ghana. In all, three academic institutions were identified to be running the programme at the tertiary level at the time the study was conducted. These were, University of Cape Coast, Cape Coast Polytechnic and Takoradi Polytechnic. Finally, managers or human resource managers (where available) were sampled from hospitality businesses (industry) in the study area. Human resource managers were also targeted because, in larger hotels, they are responsible for the recruiting and hiring of human resources for the various segments of the operation. They are therefore likely to have knowledge on which competencies are important for the various segments of the industry.

Sampling Procedures

To arrive at a sample size for the study, a list of all registered hotels and restaurants was obtained from the GTA. According to GTA (2012) there are four 3-star, seven 2-star and 12 1-star hotels in the Central Region. There are also one grade-1, two grade-2 and 14 grade-3 restaurants in the region as well (GTA, 2011). A census of 3-star and 2-star hotels in the region was selected, whilst half of the three star hotels were selected by simple random sampling. Each manager or Human Resource Manager (HRM) was purposively selected.

Table 2: Sample Selection for Central Region

Hospitality establishments/ institutions	Population	Number of establishments to be selected	Number of respondents to be selected	Total no. of respondents
Hotel category				
3-star	4	4	1	4
2-star	7	7	1	7
1-star	12	6	1	6
Restaurants				
Grade-1	1	1	1	1
Grade-2	2	2	1	2
Grade-3	14	7	1	7
Sub-total	*40*	*27*	*6*	*27*
Institution				
UCC	9		All	9

Table 2 continued			
C/Coast Polytechnic	10	All	10
Sub-total	*19*		*19*
Total Sample			46

Source: GTA, 2011 & 2012

A similar sampling procedure was used to select managers in restaurants (Table 1). There were two higher learning institutions offering hospitality programmes in the region. All educators in these institutions were selected.

In the Western Region, all five 3-star hotels and all grade 1 and 2 restaurants were selected. However, a quarter of the 1-star hotels and a half of grade-3 restaurants was sampled randomly.

Table 3: Sample Selection for Western Region

Hospitality establishments/ institutions	Population	Number of establishments selected	Number of respondents selected	Total no. of respondents
Hotel category				
3-star	5	5	1	5
2-star	16	8	1	8
1-star	38	13	1	13
Restaurants				
Grade-1	2	2	1	2
Grade-2	7	7	1	7

Table 3 continued				
Grade-3	15	8	1	8
Sub-total	83	43	6	43
Institution				
GIMPA	4		All	4
GTUC	5		All	5
Takoradi	35		All	35
Polytechnic				
Sub-total	44			44
Total Sample				87

Source: GTA, 2011 & 2012

There are also three higher learning institutions offering the hospitality management programme in the Western Region. All educators in the institutions were selected (Table 2). All 3-star hotels were selected because there are a few of them, and also it is these establishments that employ graduates from tertiary hospitality institutions the most. These establishments also up-hold higher professional standards as compared to the lower star- rated hotels.

An interview guide was used to probe further into competency issues. All academic heads of departments were purposively sampled whilst two managers each would be sampled by convenience from star-rated hotels. One manager each from each grade of restaurant was also selected for an interview. The total sample size for the study was 133.

Data Collection Instruments

The questionnaire was divided into four parts for industry. Part A required managers to show their extent of agreement to listed competencies on a five point Likert scale, (1-5). Where 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neither agree nor disagree, 4-agree, 5- strongly agree. Part B required industry to rate the extent to which graduates in their organisations possess listed competencies on a five point Likert scale (1-5, strongly disagree to strongly agree). The background characteristics of managers were in part C and Part D required them to respond to questions on the characteristics of their establishments.

For academia, the questionnaire was in two parts. Part A sought educators to show their extent of agreement to listed competencies with regards to its importance to the hospitality industry on a five point Likert scale (1-5). Where 1- strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neither agree nor disagree, 4-agree, 5- strongly agree. Part B solicited responses on their background characteristics.

The questionnaire was designed along the competency domains of Sandwith (1993). The domains are; conceptual, interpersonal, leadership, administrative and technical competencies. The advantage of this competency measurement over others is the ease with which various knowledge, skills and attitudes can be put under each domain. An extensive review of competency literature on the hospitality industry, informed various competencies that were used. These competencies were then placed under each domain for respondents to agree or disagree with their importance to managerial and

supervisory positions in the hospitality industry (see appendices A, B and C for questionnaires).

An interview guide was used after collection and analyzing the quantitative data. The interview guide was used to probe into possible reasons for competency gaps within the industry. Competencies that were not included in the competency list and other competency related issues exposed by the quantitative analysis were further probed. The interview guide sought to find answers to how academia and industry ranked the various competency domains in order of importance. Existence of collaborations between industry and academia was also probed, academia's view on the adequacy of the hospitality curriculum to the turning out of competent graduates, possible reasons for gaps among other issues were explored with an interview (see appendices D and E for interview guides).

Fieldwork Challenges

In order to test the validity of the research instrument, the field work was preceded with a pre-testing of the research instruments in two higher learning institution, six hotels and four restaurants in the Accra Metropolis. In all, twenty questionnaires and two interviews (one from academia and one from industry) were conducted. The pre-testing offered the researcher the opportunity to modify some of the questions before actual fieldwork. The pre-testing was undertaken from the 21st to the 23rd of January, 2015.

The actual fieldwork took five weeks (17th February- 27th March, 2015) to complete with the help of two field assistants. The major challenge encountered was the unavailalibity of hotel and restaurant managers. The managers were often not around during the time of visit. Attempts to get their

mobile phone numbers from their secretaries were often not successful as the secretaries claimed they were under strict orders not to give out personal mobile phone numbers to 'strangers'. This meant that continuous visits and long waits had to be made before meeting with managers. Even after meeting these managers, the questionnaires were not filled immediately, but taken and another date scheduled for collection. Collecting of questionnaires on the scheduled dates was also just as difficult as arranging for the first meeting.

Another challenge encountered had to do with those facilities within the industry, which claimed they do not employ graduates from tertiary institutions. This meant that they could not complete the questionnaires for the study. Also, two of the higher learning institutions running the hospitality management programme in the study area had at the time of data collection suspended the running of the programme due to various challenges. In all, 111 of the collected questionnaires were used, signifying a response rate of 83.5%.

Ethical Issues

The ethical implication of every research is very important and how this is addressed in any research is worth mentioning. This research, took into accounts the ethical principles of informed consent, anonymity and confidentiality. Neuman (2007) posits that researchers must not compel people into participating in a research. Participation must be voluntary at all times. Informed consent was sought from respondents and reason for the research explicitly explained before handing over a questionnaire for completion. After making known the purpose of the research, respondents who declined to participate were not coerced in any way to do so.

Closely related to the ethical principle of informed consent is the principle of anonymity. By this, the privacy of the respondent is protected and the anonymity of their identity is ensured. The study ensured the anonymity of respondents by not requiring names and personal details which may be used to identify respondents at a later date on the questionnaire and with the interviews.

According to Neuman (2007), even if a researcher is not able to guarantee anonymity, he or she should always protect participants' confidentiality. Confidentiality was assured to respondents, as whatever information they gave were not given to other people especially those outside the academic domain and the use of the information was solely limited to academic work.

Data Processing and Analysis

The quantitative data collected was coded into Statistical Product for Service Solution (SPSS) version 21. After which descriptive analysis was done on the background characteristics of respondents. Factor analysis was used to reduce the competency list. After which t- test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was employed to analyse variations in the responses of academia and industry on the competency requirements for the industry. Qualitative data was manually transcribed and grouped under themes.

Summary

This chapter described the methodology used for the study and the procedures that were followed to collect data from the field. The chapter also looked at the research design, sampling techniques, research instruments and ethical considerations. Challenges encountered from the field work were also presented. The concluding part of the chapter highlighted the methods of data processing and analysis of the study.

CHAPTER FOUR

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Introduction

This chapter presents the results and discussion of findings of the study. The results are examined in line with the objectives of the study as well as the conceptual framework guiding the study. Issues discussed include socio-demographic characteristics of respondents, characteristics of hotels, restaurants, industry and academia views on what competencies are required by the industry. The differences in the views of the respondents and gaps that exist within the industry are also presented.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents

Respondents for the study were in two groups; academia and industry. Industry was made up of managers of hotels and restaurants. In all, there were a total of 111 respondents. Academia was made up of 47 lecturers whilst industry comprised of 64 managers comprising, 43 hotel managers and 21 restaurant managers.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents from Industry

Most of the respondents (92.1%) were working on a full time basis. Though the hospitality industry is speculated to have a lot of casual staff, this is usually not the case with managers.

Table 4: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents from Industry (N=64)

Socio-demographics	Frequency			Percentage (%)
	Hotel Managers	Restaurant Managers	Total	
Gender				
Male	26	12	38	59.4
Female	17	9	26	40.6
Marital status				
Married	24	18	42	65.6
Unmarried	19	3	22	34.4
Age				
Below 30	17	3	20	31.3
30-39	12	6	18	28.1
40-49	7	8	15	23.4
>50	7	4	11	17.2
Work status				
Full time	41	17	58	92.1
Part time	1	4	5	7.9
Level of education				
Diploma	22	11	33	55.0
First degree	13	9	22	36.7
Post-graduate	5	0	5	8.3

Table 4 continued

Position				
Manager	32	16	48	75.0
Assit. Manager	5	2	7	10.9
HR Manager	6	3	9	14.1
Years in industry				
1-3 yrs	14	3	17	26.6
4-6 yrs	9	5	14	21.9
>7 yrs	20	13	33	51.5
Years in managerial position				
1-3 yrs	24	4	28	43.8
4-6 yrs	9	9	18	28.1
>7 yrs	10	8	18	28.1

Source: Field work (2015)

More than half (59.4%) of the respondents were males. This is interesting, because, hospitality programmes usually have more female enrolment. However, the result of this study supports previous studies by Mensah & Blankson (2014) and Mensah (2013), which have shown that there are more male managers in Ghana's hospitality industry.

Most of the respondents (65.6%) were married and 31.3% were below the age of 30. A relative few (17.2%) were above 50 years. With regards to level of education, more than half (55.0%) had obtained diplomas, 36.7% were first degree holders, with only 8.3% being postgraduates. Most of the

respondents (75.0%) were General Managers, with 14.1% and 10.9% being Human Resource Managers and Assistant Managers respectively.

Also, 51.5% of the managers had been working in the hospitality industry for more than 7 years, whilst 26.6% had been working in the industry for between 1-3 years. Specifically, more hotel managers (55.8%) had been working at managerial positions between 1-3 years. On the contrary few restaurant managers (19.0%) had been in managerial position between 1-3 years. This may mean that, the turnover rate of managers in the hotels segment is higher than that of their counterparts in the restaurants segment.

Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents from Academia

There were slightly more females (53.2%) in academia than males (46.8%) with most of them within the ages of 30-39 years. This shows that most of the educators are relatively young. But comparing to the age distribution of respondents from industry (Table 5), there seem to be more lecturers between the 30-39 years cohort than with managers from industry.

Table 5: Socio-Demographic Characteristics of Respondents from Academia (N=47)

Socio-demographics	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	22	46.8
Female	25	53.2
Age		
Below 30	2	4.3
30-39	22	46.8

Table 5 continued

40-49	14	29.8
>50	9	19.1
Marital status		
Married	39	83.0
Unmarried	8	17.0
Work status		
Full time	45	95.7
Part time	2	4.3
Qualification		
First degree	1	2.1
Post graduate	46	97.9
Membership of hospitality association		
Member	23	48.9
Non-member	24	51.1
Industry experience		
Have industry experience	33	70.2
Have no industry experience	14	29.8

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

From Table 5, 95.7% of the educators were working on full-time basis, with almost all (97.9%) being postgraduates. This is however expected as higher academic qualification is an important requirement of the academic community.

Comparing the educational level of lecturers to that of managers, there were no diploma certificate holders in academia, but these dominated the

industry in this study. With regards to membership of hospitality association, a little less than half (48.9%) belonged to one or more hospitality associations. Moreover, 70.2% of educators had some hospitality industry experience.

Industry Characteristics

Hotel Characteristics

Respondents were managers; nine from 3-star, fifteen from 2-star, and nineteen from 1-star hotels. This constitutes 20.9%, 34.9% and 44.2% respectively. This means that, there were more managers from 1-star hotels as compared to those from 2 and 3-stars participating in the study. This is however representative of the distribution of hotel categories in the study area.

Table 6: Hotel Characteristics

Characteristics	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Hotel rating		
1-star	19	44.2
2-star	15	34.9
3-star	9	20.9
Ownership structure		
Sole ownership	26	60.4
Local limited Liability	10	23.3
Local partnership	2	4.7
Local–foreign partnership	5	11.6
Affiliation of hotel		
Affiliated	9	20.9
Not affiliated	34	79.1

Table 6 continued

Nature of affiliation		
Joint venture	4	44.4
Franchise	2	22.2
Management contract	3	33.3

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

From Table 6, most of the hotels (60.4%) were owned by sole proprietors with a few (4.7%) in local partnership. Ten of the hotels, representing 23.3% were owned as local limited liability businesses and 11.6% were owned in foreign-local partnership. Most of the hotels (79.1%) were not affiliated. The few (20.9%) that were affiliated were affiliated in the following manner; 44.4% were affiliated through a joint venture, 22.2% were franchises and 33.3% through management contracts.

Restaurant Characteristics

The restaurant segment of the industry in Ghana is dominated by eating outlets that are not graded (GTA, 2011).

In table 7, more than half of the restaurants (57.1%) in the study were owned by sole proprietors whilst only one (4.8%) was a local-foreign partnership. Local limited liability and local partnership accounted for 23.8% and 14.3% respectively of restaurant ownership (Table 7). Out of the 21 restaurants, 4, (19.0%) were affiliated as joint ventures and the remaining 17, (81.0%) were not affiliated in any way.

Table 7: Restaurant Characteristics

Characteristic	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Restaurant-grading		
Grade 1	3	14.3
Grade 2	9	42.9
Grade 3	9	42.9
Ownership Structure		
Sole ownership	12	57.1
Local limited liability	5	23.8
Local partnership	3	14.3
Local–foreign Partnership	1	4.8
Affiliation of restaurant		
Affiliated	4	19.0
Not affiliated	17	81.0
Nature of affiliation		
Joint venture	4	100

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

Dimensions of Competencies required by the Hospitality industry

Factor analysis was carried out to reduce the number of competency statements that respondents responded to. Employing a Principal Component Analysis (PCA) with varimax rotation, 34 variables were reduced to 21, with a Kaiser Meyer Olkin test (KMO) of 0.76 and a Bartletts Test of Spherecity 1116.23 (p= 0.00).

The 21 competency statements generated from the factor analysis changed the five main competency domains to four, namely, technical, leadership, conceptual and administrative competency domains.

Table 8: Dimensions of Competencies for the Hospitality Industry

Factor	Statements	Loadings	Eigen values	% of variance explained	Cronbach's alpha
I	*Technical domain*				
	Abreast with trends	0.86			
	Able to prepare rota	0.83	6.87	27.5	0.90
	Maintains hygiene standards	0.81			
	Product knowledge	0.80			
	Good customer service	0.79			
	Handles emergency situations	0.70			
	Network with people	0.62			
II	*Leadership domain*				
	Appreciate individual differences	0.70			
	Maintain good relationship with employees	0.66	2.68	13.7	0.70
	Control emotions	0.64			
	Motivate others	0.62			
	Team work	0.53			

Table 8 continued

III	*Conceptual domain*				
	Develops contingency plans	0.83			
	Adapts to changing circumstances	0.73	2.32	11.27	0.79
	Creative thinking	0.71			
	Sets measurable action steps that supports organisational strategy	0.62			
IV	*Administrative domain*				
	Safeguards confidential info.	0.73			
	Knowledgeable in organisational policies	0.66	1.68	7.56	0.71
	Utilising operating budget	0.73			
	Cost control	0.70			
	Knowledgeable in financial accounting	0.66			
	Total variance explained			60.0	

KMO=0.76; Bartletts Test of Spherecity (1116.23); p=0.00

The technical domain measured the following competencies with their respective factor loadings: abreast with trends (0.86), ability to prepare rota (0.83), maintenance of hygiene standards (0.81), product knowledge (0.80), good customer service orientation (0.79), ability to handle emergency situations (0.70) and networking with people (0.62). The leadership domain comprised of competencies like appreciate individual differences, maintain

good relationship with other employees, control emotions, motivate others and team work capabilities. The competencies had factor loadings within 0.53 and 0.70. Conceptual competencies was made up of development of contingency plans (0.83), adapting to changing circumstances (0.73), creative thinking (0.71) and ability to set measurable action steps that support organisational strategy (0.62).

Finally, competencies like safeguarding confidential information, knowledgeable in organisational policies, utilising operating budget, cost control and financial accounting knowledge were competencies loadings under the administrative domain. This domain had factor loadings between the ranges of 0.66 and 0.73.

In all the variables explained sixty percent (60%) of the variance in competencies required for the hospitality industry. Technical domain (Factor I), explained 27.5% of the competencies required for the industry. Leadership (Factor II), conceptual (Factor III) and administrative competencies (Factor IV) explained 13.7%, 11.27% and 7.56% respectively of the competencies required for the hospitality industry.

Competency Requirements by the Hospitality Industry

In Table 9, industry managers preferred hospitality management graduates with leadership competencies compared to other competency domains. Similarly, studies by Breiter & Clements (1996), Enz et al. (1993), Hsu & Gregory (1995), Kay & Russette (2000), Nelson & Dopson (2001), Siu (1998) , Su et al. (1997) and Tesone & Ricci (2012) all highlighted leadership competency as important to the industry. Leadership domain (Domain mean= 4.53), was followed by administrative (Domain mean= 4.47), conceptual

(Domain mean=4.36) and technical (Domain mean= 4.29) competency domains.

Though managers agreed that the technical domain was the least required (Domain mean=4.29), Tas et al., (1996) and Zopiatis (2010), all stressed the importance of this competency for the industry above others. The least rating of this domain may be due to the fact that managers do not often handle 'hands-on' (technical) duties. What they need is to know and understand how these technical activities are performed (Walker, 2012), so as to provide guidance to technical staff. Within the technical domain, the most preferred competency was the ability to handle emergency situations (Mean=4.50) whiles networking with people was the least rated (Mean=4.19).

Table 9: Competency Requirements for the Hospitality Industry by Managers (N=64)

Competencies	Mean	Std. Dev.
Technical domain		
Abreast with trends	4.20	0.71
Able to prepare rota	4.27	0.86
Hygiene standards	4.25	0.85
Product knowledge	4.38	0.74
Good customer service orientation	4.22	0.89
Handles emergency situations	4.50	0.83
Network with people	4.20	0.78
Category mean	*4.29*	*0.80*

Table 9 continued

Leadership domain		
Appreciate individual differences	4.26	0.71
Maintain good relationship with employees	4.65	0.54
Control emotions	4.48	0.74
Motivate others	4.74	0.46
Team work	4.51	0.73
Category mean	*4.53*	*0.63*
Conceptual domain		
Develops contingency plans	4.36	0.77
Adapts to changing circumstances	4.26	0.92
Creative thinking	4.58	0.66
Sets measurable action steps that supports organisational strategy	4.23	0.98
Category mean	*4.36*	*0.83*
Administrative domain		
Safeguards confidential thinking	4.64	0.52
Knowledgeable in organisational policies	4.58	0.59
Utilising operating budget	4.35	0.83
Cost control	4.53	0.61
Knowledgeable in financial accounting	4.27	0.74
Category mean	*4.47*	*0.65*
Overall mean	4.41	0.72

Source: Fieldwork, 2015   Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree

With regards to the individual competencies within the leadership domain, industry preferred the ability to motivate others (Mean=4.74) above all others. This is probably due to the positive relationship between motivation and performance. Also, the ability to maintain a good working relationship with other employees (Mean=4.65), was highly rated. Industry rated all competencies within the leadership domain favourably. Appreciation of individual differences was the least required (Mean=4.25) competency by industry within the leadership domain.

From the Table 9, safeguarding confidential information (Mean= 4.64) was the most favoured competency in the administrative domain. This could be attributed to the nature of the hospitality business, where a lot of private and personal information is available. Such information must be safeguarded from other people. Knowledgeable in organisational policies (Mean= 4.58) and controlling cost (Mean= 4.53) were also rated as important competencies for hospitality operations. This finding agrees with that of Nelson & Dopson (2001) and Nolan et al. (2010), that hotel and restaurant managers consider these competencies as necessary for the industry.

Creative thinking was the most favoured competency (Mean= 4.58) within the conceptual domain. Industry preferred creative thinking ability, due to the constant changing nature of the hospitality business. This then makes creativity a necessary requirement for keeping up with the pace of changes within the industry as asserted by Bareham & Jones in Chen & Hsu (2007).

In Table 10, being able to motivate others (Mean=4.74) was the foremost competency requirement for the industry.

Table 10: Ranking of Competencies in Order of Importance by Respondents from Industry

Competencies	Mean
Motivate others	4.74
Maintains good relationship with employees	4.65
Safeguards confidential information	4.64
Creative thinking	4.58
Knowledgeable in organisational policies	4.58
Cost control	4.53
Team work	4.51
Handles emergency situations	4.50
Controls emotions	4.48
Product knowledge	4.38
Develops contingency plans	4.36
Utilises operating budget	4.35
Knowledgeable in financial accounting	4.27
Able to prepare rota	4.27
Adapts to changing circumstances	4.26
Appreciate individual differences	4.26
Maintains hygiene standards	4.25
Sets measurable action steps that supports organisational strategy	4.23
Good customer service orientation	4.22
Abreast with trends	4.20
Networks with people	4.20

Note: industry consists of hotels and restaurants   Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

Maintaining good working relationship with employees, safeguarding confidential information, creative thinking, being knowledgeable in organisational policies, cost control, team work and ability to handle emergency situations all had mean values of 4.50 and above. It can be observed that most of the above mentioned competencies are generic competencies. This affirms the assertion by Brophy and Kiely (2002) that generic/ soft skills are highly required for managers in the hospitality industry.

Being able to control emotions, being able to develop contingency plans, utilising operating budget, appreciation of individual differences and being able to maintain hygiene standards were some of the competencies that had means below 4.50. Being abreast with trends in the industry (mean= 4.20) and being able to network with other people (mean= 4.20) were the least rated competencies by industry.

Relevance of Tertiary Degrees to Managerial and Supervisory Positions in the Hospitality Industry

Managers of hospitality businesses were asked about the relevance of University or Polytechnic degree to managerial and supervisory positions in their establishments. Of the 64 managers who responded to this question, 58 managers representing 91.0% were of the belief that tertiary degrees are important to the positions of managers whilst six managers representing 9.0 % were of the view that tertiary degrees are not relevant to managerial and supervisory positions in the hospitality industry

Managers who believed tertiary degrees are not necessary to managerial and supervisory roles, cited experience and high remuneration

demands by tertiary graduates, as a basis for their claims. According to the Manageress of a 1-star hotel,

... experience is all important for quality job output in the hotel.

Another manager who felt tertiary degree is not relevant to managerial roles in the hotels had this to say,

you need experience and on the job training to be a competent

manager in the hospitality business (Manager of 2-star hotel).
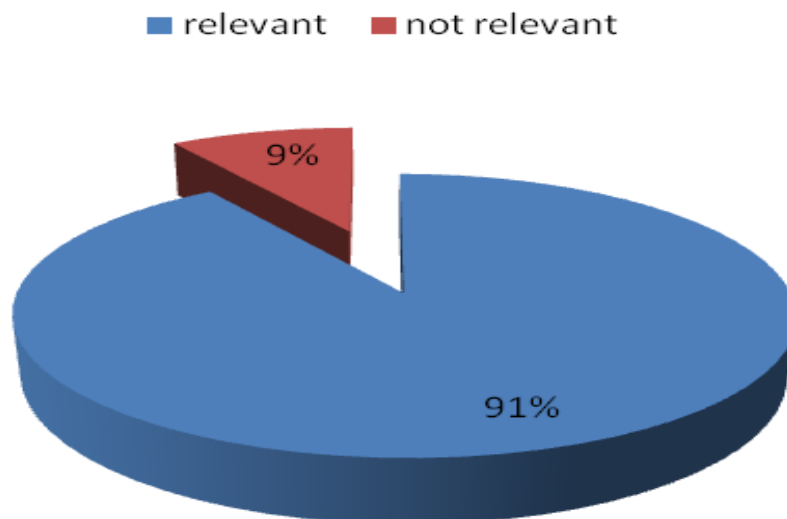
Figure 4: Relevance of Tertiary Degrees to Managerial and Supervisory Positions in the Industry

Source: Fieldwork, 2015

To another manager,

salary demands by graduates are too high as compared to

what they can do (Manager of 1-star hotel).

Competency Requirements of Hospitality Service Providers

The most important competencies required by hotels are in the leadership competency domain (Domain mean=4.58). This was followed by

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administrative domain (Domain mean=4.50), conceptual (Domain mean=4.39) and technical domain (Domain mean=4.32).

Within the leadership domain, the ability to motivate others was the most required competency for the hotel segment of the industry (Mean=4.71).

Table 11: Competency Requirements for Hospitality Service Providers (Hotels & Restaurants)

Competencies	Hotel		Restaurant	
	mean	Std.dev	mean	Std.dev.
Technical domain				
Abreast with trends	4.17	0.94	4.23	0.48
Able to prepare rota	4.42	0.71	4.11	1.02
Maintain hygiene standards	4.17	0.94	4.32	0.76
Product knowledge	4.27	0.67	4.48	0.81
Good customer service orientation	4.44	0.70	4.00	1.09
Handles emergency situations	4.65	0.71	4.34	0.96
Network with people	4.16	0.94	4.23	0.62
Category mean	*4.32*	*0.80*	*4.24*	*0.79*
Leadership domain				
Appreciate individual differences	4.23	0.71	4.28	0.71

Table 11 continued

Maintain good relationship with employees	4.69	0.51	4.61	0.58
Control emotions	4.62	0.53	4.33	0.96
Motivate others	4.71	0.50	4.76	0.43
Team work	4.69	0.51	4.33	0.96
Category mean	*4.58*	*0.55*	*4.46*	*0.72*
Conceptual domain				
Develops contingency plans	4.30	0.80	4.42	0.74
Adapts to changing circumstances	4.37	0.84	4.14	1.01
Creative thinking	4.69	0.51	4.47	0.81
Sets measurable action steps that supports organisational strategy	4.23	0.92	4.23	1.04
Category mean	*4.39*	*0.79*	*4.31*	*0.90*
Administrative domain				
Safeguards confidential information	4.81	0.45	4.47	0.60
Knowledgeable in organisational policies	4.69	0.51	4.47	0.67

Table 11 continued

Utilises operating budget	4.46	0.73	4.23	0.94
Cost control	4.39	0.65	4.66	0.57
Knowledgeable in financial accounting	4.16	0.75	4.38	0.74
Category mean	*4.50*	*0.61*	*4.44*	*0.70*
Overall mean	4.45	0.68	4.36	0.77

Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

Studies by Baum (1990), Kalarkgyrou & Woods (2011), have similarly found motivation to be an important competency required by the hotel segment. Maintaining good working relationship with employees (Mean=4.69) and teamwork abilities (Mean=4.69) were also favoured as important competencies within the leadership domain. These findings coincide with the findings of Tas (1988), Nolan et al. (2010) and Tesone & Ricci (2006). In their studies, they found out that hotel managers advocated for these competencies as desirable for the hotel segment. Another plausible explanation is that, team work and the maintenance of good working relationship with employees were rated high due to the people-oriented nature of the industry; where the ability to work with different people in providing a satisfactory service/product worthy of a repeat business is very crucial.

From Table 11, controlling of emotions (emotional intelligence) was also considered by hotel managers as an important competency requirement

(Mean=4.62). Tsai et al. (2006) and Emmerling & Boyatzis (2012) similarly found out that emotional intelligence is an important competency for service providers. This also confirms the findings of Agut (2003). However, appreciation of individual differences was the least important competency required within the leadership domain (Mean=4.23).

Knowledge, skills and attributes like safeguarding confidential information (Mean=4.81), knowledgeable in organisational policies (Mean=4.69) were the most important competencies in the administrative domain. Cost control ability was also quite important, as was the case of Nolan et al. (2010). The least important competency requirements within the administrative domain was, being knowledgeable in financial accounting (Mean=4.16). This competency may have been the least required in the administrative domain, due to the fact that, most hotels engage the services of an accountant who is expected to possess financial accounting knowledge.

From Table 11, conceptual competency, which is the ability of the mind, to analyse and critically examine issues, is an important requirement for the global hospitality industry. Hotel managers preferred creative thinking (M=4.69) as the most important competency requirement for the hotel segment within the conceptual domain. This finding agrees with the findings of Ashley et al. (1994). The least required competency within this domain was the ability to set measurable action plans that support organisational strategy (Mean=4.23).

Though technical competency has been rated highest by hotel managers in previous studies (Tas, 1988 Kay & Russette, 2000), it was the least required competency in this study. This affirms the views of Ring,

Dickinger & Wörber (2009) and Millar et al. (2010), that generic competencies are more relevant to managers' performance than hard skills. Under the technical competency domain, ability to handle emergency situations (Mean=4.65), emerged as the most important whiles networking with people (Mean=4.16) was the least required competency.

The competency requirements of restaurants were similar to that of hotels. One difference was that, restaurant managers generally rated most competencies lower. Restaurant managers also considered leadership competency as the most important competency (Domain mean= 4.46). This was followed by administrative (Domain mean= 4.44), conceptual (Domain mean= 4.31) and technical (Domain mean= 4.24) competencies.

With regards to specific competencies, restaurant managers considered appreciation of individual differences the least (Mean=4.28) within the leadership domain while controlling cost (Mean=4.66) was the most important competency within the administrative domain. This finding disagrees with the findings of Okeiyi et al. (1994). In Okeiyi et al. (1994), F&B managers did not consider cost control competency as a required competency for the F&B segments of the industry. Cost control is an important competency required of restaurants managers because, controlling cost is the key to profitability of restaurants. Safeguarding confidential information (Mean=4.47) and being knowledgeable about organisational policies (Mean=4.47) were both required competencies for the restaurant segment.

From Table 11, being able to motivate others (mean= 4.76) and maintaining good working relationship with employees (mean=4.61) within the leadership domain were considered very important by restaurant managers.

Utilising operating budget was the least rated (mean= 4.23) competency in the administrative domain. Restaurant managers preferred product knowledge (mean= 4.48) and creative thinking (mean= 4.47) within technical and conceptual domains respectively.

Creative thinking (Mean=4.47) within the conceptual competency domain was the most preferred competency by restaurant managers. Creative thinking may have been preferred in this domain because of the changing nature of the restaurant business and the hospitality industry in general. The changing nature therefore requires creativity to predict and adapt to the changing trends within the industry. Also the ability to develop contingency plans (Mean=4.42) was also considered as a requirement by restaurant managers.

Finally, technical competency domain (Mean=4.14) was the least domain. This finding is in sharp contrast to the findings of Zopiatis (2010), where technical competency was found to be the most important competency for the culinary segment of which restaurants are an integral part. Restaurant managers highlighted product knowledge (Mean=4.48), followed by maintenance of hygiene standards (Mean=4.32). The hygiene requirements of restaurants cannot be underestimated, since non conformity may result in fines or closure of the F&B facility. This finding coincides with that of Millar et al. (2010), where food and beverage professionals stressed on the need for food hygiene practices as an important competency for the F&B segment of the industry.

From Table 11, competency requirements for the restaurant and hotel segments of the industry showed some similarities and differences.

Competencies like, motivating others (Mean=4.76), appreciating individual differences (Mean=4.28); all within the leadership domains were considered more important by restaurant managers. Under the conceptual domain, the ability to develop contingency plans (Mean=4.42) was also more important to restaurant managers. However, being able to set measurable action steps that supports organisational strategy was considered equally important by both restaurant and hotel managers (Mean=4.23). All other competencies, apart from the above mentioned, within the leadership and conceptual competency domains were rated higher by hotel managers.

Within the administrative domain, cost control competency (Mean=4.66) and financial accounting competency (Mean=4.38) were required more by restaurant managers than hotel managers. The technical competency domain also had being abreast with trends (Mean=4.23), maintenance of hygiene standards (Mean=4.32), product knowledge (Mean=4.48), and networking (Mean=4.23) competencies being considered a little more important by restaurant managers. Generally, most competencies were rated higher by hotel managers than restaurant managers.

Hotel Characteristics and Competency Requirements

One-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used to find out if there were variations in competencies required by different hotels with regards to their star-rating and ownership. In Table 12, it can be said that, 3-star hotels considered leadership competencies to be the most important competency (Mean=4.84) requirement. Meanwhile, 2-star hotels preferred technical competencies above any other competencies. Also, 3-star hotels considered leadership competencies more important (Mean=4.84) than any other hotel

category. Table 12, also shows some significant differences with technical and leadership competencies requirement by 1-star and 2-star, 2-star and 3-star respectively.

Also, in Table 12, more than half of the hotels were owned by sole proprietors. Hotels owned by sole proprietors preferred leadership competency more than those with other hotel ownership forms. Local limited liability hotels considered administrative (Mean = 4.68), conceptual (Mean = 4.65) and technical (Mean = 4.48) competencies more than other ownership groups. However, hotels with local form of ownership, rated conceptual competency lowest (Mean = 3.12). Technical and conceptual competencies showed statistically significant differences among the different ownership forms (p≤ 0.05).

Table 12: Hotel Characteristics and Competency Requirements

Characteristic	N	Technical		Leadership		Conceptual		Administrative	
Star-rating		Mean	p	Mean	p	Mean	p	Mean	p
1-star	19	4.05*		4.56		4.28		4.50	
2-star	15	4.60*	0.00	4.48*	0.03	4.41	0.37	4.58	0.46
3-star	9	4.54		4.84*		4.61		4.37	
		F =5.39		F =3.54		F= 1.01		F=0.77	
Ownership									
Sole proprietorship	25	4.44		4.62		4.51		4.45	
Local limited liability	10	4.48*	0.05	4.54	0.93	4.65*	0.00	4.68	0.52
Local partnership	2	3.60*		4.60		3.12*		4.50	
Local-foreign partnership	5	3.90		4.60		3.90		4.52	
		F =2.75		F=0.14		F=8.93		F=0.76	

Source: Fieldwork (2015)   (*p≤0.05*)

Grade of Restaurant and Competency Requirements

One of the factors that influences the grading of a restaurant is the quality of service provided (GTA, 2011). The higher the standard of services provided, the higher the grade. From Table 13, grade -1 restaurants rated all competencies higher. This may be because, grade-1 restaurants must render and ensure higher quality service. Meanwhile, grade-3 restaurants considered technical competency (Mean=4.30) higher than conceptual (Mean=4.27) and administrative (Mean=4.26) competencies. This may be attributed to the fact that, grades-3 restaurants may not be able to employ a lot of tertiary graduates, therefore, the few employed to manage and supervise activities in these restaurants would be expected to be knowledgeable about technical competencies. Again, the differences amongst the different grades of restaurants were not statistically significant.

Table 13: Differences in Competency Requirements of Different Grades of Restaurant.

Characteristic	N	Technical		Leadership		Conceptual		Administrative		Test statistic
		Mean	p	Mean	p	Mean	p	Mean	p	
Grade										
Grade 1	3	4.45		4.66		4.66		4.60		ANOVA
Grade 2	9	4.30	0.91	4.53	0.50	4.25	0.73	4.57	0.38	
Grade 3	9	4.30		4.33		4.27		4.26		
		F =0.09		F = 0.70		F =0.31		F =0.99		

Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

Competency Requirements of the Hospitality Industry by Academia

The conceptual framework guiding the study proposes a view of lecturers and instructors of the higher learning institutions on the competencies required by the hospitality industry. There are comparatively fewer studies seeking the views of academia on the competency requirements for the hospitality industry as compared to those of managers in the industry. Among those few studies, Millar et al. (2010) and Tsai et al. (2006) reported conceptual competencies. Similarly, in this study academia preferred conceptual competencies for the industry.

In Table 14, conceptual competency domain (Domain mean=4.54) was closely followed by leadership domain (Domain mean=4.53) with the least domain being the technical (Domain mean=4.41). Leadership competencies were also considered as important together with conceptual competencies for the hospitality industry by educators in Millar et al. (2010). Also, educators in Okeiyi et al., (1994), considered leadership competency as one of the required competencies.

Within the conceptual competency domain, creative thinking (Mean=4.68), was considered most important. Also, ability to develop contingency plans (Mean=4.61) was also considered an important competency. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Tsai et al. (2006), where contingency planning ability was considered as a necessary competency for the industry by educators.

Table 14: Competency Requirements for the Hospitality Industry by Academia

Competencies	Mean	Std dev.
Technical domain		
Abreast with trends	4.30	0.71
Able to prepare rota	4.39	0.57
Hygiene standards	4.58	0.48
Product knowledge	4.43	0.53
Good customer service orientation	4.38	0.58
Handles emergency situations	4.48	0.50
Network with people	4.36	0.59
Category mean	*4.41*	*0.56*
Leadership domain		
Appreciate individual differences	4.29	0.85
Maintain good relationship with employees	4.55	0.65
Control emotions	4.48	0.71
Motivate others	4.63	0.64
Team work	4.72	0.49
Category mean	*4.53*	*0.66*
Conceptual domain		
Develops contingency plans	4.61	0.57
Adapts to changing circumstances	4.48	0.74
Creative thinking	4.68	0.59
Sets measurable action steps that supports organisational strategy	4.40	0.71
Category mean	*4.54*	*0.65*

Table 14 continued

Administrative domain		
Safeguards confidential information	4.68	0.55
Knowledgeable in organisational policies	4.61	0.57
Utilising operating budget	4.46	0.62
Cost control	4.55	0.54
Knowledgeable in financial accounting	4.00	1.00
Category mean	*4.46*	*0.65*
Overall mean	4.49	0.63

Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

From Table 14, team work (Mean=4.72), motivation (Mean=4.63) and maintaining good working relationship with other employees (Mean=4.55) were also considered important competencies within the leadership domain. Team work may have been rated this high, because of the numerous advantages it has over individualistic approaches to higher performance.

Administratively, safeguarding confidential information (Mean=4.68), knowledgeable in organisational policies (Mean=4.61) and cost control (Mean=4.55) were also preferred by academia. The technical domain, saw maintaining hygiene standards competency (Mean=4.58), as the most required competency within this domain. However, the importance of this competency to academia may be attributed to their understanding of the implications of not matching up to the hygiene standards in the hospitality industry. Also from Table 14, being able to handle emergency situations (Mean=4.48), was fairly considered important by academia. This might be so because, how well

emergency situations are handled during the service encounter is more likely to create customer appreciation and loyalty, which will result in repeat business (Cousins, Lillicrap & Weekes, 2014).

Generally, competencies were ranked higher in terms of importance to the hospitality industry by academia.

Table 15: Ranking of Competencies in Order of Importance by Respondents from Academia

Competencies	Mean
Team work	4.72
Creative thinking	4.68
Safeguards confidential information	4.68
Motivate others	4.63
Develops contingency plans	4.61
Knowledgeable in organisational policies	4.61
Maintain hygiene standards	4.58
Maintain good relationship with employees	4.55
Cost control	4.55
Adapts to changing circumstances	4.48
Control emotions	4.48
Handles emergency situations	4.48
Utilising operating budget	4.46
Product knowledge	4.43
Sets measurable action steps that supports organisational Strategy	4.40

Table 15 continued	
Able to prepare rota	4.39
Good customer service orientation	4.38
Network with people	4.36
Abreast with trends	4.30
Appreciate individual differences	4.29
Knowledgeable in financial accounting	4.00

Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

Team work (Mean=4.72) was the most important competency requirement for the industry by academia. Creative thinking (Mean=4.68), safeguarding confidential information (Mean=4.68), motivating others (Mean=4.63), contingency plan development (Mean=4.61), being knowledgeable in organisational policies (Mean=4.61) among others had means of 4.55 and above, indicating their importance for the industry by academia (Table 15). These competencies also showed a fair representation of competencies from all the domains.

Also, from Table 15, adapting to changing circumstances, emotional intelligence handling emergencies, utilising operating budgets and product knowledge were some of the competencies considered as less important to the hospitality industry. These competencies had means below 4.50. Moreover, most of the competencies in this category were technical competencies. Being knowledgeable in financial accounting was the least important competency required for the industry by academia.

Differences in Competency Requirements by Industry and Academia

Various studies have shown some differences in the views of academia and industry on competencies required by the hospitality industry (Enz et al., 1993; Tsai et al., 2006; Okeiyi et al. 1994). In this study, there were differences in the views of academia and industry, but most of the differences were not statistically significant (see Table 16). Generally, academia rated most of the competencies higher than industry. This may be attributed to the adherence to theoretical standards by academia.

Academia was in favour of conceptual competency, as all competencies in this domain were rated highly by them than industry. The total mean difference for this domain was 0.18. This finding is in agreement with the findings of Millar et al. (2010), which reported high ratings from academia for conceptual competencies. This may however be due to the fact that higher learning institutions stress on the ability of the mind to critically examine and analyse issues and concepts.

One domain that had same domain mean for industry and academia was the leadership domain (Domain mean= 4.53). However, competencies like maintaining good working relationship with employees (Mean=4.65), motivating others (Mean=4.74) were rated higher by industry. On the other hand, academia rated team work abilities (mean= 4.72) and appreciating of individual differences (mean=4.29) higher than industry. The ability to control emotions was rated the same by academia and industry (Mean=4.48). Cumulatively the mean difference of this domain was 0.00.

Table 16: Difference in Competency Requirements of the Hospitality Industry by Academia and Industry

Competencies	Industry		Academia		Mean Diff.	Test statistics	
	Mean	Std Dev.	Mean	Std. Dev.		t-value	p-value
Technical domain							
Abreast with trends	4.20	0.96	4.30	0.71	0.10	0.39	0.69
Able to prepare rota	4.27	0.90	4.39	0.57	0.12	0.26	0.79
Maintains hygiene standards	4.25	0.85	4.58	0.48	0.33	2.32	0.02*
Product knowledge	4.38	0.74	4.43	0.53	0.05	0.71	0.49
Good customer Service orientation	4.22	0.89	4.38	0.58	0.16	0.58	0.53
Handles emergency situations	4.50	0.83	4.48	0.50	0.02	1.22	0.21
Network with people	4.20	0.85	4.36	0.59	0.16	1.05	0.29
Category mean	*4.29*	*0.56*	*4.41*	*0.56*	*0.12*	*0.93*	*0.43*

Table 16 continued

Leadership domain							
Appreciate individual differences	4.26	0.71	4.29	0.85	0.03	0.31	0.74
Maintain good relationship with employees	4.65	0.53	4.55	0.65	0.10	1.05	0.31
Control emotions	4.48	0.71	4.48	0.71	0.00	0.35	0.76
Motivate others	4.74	0.48	4.63	0.64	0.11	0.82	0.39
Team work	4.51	0.70	4.72	0.49	0.21	1.26	0.20
Category mean	*4.53*	*0.66*	*4.53*	*0.66*	*0.00*	*0.75*	*0.48*
Conceptual domain							
Develop contingency plans	4.36	0.78	4.61	0.57	0.25	2.02	0.03*
Adapt to changing circumstances	4.26	0.90	4.48	0.74	0.22	1.22	0.23
Creative thinking	4.58	0.62	4.68	0.59	0.10	0.47	0.63

Table 16 continued

Sets measurable action steps that supports organisational strategy	4.23	0.95	4.40	0.71	0.17	1.07	0.30
Category mean	*4.36*	*0.65*	*4.54*	*0.65*	*0.18*	*1.19*	*0.30*
Administrative domain							
Safeguards confidential information	4.64	0.52	4.68	0.55	0.04	0.21	0.83
Knowledgeable in organisational policies	4.58	0.57	4.61	0.57	0.03	0.72	0.94
Utilises operating budget	4.35	0.80	4.46	0.62	0.11	0.57	0.58
Cost control	4.53	0.64	4.55	0.54	0.02	0.61	0.55
Knowledgeable in financial accounting	4.27	0.75	4.00	1.00	0.27	1.35	0.16
Category mean	*4.47*	*0.65*	*4.46*	*0.63*	*0.01*	*0.69*	*0.61*
Overall mean	4.43	0.63	4.49	0.63	0.07	0.89	0.46

Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

Technical domain showed a mean difference of 0.16. Industry surprisingly had lower mean ratings for almost all the competencies within this domain as compared to academia. This is surprising because, industry is expected to utilise these technical competencies for its day-to-day operations. However, industry may have rated the technical competencies lower because such competencies may be necessary for lower level personnel and not managers and supervisors. Despite the differences in the views of industry and academia, maintaining hygiene standards was one of the two competencies that showed a significant difference at $p \leq 0.05$. The significant difference may be due to the high theoretical standards upheld by academia.

From Table 16, except for being knowledgeable in financial accounting, all competencies within the administrative domain showed higher ratings from academia than industry managers; mean ratings of 4.00 and 4.27 respectively. There was no statistically significant difference within the administrative competency domain between industry and academia. Also, all competencies within the conceptual domain were rated higher by academia than industry. The ability to develop contingency plans had the highest mean difference of 0.25. This competency also showed a significant difference between academia and industry at $p \leq 0.05$.

In order of importance, industry and academia ranked the competencies differently (Table 17). Whilst team work was rated 1st by academia, it was the 7th by industry. Also, maintenance of hygiene standard was ranked 7th by academia but 17 for industry. Moreover, financial accounting knowledge was the least competency (21st) by academia, but 14th by industry.

Table 17: Ranking of Competencies in Order of Importance by Industry and Academia

Competencies	Industry			Academia		
	Mean	Std. Dev	Rank	Mean	Std. Dev	Rank
Abreast with trends	4.20	0.96	20	4.30	0.71	19
Able to prepare rota	4.27	0.90	13	4.39	0.57	16
Maintains hygiene Standards	4.25	0.85	17	4.58	0.48	7
Product knowledge	4.38	0.74	10	4.43	0.53	14
Good customer service orientation	4.22	0.89	19	4.38	0.58	17
Handles emergency Situations	4.50	0.83	8	4.48	0.50	12
Network with people	4.20	0.85	21	4.36	0.59	18
Appreciates individual differences	4.26	0.71	15	4.29	0.85	20
Maintains good relationship with employees	4.65	0.53	2	4.55	0.65	8
Controls emotions	4.48	0.71	9	4.48	0.71	11
Motivate others	4.74	0.48	1	4.63	0.64	4

Table 17 continued

Team work	4.51	0.70	7	4.72	0.49	1
Develops contingency plans	4.36	0.78	11	4.61	0.57	5
Adapts to changing circumstances	4.26	0.90	16	4.48	0.74	10
Creative thinking	4.58	0.62	5	4.68	0.59	2
Sets measurable action steps that supports organisational strategy	4.23	0.95	18	4.40	0.71	15
Safeguards confidential information	4.64	0.52	3	4.68	0.55	3
Knowledgeable in organisational policies	4.58	0.57	4	4.61	0.57	6
Utilises operating Budget	4.35	0.80	12	4.46	0.62	13
Cost control	4.53	0.64	6	4.55	0.54	9
Knowledgeable in financial accounting	4.27	0.75	14	4.00	1.00	21

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

Ability to safeguard confidential information was ranked 3rd by both academia and industry. This means that being able to keep information confidential was important to academia as it was to industry. Also, maintaining good working relationship with others was ranked 2nd by industry but academia ranked this competency as the 8th important competency.

Competency Gaps Within the Hospitality Industry

The conceptual framework guiding the study proposes a competency gap between the required skills, knowledge and attitude for the industry and those that are available for the industry. Moreover, the national tourism development plan posits a huge gap between the industry requirements and the products of higher learning institutions (GTDP, 2013-2027). To identify the gaps within the industry, paired-samples T-test was employed to find out the extent to which managers agreed or disagreed with the level to which graduates in their employment possessed the needed competencies.

Industry rated graduates in their employment as exhibiting less of the competencies required for the industry. Technical competency domain had the least gap of 0.41, whilst administrative domain had the widest gap. Conceptual and leadership domains also showed some gaps, 0.64 and 0.58 respectively. Good customer service orientation within the technical domain was the competency that graduates possessed the most (Mean=4.01). Though this competency showed a gap (0.21) this gap was not significantly different. Good customer service orientation ability was the only competency for which there was no significant gap. Also, ability to handle emergency situations by graduates had the widest gap of 0.85 within the technical domain. This means that graduates are not able to take charge of emergency situations.

Table 18: Competency Gaps within the Hospitality Industry

Competencies	Competency requirements of Industry		Competencies of Graduates		Gaps (-)	Test statistics	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std Dev.		t- value	p-value
Technical Domain							
Abreast with trends	4.20	0.96	3.81	0.86	0.39	3.66	0.00
Able to prepare rota	4.27	0.90	3.99	0.82	0.28	2.17	0.04
Maintains hygiene standards	4.25	0.85	3.91	1.14	0.34	2.51	0.05
Product knowledge	4.38	0.74	3.92	0.83	0.46	3.39	0.02
Good customer service orientation	4.22	0.89	4.01	1.03	0.21	1..47	0.13
Handles emergency situations	4.50	0.83	3.80	1.04	0.85	4.28	0.00
Networks with people	4.20	0.85	3.75	0.91	0.45	3.75	0.00
Category mean	*4.29*	*0.86*	*3.88*	*0.95*	*0.41*	*3.03*	*0.03*

Table 18 continued

Leadership Domain							
Appreciates individual differences	4.26	0.71	3.76	1.01	0.50	3.30	0.00
Maintains good relationship with employees	4.65	0.53	4.38	0.69	0.27	3.36	0.00
Controls emotions	4.48	0.71	3.74	0.93	0.74	6.52	0.00
Motivates others	4.74	0.48	3.83	0.91	0.91	6.83	0.00
Team work	4.51	0.70	4.02	0.89	0.49	5.20	0.00
Category mean	*4.53*	*0.63*	*3.98*	*0.89*	*0.55*	*5.04*	*0.00*
Conceptual Domain							
Develops contingency plans	4.36	0.78	3.69	0.94	0.67	4.48	0.00
Adapts to changing circumstances	4.26	0.90	3.78	0.86	0.48	3.57	0.00
Creative thinking	4.58	0.62	3.80	0.94	0.78	5.80	0.00

Table 18 continued

Sets measurable action steps that supports organisational strategy	4.23	0.95	3.62	1.06	0.61	3.54	0.00
Category mean	*4.36*	*0.81*	*3.72*	*0.95*	*0.64*	*4.35*	*0.00*
Administrative Domain							
Safeguards confidential information	4.64	0.52	3.56	1.26	1.08	6.27	0.00
Knowledgeable in organisational policies	4.58	0.57	3.77	1.05	0.81	6.18	0.00
Utilises operating budget	4.35	0.80	3.50	1.31	0.85	5.88	0.00
Cost control	4.53	0.64	3.59	1.10	0.94	5.82	0.00
Knowledgeable in financial accounting	4.27	0.75	3.54	2.36	0.73	5.19	0.00
Category mean	*4.47*	*0.66*	*3.59*	*1.42*	*0.88*	*5.87*	*0.00*
Overall mean	4.41	0.74	3.80	1.05	0.63	4.57	0.00

Source: Fieldwork (2015).   Note: industry consists of hotels and restaurants.

Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree

Whilst industry preferred motivation competency above all others within the leadership competency domain (Mean=4.71), graduates within the industry possessed far less of this competency (Mean=3.83). Being able to motivate others had the widest gap in the leadership domain (0.91, p=0.00).

From Table 18, industry managers agreed that graduates in their employment were able to maintain good working relationship with other employees (Mean=4.38) and also work with others as a team (Mean=4.02), but the competencies that graduates exhibited in this area did not measure up to what industry required. The two competencies showed a statistically significant gap together with all other competencies within this domain.

There were also significant gaps within the conceptual competencies, with ability to think creatively showing the widest gap (0.78, p= 0.00) and adapting to changing circumstances showing the least gap (0.48, p= 0.00). Ability to safeguard confidential information had the widest gap (1.08, p= 0.00) and being knowledgeable in financial accounting had the least gap (0.73, p=0.00) within the administrative domain.

Competency Gaps within the Hotel Segment of the Industry

The hotel segment of the industry had a number of gaps across all the competency domains. Administrative domain showed the widest gap of 0.89, whilst technical domain showed the least gap of 0.51. Ability to safeguard confidential information and motivate others had gaps of 1.02 and 1.14 respectively.

Table 19: Competency Gaps within the Hotel Segment

Competencies	Competency requirements		Competencies of Graduates		Gaps (-)	Test statistics	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std Dev.		t-value	p-value
Technical Domain							
Abreast with trends	4.17	0.86	3.76	0.82	0.40	2.81	0.00
Able to prepare rota	4.42	0.73	3.98	0.84	0.43	2.63	0.00
Maintain hygiene standards	4.17	0.83	3.60	1.08	0.57	3.33	0.00
Product knowledge	4.27	0.84	3.94	0.85	0.32	2.26	0.02
Good customer service orientation	4.44	0.63	3.78	0.84	0.66	4.50	0.01
Handles emergency situations	4.65	0.71	3.93	1.09	0.72	3.59	0.00
Network with people	4.16	0.94	3.69	0.96	0.46	3.09	0.00
Category mean	*4.32*	*0.79*	*3.81*	*0.93*	*0.51*	*3.17*	*0.00*

Table 19 continued

Leadership Domain							
Appreciate individual differences	4.23	0.71	3.67	1.06	0.55	2.67	0.01
Maintain good relationship with employees	4.69	0.51	4.34	0.65	0.34	2.81	0.00
Control emotions	4.62	0.53	3.81	0.85	0.81	5.72	0.00
Motivate others	4.71	0.50	3.57	1.06	1.14	6.06	0.00
Team work	4.69	0.51	4.09	0.68	0.60	5.70	0.00
Category mean	*4.58*	*0.55*	*3.89*	*0.85*	*0.69*	*4.59*	*0.00*
Conceptual Domain							
Develops contingency plans	4.30	0.80	3.72	0.82	0.58	3.34	0.00
Adapts to changing circumstances	4.37	0.84	3.76	0.86	0.60	3.36	0.00
Creative thinking	4.69	0.51	3.93	0.88	0.76	5.31	0.00
Set measurable action step that supports organisational strategy	4.23	0.92	3.62	1.11	0.60	3.02	0.00
Category mean	*4.39*	*0.77*	*3.75*	*0.92*	*0.64*	*3.76*	*0.00*

Table 19continued

Administrative Domain							
Safeguards confidential information	4.81	0.45	3.79	1.30	1.02	4.89	0.00
Knowledgeable in organisational policies	4.69	0.51	3.74	1.07	0.95	5.41	0.00
Utilising operating budget	4.46	0.73	3.53	1.20	0.93	4.98	0.00
Cost control	4.39	0.65	3.67	1.18	0.72	4.39	0.00
Knowledgeable in financial accounting	4.16	0.75	3.32	1.24	0.83	4.38	0.00
Category mean	*4.50*	*0.62*	*3.61*	*1.20*	*0.89*	*4.81*	*0.00*
Overall mean	4.45	0.68	3.77	0.98	0.68	4.08	0.00

Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree *p≤0.05*

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

The wide gap between managers and graduates with regards to safeguarding of confidential information may be attributed to the numerous social media platforms available where any kind of information is shared. Graduates might not be able to distinguish between work-related confidential issues and information for public consumption. The wide gap also means that managers are dissatisfied with the way graduates handle confidential information and expects more from them.

From Table 19, graduates had some leadership skills (Domain mean =3.89), but industry expected more from them (Domain mean = 4.58). This may be due to the importance of the leadership competency to the industry. Within the leadership domain, graduates performed lower on the ability to motivate others (Mean = 3.57). However, graduates were able to maintain good working relationship with others (mean = 4.34), and also exhibited good team work abilities (4.09), but not to the expectation of hotel managers. Ability to motivate others had the widest gap (1.14, $p = 0.00$), and being able to maintain good relationship with others had the lowest gap (0.34, $p = 0.00$).

Conceptual competency domain had a gap of 0.64. Although academia preferred this competency more than any other competency, graduates could not exhibit these skills to managers' expectation. Graduates could not think creatively (Gap = 0.76, $p = 0.00$) neither were they able to develop contingency plans (Gap = 0.58, $p = 0.00$) to the expectation of hotel managers. Again, all competencies within this domain showed significant gaps. Technical competency domain had the least gap of 0.51. Ability to handle emergency situations had the widest gap (Gap = 0.72, $p = 0.00$) and having knowledge about the hotel's product had the least gap (Gap = 0.32, $p = 0.02$).

Also, though graduates were knowledgeable about the hotel's product, the difference between what they exhibited and what managers expected was statistically significant.

Competency Gaps within the Restaurant Segment of the Industry

Graduates in the restaurant segment of the hospitality industry where rated as generally exhibiting more of the competencies required by restaurant managers. This is because, though there were competency gaps between what managers expected and what graduates exhibited, relatively more were not significant. The higher ratings in performance of graduates of this segment may be attributed to the specific business nature of restaurants; which is solely the production and service of food and beverage. The implication of this is that, interest must be the motivating factor for entry.

With regards to competency gaps within the technical domain, graduates were rated as being able to prepare rota and maintain hygiene standards. This is because the competency gaps for these competencies were not significant ($p = 0.09$ and $p = 0.10$ respectively). Graduates in the restaurant segment exceeded the expectations of restaurant managers in exhibiting good customer service orientation. This competency had a positive gap of 0.23. The technical competency domain had the least gap of 0.27, which was not statistically significant ($p > 0.05$).

Within the leadership domain, restaurant managers agreed that graduates showed the ability to maintain good working relationship with employees (Mean = 4.42) and motivate others (Mean = 4.09). However, these competencies still showed significant gaps. This means that restaurant managers expected more of these competencies from graduates. The

leadership domain had a gap of 0.47, which was significant at $p \leq 0.05$. Conceptual competency was the most important competency requirement for the hospitality industry by academia. Graduates were able to adapt to changing circumstances and also had the ability to set measurable action steps that support the restaurants strategy fairly well as the gaps for these competencies were not significant.

In Table 20, graduates were rated to have been able to think creatively (Gap = 0.80) and develop contingency plans (Gap = 0.76), but not to the expectation of managers, since the gaps between these competencies were significant at $p \leq 0.05$. However, in aggregate terms, the conceptual competency domain had a gap that was statistically significant.

One competency domain that showed the least graduate performance was the administrative domain (Gap = 0.87, $p = 0.00$). Graduates exhibited less ability to safeguard confidential information (Gap = 1.14) and also control cost (Gap = 1.14). Also, all competencies within this domain had significant gaps, with financial accounting knowledge showing the least gap (Gap= 0.61, $p = 0.01$).

Table 20: Competency Gaps within the Restaurant Segment

Competencies	Competency requirements		Competencies of Graduates		Gaps	Test statistics	
	Mean	Std. Dev.	Mean	Std Dev.	(-)	T value	p- value
Technical domain							
Abreast with trends	4.23	0.48	3.85	0.95	0.38	4.52	0.00
Able to prepare rota	4.11	1.02	4.00	0.80	0.11	1.72	0.09
Maintains hygiene standards	4.32	0.76	4.22	1.21	0.10	1.70	0.10
Product knowledge	4.48	0.81	3.90	0.81	0.46	4.52	0.00
Good customer service orientation	4.00	1.09	4.23	1.22	+0.23	0.56	0.57
Handles emergency situations	4.34	0.96	3.67	1.00	0.67	4.97	0.00
Networks with people	4.23	0.62	3.80	0.87	0.42	2.12	0.04
Category mean	*4.24*	*0.82*	*3.95*	*0.99*	*0.29*	*2.87*	*0.11*
Leadership Domain							
Appreciates individual differences	4.28	0.71	3.85	0.96	0.42	2.00	0.05
Maintains good relationship with employees	4.61	0.58	4.42	0.74	0.19	2.16	0.04
Controls emotions	4.33	0.96	3.66	1.01	0.66	3.16	0.00
Motivate others	4.76	0.43	4.09	0.76	0.66	3.34	0.00

Table 20 continued

Team work	4.33	0.96	3.95	1.11	0.38	1.70	0.10
Category mean	*4.46*	*0.73*	*3.99*	*0.92*	*0.47*	*2.47*	*0.03*
Conceptual Domain							
Develops contingency plans	4.42	0.74	3.66	1.07	0.76	2.96	0.01
Adapts to changing circumstances	4.14	1.01	3.80	0.87	0.33	1.37	0.18
Creative thinking	4.47	0.81	3.66	1.01	0.80	2.79	0.01
Sets measurable action steps that supports organisational strategy	4.23	1.04	3.61	1.02	0.61	1.85	0.07
Category mean	*4.31*	*0.90*	*3.68*	*0.99*	*0.63*	*2.24*	*0.06*
Administrative Domain							
Safeguards confidential information	4.47	0.60	3.33	1.23	1.14	3.87	0.00
Knowledgeable in organisational policies	4.47	0.67	3.80	1.03	0.66	3.00	0.00
Utilises operating budget	4.23	0.94	3.47	1.43	0.76	3.07	0.00
Cost control	4.66	0.57	3.52	1.03	1.14	3.87	0.00
Knowledgeable in financial accounting	4.38	0.74	3.76	1.12	0.61	2.77	0.01
Category mean	*4.44*	*0.70*	*3.57*	*1.17*	*0.87*	*3.32*	*0.00*
Overall mean	4.34	0.79	3.80	0.84	0.54	2.73	0.05

Scale: 1-strongly disagree, 2-disagree, 3-neutral, 4-agree, 5-strongly agree $p \leq 0.05$

Source: Fieldwork (2015)

Possible Reasons for Gaps within the Hospitality Industry

To gain further insights into the reason for the gaps, respondents from academia and industry were asked about the likely cause of these gaps. Academia seems to blame students and industry for the gaps, whilst industry blamed academia. Others also attributed the competency gaps to the inadequacy of the hospitality curriculum and lack of collaboration between industry and academia.

Collaboration between Industry and Academia

The experimentalist view of the hospitality curriculum proposes a link between what is taught in the classroom and what is expected of students in the field of work. Also, Spowart (2011) and Akyeampong (2007), suggest the need for collaboration between industry and academia in turning out competent graduates for the industry, but all industry managers claimed there was no established collaboration between their establishments and academia. Meanwhile, one member of academia said there is a kind of collaboration between her department and certain hospitality businesses.

> *... every week, we send groups of students to these industries to have a feel of the what the industry is like* (A female Head of department in an academic institution).

The other heads of department cited internship as the main form of collaboration between their departments and industry. However, a respondent expressed disappointment about how students are treated whilst on internship. She claimed,

> *.... industry is not willing to partner academia in helping students acquire the requisite competencies for the industry. .... students sent*

on attachment are made to do 'unnecessary' things, instead of them

*being allowed to learn managerial stuff (*A female Head of department

of an academic institution).

Adequacy of the Hospitality Curriculum

Experimentalists believe the curriculum should be reviewed from time

to time based on what role the student is expected to perform in the world on

work (Tyler, 1950). This philosophy of education further suggests a frequent

investigation into the changes in the society. The aim of these investigations is

to help in the reviewing of the curriculum that guides practice.

Heads of departments were asked if they thought the current hospitality

curriculum allows for the achievement of the necessary competencies for the

field of work. Two out of the three Heads of department believed the

curriculum was adequate for the achievement of the necessary hospitality

management competencies. However, a Head of department felt the

curriculum was not sufficient in preparing graduates adequately for the

industry. To probe further, respondents were asked how they got to know that

the curriculum was adequate. Both Heads of department cited feedback from

industry managers mainly through internship evaluation and some other

interaction opportunities. For example, a respondent, claimed,

....we are able to know that the curriculum is adequate, through

constant interaction with stakeholders..... in the industry on the

performance of students (A male Head of department of an academic

institution)

One Head of department who felt the curriculum was not adequate

cited poor reviews of the content of the curriculum as the reason.

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> *.....over the years revision of the curriculum has not been effective. Reviews done have only showed revision of the language used, but not the content to reflect the changes out there* (A female Head of department of an academic institution).

Insufficient duration of internship was also highlighted by an industry manager as a problem.

> *Duration for internship is too short, what is a student expected to learn within four or less weeks in the industry. (HR Manager of a 2-star hotel)*

Students' Attitude Towards the Hospitality Industry

The role of the student in becoming a competent manager cannot be overemphasised. Some respondents blamed students for the competency gaps within the industry. An industry manager claimed,

> *...students are lazy; they have poor orientation of the industry they intend to work in. They just want to become managers but know little about management in this industry... (A grade-1 restaurant manager).*

A head of department believed,

> *....we (educators) are doing our best to prepare students adequately for the industry...., but students lack the confidence to take up managerial roles in the industry.* (A female head of department of an academic institution)

Educators and Delivery of the Curriculum

The educator plays a very important role in the turning out of graduates for the industry. According to Bandura (1977), learning takes place in a social

environment through observation, imitation and modelling. The educator is an important figure in this environment.

Some industry managers however think educators are not performing their roles effectively in the learning environment. A restaurant manager blamed academia for the gaps within the industry. He claimed

> *educators rely on outdated notes to teach these students as they themselves (educators) are not in touch with industry* (A grade-1 restaurant Manager).

To another,

> *Educators are teaching what the books are saying but not what is happening now (A 1-star hotel Manageress).*

Importance of Competency Developed before Employing Graduates

Industry managers were asked if they look out for competencies required before employing graduates into their businesses. All managers claimed they do look out for some of the competencies before employing graduates and look out for the others during the period of probation. As put by a grade-1 restaurant manager,

> *... prospective employees are given scenarios and they are expected to explain how they will handle such situations......*
>
> *.... during the probation period, employees are closely monitored to find out if they possess the right skills for the job......, those who perform poorly very often quit their jobs before the end of the probation period, those who do not are either given warning letters for improved performance or fired* (A manager of a 2-star hotel).

Summary

This chapter discussed the socio-demographic characteristics of respondents from industry and academia. Specifically, the chapter discussed findings on issues of competency requirements of industry and academia. Ranking of competencies on order of importance to industry and academia was also presented. Also, differences in the competency requirements by the two stakeholders were also highlighted by the use of independent samples T test and one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA). Paired samples T test was employed to assess the competency gaps within the hospitality industry with reference to the hotel and restaurant segments. Finally, possible reasons for gaps; nature of collaboration between industry and academia, adequacy of the hospitality curriculum were also presented in the study.

The findings confirm the proposition in the conceptual framework, that there are similarities and differences in the views of these stakeholders as to the competencies required for the industry. However, there were more similarities in their views than there were differences. The findings also affirm the existence of competency gaps within the industry as highlighted by the conceptual framework. This is because there were significant gaps with regards to the competency requirements and available competencies.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Introduction

This chapter provides a summary of the study. Conclusions are drawn based on the major findings and recommendations on areas for further research with regards to competency issues and gaps identified are proposed.

Summary

The main objective of this study was to assess the competency requirements of the hospitality industry in Ghana. The specific objectives were to:

1. Examine competencies that industry managers consider important for hospitality operations;

2. Examine the competencies that educators consider as important for hospitality operations;

3. Analyse the differences in the competencies considered as important by educators and managers; and

4. Assess the competency gaps within the hospitality industry

The conceptual framework proposes similarities/ differences in the views of academia and industry on competencies that are required by the hospitality industry. It postulates the availability of certain competencies. The difference between the competencies required by the industry and what is available currently is the competency gap.

The study was descriptive in design, and adopted a mixed method whereby quantitative and qualitative data collection tools were employed (questionnaire and interview guide). Analysis of data also incorporated both quantitative and qualitative techniques. A census of 3-star hotels and grade-1 restaurants (because these were few in number), a simple random sample of other categories of industry segment, as well as a census of all educators in the tertiary institutions that offer the hospitality programme at the degree and diploma levels in the Central and Western Regions of Ghana. Heads of departments of academic institutions and industry managers were purposively selected for interviews.

Summary of Main Findings

The hospitality industry preferred leadership (Domain mean = 4.53), administrative (Domain mean = 4.47), conceptual (Domain mean = 4.36) and technical (Domain mean = 4.29) competencies. Specific competencies like, motivating others (Mean = 4.74), maintaining good working relationship with others (Mean = 4.65), safeguarding confidential information (Mean = 4.64), creative thinking (Mean = 4.58), being knowledgeable in organisational policies (Mean = 4.58), cost control capabilities (Mean = 4.53) and good team work abilities (Mean = 4.51), were some of the most important competencies required by industry.

The hotel segment of the hospitality industry, placed higher emphasis on leadership (Domain mean = 4.58), administrative (Domain mean = 4.50), conceptual (Domain mean = 4.39) and technical (Domain mean = 4.32) competencies. Specifically, safeguarding confidential information (Mean = 4.81), motivating others (Mean = 4.71), thinking creatively (Mean = 4.69),

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being knowledgeable in organisational policies (Mean = 4.69), team work abilities (Mean = 4.69), being able to maintain good working relationship with other employees (Mean = 4.69) and handling of emergency situations (Mean = 4.65) as some of the very important competencies.

The restaurant segment of the industry also stressed on leadership (Domain mean = 4.46), administrative (Domain mean = 4.44), conceptual (Domain mean = 4.31) and technical (Domain mean = 4.24) competency domains. Ability to motivate others (Mean = 4.76), undertaking cost control measures (Mean = 4.66) and maintaining good working relationship with other employees (Mean = 4.61) were ranked as essential competencies for the segment.

Academia on the other hand, considered conceptual (Domain mean = 4.54), leadership (Domain mean = 4.53), administrative (Domain mean = 4.46) and technical (Domain mean = 4.41) competencies as competencies required for the industry. Academia ranked team work (Mean = 4.72), creative thinking (Mean = 4.68), safeguarding confidential information (Mean=4.68), motivating others (Mean = 4.63), being able to develop contingency plans (Mean = 4.61), knowledgeable in organisational policies (Mean = 4.61) and maintenance of hygiene standards (Mean = 4.58) as some of the important competencies for the industry.

Whilst industry preferred leadership (Domain mean = 4.53) and administrative competencies (Domain mean = 4.47), academia favoured conceptual (Domain mean = 4.53) and leadership (Domain mean = 4.53) competencies. Both groups (industry and academia) however rated technical competency domain (Domain mean = 4.28 and 4.41 respectively) as the least

important competency domain for managers in the industry. In all, there were differences in the views of industry managers and members of academia, however, only ability to maintain hygiene standards and ability to develop contingency plans showed statistically significant differences at $p \leq 0.02$ and $p \leq 0.03$ respectively.

Competency gaps were found to exist within the hospitality industry. The restaurant segment of the industry showed less competency gaps than the hotel segment. Graduates exceeded the expectation of restaurant managers with regards to their customer service orientation competency (Gap = +0.23). In aggregate terms however, all competencies showed significant differences with administrative domain showing the widest gap (Domain gap = 0.88). This was followed by conceptual (Domain gap = 0.64), leadership (Domain gap = 0.58) and technical competencies (Domain gap = 0.43). Graduates were rated by industry as being able to maintain good working relationship with other employees (Mean = 4.38), exhibiting good team work abilities (Mean = 4.02) and having good customer service orientation (Mean = 4.01).

Conclusion

With reference to the objectives of the study and resultant findings outlined, the following conclusions are drawn:

On the whole, industry agreed that all competencies presented in the study were important. However, people-skills (leadership skills) were the most important competency required for performance in the hospitality industry by managers. This is due to the fact that the hospitality industry is seen as a people-oriented industry.

However, academia stressed on conceptual competency requirements for the industry, with creative thinking ability being favoured in the conceptual domain. Leadership competencies were also considered important by members of academia. This means that conceptual abilities are an important competency to educators in higher learning institutions. Both academia and industry stressed leadership competencies as important for managing hospitality businesses.

Also, it may be concluded that, apart from maintenance of hygiene standards and development of contingency plans, there were no statistically significant differences in the views of industry and academia with respect to the competencies required by the industry. These differences which were not significant may be due to the fact that, most of the members of academia in this study had some industry experience. This finding fits into the conceptual framework guiding the study, which proposed differences and similarities in the views of academia and industry on what competencies are required for the industry. However, there were more similarities in the views of the two stakeholders than differences.

The conceptual framework proposed a gap between competencies that industry expected and what graduates possessed. Graduates in the hospitality industry, were generally rated by industry managers as exhibiting less than expected competencies for the industry. The reasons ascribed to these gaps were poor collaboration between academia and industry, students' attitudes, educators and the curriculum. To fully bridge the competency gaps, the experimentalist philosophy of education must be implemented, which proposes a constant link between industry and academia.

Recommendations

Since there were gaps along all competencies based on the competencies exhibited by graduates on the job, there is the need for more collaboration between academia and industry to deliberate on what is expected of graduates in order to bridge the gap. From the interviews with industry, all managers expressed the need for collaboration between their industry and academia. The collaboration could be in the forms on seminars and workshops, field trips among others.

Also, interviews with some members of academia and industry revealed that the only way students can have hands–on experience is mainly through internships. However, industry managers bemoaned the little time that students have for this exercise. It would therefore be necessary for curriculum planners to extend the period of internship for students of the hospitality programme. Academic institutions could also adopt the Work Integrated Learning approach practiced by other countries running the hospitality programmes. By this approach, students are sent on industry training for six months in order to make them understand the work in the industry before completing the hospitality programme. Also, industry should engage students on attachment in activities which are related to their future jobs in the industry.

Finally, industry claimed academia is not in touch with the changes of the industry. It would therefore be important for educators to frequently take up jobs in the industry during vacation or when on leave. This way, educators will be able to understand the administrative competencies of the hospitality industry and teach this to student. This is important since the administrative competency domain had the widest competency gap.

Suggestions for Further Research

The perspectives of hospitality management students, especially those who have had been on attachment in the industry and graduates working in the industry would be very important in future studies. This is because such groups may be able to really ascertain the competencies taught in the classroom and what their jobs in the industry require.

Also, since the study adopted a mixed method which was highly tilted towards quantitative data, it would be important to conduct a pure qualitative study to explore the views of industry and academia on the competency requirements for the industry.

Finally, a study may investigate the hospitality curriculum to ascertain its relevance to the needs of the industry as well as students' preparedness for jobs in the industry.

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QUESTIONNAIRE FOR HOTEL / HR MANAGERS

PART A

Please indicate how important the following competencies are to supervisory/ managerial positions in your organisation on a scale of 1-5 (1- unimportant, 2- somewhat unimportant, 3-neutral, 4- somewhat important, 5- very important) [√]

1. **Conceptual/creative domain**	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Adapts to changing circumstances					
Develops contingency plans					
Develops new ideas (creative thinking)					
Sets a measurable action step that supports organizations strategy and mission.					

2. **Interpersonal domain**	1	2	3	4	5
Seeks feedback from people					
Identifies and solves problems					
Gives timely feedback.					
Has good communication skills					
Has good negotiation skills					
Maintains good working relationship with all employees					
Controls his/her emotions					

3. **Leadership domain**	1	2	3	4	5
Manages time for productivity					
Manages conflicts effectively					
Works under pressure					
Coaches and mentors other employees					
Works with different people as a team					
Networks with people					
Delegates effectively to others					
Motivates others					
Appreciates individual differences					

4. Administrative domain	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledgeable about financial accounting					
Utilises operating budget					
Knowledgeable in organisation's policies					
Safeguards confidential information					
Ensures compliance with organisation's laws					
Maintains professional ethics and standards					

5. Technical domain	1	2	3	4	5
Has good product knowledge					
Abreast in trends in the industry					
Has good customer service orientation					
Ability to control cost					
Able to prepare rota					
Handles emergency situations					
Knowledgeable in furnishing					
Knowledgeable in hygiene standards					

PART B

On a scale of 1-5 (1-strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neutral, 4- agree, 5-strongly agree), indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements, on the extent to which current hospitality management graduates in your employment possess the following competencies. [√]

1. Conceptual/creative domain	1	2	3	4	5
Adapts to changing circumstances					
Develops contingency plans					
Develops new ideas (creative thinking)					
Sets a measurable action step that supports organizations strategy and mission.					

2. **Interpersonal domain**	1	2	3	4	5
Seeks feedback from people					
Identifies and solves problems					
Gives timely feedback.					
Has good communication skills					
Has good negotiation skills					
Maintains good working relationship with all employees					
Controls his/her emotions					

3. **Leadership domain**	1	2	3	4	5
Manages time for productivity					
Manages conflicts effectively					
Works under pressure					
Coaches and mentors other employees					
Works with different people as a team					
Networks with people					
Delegates effectively to others					
Inspires and motivates others					
Appreciates individual differences					

4. **Administrative domain**	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledgeable about financial accounting					
Utilises operating budget					
Knowledgeable in organisation's policies					
Safeguards confidential information					
Ensures compliance with organisation's laws					
Maintains professional ethics and standards					

5. Technical domain	**1**	**2**	**3**	**4**	**5**
Has good product knowledge					
Abreast with trends in industry					
Has good customer service orientation					

Ability to control cost					
Able to prepare rota					
Handles emergency situations					
Knowledgeable in furnishing					
Knowledgeable in hygiene standards					

PART C

Background characteristics

1. Sex: a. Male [   ]   b. Female [   ]

2. Age :   a. below 30 [   ]   b. 30-39 [   ]   c. 40-49   [   ]

d. 50-59   [   ]   e. 60-69 [   ]   f. above 70 [   ]

3. Marital status: a. Married   [   ]   b. single [   ]   c. divorced [   ]

d. widowed [   ]

4. Work status: a. full time [   ]   b. part- time [   ]

c. Other, please specify ………………………………………

5. What is your highest educational level:

a. No formal education [   ]   b. primary/JHS [   ] c. SHS [   ]

d.   Diploma   [   ]   e. First Degree [   ]

f. Others, specify……………………………………………..

PART D

Establishment Characteristics

1. What is the star rating of the establishment?

a. 1-star [   ] b. 2-star [   ]   c. 3-star [   ]

d. Other(s), please specify ....

2. What is your position………………………………………………

3. How long have you been working in the hospitality industry in general

a. Less than a year [   ] b. 1-3yrs [   ] c. 4-6yrs [   ] d. 7yrs and above [   ]

4. How long have you been working in this position? (Tick as many as appropriate)

   a. Less than a year [   ] b. 1-3yrs [   ] c. 4-6yrs [   ] d. 7yrs and above [   ]

5. How did you get to this position?

   a. Through academic qualification　　[   ]

   b. Through years of experience　　　[   ]

   c. Family-ties　　　　　　　　　　[   ]

   d. Owner　　　　　　　　　　　　[   ]

   e. Other, please specify ....

6. What is the ownership structure of the establishment?

   a. Sole ownership　[   ] b. Local limited liability company　[   ]

   c. Local partnership [   ] d. . Local-Foreign partnership　　[   ]

   e. Other(s), specify...

7. Is the establishment affiliated?

   a. Yes [   ]　　b. No [   ]

   If yes, what is the nature of affiliation?

   a. Joint venture [   ] b. Franchise [   ] c. Management contract [   ]

   d. Other(s) please specify ………………………………..

8. What is the capacity (number of rooms) of the establishment?

   ....

9. How many years has this establishment been operating?

   ....

9a. Do you think a University/Polytechnic degree is required for a supervisory/ managerial position in your organisation?

   a. Yes [   ]　　　b. No [   ]

9b. If no, why………………………………………………………….....

   ....

9c. If yes, how would you rate the performance of hospitality graduates in your establishment?

   a. Below average [   ] b. average [   ] c. above average [   ]

   d. very good　　[   ] e. excellent [   ]

Thank You

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR RESTAURANT MANAGERS

PART A

Please indicate how important the following competencies are to supervisory/managerial positions in your organisation on a scale of 1-5 (1-unimportant, 2-somewhat unimportant, 3-neutral, 4- somewhat important, 5-very important) [√]

1. Conceptual/creative domain	1	2	3	4	5
Adapts to changing circumstances					
Develops contingency plans					
Develops new ideas (creative thinking)					
Sets a measurable action step that supports organizations strategy and mission.					

	1	2	3	4	5
2. Interpersonal domain					
Seeks feedback from people					
Identifies and solves problems					
Gives timely feedback.					
Has good communication skills					
Has good negotiation skills					
Maintains good working relationship with all employees					
Controls his/her emotions					

3. Leadership domain	1	2	3	4	5
Manages time for productivity					
Manages conflicts effectively					
Works under pressure					
Coaches and mentors other employees					
Works with different people as a team					
Networks with people					
Delegates effectively to others					
Motivates others					

Appreciates individual differences					

4. Administrative domain	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledge about financial accounting					
Utilises operating budget					
Knowledgeable in organisation's policies					
Safeguards confidential information					
Ensures compliance with organisation's laws					
Maintains professional ethics and standards					

5. Technical domain	1	2	3	4	5
Has good product knowledge					
Abreast with trends in the industry					
Has good customer service orientation					
Ability to control cost					
Able to prepare rota					
Handles emergency situations					
Knowledgeable in furnishing					
Knowledgeable in hygiene standards					

PART B

On a scale of 1-5 (1-strongly disagree, 2- disagree, 3- neutral, 4- agree, 5- strongly agree), indicate the extent to which you agree with the following statements on the extent to which current hospitality management graduates in your employment possess the following competencies. [√]

1. Conceptual/creative domain	1	2	3	4	5
Adapts to changing circumstances					
Develops contingency plans					
Able to develop new ideas (creative thinking)					
Sets a measurable action step that supports organizations strategy and mission.					

2. Interpersonal domain	1	2	3	4	5
Seeks feedback from people					
Identifies and solves problems					
Gives timely feedback.					
Has good communication skills					
Has good negotiation skills					
Maintains good working relationship with all employees					
Controls his/her emotions					

3. Leadership domain	1	2	3	4	5
Manages time for productivity					
Manages conflicts effectively					
Works under pressure					
Coaches and mentors other employees					
Works with different people as a team					
Networks with people					
Delegates effectively to others					
Motivates others					
Appreciates individual differences					

4. Administrative domain	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledgeable about financial accounting					
Utilises operating budget					
Knowledgeable in organisation's policies					
Safeguards confidential information					
Ensures compliance with organisation's laws					
Maintains professional ethics and standards					

5i. Technical domain	1	2	3	4	5
Has good product knowledge					
Abreast with trends in the industry					
Has good customer service orientation					
Ability to control cost					

Able to prepare rota					
Handles emergency situations					
Knowledgeable in furnishing					
Knowledgeable in hygiene standards					

PART C

Background characteristics

1. Sex: a. Male [   ]   b. Female [   ]

2. Age : a. below 30 [   ]   b. 30-39   [   ]   c.   40-49 [   ]
             d. 50-59   [   ]   e. 60-69 [   ]   f. above 70 [   ]

3. Marital status: a.   married [   ] b. Single [   ]   c. divorced [   ]
                         b. widowed   [   ]

4. Work status: a.   full time   [   ]   b. part- time   [   ]
        c. Other, please specify …………………………………………

5. What is your highest educational level:
        a. No formal education [   ] b. primary/JHS [   ] c. SHS [   ]
        d. Diploma   [   ]   First Degree   [   ]
        Others, specify…………………………………………………….

PART D

Establishment Characteristics

1. What is the grade of the establishment?
        a. Grade-1 [   ] b. Grade-2   c. Grade-3 [   ]
         e. Other(s), please specify ....

2. What is your position……………………………………………………..

3. How long have you been working in the hospitality industry in general
    a. Less than a year [   ] b.   1-3yrs [   ]   c. 4-6yrs [   ] d. 7yrs
    and above [   ]

4. How long have you been working in this position
    a.   Less than a year [   ] b. 1-3yrs [   ] c. 4-6yrs [   ] d. 7yrs and
        above [   ]

5. How did you get to this position?   (Tick as many as appropriate)

   a. Through academic qualification   [   ]

   b. Through years of experience   [   ]

   c. Family-ties   [   ]

   d. Owner   [   ]

   e. other, please specify …………………………………………

6. What is the ownership structure of the establishment?

   a. a. Sole ownership [   ]   b. local limited liability

      company   [   ]   c. local partnership [   ]

   d. Local-Foreign partnership [   ]

   e. Other(s), specify ....

7. Is the establishment affiliated?

       b. Yes [   ]   No [   ]

7a. If yes, what is the nature of affiliation?

   a. Joint venture [   ] b. Franchise [   ] c. Management contract [   ]

   d. Other(s) please specify ……………………………..

7b. What is the sitting capacity of the establishment?

....

8. How many years has this establishment been operating?

    ....

9a. Do you think a University/Polytechnic degree is required for a

supervisory/ managerial position in your organisation?

       a. Yes   [   ] b. No [   ]

9b. If no, why

……………………………………………………………………………………

…………………...

....

9c. If yes, how would you rate the performance of hospitality and tourism

graduates in your establishment?

a. Below average [   ] b. average   [   ] c. above average [   ]

d. very good   [   ] e. excellent   [   ]

Thank You

APPENDIX C

QUESTIONNAIRE FOR ACADEMIA

PART A

Please indicate how important the following competencies are to supervisory/ managerial positions in the hospitality industry on a scale of 1-5 (1- unimportant, 2-somewhat unimportant, 3-neutral, 4- somewhat important, 5- very important). [√]

1. **Conceptual/creative domain**	1	2	3	4	5
Adapts to changing circumstances					
Has foresight and develops contingency plans					
Develops new ideas (creative thinking)					
Sets a measurable action step that supports organizations strategy and mission.					

2. **Interpersonal domain**	1	2	3	4	5
Seeks feedback from people					
Identifies and solves problems					
Gives timely feedback.					
Has good communication skills					
Has good negotiation skills					
Maintains good working relationship with all employees					
Controls his/her emotions					

3. **Leadership domain**	1	2	3	4	5
Manages time for productivity					
Manages conflicts effectively					
Works under pressure					
Coaches and mentors other employees					
Works with different people as a team					
Networks with people					
Delegates effectively to others					
Motivates others					
Appreciates individual differences					

4. Administrative domain	1	2	3	4	5
Knowledgeable about financial accounting					
Utilises operating budget					
Knowledgeable in organisation's policies					
Safeguards confidential information					
Ensures compliance with organisation's laws					
Maintains professional ethics and standards					

5. Technical domain	1	2	3	4	5
Has a good product knowledge					
Abreast with trends in the industry					
Has good customer service orientation					
Ability to control cost					
Able to prepare rota					
Handles emergency situations					
Knowledgeable in furnishing					
Knowledgeable in hygiene standards					

PART B

Background Characteristics

1. Sex: a.   Male   [   ]   b.   Female   [   ]

2. Age: a. less than 30   [   ]   b. 30- 39   [   ]

                         c. 40-49   [   ]   d. 50-59   [   ]

                         e.   60-69   [   ]   f. 70 above   [   ]

3. Marital status: a. married [   ] b. Single   [   ]

                 c. divorced   [   ]   d. widowed [   ]

4.   Work status: a. full time [   ]   b. part time [   ]

                c. Others, specify ………………………………………

5. What type of institution do you teach in?

                a. University   [   ]

                b. Polytechnic   [   ]

                c. Other(s), please specify ....

6. What is your highest academic qualification
   a. Diploma [ ] b. First degree [ ] c. Master's degree [ ]
   d. Doctorate degree [ ]
   e. Other (please specify) …………………………………………..

7. Which of the following best describe your status
   a. Full Professor   [ ]   b. Associate professor   [ ]
   c. Senior Lecturer   [ ]   d. Lecturer   [ ]
   e. Assistant lecturer   [ ]   f. Instructor   [ ]
   g. Other (s) please specify...

8. How long have you been teaching in the hospitality and tourism programme/ department

   ....

9. What is your area of specialisation (if any)

   ....

   9i. Do you have any industry experience
       a. Yes   [ ] b. No [ ]
   9ii. If yes, (specify type of business) ………………
   10i .Are you a member of any hospitality and tourism association?
       a. Yes [ ]   b. No [ ]
   10ii. If yes, please specify...

Thank You

INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR ACADEMIA

1. What type of institution do you teach in? Polytechnic or University

2. How long have you been teaching in the Hospitality Department

3. What is the ownership structure of the institution? Government or private

4. How many hospitality students are there in the department currently

5. Apart from the hospitality management competencies outlined in the questionnaire, are there other important competencies that you think are missing? If yes please list them

6. Is there any collaboration between your department and industry to ensure that students have the required competencies before graduating?

7. If you are to rank the following broad competencies in an order of importance, (conceptual, interpersonal, leadership, administrative and technical), how would you rank them?

     1.

     2.

     3.

     4.

     5.

8. Does the current hospitality management curriculum allows for the achievement of the required competencies for the industry

9. There were differences (gaps) with regards to the competency expectations of industry and competencies that graduate possessed. What do you think are the causes of these gaps?

APPENDIX E
INTERVIEW GUIDE FOR INDUSTRY

1. What is the star- rating or grade of the establishment?

2. How long has the business been operating?

3. Apart from the hospitality management competencies outlined in the questionnaire, are there other important competencies that you think are missing? If yes please list them

4. Is there any collaboration between the establishment and any higher learning institution? If no, answer question 5.

5. Is your establishment willing to collaborate with any higher learning institutions?

6. What are the five most important knowledge, skills or attributes that you look out for in graduates before engaging them

7. If you are to rank the following broad competencies in an order of importance, (conceptual, interpersonal, leadership, administrative and technical), in what order would you rank them?
   1.
   2.
   3.
   4.
   5.

8. Do you look out for these competencies in graduates before employing them?

9. There were differences (gaps) with regards to the competency expectations of industry and competencies that graduate possessed. What do you think are the causes of these gaps?